

Republic of Tajikistan



**Mainstreaming Gender in Poverty
Reduction Strategies**

TAJIKISTAN

COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT

**East and Central Asia Regional Department and
Regional and Sustainable Development Department
Asian Development Bank**

May 2006

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Printed in the Philippines.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Available

Publication Stock No. 122905

Asian Development Bank

ADB country gender assessment to provide background information and analysis on gender and development issues in its developing member countries

1. Asian Development Bank; 2. Gender and Development; 3. Tajikistan.

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Acknowledgements

This country gender assessment (CGA) was prepared with support from the East and Central Asia Regional Department (now Central and West Asia Department) and Regional and Sustainable Development Department as part of a regional Asian Development Bank (ADB) technical assistance project covering four countries in the Central Asian republics (CARs)—Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan. The CGA aims to support government efforts in these four countries to promote gender equality and mainstream gender into national poverty reduction strategies and to ensure that the ADB interventions are responsive to country gender conditions and commitments. It is also hoped that the report will also be useful to government and nongovernment organizations and to individuals working in gender and development. The report updates information contained in an earlier publication, *Women and Gender Relations in Tajikistan* (ADB 2000).

A variety of sources were used in preparing of this CGA. Qualitative data were gathered during field missions to Tajikistan between December 2004 and April 2005, during which time participative consultations were held with a range of stakeholders including NGOs, community based-organizations and women's groups, individual women activists and farmers, academics, government officials, and donor organizations. Visits to different regions in the country provided additional qualitative information.

Rukiya Kurbanova, Chair of the Committee on Women and Family Affairs and representatives from the committees of family and women affairs at state and local levels also provided extensive support, especially during fieldwork. Rukiya Kurbanova provided leadership in drawing together the Technical Assistance Task Force that provided oversight to the work and facilitated collaboration with other ministries and government agencies. This report would not have been possible without the special assistance provided by the many officials of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, representatives of international development agencies and non-government organizations, and the many national NGOs and development experts in Tajikistan who so generously shared information, documents, perspectives, and advice on gender and development issues. In particular, the author wishes to thank the participants at the National Consultation Workshop in Dushanbe in April 2005 who helped to define and later comment on the paper.

The Tajikistan Country Gender Assessment has been prepared by a team led by Sri Wening Handayani of ADB's Social Sector Division, East and Central Asia Regional Department (now East Asia Department). The report was written by the consultant, Helen Thomas, with extensive support for data analysis, document review, and field work from Tatiana Bozrikova. Translation was diligently carried out by Venera Bagdalova and Aziz Sultanov. Special time and energy was also always available from Tatiana Abdushukurova and Viloyat Mirzoeva who assisted with translation, locating of documents, information, and general support and guidance throughout the study. Ferdinand Reclamado and Maureen Mamayson provided production assistance. Editing assistance was provided by Sara Medina and Jill Gale de Villa.

The report also benefited from the constructive inputs of the peer reviewers—Shireen Lateef, Shikha Jha, Harriet Wilkinson, and Francesco Tornieri. The ADB staff at the Tajikistan Resident Mission also provided much logistical support and guidance; the former Country Director Kazuko Motomuro, and current Country Director Neeraj Jain both supported this initiative by giving generously of their time and advice. Robert Dobias, Director of the Gender, Social Development, and Civil Society Division of the Regional and Sustainable Development Department, provided much appreciated support and guidance. Robert Wihtol, Director of Social Sector Division, East and Central Asia Regional Department (now East Asia Department) provided overall guidance to the report team throughout the process.

Abbreviations

ADB	—	Asian Development Bank
CARE	—	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc
CCP	—	cash compensation program
CEDAW	—	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGA	—	country gender assessment
CIS	—	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSP	—	country strategy and program
CWFA	—	Committee on Women and Family Affairs
FHH	—	female-headed household
GDP	—	gross domestic product
HIV/AIDS	—	human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
IOM	—	International Organization for Migration
ILO	—	International Labour Organization
IMF	—	International Monetary Fund
MDG	—	Millennium Development Goal
MFI	—	microfinance institutions
MHH	—	male-headed household
MLSP	—	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
NGO	—	nongovernment organization
PPP	—	purchasing power parity
PRSP	—	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SIF	—	social investment fund
SSA	—	State Statistical Agency
STD	—	sexually transmitted disease
TLSS	—	Tajikistan Living Standards Survey
UN	—	United Nations
UNDP	—	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	—	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	—	United Nations Development Fund for Women
US	—	United States
WID	—	women in development
WHO	—	World Health Organization

Glossary

avlod	—	patriarchal community of blood relatives who have common ancestor and common interests
dekhan	—	privatized farm
jamoat	—	traditional local community unit in villages, or village, or county, or community
hukumat	—	local government
oblast	—	province
rayon	—	region or district

Currency Equivalents

(as of 8 December 2005)

Local Currency	—	somoni (TJS)
1.00	=	US\$31.29
US\$1.00	=	somoni 3.189000

Note: In this report “\$” refers to US dollars.

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Executive Summary

The stabilization of the Republic of Tajikistan as an independent state, with a market economy governed under a pluralist democracy, is still in progress after 15 years of rapid change. For a majority of the population, these changes have brought sudden poverty, physical insecurity, and at times bewildering social transformations. The economic shocks of the immediate breakup of the Soviet Union were compounded in Tajikistan by a bitter 5-year civil war in which more than 50,000 people were killed, 25,000 women widowed, and 55,000 children orphaned. The mountainous terrain and climate of Tajikistan also exposes the population to periodic natural disasters, and brought additional suffering to many regions during this tumultuous period. The vast majority of families were plunged into poverty and forced to face insecurity without effective social protection from the state. Funding crises compelled the Government to rapidly dismantle the elaborate social welfare programs of the Soviet era, while at the same time dramatically cutting resources for education and health care services.

With several years of economic growth since 1998 and political stability following peace settlements, conditions have improved for many. Compound growth of gross domestic product (GDP) in recent years of nearly 30% has been driven by increasing production in aluminum and cotton, rising domestic demand fueled by remittances from labor migrants, and progress on the government's reform agenda. Poverty rates fell by 18% between 1999 and 2003 and macroeconomic indicators have improved, so that increasing amounts of public resources are again being allocated to social sectors as revenue performance improves. Yet, over 65% of the population continues to live in poverty and one quarter of the workforce (more than 400,000 people) migrates every year to seek employment outside Tajikistan. In the 2003 Tajikistan Living Standards Survey, four fifths of households stated they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with their current financial situation (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004b).

The effects of this transition period have been particularly difficult for women. Women's workload has intensified, as they try to sustain their family through unfamiliar economic activities while absorbing caring responsibilities for the household that were previously provided without cost by the state. The seemingly "natural" assumption that women would extend their contributions of unpaid labor within the household in response to government cuts in social services and economic chaos has been increasingly rationalized through reemerging traditional patriarchal attitudes.

Gender relations have adjusted in ways that increasingly exclude women from household and community decision making. Gender stereotypes reinforce discriminatory practices in the workplace, leaving women without employment in higher-paid and skilled sectors and consequently withdrawing from the formal workforce. Women are not considered suitable as farm managers, despite their extensive contribution to agricultural production, even further limiting their access to privatized agricultural land. Investment in higher education for girls (from all income brackets) is no longer deemed worthwhile, since they will not find employment and should rather aspire to more traditional women's roles as wives and mothers who remain in the household and have limited interaction in the public sphere.

Even as income poverty rates start to fall, social indicators for women continue to deteriorate (e.g., as more girls fail to complete 9 years of education and health risks from poor nutrition and stress place pressures on maternal health). Gender gaps in key areas contribute to women's vulnerability to income poverty. Women in all sectors earn less than men. Without adjusting for education differences, women's wages in 2003 were only 46% of men's. Women have been laid off more readily than men and remain unemployed longer; labor market distortions keep women in lower-paid sectors (horizontal segregation) and exclude them from senior or professional positions (vertical segregation), contributing to inefficiencies in the economy. Additional areas of vulnerability for women are often masked by macro development indicators and include impacts on women's health and self-esteem from exposure to gender-based violence, vulnerability to human trafficking, and women's inability to contribute to household or community decision making. Thus, the impact of the transition period on women in Tajikistan has been to increase gender inequalities and to leave women more vulnerable to being poor than their male counterparts.

Based on detailed analysis of poverty and economic and human development areas, the following types of programming are recommended to narrow gender gaps and enable women to participate in and benefit from poverty reduction programs.

Increase Opportunities for Women

- Ensure that labor market policies respond to women's needs as well as men's. e.g., improve profiling of unemployed women and determine how programming can be targeted to support skill development in sectors of growth in the economy. Encourage employers to examine and remove discriminatory barriers to hiring and promoting women, including public campaigns to challenge gender stereotypes.
- Facilitate women's participation in the workforce by giving greater priority to relieving household responsibilities and requirements for unpaid labor by reinvigorating affordable child care services, addressing food security to relieve demand for subsistence food production, and investing in time-saving technologies to relieve domestic drudgery.
- Improve women's access to economic resources, business development and management skills, and market knowledge in the micro and small business sector. Mechanisms that have proved most successful have been group mobilization that delivers business development services, and can respond to other social needs of women, such as shared child care and advocacy of improved social insurance schemes that respond to the needs of women in the informal sector. Institutions providing services to the private sector should also be encouraged to support female entrepreneurs through awareness campaigns, dissemination of research demonstrating women's productive potential, etc.
- Increase women's access to privatized land as a priority step toward improving productivity in the agriculture sector. Access can only be increased through a combination of programming to ensure that legislation founded on equity principals is enforced by government officials' knowledge of women's rights and of mechanisms to claim those rights; changes in government officials', agricultural suppliers', bankers', and other farmers' attitudes regarding women's capabilities to be productive farmers; and

dissemination to women as well as men farmers of knowledge and information about farming practices and potential markets.

- Increase opportunities for women to invest remittances in productive activities rather than in meeting emergency short-term needs.
- Improve monitoring of key indicators regarding women's comparative access to economic resources and employment opportunities.

Increase Women's Capabilities

- Promote girls' education through multiple approaches that include changing attitudes within families through public campaigns regarding the value of educating girls; making the environment in schools more secure and appropriate for girls (e.g., infrastructure, curriculum revisions, and segregated classes with female teachers if necessary); focusing on improving secondary education to prepare graduates for the current job market; reinvigorating special incentive programs to encourage girls to remain in secondary and higher education, such as scholarships and school feeding programs; strengthening the monitoring of the many factors that contribute to gender gaps in education outcomes and enrollment levels; and challenging gender stereotypes in vocational training to encourage girls and women to enter professions with higher return on their labor.
- Improve women's overall health status by developing a better understanding of the broad range of factors influencing well-being and health outcomes beyond reproductive functions (e.g., psychological stresses from poverty, health impacts of domestic violence, and inability to command resources within the household for improved nutrition and accessing health care services); combating emerging health risks from HIV/AIDS and drug and alcohol abuse with programming that responds to the different needs of men and women (e.g., incorporate into HIV/AIDS programs wives of high-risk male groups such as migrant laborers and transport workers); and investing in the management and analysis of health-related data that incorporate a gender perspective.
- Seek ways to relieve women's unpaid work burdens that place limitations on physical capabilities and opportunities to improve income-generating skills.

Empower Women to Influence Decisions and Institutions Affecting Their Lives

- Address pervasive and growing gender stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes through public campaigns, revisions to education curricula, visible support from political leaders, etc.
- Increase women's access to decision making in the public sphere through a range of programs including quotas for female candidates and elected representatives at all levels of government; awareness campaigns targeting elected men representatives so they facilitate women's participation; and regular collaboration between the government and women-focused nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and other civil-society organizations to ensure that women's needs and priorities are reflected in planning and implementing government policies and programs.
- Implement employment equity programs in the public sector, demonstrating leadership in creating workplace environments where women can reach decision-making positions.

Increase Physical and Economic Security for Women

- Place high priority on implementing a zero-tolerance campaign against domestic and all forms of gender-based violence (including human trafficking and sexual harassment in the workplace). Sensitize police, the judiciary, and policy makers to the criminality of violence against women and its impacts on the community and contribution to poverty. Hold them accountable to enforce the law on domestic violence and human trafficking. Establishing crisis centers, safe houses, and a range of economic and psychological supports for survivors of violence and human trafficking.
- Establish appropriate support (e.g., social protection services) so women can build economic security and reduce dependence on state and family support. Such programming should include action to increase women's economic opportunities, capabilities, and empowerment.
- Increase household-level security by providing alcohol abuse treatment for men and women, with a focus on residential facilities for those who are repeated perpetrators of violence.

Promote a Government Response to Gender Disparities

Several government policy documents directly or indirectly address key factors that contribute to gender disparities. Following commitments made by the government at the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the *National Action Plan of the Republic of Tajikistan for 1998–2005* was adopted in 1998 to increase women's role and status. This was the first policy document to address some gender equality concerns, but was based on an approach to improving women's status rather than actually addressing gender inequalities in all spheres of life. *The Principle Direction of the State Policy of Providing Equality Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women in the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period 2001–2010* (GRT 2001) was approved in August 2001 to address shortcomings identified in the National Action Plan and to shift the approach of the government to one based on a recognition that despite the principles of equality established in the Constitution, women experience unequal access to benefits from development. A further amendment to the State Program for Equality was approved in 2003 concerning "Access of Rural Women to Land," following recommendations from the study sponsored by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on women's access to privatized land (UNIFEM 2004).

Several priority concerns for women and gender equality identified in these policy documents have been incorporated into legislation and policies in areas such as reproductive health and employment. As the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of 2002 (GRT 2002) was prepared, gender concerns were incorporated in the analytical sections regarding employment (to a limited degree), education, and health care, and specific targets were established for targeted programming to address these concerns. Monitoring indicators for the PRSP remain at a highly aggregated level that masks many of the gender gaps noted in this country gender assessment. In some areas, Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets have been applied that incorporate women's empowerment and gender disparities in health care and education.

Progress on addressing gender aspects of poverty reduction programming has been hampered by incomplete analysis of the factors contributing to gender disparities, inadequate targeting of programs designed to meet the specific needs of women (e.g., unemployment services and microfinance), and lack of capacity and commitment to monitor adequately to readjust future programming. A recent groundbreaking needs assessment and costing for achievement of national MDG targets includes gender equality and women's empowerment targets (including gender balance in education enrollment and attendance, proportion of parliamentary seats and executive positions held by women, share of women in wage employment in nonagriculture sectors, awareness regarding reproductive health, and domestic violence prevalence rates). The overall cost for gender equality is estimated at \$115.6 million or \$1.30 per capita annually for 2005–2015. These costs are equivalent to approximately 0.003% of GDP during this period, which can be set in context against, for example, the debt-servicing payments that alone accounted for about 4% of Tajikistan's GDP in 2001. Costs for improving women's health care status are incorporated under other MDG targets. However, the needs assessment does not identify additional costs that will be required to overcome difficulties women face in accessing economic resources or overcoming discrimination in the labor force.

As the findings from the needs assessment will form the basis of policy and program priorities for the revised PRSP being prepared in 2005–2006, it is anticipated that increased funding will be made available for achievement of gender equality targets beyond that already allocated for the State Program for Equality between Men and Women. However, additional efforts will be required to ensure that adequate priority is given in other areas, such as employment or rural development, to the specific needs of women so they may overcome limited, unequal access to resources and other benefits from poverty reduction programming. To facilitate analysis of progress and advocacy of existing and emerging issues, greater synergy is required between gender equality goals and monitoring indicators of the State Program and those of the PRSP.

Recommendations to improve effectiveness of poverty reduction programs in addressing gender disparities include the following:

- Build capacity of policy analysts and the PRSP monitoring unit to carry out detailed gender analysis to improve targeting and monitoring of policies and programs. This will require highlighting the importance of challenging gender stereotypes about women's primary role as mothers and caregivers, so that the potential contributions of women in the economy and in political decision making can be captured in policies and programs.
- Incorporate gender-sensitive indicators and subindicators into monitoring mechanisms.
- Establish mechanisms for regular consultation with women and women's organizations to ensure that women's priorities are understood and incorporated into government planning, budgeting, and monitoring procedures.
- Collaborate with NGOs that have experience in planning and implementing programming that has successfully addressed gender issues, to facilitate capacity building of government officials and consultation with women.

- Build the capacity of the Committee on Women and Family Affairs to carry out its mandate to oversee mainstreaming of gender equality concerns across all government functions more effectively.

Mainstream Gender Concerns into Asian Development Bank Operations in Tajikistan

The Asian Development Bank's lending operations in Tajikistan and commitment to continued policy dialogue on poverty reduction provide many concrete opportunities to mainstream gender at both the strategic and operational level in areas of focus identified in the 2004–2008 Country Strategy and Program. Ensuring that women participate fully in project activities can provide equal access to economic opportunities and improve their capabilities (e.g., by accessing improved education and health care services); contribute to decision making regarding projects and community development (empowerment); and significantly improve their security. These actions will support objectives of the Government and can be reinforced through systematic inclusion of gender issues in policy dialogue. Chapter 8, the final section, provides examples of ways in which operations can be designed, implemented, and monitored to ensure that gender concerns are systematically taken into account. Concrete suggestions also focus on relevant areas where gender disparities can be addressed and equitable participation in project activities encouraged.

Tajikistan is a landlocked Central Asian country that covers 143,000 square kilometers. Almost 93% of its territory is mountainous and only about 10% is suitable for cultivation. Its mountainous nature complicates transportation and communication between regions, but also provides rich natural endowments of minerals, hydropower potential, and water resources for irrigation. Its location along the regional divide between South, East, and Central Asia has brought a history of ethnic mixing, population flows, and strategic importance to several imperial powers, all leaving their mark on the social and economic makeup of Tajikistan today.

According to preliminary data from the State Statistical Agency (SSA), the total population of Tajikistan in 2003 was 6.64 million, which, with its high birth rate, is 513,300 more than in 1999. Within the population structure, 26.4% live in urban and 73.6% in rural areas. The gender distribution is almost equal, i.e., 50.1% male and 49.9% female, which is unchanged during 1999–2003 (GRT 2004b). Overall, for 1989–2000, the total population has increased by 1 million, while the absolute increase in the working-age population was 640,000.

Tajikistan was the poorest of all the Soviet Republics at independence, with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) half that in Kazakhstan and two thirds those elsewhere in the region. However, it had relatively high human development indicators, comparable to those of other medium-income countries. Life expectancy at birth averaged 70 years, significantly above that in Pakistan and other regional states. Literacy was almost universal, with little difference between men and women.

The past 15 years have been ones of great change for the people of Tajikistan, as they have striven to establish an independent state, with a market economy governed under a pluralist democracy. For a majority of the population, these changes have brought sudden poverty, physical insecurity, and bewildering social transformations. Sharp economic shocks, starting in 1991 with the breakup of the Soviet Union, brought with them mass unemployment and economic uncertainty. At the same time, the government was unable to fund the social protection programs that, in the past, provided some relief during periods of economic insecurity. Education and health care services rapidly deteriorated following government funding cuts. The 5-year civil war of 1992–1997 brought further terrible suffering to thousands: as many as 50,000 people were killed, 25,000 women widowed, and 55,000 children orphaned. Beyond the human suffering, the effects of this civil strife on the economy and infrastructure in the worst-affected regions were also extensive.

With several years of economic growth since 1998, conditions have improved for many. Compound GDP growth in the past 3 years of nearly 30% has been driven by increasing production in aluminum and cotton, rising domestic demand fueled by remittances from labor migrants, and progress on the government's reform agenda. Poverty rates fell by 18% between 1999 and 2003 and macroeconomic indicators and revenue performance have improved, so that increasing amounts of public resources are again being allocated to social sectors. Yet over 65% of the

population continues to live in poverty and one quarter of the workforce (more than 400,000 people) is migrating every year to seek employment outside Tajikistan. In the 2003 Tajikistan Living Standards Survey (TLSS), four fifths of households stated they were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with their current financial situation (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a).

Women in Tajikistan have borne the brunt of the impacts of the transition period. Women's workload has intensified because of the increasing need to contribute to the cash income of the family, to supplement family food needs with produce from a garden plot, to care for children and the sick while health and other social services have deteriorated, and all this with an unequal division of labor for household tasks between men and women. Even as income poverty rates start to fall, social indicators for women continue to deteriorate: e.g., more girls are failing to complete 9 years of education and health risks from poor nutrition and stress place pressure on maternal health.

This country gender assessment (CGA) provides an overview of the gender dimensions of poverty and the factors that are contributing to differences in benefits from poverty reduction efforts in Tajikistan. In addition to supporting government efforts to promote gender equality and mainstream gender into national poverty reduction strategies, the CGA aims to ensure that Asian Development Bank (ADB) interventions respond to the conditions and priorities of women as well as men. It is also hoped that the report will be useful to the government, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and individuals working in the field of gender and development.

Chapter 2 Gender Dimensions of Poverty

A. General Poverty Situation

Various standards are used to assess poverty levels in Tajikistan. The most frequently cited data are based on official government statistics or the TLSS of 1999 and 2003.¹ Absolute poverty or *income poverty rates*, regardless of which poverty line is applied, were lower in 2003 than in 1999. In 2003, 63.9% of women and 63.1% of men were living in absolute poverty, according to the World Bank definition of absolute poverty, i.e. “the share of population living in a household with a per capita consumption of less than \$2.15 per day (at purchasing power parity [PPP], equivalent to TJS47.06) in May/June 2003” (Table 1).² When the State Statistical Agency’s poverty line is used, it appears that the poverty rate has dropped from 83% to 67% between 1999 and 2003.

Table 1. Poverty Rates in Tajikistan by Year and Region

Region	Population	Poverty Rate 1999	Poverty Rate 2003	Decline (%points)
GBAO	197,000	97%	84%	-13%
Sugd	2,123,000	79%	64%	-15%
Khatlon	2,169,000	91%	78%	-13%
Dushanbe	630,000	61%	49%	-12%
RRS	1,553,000	71%	45%	-26%
Total	6,672,000	82%	64%	-18%

GBAO = Gorno Badakhashan Autonomous Oblast; RRS = Rayon of Republic Subordination.

Note: Poverty Assessment based on a poverty line of \$2.15 at purchasing power parity/capita/day.

Source: World Bank 2005.

Regardless of the precise proportions, four fifths of the population still have a *per capita consumption level* that is less than the “rational norm” of a basic nutrition basket³ and nearly two thirds live on less than PPP \$2.15 per day. What is consistent is that poverty rates are falling, but regional variation is considerable: the likelihood of living in poverty ranges from 84% in the Gorno Badakhashan Autonomous Oblast to 45% in the Rayon of Republican Subordination.

In light of the current economic outlook, it seems possible for Tajikistan to achieve the national targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for overall poverty reduction, as set out in Table 2. However, recent household surveys also suggest that reductions in the poverty index do not correlate very closely with improvements in overall living standards: based on the available data, the encouraging drop in the poverty index has not been accompanied by similar improvements in educational or health care outcomes. Success in reducing the income poverty

¹ Carried out by the State Statistical Agency (SSA) with support from the World Bank.

² Data vary considerably; the 2003 *Annual Progress Report of the Republic of Tajikistan Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (PRSP) reported in a combined calculation by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and World Bank purchasing power parity (PPP) calculations, that 61% of the population was below the poverty level.

³ Neither of these measures is established according to scientific estimation of required calorie intake, but rather against a measure established during the Soviet era.

index should in no way divert attention or urgency from the need to pursue social sector reforms that aim to make specific improvements in the quality of life of the population (GRT and UNDP 2005).

Table 2. Millennium Development Goal #1: Poverty Reduction

Area	Goal	1999	2003	2015	Indicator
Extreme Poverty	Target 1: Halve between 1999 and 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 per day.	81%	64%	41%	Proportion of population living below \$2.15 poverty gap ratio
	Economic growth: GDP growth at minimum 3%		9% (2004)		Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
	Target 2: Halve, between 2005 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.				Prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age
	Target for Tajikistan: Acute malnutrition 2.3% % of underweight children (under 5) 18%		Acute 4.7% Chronic 36.2%	2.3%	Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
	Incidence of goiter: 7.5% among population		Goiter 7.5%	7.5%	
	Prevalence of anemia: Children 18.5% Pregnant women 24%		Children 37%, Pregnant women 48%	Children 18.5%, Pregnant women 24%	Prevalence of nutrition-related diseases such as goiter, anemia etc.

GDP = gross domestic product

Source: GRT and UNDP 2005: 66.

As identified in Table 2, and illustrated through nutrition-related indexes linked to food insecurity, consumption poverty levels are also slow to improve. Food consumption levels, for example, have fallen dramatically since the early 1990s and continue to decline. In the 2003 TLSS, alarmingly large numbers of families, headed by both men and women, reported consuming one meal or less per day in the previous week (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004). The figure has risen from 10% in 1997 to 13% in 1999 and approximately 50% in 2003. The impact of these high levels of food insecurity are clear: 36% of children under 5 suffer from chronic malnutrition and 5% suffer from malnutrition (GRT and UNDP 2005, using data from the United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]). High levels of malnutrition significantly influence the overall health status of children and young mothers and health outcomes for the community as a whole.

B. Gender Dimensions of Poverty

1. Income Poverty

Available data suggest that the likelihood of being poor is little different for men and women. However, these conclusions are based on a unitary model of the household that assumes that all resources in the household are pooled and all members share equally from these pooled resources. Other studies of decision-making patterns within households challenge this assumption, as women appear to have significantly less command over household resources than men family members, leaving women at greater risk of poverty, as indicated by the following.

- Women earn less than men, so their bargaining position for household resources is more limited.
- Unpaid labor that women perform in caring for the family is not valued as a contribution to household survival.
- Particularly in multigenerational households, unequal power relations between husbands and wives mean women have to consult men family members before using resources.
- While it can be assumed that in poor households a large proportion of income is shared, women tend to pool what resources they do control and will favor expenditures in areas such as food purchases, education, and health care for children. Men, on the other hand, favor expenditures on capital goods and rake any surplus income for their own consumption, often on items such as tobacco or alcohol.
- Women experience poverty differently and their capacity to make the best use of available resources is more limited.

A groundbreaking study of 2003 TLSS data recalculates poverty levels based on allocations of resources between men and women within households (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004b). The findings present a revised picture of gender differences in poverty levels, as well as how poverty is experienced within households. When 50% of men's and women's incomes are pooled within a household, poverty rates among men and women increase from 63.9% to 66.1% for women and decrease from 63.5% to 52.7% for men. This presents a gender poverty gap of 13 percentage points. The gender gap decreases by 7 percentage points under the more likely scenario of both men and women being able to retain only one fifth of their income because of the needs of other household members, especially in large, multigenerational households in rural areas.⁴ In a final scenario that calculates poverty levels in the event that women pool all their resources and men pool only four fifths, the poverty level changes to 66.7% for women, 68.8% for children, and 57.4% for men, representing a gender poverty gap of 9.3 percentage points.

⁴ This last scenario changes slightly when children are also sharing pooled resources: the gender poverty gap widens, with 66% of women and 71% of children having per capita income below poverty line compared with 58% of men.

2. Consumption poverty

Consumption poverty measures are also based on household-level data, and without further work examining gender differences in resource allocation practices within households possible significant gender differences can not be assessed. The impact of consumption poverty is also different among family members. Almost half of all pregnant women suffer from anemia and other dietary deficiencies, considerably increasing risks to the mother and baby (GRT and UNDP 2005). Their capacity to work is severely limited and their immune systems are compromised by poor nourishment, influencing their capacity to care for their families and cope with other chronic symptoms of poor nutrition among their children. The effects of prolonged food insecurity on women and children will continue to be felt even as incomes rise. This underlines the need to consider the differences in impacts of poverty within the family.

C. Poverty and Female-Headed Households

In the 2002 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Government identifies female-headed households (FHHs) as among the most vulnerable groups in Tajikistan (GRT 2002). Caution has to be taken in drawing the conclusion that all FHHs are vulnerable to poverty, as no significant difference appears in overall headcount poverty between FHHs and male-headed households (MHHs) based on the analysis carried out by Falkingham and Baschiere of the TLSS 2033 data. Among FHHs, 15.2% fall within the quintile of all households with the highest income. Table 3 presents the distribution of absolute poverty rates for FHHs by type and in comparison with MHHs. A higher-than-average headcount poverty in FHHs with large numbers of children can be seen, but this is also the case for MHHs. So the assumption that all FHHs are vulnerable to poverty may be misleading. However, FHHs do face particular problems in coping with poverty, as women have less access to land and irrigation services and less food security than men.

Table 4 shows some regional variation in the proportion of FHHs. The highest proportion is in urban areas, where it is easier for single women to live alone. The difference between the region with highest levels of poverty, Gorno Badakhashan Autonomous Oblast, and that with the lowest level of poverty, Rayon of Republican Subordination, is only marginal, indicating that the incidence of FHHs is not contributing to overall poverty levels. But these regional differences may also be influenced by the higher number of widows following the civil war in Khatlon and Garm regions.

Table 3. Absolute Poverty Rates in the Population by Type and Location of Household Head (TLSS 2003)

Type of Households	Headcount Poverty (%) of Total Type	Distribution in Urban and Rural Areas		
		Urban	Rural	All FHHs
Male-Headed Households	63.6	—	—	—
Female-Headed Households	62.6	—	—	—
Within FHHs				
Single Pensioner	37.2	11.3	5.4	8.5
60+ Living with Other Adults Only	48.1	5.6	4.0	4.9
60+ Living in Extended Households with Children	68.3	13.8	38.9	25.8
Single Younger Adult	6.9	8.2		4.4
Lone Parent	50.8	15.6	8.1	12.0
Under 60 Living with Other Adults Only	36.3	15.8	6.4	11.3
Under 60 Living in Extended Household with Children	67.1	29.6	36.8	33.1

FHH = female-headed household; TLSS = Tajikistan Living Standards Survey; — = no data available
 Source: Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a.

The civil war left an estimated 25,000 widows, many now heads of households. Perhaps as many as 500,000 men migrating, many for several years at a time, leave a large number of de facto FHHs. Sources of income vary among FHHs and MMHs, but also among different types of FHHs, influencing vulnerability to poverty. Remittances, for example, are an important source of income for single women (probably students receiving payments from men family members), those under age 60, and single pensioners. Social assistance is most significant for men migrants, those under age 60, and single pensioners. Social assistance is more significant for FHHs and total wage income for MMHs (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a). As might be assumed, social assistance is most important for single pensioners and total wage income for FHHs under 60 living with other adults. Overall, more FHHs report being very unsatisfied with their living conditions than MMHs in all income quintiles. Thus, the inference that FHHs are facing higher levels of psychological stress than MMHs at a given level of welfare (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a).

Table 4. Proportion of Households Headed by Women by Region (TLSS 2003)

% Female-Headed Households	Urban	Rural	All Households
GBAO	18.3	13.1	13.9
Sugd	27.5	15.2	19.1
Khatlon	26.4	12.6	15.5
Dushanbe	31.8	—	31.8
RRS	40.0	15.7	19.9
Total	30.0	14.3	19.7

GBAO = Gorno Bakakhashan Autonomous Oblast; RRS = Rayon of Republic Subordination; TLSS = Tajikistan Living Standard Survey; — = data not available.

Source: Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a.

D. Changing Gender Relations

The previous discussions suggest that the causes and experience of poverty are influenced by different socially imposed roles and responsibilities for men and women, as well as economic factors. Even though many assume that these different roles and responsibilities are immutable and have been followed since time immemorial, they in fact have changed over time. The Soviet era brought vast changes to all social relations in Tajikistan. In some respects, gender relations became more equal. Soviet ideology lauded the role of women as mothers, but also sought to release women's labor from household tasks into productive work and to balance motherhood against women's contribution to the economy. This balance was partly met by the state's provision of comprehensive social services to relieve women of some domestic burdens, such as free child care, often linked to the workplace. Great emphasis was also placed on equal access to education for girls alongside boys, and by the late 1980s women's capabilities were more or less equal to those of men. Despite this focus on equity for women, the centrally planned labor market ascribed for women specific sectors of work that were closely linked to their role as family caregivers: teaching, the medical profession, and provision of other social services. But many women also worked in the agriculture sector on collective farms.

The Soviet state also actively discouraged many traditional cultural and religious practices in Tajikistan that had a strong influence on gender relations: polygamy, dowry payments, veiling of women, and so on. These customs were considered by the Soviets as "backward" tendencies and counterrevolutionary, effectively limiting women's mobility and access to resources. Soviet-style nuclear families replaced multigenerational households in most regions of Tajikistan; thus, women had more equitable roles as partners in household decision making. However, the Soviet influence did not change all patterns of political decision making between men and women. Women were equitably represented throughout the Communist Party structures, but their areas of responsibility remained limited to stereotyped areas of concern to women—i.e., associated with motherhood and social development—so that they were left marginalized from decision making in economic and other key areas.

Social relations of all kinds have been in during over the 15 years since independence. Such changes as the privatization of economic assets have forced the population to adapt rapidly to new economic relations among family, community, and the state. Economic chaos, civil war, and ensuing poverty have also intensified the social and economic expectations placed on men and women and the relationships between them. The erosion of state-supported child and health care has placed heavy burdens on women, forcing them to absorb caregiving duties as unpaid labor. Services remaining after government cutbacks were further disrupted by civil strife and in many regions have yet to be restored, placing additional limits on the time and physical, emotional, and psychological resources available to women. Unemployed men are also often forced to make the dismal choice of disrupting family relations with long absences, as they migrate to other countries to find employment, leaving women to cope without social acceptance of their new role as *de facto* household head.

The civil war brought particular threats and difficulties for women and long-term impacts. Although rape as a war crime was not as widespread in Tajikistan as in other countries, there were

numerous reports of armed bands, from all sides, looking for women to rape and terrorize.⁵ The trauma for rape victims does not end with the conflict, but continues with the unwanted pregnancies, the infection with sexually transmitted disease, or the mental illness associated with depression, fear, and low-self-esteem. These psychological symptoms have frequently been exacerbated by family or community rejection. Many women having to cope with these conditions alone report continued harassment and fear of violence, as they are perceived by trouble makers as “damaged goods” and beyond the protection of their families, and hence targets.

Since the end of the civil war, more traditional, pre-Soviet gender stereotypes are shaping gender relations, some of which are sanctioned by either ethnic or religious patriarchal customs, such as limitations on women’s mobility, polygamy, and forced marriage. Economic and social insecurities have encouraged a return to multigenerational households in many regions, where resources can be pooled and protection offered to families of migrant laborers.

Caution must be used in generalizing about these changes in gender relations and the factors shaping them. Little detailed evidence has yet been collected or analyzed in Tajikistan to confirm the validity of these assumptions. Table 5 presents the findings from one recent comparative study of household decision making in all regions of Tajikistan. The study confirmed that multigenerational households have indeed formed primarily to address economic and personal insecurity, rather than simply to rekindle traditional family structures. But women exchange security for positions of less power over decision making and less mobility, limiting their economic, political, and social opportunities and capabilities.

E. Conclusions

For many women in Tajikistan, as for many men, the transition period has exacted considerable costs, and many continue to struggle against growing poverty, high levels of unemployment, a decline in access to quality basic services, and signs of a (re)emergence of conservative gender stereotypes that limit women’s personal, social, economic, and political freedoms. This CGA captures the gender dimensions of poverty in Tajikistan by analyzing contributing factors to the following trends for women: (i) decreasing opportunities, (ii) eroding capabilities, (iii) increasing levels of insecurity, and (iv) increasing disempowerment. Characteristics and impacts of these four trends include the following.

⁵ The most frequently cited evidence is from journalists’ reports and Human Rights Watch and Helsinki Watch Reports from late 1993.

Table 5. Decision Making within Tajikistan Families

Nuclear Families	Multi-Generational Households
<i>Definition:</i> Household with husband and wife and one generation of children	<i>Definition:</i> Several generations of the same family live in one household. Wives move to the households of their husbands, so these households tend to consist of older parents living with the families of their adult sons (i.e., at least three generations).
<i>Proportion in survey:</i> 54% of households in urban areas and 47% in rural areas	<i>Proportion in survey:</i> 19% of households in Dushanbe and a majority in rural regions with less commercial agricultural production (cotton, etc.), and especially where high emigration of men has occurred
<i>Workforce participation of women:</i> Majority of women in workforce and 55% employed	<i>Workforce participation of women:</i> Much lower, only 1–7% in some areas, even when employment is available, but 45% where male emigration is high
<i>Relationship with extended family:</i> Family ties between husband and wife reach out to their extended families and remain strong, especially for economic support	<i>Relationship with extended family:</i> Economic compulsion to join generations and households is very strong, for pooling of resources, protection, and security when men are emigrating; women may agree to polygamous marriages because of fear of poverty.
<i>Patterns of decision making:</i> Decisions made by the husband with discussion and support from the wife	<i>Patterns of decision making:</i> Traditional patriarchal gender relations are reappearing: senior men may consult with the most senior women, but never with younger wives of sons, even concerning disposal of income brought into the household by younger wives

Source: Bozrikova 2004.

1. Fewer Opportunities

- Women are withdrawing from the workforce for several reasons, but primarily because of the extra demands of unpaid labor in the home and changing attitudes regarding women's need to remain out of the public sphere.
- Women are losing employment and face greater unemployment. A government analysis of the poverty situation notes that women have lost jobs more quickly than men and find it harder to find new jobs, particularly after child rearing (GRT 2004a).
- Labor market distortions limiting women's opportunity to apply their education or skills are growing. These distortions are associated with discrimination against women in nontraditional sectors (labor market segregation) or with perceptions that women are considered unreliable workers because of their multiple responsibilities (time constraints and gender stereotypes).
- Women have limited access to economic resources (land and credit), and time constraints from having to absorb cuts in social services by their unpaid labor. These limit their capacity to take up alternative or more productive economic opportunities emerging in the new market economy.

2. Declining Capabilities

- Education achievements of girls are deteriorating, even among nonpoor households, as attitudes regarding the value of education for girls are changing, as is the overall quality of education.
- Opportunity costs are higher for women to access existing health care services (which are of poor quality), because of their time constraints; inability to command resources to pay for increasing costs, particularly of transportation; and the limitations being placed by traditional households on their social mobility.
- Women's health is generally deteriorating from factors including poor nutrition and time pressures.

3. Disempowerment

Women are being disempowered within households, particularly younger women in multi-generational households, and in the public sphere, because participation in the political process is sharply declining. Factors influencing the situation are as follows:

- Gender stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes are pervasive and increasing. Women are not perceived as independent actors or agents of change and their access to economic and social resources is increasingly mediated through men family members. Women in multigenerational families have to seek permission to take up a job or spend income they have earned. Even in nuclear families, women will discuss all decisions with their husbands, while their husbands often act alone.
- Women lack access to decision-making positions in the public and private sector. Few women run or are elected to the legislature, and few women hold senior positions in government and even fewer in the private sector.

4. Reduced Security

- Personal security is especially at risk during and since civil strife in public places. In addition, many women are left alone by their husbands, forcing women to be less mobile in public because of fear of public violence.
- The risk of human trafficking for women is growing, especially because of poverty, e.g., women may risk taking jobs offered by a stranger, or migrating alone without previous experience of solitary travel.
- Insecurity in the household is growing as a result of increased domestic violence: poverty and social disruptions are a toxic mix that leads to violence.
- Because of deterioration in social protection safety nets, women are now less able to manage the risks of economic insecurity.

The following chapters of this paper outline in further detail the gender-based factors that influence poverty rates for both men and women and create gender gaps in key indicators, and make recommendations for addressing these factors and narrowing gender gaps.

A. Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

The PRSP provides the Government's coordinated framework for addressing poverty in Tajikistan. The PRSP was approved in 2002 and seeks to increase real incomes, achieve a fair distribution of the benefits of growth, and ensure a rise in the living standards of the poorest groups in the population. This will be achieved through three key objectives: (i) sustained high economic growth, (ii) improved governance, and (iii) improved access to and better targeting of social services (GRT 2002).

The PRSP views growth of the agriculture sector and increased agricultural exports, as well as the provision of adequate infrastructure (energy, transport, water supply, and communication), as the keys to achieving economic growth and poverty reduction. Five of the poverty reduction targets in the PRSP are based on the MDGs. The MDG process is seen to be parallel and complementary to implementation of the PRSP, sharing common goals, and in 2002 ADB and Tajikistan signed a poverty partnership agreement that conforms with the PRSP approach and objectives. The government, with assistance from ADB, prepared the *First Progress Report* for the PRSP in March 2004 (GRT 2004a) and a revised PRSP was in prepared in 2005.

The PRSP is the government's first comprehensive analysis of poverty reduction and priorities for policies and programs to address the causes presented in the introductory analysis. Consultation was undertaken with civil society organizations (although not extensively with stakeholders in gender equality) and an unprecedented public debate was generated on these pressing issues. While the final document has been criticized for not providing adequate detail on the funding and implementation of policies and programs presented, the government has been open to ongoing monitoring and examination of progress.

PRSP objectives and corresponding targets provide extensive entry points for addressing most aspects of current gender gaps in economic and human development, but specific reference to either gender-related targets or indicators is limited. The background analysis of poverty identifies gender gaps in only two areas—education and the labor market (Box 1)—but does not provide an analysis of factors influencing these gaps. Programming outlined in the PRSP assumes equal access for men and women, except as noted in education and unemployment, where specific steps are identified to address gender gaps. Indicators are highly aggregated, except where based on MDG targets. No corresponding programs are set out in the PRSP to reach targets for the MDG indicators for women's empowerment that are incorporated into the PRSP indicators.

The analysis in the following sections of this report covers each of the main areas of programming addressed by the 2002 PRSP. As the PRSP was revised in 2005, the analysis for this CGA can contribute to identifying (i) factors influencing existing gender gaps, and (ii) areas where data may not be available but gender differences may be occurring in access to related poverty reduction programming. Specific recommendations are made regarding types of programming that can help narrow gender gaps.

An overview of gender-related entry points in the PRSP framework is presented in detail in Appendix 1, as well as related contributions from the State Program for Equality between Men and Women (the State Program), which is the primary mechanism through which the government promotes gender equality and the status of women (GRT 2001). The State Program also has a specific poverty reduction focus, but the analysis and targets are not consistent with the 2002 PRSP, which was formulated without apparent significant contributions from the Committee on Women and Family Affairs (CWFA) or the women's movement. Additional gender-sensitive indicators are also provided in Appendix 1 for several PRSP objectives based on discussions with stakeholders during the preparation of the CGA and at the National Consultation Workshop held in April 2005 in Dushanbe (Appendix 2). These additional indicators can be considered when the PRSP is revised.

The following is a synopsis of potential entry points for gender equality issues for each objective in the 2003 PRSP.

1. Macroeconomic Management: Main Objective

The main objective is to increase allocations of public resources to social sectors through enhanced planning and monitoring.

a. Gender Equality Issues

Restoring higher budget allocations to social sectors is vital for women to regain capabilities eroded during the transition period. Women have also had to compensate for cuts with their own unpaid labor in the family, putting great pressure on their time and overall well-being.

Box 1. Gender Concerns in the 2002 PRSP

“Tajikistan inherited a well-developed network of educational establishments from the past and corresponding teaching personnel, high enrollment ratio and gender equal rights to compulsory basic education. Since 1990 enrollment ratios have dropped in primary and secondary education as well as in preschool; the quality of schooling has declined and a growing gender imbalance has emerged.”

“There are also gender issues in the sphere of labor. The position of women is more difficult than that of men. Women are mostly engaged in low-wage jobs, in particular in education, health care and agriculture. The level of professional skills among women is very low. The problem of households headed by women needs to be highlighted specifically. The number of such households in the country exceeds 25,000. Such households often have limited access to land and other agricultural resources.”

Source: GRT 2002: 21 and 28.

The Government acknowledges unequal access to benefits from development programming, but has not articulated it as a priority for reforms to structures or delivery mechanisms.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

Two entry points for gender are

- to improve targeting of programs, which was identified as a priority in the MDG Needs Assessment (GRT and UNDP 2005); and
- to strengthen skills for gender-related gender budget analysis to assess women's access to existing and future government programs.

2. Public Administration Reform: Main Objectives

The main objectives are to reform public service with particular attention to decentralization and the audit function, and reform budget management to ensure that policy priorities are reflected in budget allocations.

a. Gender Equality Issues

The low proportion of women in decision-making positions in public service and employment equity is not identified as a priority in civil service reform programs.

Improvement in linkages between policy priorities and budget management is limited by lack of skills to carry out gender analysis and inconsistent monitoring of gender-sensitive indicators, particularly at the local government level.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

The four entry points are as follows:

- Identify employment equity as a priority to increase the proportion of women in decision-making positions in the civil service.
- Carry out gender training of government officials to strengthen the articulation of the needs of men and women in policies and targeted programs.
- Use performance-based budgeting to incorporate gender issues by developing formats to guide analysis and regulations requiring annual gender analysis pertaining to who accessed programs.
- The government should engage directly with women's organizations at the local level to increase the voice of women as government accountability is increased.

3. Privatization, Labor, and Private Sector Development: Main Objectives

The main objectives are to define a target for job creation for women; reform vocational training; improve the business environment (taxes, inspections, and licensing); promote self-employment through microcredit; and manage migration.

a. Gender Equality Issue

Distortions in the labor market limit women's opportunities and competitiveness and their access to resources made available by the process of privatization.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

Eight entry points are recommended.

- Analyze trends in women's participation in the workforce to identify appropriate policies and programs to ensure efficient use of labor potential.
- Increase the competitiveness of women as a specific target group in reforms to vocational training (especially in nontraditional areas).
- Reduce discrimination against women in the labor market (vertical and horizontal) by restoring support to mothers of young children and relieving the domestic burden.
- Conduct a public campaign to challenge gender stereotypes of women as caregivers rather than significant contributors to the country's economic growth.
- Provide equitably to men and women business development services and other support that responds to their specific needs.
- Identify specific programs to support spouses of labor migrants to facilitate reinvestment of remittances into productive activities for women and other family members.
- Improve awareness, especially among women and children, of the risks of trafficking arising from migration.
- Monitor implementation of the State Program more effectively in cooperation with PRSP monitoring.

4. Social Protection: Main Objectives

The main objectives are to improve the targeting of social programs in general, increase pensions, improve and rehabilitate infrastructure, and provide cash payments to the most vulnerable through local government mechanisms.

a. Gender Equality Issues

Programs do not necessarily respond to the needs of both men and women and build their self-reliance. Monitoring and analysis of findings from existing programs and of specific vulnerabilities and risks of different community members need to be improved (for example,

monitoring of unemployment programs is currently very limited). Pension reforms should take into account the fact that women have lower average salaries than men (the wage gap) and correspondingly lower contributions through employment, which will increase women's vulnerability to poverty during old age.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

The three recommendations are as follows:

- Adjust existing pension schemes to ensure that women have secure incomes when they retire, taking into account disruptions to contributions from employment because of child care.
- Undertake a gender training program with government officials at state and local levels to strengthen skills in integrating gender equality concerns into program planning, delivery, and monitoring.
- Ensure that program monitoring is based on sex-disaggregated data of recipients so that targeting of cash transfer programs is efficient and effective.

5. Agriculture and Land Reform: Main Objectives

The main objectives are to facilitate land reform; facilitate other forms of privatization in the agriculture sector (including inputs, marketing mechanisms, and financial services); improve water resource management; and increase the independence of farmer's decision making.

a. Gender Equality Issues

At present, women have very limited access to land because they are unaware of their rights, because government authorities do not consider women good farmers, and for other reasons.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

The seven recommendations are as follows:

- Ensure equitable access to resources, specifically land, for men and women.
- Provide men and women with training and access to information regarding women's rights to land.
- Develop a public campaign to increase understanding of women's contribution to the agriculture sector and their potential as privatized (*dekhan*) farm leaders.
- Improve delivery of inputs to all farmers (men and women), including information, appropriate technologies, and credit.
- Take special steps to ensure that women participate effectively in community-based water associations and other natural resource management activities.
- Offer special business development training for women as well as men to increase their decision-making capacities and knowledge.

- Train government officials, particularly at the community level, on the importance of gender balance in social mobilization activities, and how to ensure that women's voices are heard.

6. Infrastructure: Main Objectives

The three main objectives are to increase investment in rehabilitation of roads, irrigation, energy, water, and communications; support restructuring and privatization, including tariff revision and reform of the regulatory environment; and improve access to remote and underserved areas (particularly the poor).

a. Gender Equality Issues

Deteriorating infrastructure puts extra pressure on the capacity of women to carry out household responsibilities, for example

- energy shortages in households put extra pressure on women's time for preparing food;
- exposure to diseases from unsafe water increases the time pressure on women, who care for the sick; and
- lack of access to transport contributes to poor health indicators for women, especially maternal mortality rates.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

Four entry points are recommended.

- Ensure that the needs of men and women are understood and integrated into the design of all infrastructure, e.g., men identify economic benefits from improved transportation whereas women identify improved family health.
- Facilitate the involvement of men and women in community-based infrastructure committees managing the construction, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure. This may require special training and awareness-raising sessions for both men and women to ensure support for women's involvement.
- Consider risks as well as benefits from improved transportation networks, e.g., increased vulnerability to human trafficking through the transport industry.
- Train government officials, particularly at the community level, on the importance of gender balance in social mobilization activities, and how to ensure that women's voices are heard.

7. Education: Main Objectives

The four main objectives are to provide equal access to all levels of education for girls and boys; target the poorest rural girls, with a scholarship program for higher education; improve the

quality of education (increase the teachers' salaries and improve the curriculum to prepare students for the current labor market); and reform the financing of the education system.

a. Gender Equality Issues

The growing gender gap in secondary education is associated with several causes, including changing attitudes regarding the value of educating girls and the potential for future employment, the quality of education, its cost, and other access factors.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

The four recommendations are as follows:

- Address all factors contributing to falling educational achievements of girls and young women, including social factors (e.g., attitudes toward potential careers for women beyond marriage).
- Analyze the scholarship program to show how it could be improved (e.g., identify causes for dropouts, and target those most in need).
- Adjust the curriculum to challenge gender stereotypes in the labor market, to increase competitiveness of females who graduate from or leave school.
- Ensure that education governance reforms (e.g., parent teacher associations) seek gender balance in representation from the community.

8. Health Care: Main Objectives

The three main objectives are to improve primary health care services, improve the quality of care through training and infrastructure rehabilitation, and adopt a new reproductive health policy.

a. Gender Equality Issues

Despite increases in GDP, modest growth in incomes, and some improvements in health indicators for women and children, the health status of women continues to be of concern. Health-seeking behavior is deteriorating and access to services for women continues to worsen. Little is understood regarding the ability of women to command resources within the household to cover health care costs for themselves and their children.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

The six recommendations are as follows:

- Ensure that funding is available for sexual and reproductive health (as per recommendations in the MDG Needs Assessment) for girls and women, and for other health-related priorities.

- Improve health information management and analysis to increase understanding of all the factors contributing to the declining status of men's and women's health.
- Ensure continued support for primary health care delivery points, particularly in rural areas, to ensure that the poor can access appropriate quality services.
- Address increasing risks to women's health in areas such as drug abuse, psychological stress, and migration.
- Increase understanding of the potential impact on women as caregivers due to the anticipated increases in HIV/AIDS infection rates.
- Increase health professionals' and workers' understanding of the impacts of domestic violence on women's health and how to provide medical and social support to women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

9. Environmental Protection and Tourism: Main Objectives

The three main objectives are to improve environmental disaster management, increase investment in alternative energy sources for rural areas, and promote and facilitate investments in tourism infrastructure.

a. Gender Equality Issues

Men and women are actively engaged in natural resource management, but women tend not to be consulted in planning and implementation of environmental protection and conservation programs. Women bear the major burden of caring for those affected by unsafe water supplies.

b. Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

The four recommendations are as follows:

- Ensure that women are equal partners in community-managed environmental initiatives for the improvement of protected areas and land reclamation/resettlement. This may require specific steps to ensure that men and women have adequate knowledge and skills to participate effectively in social mobilization.
- Ensure that the different energy requirements of men and women within the household are incorporated into technological developments in alternative energy sources.
- Ensure that women are actively involved in community-based water associations, so that their needs and priorities are addressed as potable water and sanitation infrastructures are designed, developed, and operated and managed.
- Provide women equal access to appropriate training and enterprise opportunities so they may participate fully in the tourism sector.

B. Gender and the Millennium Development Goals

Several of the PRSP indicators are MDG national targets (see the analysis of the PRSP in Appendix 1). A summary of MDGs and national targets with a gender analysis is included in the relevant sections of this report.

Tajikistan is unlikely to meet its MDG targets if it continues along its current trajectory, as noted in the Government's 2003 report *Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals* (GRT and UNDP 2003b). In 2004/2005, an extensive joint needs assessment was carried out by the government and the United Nations (UN) Country Team in Tajikistan to ascertain the policy and structural reforms and investments required to meet the MDGs. The MDG Needs Assessment report was released in May 2005 and provides comprehensive and flexible financial models and policy recommendations, which the government and its partners can use to discuss development scenarios for achieving the MDGs, and estimate resources needed from government, private, and donor sources. The priority policy and program areas and associated costs reported in the 2005 MDG Needs Assessment report will form core elements of Tajikistan's revised PRSP. To carry out the needs assessment, five working groups were established by presidential decree for sectors covered by the MDGs and are chaired by the deputy prime ministers responsible for the sectors. The working groups considered policy development and financial costing for education, health care, water and sanitation, gender, nutrition and food security, and rural development (GRT and UNDP 2005).

Tajikistan is one of several pilot countries identified by the UN Millennium Project Secretariat to test a general needs assessment methodology. The UN Millennium Project Secretariat Task Force on Education and Gender Equality (the Task Force on EGE) adapted this general methodology for assessing all gender-related MDG interventions, including interventions associated with agriculture, transport, water and sanitation, education, and health care. The Task Force on EGE also stressed that if women and girls are to benefit from programs, other interventions will be required to build capacity within government and private sector institutions to understand the significance of gender equality concerns in the context of maximizing poverty reduction investments and to bring about changes in attitudes and institutional structures that lead to discrimination. The suggested gender-sensitive approach therefore follows two tracks: (i) gender interventions to meet all MDGs other than Goal #3—women's empowerment, and (ii) the additional specific interventions to meet Goal #3 (UN Millennium Project 2005).

The MDG Needs Assessment for Tajikistan followed only the second track closely and recommends the following priority actions to achieve MDG #3:

(i) short-term priorities:

- for economic empowerment, provide women with access to microcredit, especially in rural areas, and promote measures to assist out-of-school girls with technical training and income-generating activities; and
- for personal empowerment, conduct countrywide public awareness campaigns promoting “zero tolerance for violence against women;”

(ii) medium-term priorities:

- strengthen and intensify women's participation in decision making and management; train women for leadership from school age and throughout their lives, and provide targeted support to female political candidates;
- implement reproductive health care planning measures, integrate reproductive health care services into primary health care services, and conduct public awareness activities; and
- train health workers, social workers, teachers, and the police in protecting women and girls from all kinds of discrimination, including gender discrimination in schools, and provide professional support to women in crisis.

The MDG Needs Assessment estimated that about \$115.6 million, or \$1.3 per capita, will be required annually for 2005–2015 to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in Tajikistan, with costs peaking at \$2.00 in 2015. Much of these costs—40.6%, or \$47 million—will cover interventions to support the transition of girls and women to the workforce, and 24.3% will help end violence against women (GRT and UNDP 2005). The costs are equivalent to approximately 0.003% of GDP during this period, which can be set in context against, for example, the debt-servicing payments that alone accounted for about 4% of Tajikistan's GDP in 2001 (UN Millennium Project 2005, 20).

The other sections of the Tajikistan MDG Needs Assessment do not take such a comprehensive approach to incorporating gender concerns into priorities or financial estimates, and hence do not apply the first track suggested by the Task Force on EGE. In some areas, women are identified as a specific target group (i.e., concerning access to land) but the assessment contains no discussion of the costs of special measures required to ensure that women have equal access. For example, in the case of ensuring that women have equal access to privatized land, neither the extra programs required to provide information to women regarding their rights nor public campaigns to ensure that men are also aware of the need to include women's names on registration certificates are included. Even in the detailed report from the Water and Sanitation Working Group, no specific costing is done of the special measures required for women to be consulted fully and participate effectively in proposed programming. An example is that women will require additional training and encouragement to participate in infrastructure planning sessions, and these constraints are not discussed. Several strategic priorities identified by women are not incorporated anywhere in the MDG Needs Assessment (see Box 2 for the minimum set of actions suggested by the Task Force on EGE): for example, child care or developing time-saving technologies for domestic tasks to free women for income-generating activities or training opportunities.

**Box 2. Creating Opportunities for Women: United Nations
Millennium Project Task Force Recommendations**

The following strategic priorities are proposed by the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality for creating opportunities for women, particularly in education and employment, while protecting them from violence and sexual abuse:

- Strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls, while simultaneously ensuring universal primary education.
- Guarantee sexual and reproductive health care and rights for women and girls.
- Invest in infrastructure designed to reduce the amount of time women and girls spend on burdensome tasks. Increase women's participation in the design and implementation of infrastructure projects to increase access to and affordability of the project.
- Guarantee women's property and inheritance rights with actions that include legal reform to increase access to land. Strategies for better enforcement include recording women's share of land or property, supporting women's groups that help women make land claims, and improving legal literacy.
- Reduce gender inequality in employment, close gender gaps in earnings, and reduce discrimination against women in labor markets through programs that provide support for child care, social policies that eliminate discriminatory employment and pay practices, social protection, and access to credit and skills training, especially in the informal sector.
- Increase the representation of women in political bodies at the national and local levels through proven interventions like gender quotas and reservations.
- Combat violence against women through a combination of infrastructure, legal education, health care, and other actions, including legislation, awareness programs, and health care services to support violence victims.

Source: United Nations Millennium Project 2005: 20.

3. Recommendations

As noted in the introduction of the MDG Needs Assessment for Tajikistan, the report's recommendations form core areas for programming in the revised PRSP. Therefore, it is vital that the gender equality gaps in all sector analysis and financial assessments be identified and addressed. Additional capacity building regarding gender mainstreaming will be required for the CWFA and other government departments involved in drafting the PRSP if the implications of a more comprehensive gender analysis are to be taken into account. It is also important that the objectives of the State Program, the core framework for gender mainstreaming, be harmonized with those of the PRSP. This will facilitate close work between the CWFA and other line ministries and strengthen monitoring of both instruments.

C. Monitoring the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the Millennium Development Goals

1. Constraints on Monitoring Gender Aspects

More than 100 indicators were originally identified to monitor progress of the PRSP implementation. Because monitoring so many indicators presented a practical challenge, a core set of 48 quantitative and 6 qualitative indicators, with close alignment to MDG targets, has been formulated. This has meant that the indicators have become more aggregated and macro in nature, which does not help to unmask gender-based differences in outcomes of poverty reduction programming. Moreover, several areas of the PRSP are no longer covered by explicit indicators, but government discussions are under way regarding identification of subindicators that will track specific program targets that contribute to PRSP and MDG targets.

Government structures have been deprived of adequate funding and investment in capacity building, creating unreliability in statistics and data collection. Line ministries are responsible for providing data that are regularly based on assigned indicators, but officers need a greater understanding of the significance of findings from analysis and currently provide at best a rudimentary scrutiny of data.

On a more hopeful note, there are plans to decentralize the monitoring process to eight regional centers—two per region—with institutionalized regular consultation with NGOs and community members for the collection and assessment of data. Training for local-level officials is to be developed, drawing to a great extent on the experience of NGOs, which have the strongest experience in Tajikistan in community-based research and analysis. The PRSP monitoring unit in the President's Office is assuming that these skills will also be mainstreamed into PRSP monitoring and capacity-building activities because many of these NGOs are led by women and have pioneered gender analysis.

The PRSP unit in the President's Office advocated a separate section on gender equality issues in the next PRSP progress report. Gender was integrated into some sections of the 2003 PRSP Progress Report and it is argued that the working group on gender for MDGs (which covers health care and education for the PRSP) can be responsible for integration of gender issues. This plan is not feasible, however, as the most recent progress report contained only one or two direct references to gender differences in education and unemployment. Until full acceptance of the need to address gender issues and capacity is available to do so as a mainstreamed topic in all matters under discussion, it is important for a separate section to be included in the report so that priority concerns can be given adequate space. For example, priority concerns for women include agricultural development and access to land, in addition to health care, education, and unemployment.

Some special studies are being conducted by the State Statistical Agency (SSA) with specific gender-related survey questions, such as the 2003 TLSS and a recent agriculture sector survey. It would be naive to assume, however, that a consensus exists regarding the importance of including these kinds of questions within the SSA. A case in point was the additional support

requested from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to ensure that analysis was carried out on the gender dimensions in the agriculture survey, as time was not allocated to SSA staff to carry out this analysis. Some gender analysis training has been given to officers, but the scope was too limited for them to apply their learning consistently to all areas of their work. Moreover, follow-up training is still urgently required.

2. Recommendations Regarding PRSP Monitoring

The four recommendations are as follows:

- Improve collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated poverty data to strengthen understanding of the dynamics of poverty within households. This will require increased capacity building for statistical agencies and government analysts if the significance of gender differences and gaps are to be assessed and the results incorporated into policy and poverty reduction programs.
- Unmask the different vulnerability factors between women in poor households and women in FFHs.
- Give greater consideration to other types of impacts on poverty, such as women's time. This will require improved time use surveys, and national accounting systems that include unpaid female labor, to understand how these patterns have changed over recent years and what types of programs can be developed to address these priority concerns for women.
- Develop a series of subindicators for each of the PRSP objectives and target areas (as suggested in Appendix 1) that can be used to guide line ministries in their collection and analysis of data in a more gender-sensitive manner.

Chapter 4 National Legal and Institutional Frameworks to Promote Gender Equality

A. International Commitments

Tajikistan has expressed its intention to abide by international standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as set out in various human rights treaties, and has ratified a comprehensive list (Box 3), including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Article 10 of the Constitution also states “International legal documents recognized by Tajikistan are a constituent part of the legal system of the republic. If republican laws do not conform to the recognized international legal documents, the norms of the international documents apply.” This means that CEDAW and other human rights treaties are formally part of the law of Tajikistan and courts may directly apply the provisions of international treaties.

No formal report has been presented by the government to the CEDAW Committee regarding compliance, but a review was prepared in 2002 by an international expert (Dairiam 2002). This report concluded that while the Constitution and laws in formal terms integrate the CEDAW principle of equality, in practice the situation of women does not match the standards set out in the law. Mechanisms have not been put in place to facilitate access to the courts to seek protection of these rights (legal aid, procedures, or regulations that are implemented or applied by the judiciary or law enforcement officials), and commitment to building awareness among those most in need of protection (for example through legal education or public campaigns to build a wider acceptance of equality norms) is limited.

Box 3. International Treaties Ratified

- Convention on Repressing Human Slavery and the Exploitation of Another Person’s Prostitution, 2 December 1949.
- Convention on Political Rights of Women, 20 December 1952.
- Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, 21 December 1965.
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966.
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966.
- International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 16 December 1966.
- Convention on the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951 and Protocol thereto of 16 December 1966.
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 18 December 1979.
- Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1 December 1984.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989.
- Convention against Transnational Crime and its protocols, 2000.

Source: Field Assessment of CGA team. 2005.

B. The Constitution and Laws

The Constitution guarantees full equality of men and women,⁶ but inequalities between men and women persist in most areas of public and private life. A key area of concern has been the lack of a definition of discrimination to be applied by the courts. Knowledge of constitutional rights and how redress can be sought through the courts is very limited, particularly among women. That the judiciary and enforcement officers are also unaware of bias in their own rulings or in applying existing laws to ensure that women can claim their rights is also a concern.

Most people state that there is no discrimination against women, as the Constitution guarantees equality and legal provisions protect women's rights. Few, particularly government officials, acknowledge that outcomes from the application of laws are unequal, especially in areas such as economic rights. These attitudes are changing where evidence of inequalities is mounting, such as unequal access to land. The new Gender Equality Law was adopted in December 2004⁷ to address some of these concerns by defining statutory guarantees in several areas, including employment. The law stops short of creating specific structures through which discrimination can be addressed.

Since independence, Tajikistan has seen extensive reform and restructuring of the law and enforcement systems. Appendix 3 provides an overview of the legal framework of the Republic of Tajikistan. In 1990–2000, about 300 laws were adopted and in 2001–2002, 150 more. Equality perspectives, particularly in areas associated with family law based on constitutional guarantees, have to a certain extent been reflected in this new body of legislation. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and UNIFEM in 1999 supported a further review of three legal codes: family, civil, and land. The review was coordinated by a committee chaired by the Minister of Justice. Some of the recommendations from the review have been put in place, e.g., in areas of alimony payment and adoption of children.

In areas such as labor legislation, however, disjuncture is appearing between existing legal norms from the Soviet period that focused on women's "predestination" as mothers and a more egalitarian model that provides women with protection of their equal rights in areas such as wages and promotion. In practice, the enforcement of legislation in most areas tends to fall back on traditional stereotypes of women's roles and behavior rather than their equal rights, and anomalies are not addressed.

C. Institutional Framework to Promote Gender Equality

The Women in Development (WID) Bureau was established in 1995, involving government and local NGO representatives and providing a liaison point between local and international organizations. The WID Bureau had a broad mandate to promote the interests of women in Tajikistan during the transition period. The National Action Plan of the Republic of

⁶ Article 17 of the Constitution states: "All are equal before the law and the courts. The state guarantees the rights and freedoms of every person regardless of nationality, race, sex, language, religious beliefs, political persuasion, social status, knowledge and property. Men and women have the same rights."

⁷ The new law was not available in English translation during the country gender assessment (CGA) study period.

Tajikistan for 1998–2005 was adopted in 1998 to increase women’s role and status and was the first policy document to address gender equality concerns, but it was based on an approach to improving women’s status rather than actually addressing gender inequalities in all spheres of life. In December 1999 the President enacted a decree, to provide impetus to the implementation of the National Action Plan. Other key policy documents include the Law on Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights (2002) and the PRSP (2002).

Specific programs were put in place, including a working group under the Ministry of Justice to conduct gender analysis of draft laws and the scholarship program for girls from remote areas, with quotas allocated by the President. Support from international development partners to implement the National Action Plan has been considerable, but progress has remained limited. Many of the statements are declarative in nature and the line ministries are under little compulsion to take the recommended actions. Progress has been especially slow in areas such as providing microcredit to businesswomen and creating employment for women.

Shortcomings of the 1999 Presidential Decree were addressed in the State Program. A further amendment to the State Program was approved in 2003, concerning “Access of Rural Women to Land,” following recommendations from the UNIFEM-sponsored study on women’s access to privatized land.

The State Program and its amendment concerning access to land acknowledge that even while the constitutional and legal basis for equality is in place in Tajikistan, opportunities for women to realize their rights remain limited compared with those of men. It is necessary, therefore, to overcome a number of social, economic, cultural, and other barriers. This requires that state actions achieve equal results for men and women, not merely equal treatment, i.e., moving beyond gender equity to true gender equality (in accordance with CEDAW principles). The goal of this policy must be reflected in the general strategy for development of Tajikistan and all state programs, but in partnership with civil society through the direct involvement of NGOs in implementation.

1. The State Program

The goals of the State Program are as follows:

- identifying long-term government policy for providing equal rights and opportunities for men and women of Tajikistan;
- raising among all men and women, awareness of actual gender relations and their importance to development of Tajikistan, including public administrators at all levels; and
- establishing and developing a system of socioeconomic, political, organizational, and legal conditions to enable women to contribute to the development of society as a whole.

The State Program sets out a series of results, mandates for ministries and agencies for achieving these results, and (most important) specific allocations from the central government

budget. Additional funding is also anticipated from local governments (*hukumats*) and nonbudget sources. CWFA is given the mandate for financial control and coordination over the State Program. CWFA was established in 2001 and is governed by a board chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister,⁸ with membership drawn from key line ministries such as labor and social protection. Representatives from key NGOs are also permanent members. Representatives from other ministries or NGOs may be invited to discuss specific topics. Gender focal points have been identified within each line ministry and form a council to provide additional support and advice to the CWFA and to channel directions for coordinating gender-related activities.

The potential for CWFA to facilitate and oversee gender mainstreaming in all line ministries is limited by several factors, including lack of clarity about the CWFA's mandate as coordinator of the State Program. Many officials assume it to be the implementer of programs targeting women and narrowing gender gaps. Lack of funds and technical capacity prevent CWFA from advising other ministries regarding gender analysis of policies and programs, implementing gender-sensitive programs, or monitoring the implementation of the State Program itself. What funding is received tends to be for specific programs rather than to carry out the function of an oversight agency in support of gender equality. It is hoped that the findings from the recent MDGs Needs Assessment (see Chapter 3) regarding priorities and funding required to achieve the MDG #3 targets for gender equality will provide some impetus to CWFA and the updating of the State Program. Table 6 contains an overview of the MDG national targets for gender equality that provided the framework for the 2005 MDG Needs Assessment, which now incorporates a wide range of indicators to cover priority issues for women, including domestic violence. Efforts should be intensified to ensure that this full range of indicators is incorporated into the revised PRSP, at least as subindicators.

Women's committees are also in place at oblast, hukumat, and community level, but with very limited staff and resources. At the oblast level, the committee may have only two or three staff members, and at lower levels perhaps only one—with no salary or resources to respond to the many requests for support from women in the community. In some respects these women's committees echo the party structures in place during the Soviet era to address women's issues, and many women assume they can obtain direct financial and other support from committee staff.

⁸ The Committee on Women and Family Affairs (CWFA) replaced the WID Bureau, and serves as a focal point within the President's Office for issues of concern to women and the family. No specific ministry is responsible for gender equality.

Table 6. National Targets for Gender Equality Millennium Development Goals

Area	Goal	Indicator	Latest year 2004	2015
Gender Equality	MDG #3: promote gender equality and empower women.	Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education	88%	100%
		Ratio of literate women to men 15–24 years	98%	100%
		Share of wage employment in the nonagriculture sectors	41%	50%
		Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	13%	33%
		Percent of population covered by public awareness on reproductive health	20%	50%
		Proportion of women covered by school-to- work programs	2.4%	30%
		Access of women to microcredit programs	0.5%	1.5%
		Domestic violence prevalence rate	30%	20%
		Awareness among public sector employees of measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)	50%	100%

Source: GRT and UNDP 2005: 68

An action plan incorporated into the State Program sets out lines of responsibility for different results. Coordinating committees for implementing specific actions have been created under ministries, e.g., for labor issues, with the Minister for Labor and Social Protection as chair. One or two direct links have been made between itemized actions under the State Program and the PRSP. Creation of a businesswomen's network was initially elaborated under the State Program, with cross-references in the PRSP. In discussion with local *hukumat* officials, reference was made frequently to programs being implemented under the State Program, with funding from province- and local-level sources. In Sogd Oblast, the vice chair provided an example of how priorities set out in the PRSP, including the reduction of maternal mortality rates, is designed against specific needs within their province.

The allocation of funds from state and other budgets is very limited. The head of the Sogd Oblast Women's Committee pointed out that a budget of only TJS20,000 severely hampers implementing the State Program. In Kulyab, the Women's Committee representative spoke of the difficulties she faces, with many women living in dire circumstances seeking her assistance day and night, but she has nothing to offer. For example, many come for help in finding housing or employment, but no programs are directly available through her office. She tries to suggest different ways of obtaining support, or how pension problems might be resolved, but she finds her work very exhausting and discouraging.

The accountability structure set out in the State Program does offers opportunities for agencies involved in poverty reduction programming to identify entry points for gender mainstreaming that will both support implementation of the government’s program for gender equality and meet the needs of women. Some areas where targets from the State Program can directly contribute to PRSP objectives have been identified in Appendix 1, but coordination between key agencies monitoring progress of the PRSP and CWFA is limited. CWFA participates in a working group on MDGs in areas of health care and education, but not those associated with economic growth, privatization, or budget reform, reinforcing attitudes that women should only be concerned with social development issues.

2. Recommendations

The five recommendations are as follows:

- Clarify the mandate of CWFA and identify practical steps needed for it to take a stronger role as a facilitator of gender mainstreaming across government functions rather than as an implementer of programs that target women.
- Develop technical capacity among the CWFA staff to provide gender analysis of policies and programs, particularly in priority areas for women in the PRSP and the MDGs.
- Review and revise targets and indicators for the State Program to be more closely aligned with PRSP and MDG indicators, to facilitate coordinated monitoring and improved tracking of gender gaps in areas of priority to women.
- Build on the strong vertical links between CWFA and the grassroots to reflect the voices of women in the development and delivery of poverty reduction programs. Such measures can build on the support from the President to increase the representation of women in political forums, especially at local government levels (see recommendations in Chapter 8).
- Encourage collaboration with NGOs experienced in identifying and designing programming that effectively targets women and narrows gender gaps. Several successful collaborations for implementing specific programs have taken place, but many of the NGOs can help strengthen the capacities of CWFA staff to analyze impacts of policies and facilitate gender mainstreaming across the Government.

Chapter 5 Gender Dimensions of Economic Development

Economic collapse followed independence in 1991 and the difficult conditions were exacerbated during the period of civil war, contributing to a sharp rise in poverty. Employment in most economic sectors declined overall; the reported decline varied between 2.4% (SSA 2003) and 33% (World Bank 2005). For example, the employment share of the industrial sector decreased from 21% in 1992 to just 8.2% in 2003 (GRT 2004b). But while employment levels dropped, the size of the overall available labor force grew from 3.125 million in 1999 to 3.644 million in 2003 (GRT 2004b).

Real GDP growth has been strong in recent years, averaging 9.5% between 2000 and 2003 (IMF and IDA 2004), more than other poor Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)⁹ countries (although real GDP at the end of 2003 was only 68% of its 1991 level). But employment did not expand to the same extent as GDP. Registered employment data showed declines from approximately 1.80 million jobs in 1999 to 1.75 million in 2002. Some of the reduction in unemployment results from workers moving to the informal sector, taking up labor migration options, or withdrawing from the labor market altogether.

Workforce participation rates have continued to fall, as many men and women gave up seeking employment and turned to the informal sector or relied upon home-based production for survival. Labor migration also increased sharply, to perhaps as many as 500,000 working outside the country, particularly in the Russian Federation, and bringing in an estimated \$78.3 million in 2002 through remittances (IOM and Sharq 2003).¹⁰ The combination of these two factors implies that the economy has considerable labor reserves, equivalent to 12–20% of the total labor force (World Bank 2005, 16).

The economy relies heavily on the agriculture sector, which accounted for 22% of GDP in 2003, with cotton contributing about one quarter of total agricultural output (World Bank 2005, 13). Growth in employment in the sector has been significant, but has resulted from absorbing overqualified unemployed people from other sectors into nonskilled work. Industrial production (dominated by aluminum extraction and processing) contributed 20% of GDP in 2003. Aluminum and cotton have represented 75% of all exports in recent years, but as subsectors they have not created jobs to keep up with growth in the labor force.

A. Privatization, Labor, and Private Sector Development

During the Soviet era, employment was guaranteed under the Constitution for all able-bodied citizens of working age, including women, with further guarantees of equal pay for equal work. The state provided significant support to women to release their labor into the workforce,

⁹ The Commonwealth of Independent States comprises of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

¹⁰ IOM and Sharq (2003, 94) also cite estimates of total transfers of money and goods flowing into Tajikistan in 2002 at \$200 million to \$230 million.

including childcare services offered at their places of work. As these guarantees have now been eliminated, women are forced to cope with work and family responsibilities on their own.

During the transition period, women and their capacity to participate in the labor market have been disproportionately affected by the economic dislocation. Men are considered the major breadwinners, leaving women vulnerable to losing their jobs first. The PRSP notes that women are less able to find new jobs in the emerging market economy. In order to survive, more women than men are moving into the informal private sector, where they face difficulty in accessing resources to generate income. Education rates are lower for unemployed women than for men, compounded by falling enrollment levels of girls, particularly in post-secondary education, further reducing women's capabilities and competitiveness in the new job market. Employment in sectors where women have traditionally worked—education and health care—is also declining, following drastic cuts in government funding, and women are typically able to move only into low-skilled agricultural work or petty trading.

The increasing demands on women's time and unpaid labor to take on household responsibilities previously supported through state social programs (e.g., child care) further limit opportunities for women to contribute to family income and put pressure on their health.

Labor mobility is important to promote flexibility to respond to new areas of employment as the economy diversifies. The segmented structure of the existing labor market and gender-based distortions need to be mitigated if labor productivity is to be maximized and government economic growth policies successfully implemented. Investments need to be targeted to ensure that women are equally prepared to compete in new sectors of growth. The labor market in Tajikistan is influenced by several gender-based factors, as discussed in the next sections.

1. Women Opting Out of the Labor Market

After the significant fall in women's participation rates in the workforce during the early transition period, rates have remained more or less the same: 56% in 1999 and 57% in 2003, despite the growth in GDP. Differences between men and women have not changed significantly either. In 2003, 70% of all adult men were in the workforce and 45% of all adult women. In 2003, 33% of women reported that they were out of the workforce because of home care¹¹ as a consequence of dismantling the state family support structures coupled with the need to provide increasing amounts of unpaid labor for home production (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a). For men, on the other hand, the most frequently cited reason for being out of the workforce was study (7%), being a pensioner (7%), and home care (6%).

Labor participation rates vary between rural and urban areas for both men and women. For example, only 15% of women aged 16–19 (and 23% of men) are active in the workforce in urban areas. This figure reflects how discouraged female school leavers and young women are about finding work with decent wages, and suggests difficulties in coping with productive and

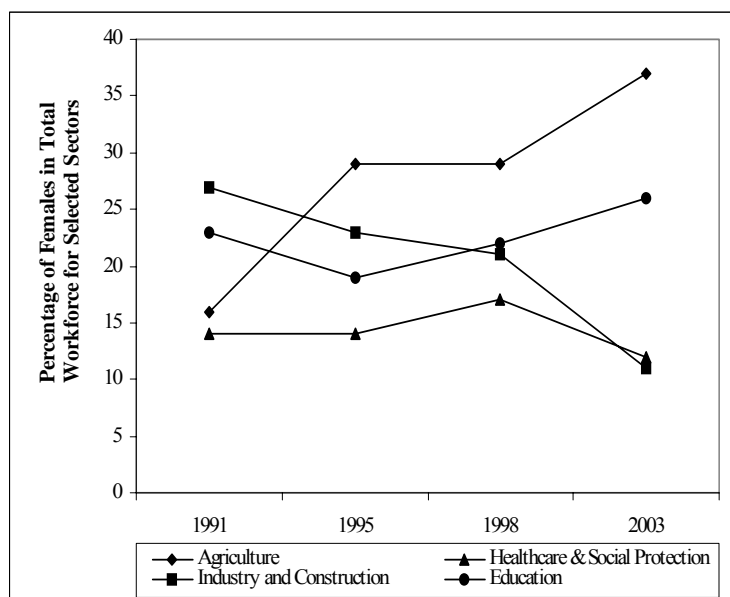
¹¹ But this proportion has fallen, from 52% of women reporting home care as reason for nonparticipation in the 1999 Tajikistan Living Standards Survey (TLSS) cited in ADB 2000.

reproductive responsibilities. This compares with 43.4% of women in the same age group who are active in the workforce in rural areas (and 47% of men), where it may be easier to find casual unskilled work, for example in the agriculture sector. Women over 40 years of age have the highest participation rates in both urban and rural areas, as they no longer have to care for young children. However, with the retirement age for women at 55 years, compared to 60 for men, women over 40 report discrimination from employers when seeking jobs, as they are considered too close to retirement age for training. Approximately 30% of women, though, are forced to continue to work after reaching retirement age because of the low value of pensions and economic insecurity. These differences in participation rates reflect and reinforce gender stereotyping that young women cannot hold down jobs because of family responsibilities and that older women have little to contribute to employers. The data also reflect the underutilization of women of working age in the workforce, limiting economic growth and poverty reduction efforts.

2. Labor Market Segregation

A higher proportion of women than men is now employed in unskilled jobs in low-paid primary sectors—77% of women compared with 63% of men. It is difficult for people marginalized into unskilled jobs to move up or return to secondary sector jobs, particularly for young school leavers. More women than men are also moving into informal sector jobs, with 34% of women—but only 24% of men—reporting that they work for themselves (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a). The agriculture sector has been forced to absorb the majority of workers from the industrial sector; the highest increase in the percentage of the agriculture workforce was among women. As illustrated in Figure 1, in 1998 nearly 30% of women were employed in agriculture (ADB 2000). By 2003 this proportion had risen to almost 40%, with a corresponding drop in the proportion of women working in the industrial sector. This also illustrates that a significant proportion of women still work in the lowest-paid sectors: agriculture, education, and health care (Table 7).

Figure 1. Proportion of Female Workforce by Sector



Source: GRT 2004b.

Table 7. Employment by Occupation and Gender in 1999 and 2003
(percent)

Sector	1999			2003		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Armed Forces	0.8	1.4	0.0	0.4	0.7	0.0
Legislative, Senior Officials, Management	1.2	1.6	0.6	0.9	1.4	0.3
Professionals	5.9	8.0	5.0	10.9	12.3	8.9
Technicians, Associated Professionals	2.6	2.7	2.3	2.2	1.9	2.6
Clerks	9.3	9.2	9.4	0.7	0.4	1.0
Service Workers, Sales	5.9	6.6	4.7	8.1	9.2	6.6
Skilled Agricultural Work	11.0	11.3	10.6	1.2	1.6	0.6
Craft and Related Trade	1.6	2.5	0.2	4.5	5.6	2.9
Plant, Machine Operators	3.2	4.9	0.6	2.3	3.9	0.1
Elementary Occupation	42.8	37.9	50.3	68.8	62.9	76.9
Other	10.4	9.9	10.9	0.0	0.0	0.0

TLSS = Tajikistan Living Standards Survey.

Source: Adapted from ADB 2000 and Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a, based on TLSS data.

Vertical segregation of the labor market is also increasing, as the proportion of women in skilled or management positions has fallen. Significantly, the proportion of women who are skilled agricultural workers has fallen from 10.6% in 1999 to only 0.6% in 2003. Women's representation in the category of legislative, senior official, or management positions has also fallen, from 0.6% in 1999 to only 0.3% in 2003, as shown in Table 7. The proportion of women in the professional category has risen (although less than the increase for men) from 5.0% in 1999 to 8.9% in 2003, but women still make up the highest proportion of the workers in elementary occupations, and the proportion has increased from 50.3% of the workforce in 1999 to 76.9% in 2003. The proportion of men has also increased, but to a lesser extent, illustrating the general lowering of skilled employment in the economy.

This gendered occupational segregation is influenced by women's lower capabilities (appropriate education for jobs available) and by gender stereotypes that assume that men should occupy decision-making positions with greater responsibility because women's primary role is in the household. As women have been squeezed out of sectors where they have good skills and experience, such as education and health care, and as these sectors contract, women are more and more limited to low-paid, unskilled work. Potential economic growth and productivity of the economy are affected by this inefficient use of the female workforce, and more women become at risk of economic insecurity and dependence, with wages that cannot meet their basic needs. The horizontal and vertical segregation in the labor market limits both the efficiency of use of the available workforce, female and male, and the flexibility and competitiveness of the labor force.

3. Wage Gaps

While some sectors may show few differences between the representation of men and women, a serious gender gap is found in wage levels. Without adjusting for education differences, in 2003 women's wages were only 46% of those of men (World Bank 2005, 16). The gaps are especially large in the agriculture and service sectors, with the widest gap in earnings between men and women in areas with lower average wages. As presented in Table 8, average daily wages in the

agriculture sector, where almost one out of two working women is now employed, are TJS26.95, well below the poverty line of TJS47.06 (\$2.15 PPP). But women on average earn TJS17.47, only 37% of the poverty line, demonstrating their acute vulnerability to living in poverty. Table 8 also shows different sectors of employment by gender and how wage levels vary between sectors, with women's average wage as a percentage of men's average wage. For example, in agriculture, where 73.2% of all women work, they earn only 51% of average men's wages. Further, women earn only 49% of men's wages in the public administration sector. In sectors where women were traditionally employed under the Soviet economy—education and health care—the wage gap may be less than in agriculture, but the average salary is still below the poverty line.

Table 8. Employment and Average Total Wages by Sector and Gender (2003)

Sector	Employment (Percent of Total Workforce)			Average Total Wages in (TJS)			Women's Average Wage (as percent of men's)
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Percent
Transport	1.7	2.9	0.1	94.9	96.43	12.61	13
Manufacturing	1.2	0.5	2.1	37.89	61.03	29.44	48
Public Administration/ Defense	5.7	7.9	2.7	54.88	61.65	30.33	49
Agriculture	63.8	56.9	73.2	26.95	34.67	17.47	51
Other Services	10.2	13.0	6.4	71.58	80.25	45.42	57
Insurance	0.3	0.4	0.2	55.99	59.64	45.44	76
Education	5.9	5.4	6.6	33.37	37.40	28.90	77
Retail, Hotel, Restaurant	6.4	7.2	5.3	89.49	94.6	79.58	84
Health Care, Social Work	1.9	1.3	2.8	24.34	26.26	23.18	88

Source: Adapted from Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a and GRT 2004b.

The wage gap is greatest in rural areas. Male-to-female ratios for primary wages are 230:100 in rural areas compared with 172:100 in urban areas, increasing the pressure on rural livelihoods of women (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a, 29). Wage rates also vary between age groups; the highest gaps are among 16–19-year-olds (male-to-female ratio 257:100), illustrating the difficulties young women face in obtaining jobs with decent wages and further discouraging them from continuing to seek employment, as noted above. Low wages for young women also mean they are unable to pay for child care and may have to take on additional jobs or part-time income-generating activities in the informal sector to cover basic household expenses. The wage gap further explains why adolescent women increasingly fail to see the purpose of obtaining higher education if they cannot access jobs with decent wages.

4. Unpaid Work

No clear data are available on the proportion of unpaid work carried out by men and women (or boys and girls). It is also not clear from available poverty studies whether the National Accounting System takes into account production for own use within households.

The UN has estimated the market value of the unpaid sector at 70% of world GDP, and this proportion can be projected into national accounts. It can also be assumed that, as women have the primary responsibility for most domestic tasks in Tajikistan, their contribution of unpaid labor to household survival is greater than the contribution of men. The following aspects of unpaid labor have to be taken into account when considering ways to maximize benefits from women's participation in the paid labor market:

- *The opportunity costs of unpaid labor time.* These limit the supply of female labor in the paid labor market and their capacity to find employment or other sources of income, and hence increase income poverty among women. They also reduce leisure time and have a significant impact on women's health and well-being and an indirect impact on their children.
- *Disproportionate burden on poor women.* Subsistence production for household consumption requires unpaid labor from family members, particularly women, in post-harvest activities and food preparation. In poorer households, the time required is higher than in households with higher incomes that are able to purchase food.
- *Low productivity of unpaid labor.* Typically, men's income is not invested in activities that are women's responsibilities. This limits women's productive capacity. Women may try to use household-based skills to earn income in the informal sector, for example in food preparation or selling small surplus from subsistence production, trapping them in low-productivity activities.
- *Women's unpaid labor is expected to replace/substitute for social services previously supplied by the state.* Examples are the care of the sick and children. Further, in times of crisis, own-account activities, such as subsistence food production, tend to be carried out mostly by unpaid female labor. Over time, the use of unpaid labor can lead to a reduction in aggregate demand from low-income families, limiting economic growth in these communities, for example in rural small towns (OECD-DAC 2005, 15).

5. Unemployment

The official unemployment rate of 2.4–2.9% does not reflect the real picture (World Bank 2005, Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a). In the 2003 TLSS, more people claimed they had no jobs (14.7% of men and 3.5% of women) than were registered as unemployed (5.3% of men and 2.9% of women). People living in remote areas do not know how or where to register as unemployed. Hidden seasonal unemployment in Tajikistan had a long history during the Soviet period, and many seasonal workers still fail to register as unemployed. Failure to include family care-giving activities

and some household production in the official accounting also masks ways women participate in productive work and hence employment rates.

Table 9 shows that the proportion of women among the officially registered unemployed has fallen between 1998 and 2004 (although not across all regions), as has labor-force participation for young women in urban areas, as previously noted. The highest proportion of unemployed is in the under-24 age group. The rates for women 16–19 years of age and men 20–24 years of age, coupled with the significantly lower workforce participation rates for these age groups, point to the potential of a lost generation of workers. The large numbers also point to the need for specifically targeted employment programs addressing the different needs and capabilities of young men and young women.

Table 9. Official Unemployment Among Women
(in thousands)

Official Unemployment	1998	2000	2004
Overall registered unemployment	54.1	49.7	42.9
Registered unemployment among women, including:	28.8	26.3	23.2
Dushanbe	0.5	0.5	0.4
GBAO	5.7	6.4	6.7
Khatlon	4.8	4.2	3.6
Sughd	9.6	7.9	8.6
RRS	8.2	7.3	4.2

GBAO = Gorno Bakakhashan Autonomous Oblast., RRS = Rayon of Republican Subordination
Source: GRT 2004b.

6. Informal Sector

Lack of job opportunities has encouraged, or pushed, many workers into the “informal” economy in Tajikistan. Informal employment is not registered in the official labor market data and is difficult to measure. If informal income-generating or income-substituting activities are included, the TLSS data show that more than two thirds of people of working age in Tajikistan were employed in 2003 (World Bank 2005, 16). If household unpaid work is also included, then more than four fifths of the population of working age can be regarded as having been employed in 2003 (World Bank 2005, 16). This is confirmed in findings from the 2002 research study, *Informal Employment in Pilot Districts of Tajikistan*, conducted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP). According to respondents, the main source of income in the four pilot areas was from work in their own household farm and/or garden, as well as social benefits.

The main reasons for remaining in the informal economy were explored in a survey conducted in 2003 by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and CARE International (Pickup and Kuvatova 2003). Many of the advantages listed are offset by drawbacks faced especially by women:

- Entry is easy, as no capital equipment is required and the worker can rely on labor-intensive technologies, but women lack skills in areas with a higher return on labor.
- Existing skills can be applied (e.g., food preparation or sewing by women) and new techniques can be obtained outside the official education system or through “learn as you go” experience, but productivity is jeopardized when skills and knowledge regarding labor-saving technologies are not accessible; for example, women have very limited spare time to attend training courses or meet with other entrepreneurs because of household responsibilities.
- The informal entrepreneur has to rely on her/his own resources, or may be able to use small savings from remittances, because access to start-up capital and other technologies is very limited, especially in rural areas.
- Family property can be used for small-scale activities, but women have limited access to or control over how such family assets are used.
- Women can care for children or the elderly while working, but this double burden reduces their productivity.
- Entrepreneurs in the formal economy are plagued by complex registration and licensing procedures and intensive scrutiny by more than 17 different agencies; over 95% of entrepreneurs report having to pay unofficial fees (bribes) to licensing agents to avoid fines. This is particularly a problem for women entrepreneurs, who report frequent sexual harassment by officials.
- While it is relatively easy to enter some markets, particularly petty trading, the markets are not under anyone’s control and most people have little knowledge or understanding of market trends and consumer demand. Thus, the terms of trade tend to be disadvantageous to small producers and traders.

Almost all credit and business development services are made available to women in the informal sector through NGOs and microfinance institutions (MFIs): see the following discussion of credit and MFIs. Evidence from MFIs is mounting that women make as good entrepreneurs as men, if not better.¹² Women appear to be more adaptable to business risks inherent in the market economy, repay loans more consistently, and take a longer-term perspective in business planning than men. NGOs offering services through group mobilization also note that women appreciate contact and support from other members, especially to address the many social constraints they face. For example, when women are unable to access formal training, they are eager to search out other women engaged in the same area of business to learn from their experience. Group mobilization has also enabled many women to work under what are considered to be more “suitable” circumstances than working alone. Many MFIs note that women become more confident when they can see they are not alone and are encouraged to participate more fully in household and community decision making.

Although official data are scarce, women tend to be engaged in embroidery, sewing for sale, trading produce from their own households in the market, or petty trading near their

¹² Information given to the CGA study team, 2004.

household, according to MFI reports. Women have only rarely penetrated subsectors with higher returns on labor or that involve more capital outlay, e.g., light engineering.

Many people involved in the informal economy have other jobs, but at such low salaries that additional income is required. For example, in sectors such as education and health care, where women predominate, salaries can be as low as TJS120 per month. The need to find additional income places great pressures on time available, especially for women, as they have care-giving responsibilities within the house while working long hours.

7. Credit and Enterprise Development

Tajikistan has a young and underdeveloped financial sector that cannot meet the demand for basic financial services from micro, small, or medium enterprises, a sector of the economy vital for poverty reduction and economic growth. NGOs provide the bulk of financial services for micro and small enterprises, particularly for agriculture purposes in rural areas, where operations mostly target the rural poor, mainly women and vulnerable groups. Only three NGOs lend in urban areas, and mainly to groups. The microfinance market is dominated by a few NGOs, including the Aga Khan Development Foundation, the National Association of Business Women in Tajikistan, and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (GTZ). These NGOs account for nearly 80% of clients, according to ADB studies (ADB 2003) preparatory to the Microfinance Systems Development Program. Multilateral and bilateral agencies and international NGOs have financed these organizations, mostly on a grant basis. While the aggregate NGO loan portfolio was equal to 6% of banking sector assets in 2001, it involved three times the number of households served by the banking sector.

Most microlending is provided to groups—95% by number of loans and 75% by loan amount. Lending is commonly for 1–3 months for group-based borrowers and 12 months for individual borrowers. Three NGOs have achieved loan recovery rates higher than 98% of total lending. Savings culture is being developed, but has been hampered by legal limitations that have only recently been addressed.

Most women beneficiaries have accessed small-scale credit lines to engage largely in trading and service-based activities, according to studies in preparation for the ADB Microfinance Systems Development Program. Some recent surveys of international NGOs have shown that incomes derived from this informal source have improved beneficiaries' revenue stream by 20–60%, and many female-headed and poor households have been able to solve their food insecurity. Evidence is also growing that group activities build women's confidence and skills to participate in community development activities, participate in local governance, and network with other women's groups.

Reliance on MFIs is acute among the rural agricultural poor (Box 4). Most MFIs in rural areas have successfully targeted women borrowers. For example, Sitorai Najot, in Krugan-Tuybe, had more than 2,000 clients in 2004, 1,200 of them receiving loans for the second time. Women appreciate the combination of services offered by many MFIs, including training, while credit services and female heads of dekhan farms also noted that they appreciate the support received

from the NGO staff. High interest rates and short repayment terms are commonly cited as problems discouraging borrowers and causing default.

Box 4. Importance of Microfinance Institutional Lending to Dekhan Farmers

Findings from the country gender assessment's Dekhan (Privatized) Farm Survey underline the importance of NGO-based microfinance institution (MFI) lending to the agriculture sector. Even though lack of credit is cited among key problems in increasing productivity, about 81% of respondents (76% of men and 85% of women) had not even tried to obtain credit. Those who were receiving credit from MFIs were from an older age group, 41–60 years (71% of the total who received credit). Commercial banks lend small amounts to dekhani farms (\$500–1,000), but under short-term repayment requirements that do not suit agriculture producers. No banks had lent to dekhani farms led by women in the study sample, and only one had even received an application in 2004. Credit from commercial banks is not extended without collateral. Real estate is the most acceptable form of collateral and almost no women hold a property certificate in their own name—it is usually in the name of their father-in-law, husband, or son. Banks also regard dekhani farm enterprises as high-risk borrowers and the requirements from the bank for business plans and collateral do not suit dekhani farmers' needs.

Source: Case study for country gender assessment, 2005.

The commercial banking sector is unable to address demand for microcredit (Box 5). Interest rates on commercial bank loans of 3–6 months average 25–30% per annum, while the rates on 3–6-month term deposits are close to 22%. Transaction costs are very high for small borrowers and the banking sector has yet to prove capable of mobilizing savings from the public and channeling loans to creditworthy borrowers. The amount of lending to the cotton sector is estimated to be 12% of GDP (7% in 1999). Credit to the noncotton private sector represents barely 2% of GDP.

Box 5. Attitude toward Dekhan Farmers

“Dekhan farm leaders are incompetent people. They do not have a higher education, have little understanding in this sphere. When they learn what kind of documents must be submitted, about the business plan to be written and a report to be submitted...for them it is very difficult. Considering all this, many dekhani farmers do not apply to the banks.”

Source: Director of Agroinvest Bank, January 2005, during an interview for the country gender assessment.

The government is seeking to build confidence in the banking sector through new legislation concerning MFIs and their ability to receive deposits. Continued rehabilitation, restructuring, and renovation of the banking subsector are critical and are being supported by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

8. Labor Migration

According to the MLSP, about 210,000 people migrate to work abroad, but some organizations estimate that more than 400,000 people migrate for work outside Tajikistan (perhaps as much as 25% of the total workforce). Official statistics do not reflect the large number of irregular migrants. More than 85% work in the Russian Federation, and some Russian government officials have even claimed that more than 1 million Tajiks are in their country. The number of official migrants is expected to fall in the coming agriculture season because the Russian Federation has instigated new measures requiring all migrants from the former Soviet Union countries to hold a passport, although a visa will not be required. For many migrants from Tajikistan, this extra cost will be prohibitive and they will be forced either to remain at home or seek illegal channels to find work. This increases the risk of abuse from employers and officials in the destination countries for both men and women migrants.

Few women migrate from Tajikistan: 85% of all migrants leaving Tajikistan in 2002 were men (IOM and Sharq 2003). Most women consider traveling abroad, especially alone, to be dangerous and unacceptable behavior for women. In interviews for this CGA in one rural area with high men's out-migration, women noted that they do not personally know of any women migrants. About 44% of women from migrant households left Tajikistan as family members and were episodically involved in the work of men family members. Recently, however, some data from NGOs suggest a considerable increase in the number of women migrant workers employed in infrastructure in the Russian Federation.

Women are highly represented in the "shuttle trade,"¹³ accounting for 39% of Tajik shuttles, while 74.5% of all women Tajik labor migrants work as shuttles. Of Tajik migrants engaged in agriculture, only 16% are women, usually in seasonal jobs in harvesting; entire families may leave home to work as farmhands. Table 10 shows the proportions of women in all sectors in which migrants work abroad.

Table 10. Men and Women Working Abroad by Type of Employment
(percent)

Type of Employment	As Percentage of Total in Each Sector of Employment	
	Men	Women
Construction and House Renovation	98.6	1.4
Shuttle Trade and Retail	61	39
Hired Workers	90	10
Agriculture	84	16

Source: IOM and Sharq 2003.

¹³ Shuttle traders leave Tajikistan to purchase goods not easily available and return to trade these goods informally in Dushanbe or other market centers.

Many migrants face exploitation from employers while working abroad. Women are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and harassment, and a sharp increase has occurred in trafficking incidents, mostly of women. Cases are also reported of men being exposed to conditions similar to slave labor. (See discussion of human trafficking in Chapter 7.) MLSP has been mandated to track migrant labor issues and provide support to migrants concerning their rights and working conditions. For example, eight offices have been opened in regions of the Russian Federation to help identify job opportunities for migrants and to work with labor brokers. MLSP is responsible for setting standards and licensing labor brokers in the private sector. Licenses can be withdrawn based on complaints from their clients. Booklets on safe migration information and are available in border areas, according to MLSP.

When women or men report to MLSP offices abroad that they are in trouble, they are referred to the Foreign Ministry for repatriation assistance and registered in unemployment programs once they return home.¹⁴ In practice, this may rarely happen, especially as Tajikistan has very few diplomatic offices in Russia, and these are only located in capital cities that, in the case of the Russian Federation, can be thousands of kilometers away from where migrants are in trouble. The very limited protection offered to victims of exploitation or human trafficking by the government is one of the areas of concern identified by the United States Department of State in its annual reports on human trafficking (US Department of State 2004).

In 2002 alone the total amount of remittances returned through the banking system was estimated at the equivalent of \$78.3 million. Additional economic benefits include goods brought back into the country by returning migrants (e.g., home appliances, clothing, and medicines) whose value is estimated to be at least 50% of the cash returned.

As a consequence, migrant households in Tajikistan have a higher-than-average living standard. Twelve percent of the highest-income segment of the population shows remittances as the primary source of income. The majority of remittances are spent on basic needs such as more or improved types of food, clothing, and other household expenditures. Larger amounts that the migrants have brought back with them are then spent on larger capital items and social ceremonies.

While returning migrants have increased their family purchasing power, evidence is scant that these funds are creating wealth. A mere 3.8% of migrants interviewed had actually started a business, and only 16.1% managed to save money to do so. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has recently put in place a pilot project, funded by the United National Development Programme (UNDP), in three regions to encourage greater investment of remittances in small business and agriculture. These kinds of programs should target women in particular, to help them manage the remittances and to help ensure that not all funds are diverted to short-term needs.

¹⁴ Information from interview with the Vice-Minister, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, December 2004.

The high rates of migration are also having impacts on social and gender relations.

- *Changing role of women.* Women are required to work and provide income for the family while their husbands are away. One third of women had not seen their husbands for years, and had not received any remittances (Bozrikova 2004). Women have had to take on nontraditional roles, despite their more limited access to resources (especially land) or experience in areas such as marketing of agricultural produce.
- *Changing structure of the migrant households.* Families seek to remain within one household as male members leave for work. Loss of men family members from the war has also contributed to this problem. Living in multigenerational households is not always easy for women, who may be left for months or years unable to make decisions while their husbands are absent.
- *Changes in sexual behavior.* These are spreading into the society as a whole, including increased sexual relations outside marriage, with especially negative effects on wives, who are at higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and who also suffer from psychological stress. Many women are also submitting to extramarital relationships, because in some communities few men are left behind seeking first wives, and many young men return only for a few months and seek “temporary wives.” These unofficial marriages leave women very vulnerable should the husband cease to support her or her children, but the social stigma is less than if she becomes a commercial sex worker.

9. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Other Government Policies and Programs

The Government recognizes in the PRSP that an effective way to reduce poverty is to create jobs and promote self-employment and migration management. Several policies have been outlined, including improving the growth environment for private enterprise (including the informal sector) and ensuring a well-functioning labor market. Special measures are required to increase job opportunities for women, and a specific target was identified for creating a network of women’s labor exchanges at employment centers in four locations: Dushanbe, Khorog, Khujand, and Tavildara. MLSP is mandated to implement government labor market policies with the objectives of creating a more flexible market by training workers, conducting employment counseling, and providing help for seeking jobs.

The Coordination Committee for Gender Issues was created in 2001 under MLSP (Decree #100) and has set out its priorities in response to the PRSP and the State Program. The priorities are the creation of women’s labor exchanges, the creation of a network of sociobusiness centers, assistance in the promotion of NGOs addressing problems of unemployed women, and coordination and facilitation of donor assistance and NGOs.

Despite this change for the better, the government’s analytical basis for promoting gender equality and employment policies tends to be declarative and narrow in scope. Consequently, the PRSP framework does not provide a detailed approach to addressing specific problems faced by

women, or to addressing gender distortions in the labor market. A serious problem is that the PRSP fails to articulate the causes of labor market distortions, such as the time burden on women with household and workplace responsibilities, or discrimination based on gender stereotyping. The PRSP also fails to outline specific means to monitor and regulate implementation of targeted programs. A gap exists between the measures planned and the budgets available; staff lack the capacity to analyze gender concerns in the current labor market and hence allocate budgets efficiently and effectively.

Progress is monitored on aggregated targets, but only by applying general indicators of levels of unemployment by gender and age at the national level, providing insufficient information to modify programming for more effective targeting. For example, from the total MLSP budget, 80% is allocated for pensions and other social protection benefits, but no tracking of sex-disaggregated data takes place regarding recipients for any benefits paid through this budget allocation. Only about 4.5–10.0% of the total is allocated to clearly pro-women programs, such as maternity and child care.

MLSP has taken positive action to address unemployment among women, including establishing the Coordination Committee for Gender Issues; developing women's labor exchanges (although only one of the targeted four has been established to date); and developing microcredit programs for women's self-employment, in collaboration with NGOs and international development partners. However, these fragmented programs depend on the commitment of individual officers rather than a well-established institutional structure for program coordination or adequate skills to understand the gender dimensions of the labor market.

In terms of the actual state budget expenditures in the employment sector,¹⁵ the budget and planning systems, budget allocations, and staff capacities are not well developed within the government to respond to the actual needs of the population or policy goals (World Bank 2005). Under these circumstances, it cannot reasonably be expected that gender considerations, among myriad others, will be taken into account. The budgeting process is top-down, based on gross indicators, and primarily aims to cover operational costs. Furthermore, following the dramatic cuts in funding in all sectors between 1991 and 2001, prioritizing expenditure to target the most vulnerable among the population has been limited. As funds available are now gradually stabilizing, the proportion of GDP allocated to social protection and employment expenditure has increased slightly, from 1.8% in 2000 to 2.3% in 2004, but efficient targeting will be required if the increases are to be effectively applied.

Other areas of expressed concern have been the labor laws and the protection of women's rights as workers. Women face discrimination in the workforce, as demonstrated by the persistent wage gap and the difficulties young women face in finding employment, because employers prefer to avoid the need to grant maternity leave by simply not hiring women of child-bearing age. The mechanisms in place for enforcing existing laws are limited, as is the understanding of discrimination by lawyers or judges. No cases have been reported or brought to court regarding discrimination in hiring practices, although most women attest to examples from their own or other

¹⁵ Based on the CGA Gender Budget Analysis of the employment sector. See Appendix 4 for detailed findings.

women's experiences. Yet, the Constitution guarantees the right of all citizens to work and choose their profession, protects their labor rights, and specifies equal pay for work of equal value. Maternity rights are also incorporated, including provisions for both parents and extended family to take leave to care for young children and the prohibition of the dismissal of pregnant women.

Elements of the Labor Code perpetuate stereotypes of women as weak and place a strong emphasis on women's role as mothers responsible for child rearing. International standards such as CEDAW require that such legislated protection recognizes the common responsibility of men and women in child rearing.

Recommendations for improving gender equality in the labor market, the informal sector, credit, and migration are as follows:

(i) Labor market distortions:

- Make labor market policies more responsive to the needs of women as well as men by articulating specific frameworks to understand gender differences in access to employment and by providing appropriate support to reduce unemployment levels.
- The new Program for Employment Promotion in Tajikistan for 2005–2007 is being prepared and the findings from this study should be taken into consideration in its preparation. Special measures that should be considered in this policy include (a) introduction of effective profiling mechanisms for unemployed men and women to facilitate the collection and analysis of data by gender, age, socioprofessional group, and other relevant items; (b) equal access by all groups to services provided, based on actual expenditure; and (c) improved targeting of programs in employment centers to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to appropriate services.
- Routinely incorporate gender analysis into all analyses carried out as part of improvements in planning and budgeting processes. Ensure broadened participation of women as well as men in decision making in all budget preparation, analysis, and performance monitoring through public and civil society consultations.
- Institutionalize capacity building within the civil service for carrying out gender budget analysis. Draw upon the growing international experience in gender budget analysis to provide lessons learned and good practices to be applied in Tajikistan.
- NGOs and other members of civil society should improve their understanding of the budget process in general and the potential for gender budget analysis to be used as a lobbying tool to increase allocations for priority concerns for women and gender mainstreaming in general.
- Put mechanisms in place to ensure that labor laws and regulations protecting women from discrimination are enforced, including training and awareness raising of inspectors, lawyers, and judges. To challenge gender

stereotypes, amend all legal provisions that are premised on the notion that women are the primary caregivers of their family to challenge.

- Fund and implement public campaigns and other proactive measures set out in the State Program to break down job segregation (vertical and horizontal), including measures to encourage employers to hire women, encouragements for women to take up training in nontraditional but more productive sectors, and campaigns to encourage men to take more responsibility for child rearing and other household tasks.

(ii) The informal sector:

- In programming to support micro and small enterprises, give strong emphasis to improving mechanisms for informing women about business developments in different sectors, especially those where women entrepreneurs are prevalent. Training should also challenge gender stereotypes regarding suitable areas of business for women, so more women can take up business and gain a higher return on their labor.
- In programs targeting women, incorporate group mobilization to build self-reliance and support networks to help them overcome the social and economic barriers they face to becoming successful entrepreneurs.
- Consider schemes to increase access by microenterprises to social protection funds, to complement those offered through employers, such as sickness benefits and pension funds that are designed specifically to meet the needs of small entrepreneurs. Such schemes should also ensure that the needs of women are met, as women will make up more than 50% of the contributors from the informal sector.

(iii) Access to credit:

- Improve women's business management skills and their confidence in business activities.
- Open a borrowing window for women, particularly in the emerging rural sector including dekhkan farmers. The borrowing should have appropriate terms, particularly for repayment schedules and interest rates.
- Educate bankers and government officials about the potential of women borrowers as well as rural borrowers. Give the bankers and government officials incentives to acknowledge this potential.
- MFIs need to acknowledge through internal policies the importance of promoting greater gender equality, e.g., through employing more women in decision-making positions. Simply supplying credit is not sufficient to improve business conditions for women: it is also important to increase the number of women in leadership positions in MFIs. Some MFIs need to expand their approach to ensure that lending operations are carried out in a manner that enhances equality in the community. Experience can be drawn from many other countries to facilitate this change in Tajikistan.

(iv) Labor migration:

- Make safe migration guidelines and awareness of risks more available to migrants. Integrate the specific risks women face (e.g., sexual harassment and trafficking) into these messages. Pre-departure training programs in other countries can provide good examples to MLSP and other organizations providing support to migrants.
- Strengthen awareness and capacities of government officials in border areas, MLSP, and the Foreign Ministry so they can offer protection and support to migrants, and so that sensitivity to specific concerns or experience of women is increased.
- In health awareness campaigns, target migrants and their spouses or other sexual partners. All public health campaigns should incorporate specific health risks encountered by migrants and provide programs that suit their specific needs, e.g., confidential access to HIV/AIDS testing that is then followed up with other support should an individual test positive.
- In programming to promote investment of remittances into more productive activities, target women in particular. Women have very limited access to business training, yet are most in need of advice and ideas to ensure that the remittances they are able to access contribute to longer-term livelihood maintenance.

B. Agriculture and Land Reform

About 70% of the population of Tajikistan lives in rural areas, and poverty reduction in the country depends to a considerable degree on effective government agricultural policies. Half the workforce depends on agriculture for income, including a vast majority of women, most of whom rely on very small plots of land (about 0.1 hectare per household) for their subsistence. Income poverty is severe in the countryside because job and income-earning opportunities outside the agriculture sector are lacking and the productivity of the land is declining. Inadequate irrigation and farm inputs, imperfect markets, and insecure land tenure rights have contributed to the poor performance of the agriculture sector.

The share of agriculture in GDP has been falling, from 26.4% in 2002 to 25.2% in 2003; during 9 months of 2004 it dropped again to 21.2% (ADB 2004). A contributing factor has been a reduction of capital investments in the sector since 1991, when agricultural investments made up 20.5% of total capital investments. That rate fell to 7.2% in 2003. This has affected irrigated lands, which are deteriorating seriously. Furthermore, most farmers do not have access to machinery and other vital inputs, such as quality seeds and fertilizer. The cotton sector is suffering from extremely high levels of debt and falling world prices. Organized domestic markets for produce are developing, but many rural producers have limited access to price information, or to inputs for alternative crops with higher returns; agriculture extension services are nonexistent. Local government officials continue to exert significant influence over decision making and access to markets (GRT 2002 and 2004a).

Not only do 27% more women than men work in the agriculture sector, but women also rely more for survival on produce from personal land plots (108 women for every 100 men) (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003). Women tend to provide seasonal unskilled and poorly paid labor during planting and harvesting, especially in areas with high out-migration by men or where the number of war widows is high.¹⁶ The widows receive extremely low wages that are often not paid regularly or are made “in kind,” putting further pressure on their livelihood. Women do not have access to higher-paid jobs that require operation of machinery, as this is still considered to be a man’s domain. Few women have formal training in the agriculture sector, but many have long experience working on collective farms (sometimes in positions of responsibility) or may be highly educated, with skills from previous nonagricultural employment. Despite the experience women have been gaining in recent years in this sector, they are commonly portrayed as unskilled agricultural workers or as contributing only unpaid family labor to household plots.

Women also work as traders in local marketplaces, selling items from the “shuttle trade” or produce from their own household. Little effort has been made to understand how women’s roles are changing and whether women are able to access the resources and other inputs required to be productive farmers alongside their male counterparts.

1. Land Reform

Access to land is central to survival for a large proportion of the poor in Tajikistan and a functioning land tenure system forms the basis of a market economy. Land in Tajikistan belongs exclusively to the state, and the state guarantees its effective use in the interests of the people through regulations established under Article 1 of the Land Code. Under the land reform framework established by the government, state agricultural enterprises from the Soviet era have been reorganized into privately owned dekhan farms under three categories: individual, family, or collective dekhan associations (organized under a cooperative structure with shareholders). Appropriate portions of land are then allocated to dekhan farms by the local land commission and land use certificates are drawn up by the State Committee on Land Resources. A portion of land is reserved for household and garden use and distributed accordingly through regulations under the Presidential Land Decree. Yet delays and irregularities in obtaining approvals and registrations have been numerous. Decisions in many areas have not been transparent (particularly during the civil war period) and certificates can be rescinded, sometimes seemingly at the whim of local officials.

In 2002, UNIFEM funded an assessment of rural women’s needs for receiving rights for land use in Tajikistan (Sabates-Wheeler 2002). It concluded that women, in spite of proclaimed legal equality, have unequal access to economic resources, including land. When women do access land, it tends to be the farthest from irrigation facilities or of marginal quality. Upon divorce or becoming widow, women are also frequently denied their right to land previously held by their husbands.

¹⁶ Estimated at 25,000 widows following the civil war.

Women interviewed for this CGA confirmed that they had encountered great difficulties in reregistering dekhan farm certificates in their own names following the deaths of their husbands. The existing legislation fails to state specifically how such title transfers are to take place. Government officials have little capacity to assist women in claiming their rights or dealing with inheritance and property rights in general. UNIFEM has established information centers in 11 districts, in collaboration with local representatives of women's committees. Lawyers at the centers provide free advice on particular days of the week, and training is offered to government officials regarding women's rights and how to link women with other services they require. These centers are providing vital services that are needed throughout the country.

Despite the egalitarian framework of the land legislation, discrimination against women (and other disadvantaged groups) can be perpetuated through the invocation of specific articles. For example, the requirement that an individual be able to manage a farm in order to qualify for a land certificate has been used to exclude women simply on the basis of gender stereotypes held by the land committee or hukumat chairman. The proportion of dekhan farms headed by women remains very low—only 6.8% of the total number of dekhan farms registered in 2004. This proportion has increased gradually, from 3.9% in 1999 and 5.6% in 2003. Only 3.7% of managers of the larger collective dekhan farms are women. Women leaders make up 9.6% of all family dekhan farms and 5.5% of the individual dekhan farms. Women hold 53% of the shares in larger registered dekhan farms, which reflects more accurately the proportion of women workers. Little detailed research has been carried out to understand the gender dimensions of other aspects of the agriculture sector in Tajikistan, especially to counter strongly held assumptions regarding the comparative productivity of men and women dekhan farm managers and different needs and priorities of men and women (Box 6).¹⁷

Box 6. Summary of Findings from the Dekhan Farm Survey

An analysis of the findings from the survey produced the following conclusions:

- A slightly higher proportion of privatized (*dekhan*) farms are led by women able to support their families through dekhan farm income and produce than those led by men; it can therefore be assumed that women are at least as productive dekhan farm managers as men.
- Women dekhan farm leaders are considered to be as productive as their men counterparts by 80% of the dekhan farm farmers interviewed, with 75% considering women capable of managing dekhan farms. Authority and respect for women dekhan farm leaders increases in the family, as do their roles as a decision makers, once they prove their competence and ability to earn income and manage resources.
- None of the women dekhan farm leaders had received credit from a bank and all had experienced greater difficulties than men in accessing agricultural equipment, having it repaired, and seeing agricultural specialists, and received less support from other official structures, e.g., local government.

Source: Survey for the country gender assessment.

¹⁷ In preparation for the CGA a survey was commissioned to test assumptions regarding productivity and to assess comparative needs and priorities. The survey consisted of a questionnaire for a representative sample of 144 men and 144 women leaders of dekhan farms across all regions of Tajikistan. The survey was complemented by 28 qualitative in-depth interviews with representatives from a commercial bank, the Land Reform Committee, an

2. Government Policies and Programs

Since independence, the Government has introduced a range of reforms intended to transform agriculture into a competitive, market-oriented sector. Increasing productivity is recognized as a key step toward reducing rural poverty. Priority programs identified include facilitating land reform and other forms of privatization in the sector, e.g., markets and agricultural inputs. The government's approach notes the importance of increasing the independence of decision making by farmers. However, implementation of government policies has been plagued by obstacles, including poor technical capacity of government officials and the need for the sector to continue to absorb labor from other sectors. Coordination with other policy areas—for example, water supply, environmental protection, and rural infrastructure improvement—is also vital if poverty reduction is to be effective.

Neither the PRSP nor other policy statements provide an analysis of the vulnerabilities women face through gender imbalances, such as the significant wage gap, or unequal access to land for women, either in dekhans or adequate secure access to vital lands. Although out-migration of men is high in some regions, ways to increase women's productivity (e.g., through training specifically targeting women) have not been discussed.

The State Program does not specifically address any of the concerns regarding women's unequal access to land, although agriculture is a crucial element for most rural women to sustain their livelihoods. However, a supplement to the *Access of Rural Women to Land* was adopted in 2004, following the work of UNIFEM to address specific constraints women face. The government has also established a coordinating council on land reform issues, chaired by CWFA. Ministries and commissions involved in implementing land reform sit on this committee and, with support from UNIFEM, have started to consider specific measures to address concerns that women are facing discrimination in accessing their rights to land. Training has also been offered to government officials through regional programs of UNIFEM, as well as opportunities to travel to other CIS countries where similar challenges are being addressed. However, much more capacity building is required to ensure that people making decisions regarding land allocation, from local to state levels, take action to limit discrimination and ensure that equal opportunities are offered to all citizens.

3. Recommendations

The following action is recommended to promote gender equality in agriculture and land reform:

- Develop effective and appropriate programming that will improve productivity for both men and women and hence reduce poverty in rural areas, a key priority for the government. Understanding the needs of women is a first step in this effort.

- So that community and government officials recognize that women are effective farm managers, as good as their men counterparts and in some cases even better, institute initiatives to overcome gender stereotypes, e.g., annual competitions, invitations to participate in local-level discussions with men, and education materials that portray women in productive roles in agriculture and other sectors.
- Increase access to credit for women, acknowledging evidence that women are good credit risks and are potentially as productive as men farmers. MFIs and banks require a better understanding of specific terms and conditions that will suit the needs of women as well as men farmers.
- Increase women's awareness of their rights, particularly rights to land. UNIFEM has demonstrated an approach to achieving this through establishing information centers for women that provide a combination of services in one place. This program has been running on a small scale, but elements need to be integrated into all rural development programming to ensure that special efforts are made to help women overcome difficulties with access to land.
- Improve monitoring of the land reform process by including gender-sensitive indicators in the PRSP and through other mechanisms such as the Land Commission. Indicators should include (i) the share of all dekhan farms registered in a woman's name, (ii) the ratio of men and women among leaders of collective dekhan farms, (iii) the share of men and women among dekhan farm shareholders or owners of land plots, (iv) the ratio of men and women who received credit for the development of dekhan farms or other agricultural enterprises, and (v) the number of women who received training and attend workshops.
- Monitor such indicators to enable program planners to identify areas where progress on equitable access is slow. Moreover, monitoring can lead to improved targeting of special assistance to women to ensure that they can claim their rights.
- Secure greater access for women and the poor in general to household plots. Clarify the rights to these plots for women.
- Incorporate in all programs designed to improve agroservices and agroservice organizations specific measures to ensure that women have equal access to these services, and that they address their specific needs.
- Demand for training to improve skills and knowledge of both men and women dekhan farm leaders is high. Ensure that such training meets the needs of women as well as men.
- Establish self-help coalitions and groups among dekhan farm managers, both men and women. Women in particular respond well to structures that reinforce learning, provide assistance, and provide mentoring roles. These groups can be more sustainable if they also serve as a platform for the delivery of other services, e.g., agriculture extension or information about inputs.

C. Infrastructure

Infrastructure development is vital to Tajikistan's economic growth and considerable investment is being made in this sector. High priority is being given to rehabilitating infrastructure

and to reforms of legal and regulatory frameworks under a market economy. As noted previously, a gender analysis should be used to assess the potential impact of policies and programs that have been developed and/or implemented. For example, changes in tariff structures for electricity or gas services can be used as a proactive poverty reduction measure to shift the burden of costs from poor households to larger private and commercial users. Household managers—women—also have very specific energy needs that vary considerably from commercial consumers. These needs have to be understood if reforms are to reduce vulnerabilities of the poor and ensure they can benefit from reforms equitably.

1. Transport

As a landlocked country with remote, sparsely populated mountainous areas, Tajikistan depends on road links between communities and with its neighbors to provide access to markets and services. The rehabilitation and improvement of the road network is a high priority for the government. Priority is being given to improving the road network along regional corridors to increase economic growth within the region. The road corridors, for example between Dushanbe and the Kyrgyz Republic border (being rehabilitated with support from ADB) pass through remote areas; improved access from these areas to markets and services will provide greater opportunities for the poor to increase their incomes by accessing inputs and new markets, and will facilitate communications. Border regulation has also been improved to manage the flow of goods and migrants across the borders.

Little analysis has been done of the impacts of improvements in transportation systems in Tajikistan, but experience in other countries has demonstrated that, as volumes of traffic along transportation routes increase, so does the demand for support services (e.g., food, accommodation, and mechanical services), bringing additional income opportunities to communities along the way. The flow of goods in and out of communities will also improve. Other, less welcome impacts come with improved road systems, i.e., increased demand for services such as commercial sex. Poor and desperate women in communities along road corridors are tempted into this form of work, which often leads to coercion, violence, and even human trafficking. Commercial sex work also presents a high risk of infection from sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Road improvement brings negative as well as positive changes within a community, and changes have a gender dimension. Women may improve their access to health care and other services, but may also become more vulnerable to being trafficked or drawn into income-generating activities that present considerable health and other risks, e.g. as drug couriers. Community and economic development activities that often accompany road improvement should ensure that a gender analysis of the impacts of increased vehicular traffic, economic opportunities, and greater mobility are taken into account and appropriate services and awareness-raising regarding potential risks are offered.

Women also use improved transportation systems, but are rarely consulted regarding their specific needs. A new road may be seen by men primarily as a means to transport goods, whereas women often first welcome easier access to emergency health care services. Both these priorities must be reflected in the design of infrastructure-related services and policies that affect pricing of

transportation. Cost-benefit analysis should incorporate more than income measures to ensure that social development benefits are accruing in an equitable manner.

Recommendations for addressing gender-related issues in transport are as follows:

- Incorporate social as well as economic performance indicators (non-income poverty impacts) into projects and other assessment frameworks. Provide more opportunity to raise women's priority needs and benefits, and thus increase the potential for women to influence planning priorities.
- Work with local NGOs familiar with risks presented by human traffickers to build resistance against these risks among those most vulnerable, for example poor women and commercial sex workers.
- Build a combined information campaign to encourage safe sex and counter trafficking in project areas (i.e., along proposed routes and in rest areas for transport workers) to raise public and official awareness and understanding of these issues. Collaborate with local NGOs, with support from other national NGOs experienced in these areas, to build local NGO capacity to work in these areas.
- Raise awareness among government and law enforcement officials of the potential impacts of increased volumes of vehicles and flow of goods and migrants, particularly regarding human trafficking and health risks from mobile populations (transportation workers, etc.).

2. Water Resource Management (including Water and Sanitation, and Irrigation)

Poor water management and recent droughts have had significant impacts on the Tajikistan population and especially on women. Only 57% of the population has access to piped water and nearly 25% take water from pools and irrigation canals where water-borne diseases are highly prevalent. Public sanitation systems are largely not working and little or no investment has been made in improving the infrastructure. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the lack of safe drinking water and effective waste treatment are the principal causes of 60% of diseases, particularly diarrhea among young children. The burden of caring for the sick lies upon women, leaving them with reduced time and energy to generate income.

In rural areas, significant additional burdens for women result from dilapidated irrigation systems, on which 80% of Tajikistan's agricultural production relies. Water supply is intermittent, unsafe, and insufficient to ensure adequate agricultural production to meet livelihood needs. This is contributing to the outflow of men migrating to look for employment, leaving women to cope under these worsening conditions. Greater distances have to be covered to find domestic and farm water supplies, and this burden is met by women's and children's unpaid labor.

Rehabilitating irrigation systems is a priority for ADB and other development partners. Women's involvement in this process is vital because of their role in water management. Women's needs and ways of using these services should be taken into consideration in design, construction, operation, and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure. Some projects have already demonstrated

that women are keen to participate in infrastructure user groups, but rarely hold leadership positions. Women have a high stake in the success of water and sanitation improvement schemes and should be offered opportunities to participate fully in all phases. Experience throughout the world has demonstrated that primary users of infrastructure will ensure its maintenance more effectively than those with only marginal interests or investments.

Recommendations to improve gender mainstreaming in the sector include the following:

- Ensure that women participate in the planning of all projects and that gender issues are taken into consideration as priorities are set. It is vital that access to household drinking water be balanced against improved management of water resources for agriculture. This should involve consultation on a regular basis with NGOs that are led by women and work in rural areas to identify emerging issues of concern to women.
- Ensure that women participate in community-based water management committees and training opportunities. Such participation can provide opportunities for women to build their skills and experience in decision making and will encourage more women to become involved in a wider range of resource management activities.

3. Energy

Energy is required within the household as well as for commercial and industrial use. Electrification programs have brought considerable health and other social benefits to rural communities throughout the world, but limited investments in electricity and other energy supply infrastructure in Tajikistan have contributed significantly to the deterioration in social development indicators. With intermittent or failed supply, households have to rely on traditional energy sources like wood, which is being overexploited. Women and girls often spend large amounts of time searching for and transporting fuel. These chores leave less time for productive employment, education, or community involvement and increase pressure on women's well-being. Smoke pollution has damaging effects on women's health. Only a reliable source of electricity can relieve women of these burdens.

The PRSP notes that Tajikistan's mountainous terrain provides ample opportunities to improve the supply of hydro power, particularly in energy-short and impoverished rural areas. As energy supply systems are rehabilitated and tariffs and other regulatory structures are reformed, the needs of women must be understood through consultation.

Recommendations to improve gender mainstreaming in the energy sector include the following:

- Ensure that assessments of the impacts of reforms to energy tariffs and structures take into account different uses of energy by men and women.
- Consult with women regarding their priorities for investments in new or alternative energy sources and seek ways to invest in labor-saving technologies that can contribute to greater energy efficiency within the household.

4. Communications

The communications sector is being reformed, strengthening competition through privatization and regulatory reform under the Ministry of Communications. The challenges to communication technologies' potential to increase productivity and capacity building are many; however, in 2003 less than 1% of the rural population had access to telecommunications infrastructure (GRT and UNDP 2003b). As investments by the government and private sector are made, it is vital that women not fall behind in accessing new communication technologies, and that the content of media such as television, radio, and the Internet meet their needs and aspirations. New entrepreneurs and dekhan farm managers have great difficulty accessing information about markets and input prices to assist with business planning and management, and women experience particular difficulty in accessing this information because they are less mobile than men. For example, as new public telephone lines are put in place in rural areas, women should be involved in the selection of locations within communities and ensured equitable access, perhaps through allocating certain times when women can use these services, or dedicating one line for the use of women.

In some CIS countries, communication technologies have advanced most rapidly through use for illegal activities, e.g., for trafficking of drugs and people and for pornography (UNIFEM 2005). One way to avoid this form of exploitation is to encourage women to train in communication technologies, as technicians, users, and creators of content, so they are aware of potential dangers as well as benefits of new technologies, and can develop content to meet their specific needs. Thus, women's voices must be heard as the Ministry of Communications develops regulatory frameworks to facilitate the orderly development of communications across the country.

Recommendations to improve gender mainstreaming in communications include the following:

- Ensure that women are given equitable access to new technologies as they are introduced, as well as training and awareness of the benefits of accessing business and other forms of information.
- Promote women's participation in decision making within the government and the private sector to ensure that new communication technologies are not used to exploit women and children, but rather as tools for empowerment and equitable economic growth. Government consultation with women-led NGOs on these topics will help ensure that priority concerns of women are understood and considered as policies and regulatory frameworks are put in place.

5. Other Environmental Concerns

a. Natural Disasters

Tajikistan is in a highly active seismic zone and has a harsh climate, with frequent cycles of floods and droughts and related catastrophes such as landslides and avalanches. Disaster preparedness should take into account needs of both men and women.

b. Pollution and Environmental Conservation

Women of child-bearing age and their children are particularly susceptible to the effects of pesticides and other toxic substances, which are transmitted to the fetus during pregnancy and pass readily into breast milk. Women exposed to toxic substances face increased risk of miscarriage and of babies with defects and who fail to thrive. The offspring face a long list of resulting health problems. A high proportion of economically vulnerable women work in agriculture, and are exposed to toxic substances but have little awareness of health protection. Thus, consultation with women's groups and community members is vital to minimizing these serious threats. Stronger legislation, regulation, and control over the use of harmful chemicals is required, and environmentally friendly and safe alternatives must be considered as the agriculture sector modernizes.

As a short-term measure to address severe environmental degradation, especially in arid areas of Tajikistan, resettlement has been discussed frequently. This approach should be carefully considered, because it fails to address the need to rehabilitate the land for human, animal, and plant life, and puts women and children at risk of losing vital social networks and informal community support.

If resettlement is the only option, it is vital that the different needs of men and women be taken into account during planning and implementation of schemes. Consideration also has to be given to the challenges faced by women in securing their right to land and other assets that may be allocated in new settlements. Consultation with women is important to ensure that their needs and priorities are understood.

c. Recommendations

To improve gender mainstreaming in environment issues the following recommendations are offered:

- Develop disaster preparedness plans and training for men and women in communities vulnerable to natural disasters, and encourage women to lead projects to mitigate erosion and landslides, such as reforestation programs.
- Develop programs to ensure that women are aware of the dangers of misuse of harmful pesticides and fertilizers, and to encourage the use of protective equipment. Research and testing of environmentally friendly and safe, but affordable, modes of pest control and fertilizer should also be considered.
- Ensure that strategies are developed in resettlement plans to mitigate the potentially damaging impact of involuntary migration on women as well as men. If women participate fully in the planning of resettlement schemes, their needs and interests (including rights to land and access to compensation packages such as economic assets) can be understood and mitigation strategies will be more effective.
- Ensure that impact monitoring indicators are disaggregated by sex and track differential impacts on men and women.

Tajikistan has a rapidly growing population. In 2000, almost 50% of the total population comprised children under 17 years old. The fertility rate, which was 5.0 in 1990 and declined to 3.7 in 2000, remains the highest in Central Asia, and the population risks doubling every 20 years. Primary and general secondary education will have an additional 850,000 students by 2015, and social services must be ready to accommodate a rapidly growing population. During this same period of population growth, GDP has fallen sharply, as well as the proportion of GDP spent on social services. For example, in public health, expenditure as a percentage of GDP fell from 4.8% in 1990 to 0.9% in 2002. The simultaneous collapse of state-funded social safety nets and the dramatic increase in the numbers of vulnerable people has threatened the well-being of the vast majority of the population.

Recent growth in GDP has meant that actual amounts of funding have increased, along with some modest increases in the proportion of expenditures. This, with growing investment from international development partners and improved targeting, has led to moderate improvements in social development and MDG indicators, but the longer-term impacts from drastic cuts in the quality and availability of social services will take many years and a large influx of funds to repair. For example, the high unemployment rate and withdrawal from the workforce among men and women of the 17–25-year-old age group demonstrates that they are poorly equipped to participate in the market economy. The PRSP sets out efficient and fair provision of basic social services to vulnerable groups as a core element of the approach to reducing poverty, and commits itself to increasing the proportion of funding allocated to social services to stem the deterioration in social development indicators.

A key commitment is to increase funding to social services. However, as Table 11 illustrates, while social sector expenditures have increased marginally compared to other sectors, the increases have been inadequate and not necessarily sustained year by year.

Table 11. Expenditures by Functional Type, 1999-2003
(percent of GDP)

Expenditure by Sector	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Education	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.4
Health Care	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0
Management, Defense, Law and Order	5.5	5.2	4.6	4.9	4.7
Economic Sectors	4.4	2.9	3.0	2.7	3.0

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Finance data presented in GRT and UNDP 2004.

A. Education

Schooling is compulsory in Tajikistan for children aged 7 to 15; historically high enrollment rates of 94.3% were achieved in 1989. Despite disruptions during the civil war and drastic cuts in government expenditures, by 2003 enrollment had fallen only to 88.4% of the

school-age population. Enrollment has been affected by a combination of factors, including increasing poverty and severe cuts in government funding (from approximately 11% of GDP in 1991 to only 2.4% in 2003), affecting physical infrastructure and teaching quality. Moreover, in some regions physical infrastructure and attendance was badly disrupted by the civil war. Over 40% of parents report they are dissatisfied with the quality of education (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003).

Government budget expenditure on education dropped from approximately 11% of GDP in 1991 to 2.1% in 1999, then increased marginally up to 2.4% in 2003 (see Table 11) but remained below the PRSP target of 4% of GDP by 2004 (ADB 2003c, 4). Within the education budget, allocations to primary and general secondary education rose from around 44% in 1992 to over 75% in 2003, in response to the government's stated commitment to improving primary and general secondary education. Regional disparities in availability of funding are also evident; they are due to the different revenue bases of local governments, because over 80% of funding for primary and general secondary education comes from local budgets (ADB 2003, 4). Poor regions therefore are unable to keep up with current costs, such as teacher's salaries, and fall behind with payments and make limited or no investments in infrastructure or books and equipment for children.

Table 12. Education-Related Millennium Development Goals Targets for Tajikistan

Area	Tajikistan Goal	Indicator	2004	2015 target		
Achieve universal primary education MDG #2	All children, boys and girls, complete full course of primary and secondary schooling.	Net enrollment ratio in primary and secondary schooling	88%	100%		
		Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	96.8%	98.5%		
		Literacy rate of 15–24-year-olds	88.4%	100%		
		Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education	Percent of girls completing 9 years of education: 76%	98%		
		Ratio of rehabilitated schools and number of new schools built	45%	100%—841 new schools		
		Ratio of schools with access to drinking water and sanitation	50% and 65%	100%		
		Ratio of schoolchildren receiving school meals	22%	50%		
		Ratio of school children receiving text books	30%	100%		
		Gender equality MDG #3	Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education not later than 2015.	Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education	88%	100%
				Ratio of literate women to men 15–24 years old	98%	100%

Source: GRT and UNDP 2005.

Education MDG targets for Tajikistan are presented in Table 12. It appeared likely that in 2003 the MDG target to improve the coverage of primary education from 78% in 2000 to 90% in 2015 will be met (GRT 2003b); the target has since been revised upward to 100% by 2015. The elimination of gender disparity in primary and general secondary education, mainly in upper secondary (grades 10 and 11), is less likely, given the combination of factors influencing families' decisions regarding investment in girls' education.

1. Preschool Education

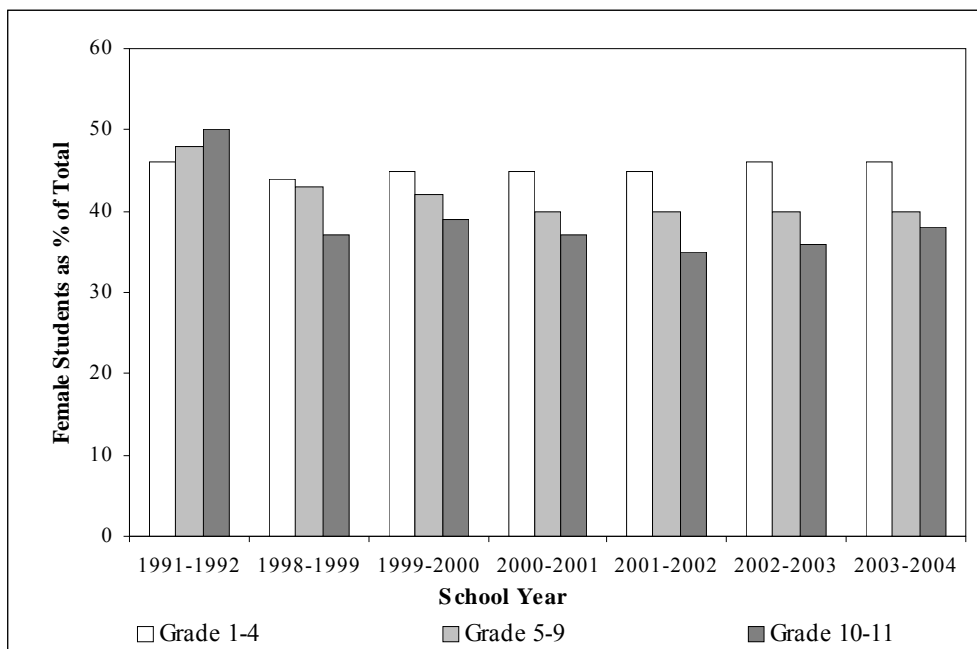
Access to preschool education has deteriorated significantly. The number of children attending such institutions fell by 59% between 1991 and 2001, and even more sharply in rural areas, by 73%. State funding has been withdrawn and parents are unable to pay for these services, so infrastructure has almost vanished and the quality of care has deteriorated. The situation is particularly difficult for children in rural areas, where only 1.2% of all children aged 1–6 years attended preschool institutions in 2001, compared with 19.6% in urban areas (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003).

The result impacts overall education of children and women's capacity to work outside the home, reinforcing more traditional gender stereotypes and limiting income-generating capacities for families. In addition, the Soviet-era education system had built-in comprehensive health services, including for preschool children. This enabled early detection and treatment of health problems, including nutritional deficiencies, and many children in kindergartens and elementary schools received free meals.

2. Primary and General Secondary Education

In Tajikistan, primary education starts at age 7 and covers grades 1–4, followed by 5 years of general secondary, covering grades 5–9. Upper secondary comprises grades 10 and 11; graduation from grade 11 is required for higher tertiary or university education. Technical and vocational education and training is available after grade 9 (3 or 4 years) or after grade 11 (2 years). While enrollment in primary education has remained relatively steady, the sharpest decline for girls has been in grades 10–11, as illustrated in Figure 2. Furthermore, girls are at greater risk than boys of not completing secondary education. In 2001, only 36.7% of girls completed 11 years of schooling compared with 63.3% of boys. For the first time in many years, women in the 20–30-year-old age group are less educated than those in 30–40 age group.

Figure 2: Percentage of Female Students Enrolled in Daytime Education Institutions



Source: GRT 2004b.

The Ministry of Education does not disaggregate data by sex between rural and urban areas. This practice masks problems of access to education for girls in rural areas, where families have greater concerns regarding adolescent girls traveling to school, and sometimes require facilities separate from boys, which are rarely available. The 2003 TLSS data indicate that primary education enrollment rates and gender differentials are similar in rural and urban areas; enrollment is slightly higher in rural than in urban areas; these are set out in Table 13. After age 12 or 13 years, however, enrollment falls for girls, particularly in Dushanbe, where education costs are highest. After grade 11, attendance at higher education institutions is greater in urban areas, where most such institutions are located, with the gap narrowing between men and women. Enrollment in higher education is lower in rural areas, where the gender gap is at its highest.

Even when children are enrolled, they do not always attend school. Attendance monitoring is irregular, and many children start the year and fail to finish. In Dushanbe, this problem is particularly acute for girls, where attendance levels fell from 90% in 2000 to 88% in 2003 (World Bank 2005).

3. Higher and Vocational/ Technical Education

The gender-based differences in enrollment in higher, vocational, and professional institutions are influenced by location as well as by attitudes concerning further education of girls. In 2003/2004, women made up 53% of enrollment in professional institutions, which are generally located in rural areas and are therefore more easily accessible to girls whose parents are concerned about suitable accommodation and about security while traveling. In higher education institutions, girls made up only 25% of students enrolled in 2003/2004. These proportions have remained steady since 1998, according to SSA data.

Table 13. Ratio of Boys to Girls Enrolled in Education by Age and Type of Settlement

Age	Ratio of Boys:Girls	Absolute Gender Gap
Urban		
7–10	1.00	0.1
11–15	1.09	7.6
16–17	1.35	19.6
18–21	1.20	5.5
Rural		
7–10	1.01	0.9
11–15	1.04	4.1
16–17	1.35	20.9
18–21	2.18	10.6

Source: From the Tajikistan Living Standard Survey, 2003, cited in Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a.

Several factors influence the significant gender gap in secondary (grades 9–11) and higher education. Many studies conclude that poverty and traditional family preferences aggravate problems of access for girls. When resources are limited in the family, boys are generally favored for education expenditures, particularly for higher education. Girls are often required to remain at home to care for siblings and work in household production.

Opinions vary as to whether economic factors alone can explain the widening gender gap in enrollment rates. Uneducated girls may be considered more marriageable than educated ones, even among urban families. Even if girls remain in school, traditional gender stereotypes are being reinforced in textbooks and teaching materials and by attitudes of teachers and parents. A girl's responsibility is to take care of and clean the house, according to one in five respondents in a Ministry of Education Monitoring of Learning survey carried out in 2002 (UNESCO 2002, 79). Reinforcing this finding, 57% of surveyed parents "absolutely agree" that it is more important to educate boys than girls, especially when resources are limited, since the family will reap direct benefits from this investment. Girls will leave the family when they marry.

Even more alarmingly, girls are less positive about education. Approximately 40% believe that their education will not directly influence their success in life. A 2004 UNICEF study concluded that "education is losing its value in the context of a limited labor market and reemerging traditional attitudes." This is confirmed in the 2003 TLSS survey, where results show that for the poorest quintile, boys and girls are equally disadvantaged in accessing higher education. However, among the highest-income quintile, significantly fewer girls participate in higher education. Even more disturbingly, even at age 17, more poor boys attend school than do girls from the top income quintile. Furthermore, high unemployment and poverty among their

mothers' generation, who were educated to secondary level, discourage girls from overcoming financial and social attitudes about the value of remaining in school. This leaves many young women highly dependent on their husband's families, or unable to find skilled employment when they are required to contribute to the family's income, as is increasingly the case even among middle-income families.

Among young women continuing education beyond grade 11, the majority pursue studies in health care, education, and to some extent economics. Despite the very high proportion of women working in the agriculture sector, only about 10% of students studying agriculture in higher education are women (GRT 2004b), as shown in Table 14. Of more concern, the proportion of women studying agriculture in the rural secondary professional institutions is even lower, at 7%. Table 14 also shows that these proportions have not changed significantly since 1991–1992, suggesting that the institutions are not tailoring courses or encouraging students to prepare for the current labor market. Thus, educational institutions are reinforcing gender stereotypes of suitable careers for women and leaving graduates without skills appropriate to employment opportunities.

Table 14. Percentage of Women Students in High and Secondary Professional Education by Type of Education

Type of Education	1991–1992	2003–2004
Higher Education Institutions —Total	34	25
Industry	12	17
Agriculture	7	10
Economy	19	20
Health, Physical Culture, and Sport	29	27
Education, Art, and Cinematography	42	36
Secondary Professional Institutions—Total	44	53
Industry And Construction	19	14
Agriculture	5	7
Economy	30	24
Health, Physical Culture, and Sport	75	67
Education, Art, and Cinematography	60	70

Source: GRT 2004b.

Urgent action has been called for to halt the widening chasm between educational achievements of boys and girls, a chasm that is compounded by growing disparities in enrollment for noncompulsory education, i.e., grades 9–11, technical and vocational education, and higher education. Priority has been given to increasing budget allocations to primary levels, but although much remains to be done to improve the quality and management of basic education, attention must also be given to the evident falling capabilities of school leavers. The lack of competitiveness among 17–25-year-olds in the labor market is evident from rising unemployment among this age group, and is most acute among young women.

4. Employment in the Education Sector

Approximately 6% of the Tajikistan workforce is employed in education.¹⁸ While equal numbers of men and women work in this sector, the proportion of women in senior positions remains limited, although the situation has improved since 1991. In 2003, women held 17% of senior positions in professional higher educational institutions (8% in 1991), 22% of senior instructor positions (13% in 1991), and made up 34% of all teachers (22% in 1991).

Teacher salaries are extremely low, adding to the general deterioration in education standards. Continued cuts in budget allocations to education have not improved this situation, although 80% of expenditures are still for salaries.

5. Government Policies and Programs

To increase the proportion of female students in higher education, in May 1997 the Government put in place a quota for accepting girls from the poorest rayons in higher education institutions without their having to pass the entrance exam. Scholarship programs (funded by the Japanese government, the Soros Foundation, and UNDP, among others) were also offered to cover living and education costs and hostels provided where additional life skills training is offered. Between 1998 and 2003, 3,050 girls took up this opportunity.

These numbers are quite small, however, and sadly, the quota is generally only three-quarters filled. Of girls admitted, 7% dropped out, mainly for marriage but also because many fell behind with studies because of poor general education received in rural schools (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003). This confirms the pressing need for improving general education in rural schools to prepare all students to maximize their benefits of higher education. It also substantiates the call to change attitudes among parents and the community so that girls continue their education rather than marry. A longitudinal study was started by the CWFA to track achievements of girls graduating from the quota program, but it is not clear if the study is being continued.

The government has also put in place the National Education Sector Development Plan for 2003–2010, which outlines improvements in teacher training, school rehabilitation, curriculum reform, and textbook development, responding to the priorities identified in the PRSP. Progress is reported in several of these areas, including increasing teachers' salaries, strengthening the role of the newly created parent teacher associations to increase community involvement in education management, and rehabilitating school infrastructure in more than one third of secondary schools. The vocational schools are now being rehabilitated.

Programs that directly seek to increase girls' enrollment at all levels have not been as extensive in Tajikistan as in other countries with significant gender gaps in enrollment and achievement. CARE International supported a program to provide hot meals to school children in grades 1–11, increasing attendance from 66% to 87% in 1 year and the number of girls who

¹⁸ The SSA *Annual Report* for 2004 (GRT 2004b) states that 9.1% of the total population works in the education sector.

remained in school after grade 9 (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003). Teachers were also offered the hot meals, and their attendance rates improved as well. UNICEF has made increasing girls enrollment and attendance a core element of its Central Asian republics programs, and has carried out several studies to broaden understanding of noneconomic factors influencing parents, teachers, and other community leaders, to regain support for equality in educational achievements for boys and girls. Other international partners supporting the education sector, (including ADB, the Aga Khan Development Foundation, German Agency Technical Cooperation [GTZ], the OPEC Fund, the Soros Foundation, the United States Agency for International Development [USAID], and the World Bank), have incorporated the MDG targets of increasing girls' enrollment in their programs. Progress remains slow, however, and more specific measures will be required if the MDG targets are to be achieved.

The Tajikistan UN MDG Needs Assessment Team's preliminary findings suggested that the costs for 2005–2015 of achieving universal primary and expanded secondary education will be roughly \$20 per capita annually (UN Millennium Project 2005, 136). The team also noted that additional specific interventions are needed to increase understanding of and commitment to gender equality; these included training and awareness campaigns and systematic interventions to improve the capacities of the CWFA in providing technical support to line ministries to strengthen gender mainstreaming in policy and program development and implementation. While the government and international partners are committed to achieving gender-related MDGs for education, specific investment is much smaller in the additional interventions required to change community attitudes regarding girls' education and to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education in gender analysis.

6. Recommendations

The following actions are recommended to increase gender equality pertaining to education:

- Seek innovative ways to increase funding for preschool programs, especially in rural areas. This might involve providing funds to rehabilitate infrastructure while encouraging communities to fund salary and equipment costs through their own resources or from local private sector sources.
- To reduce dropout rates, focus government efforts on the family and community and on improving school infrastructure and teaching quality. Teachers can play an important part in efforts to change attitudes regarding girls' education and its value to the community as a whole. Capacity building for decision makers within the Ministry of Education and within school administrative structures, such as the parent teacher associations, should also incorporate analysis of the impact on communities and poverty reduction caused by falling education levels among girls.
- Establish programs to extend educational opportunities to adolescent girls who have dropped out of school. An objective should be to bring out-of-school adolescent girls away from their homes to participate in acceptable activities that will broaden their life experience and skills.

- Create teaching and school environments suitable for adolescent girls to attend, e.g., with female religious teachers and secure dormitories or accommodation options.
- Maintain the current government focus on primary education and increase the priority accorded to secondary and higher education gender gaps, so as not to lose the potential for girls to participate in more rewarding employment and respond to the changing labor market. Thus, education must incorporate skills and knowledge that prepare graduates better for changing labor markets. This should include approaches that challenge gender stereotypes to enable more girls to move into skilled jobs that offer greater return on their labor.
- Strengthen the data collection and analysis capacities in the Ministry of Education to enable monitoring of gender gaps in all levels of education. The causes of the gender gaps can not be addressed without improving the understanding of all factors involved, i.e., social as well as economic. The macro level aggregation of data currently practiced in government does not facilitate this.
- Increase the number of women in senior teaching and administrative positions in higher education and professional institutions, both to encourage mainstreaming of gender dimensions into courses and to act as role models and encourage parents to permit their daughters to pursue higher education.

B. Health Care

Access to health care services was very comprehensive during the Soviet era, when many health care facilities were attached to the workplace or educational institution. Services were not of high quality (poorly trained staff using outdated protocols), hospital care was biased toward curative rather than preventive care, and structures were costly and inefficient. Health indicators were not impressive in 1991 and fell sharply following independence: life expectancy in 1991 was 70.1 overall, 67.3 for men and 72.9 for women, but it had decreased in 2002 to 68.6 overall, 66.0 for men and 71.3 for women. Maternal mortality rates increased 2.4 times during 1990–1995, but have declined somewhat since (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003).

The causes of the declines are complex, but are mostly due to the impact of the deteriorating living conditions of the population and limited access to health care services, because of the dramatic fall in funding. Public health expenditure as a percentage of GDP was only 0.9% in 2002, a drop from 4.8% in 1990. This is the lowest among the Central Asian republics and much lower than the 5% target figure for developing countries advocated by WHO. In 2001, per capita public health expenditure was only equivalent to \$1.60, about 1.5% of that in 1990. The especially poor performance in maternal and child health indicators can also be linked to gender inequalities. Women have less command than men over limited household resources to cover the cost of health care services and many have to seek permission to consult a health professional.

Table 15 presents the health-related MDGs for Tajikistan, with 2015 targets and progress on indicators for the latest year available from government data. These targets have been incorporated into the PRSP health-related objectives and indicators.

Table 15. Tajikistan Health-Related Millennium Development Goals

Area	Tajikistan Goal	Indicator	1990	Latest Year	2015 target
Child Health MDG #4	Reduce the infant mortality rate by two thirds from 1990 to 2015.	Deaths per 1,000 live births	40.4 ^a	89 ^b	29.6
		Under-5 mortality rate		118 ^b	39.3
Maternal Health MDG #5	Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by 75% from 1990 to 2015.	Deaths per 100,000 live births	—	43.1 ^a	330
Reproductive Health MDG #3	Increase access to contraceptives.	Female population aged 15–45 with access to contraceptives	—	21.8% ^a	50%
		Share of school children covered by public awareness programs on reproductive health		2.4% ^a	80%
Adult Health MDG #6	Halt and reverse incidence of tuberculosis, malaria, and other major infectious diseases by 2015.	Incidence per 100,000 population	—	Malaria, 80.7 TB 68 ^a	As goal
HIV/AIDS MDG #6	Halt by 2015 and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.	HIV prevalence among 15–24-year-old pregnant women	—	Total HIV positive 6,800a	As goal

HIV/AIDS = human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; MDG = Millennium Development Goal; TB = tuberculosis; — = no data available.

Sources: ^aGRT 2002, and ^badapted from GRT and UNDP 2005.

Despite the improvements reported against MDG targets in recent years, other information suggests a more precarious health care situation. Other information sources indicate that mortality rates, particularly the infant mortality rate, have stagnated over the past decade. The officially reported rate was 36.7 per 1,000 live births for 2000, but UNICEF estimated it as 82.4 per 1,000 live births. Health care data are unreliable; underreporting is attributable to the breakdown of the data collection system during the war and the introduction of registration fees that discourage poor families from recording births and deaths (GRT and UNDP 2003b). A 1998 United Nations Population Fund survey (cited in GRT and UNDP 2003a) revealed that over 80% of births and infant deaths were not registered. These problems also affect the accurate reporting of maternal mortality, and official data have to be considered with caution.

1. Women and Nutrition

The causes and impacts of high infant and child mortality rates are strongly linked to the status of women and their ability to access household and economic resources. Poor health during pregnancy starts a cycle of high risk to the development of infants and continues as the child grows. In 61% of Tajikistan families, nutrition was found to be unsatisfactory and per capita consumption of all food categories has declined significantly since 1992. Almost 50% of all households responding to the 2003 TLSS survey reported eating one meal or less per day. The most significant factors influencing child nutrition and health noted in many studies around the world are the capacity of women to command resources within the family and to access information regarding care and nurturing. With increasing numbers of young women becoming more rather than less isolated, health care programs will have to address social as well as medical risk factors if MDG targets are to be met.

2. Reproductive Health

a. Maternal Mortality Rates

Official data show a decline in maternal mortality rates from 98 per 100,000 in 1995 to 50.6 in 2002, amid significant regional disparities, with some areas reaching 1,075 per 100,000 live births in 2002 (GRT and UNDP 2003a). Most deaths could be avoided through improved quality of care, equipment, pharmaceuticals, and access to services. In the Rayon of Republican Subordination 45.4% of maternal mortalities resulted from hemorrhage; in Dushanbe 33% died from postnatal infection, according to a 2002 rapid assessment of reproductive health facilities (GRT and UNDP 2003a).

The risk factors associated with maternal mortality are numerous. Over 40% of women countrywide, and up to 80% in some regions, had unattended home deliveries in 2002, while in 1990, less than 10% of mothers delivered at home (GRT and UNDP 2003a). An overall decline has taken place even since 1999 (World Bank 2005) and the differential between women from the poorest and richest households is widening (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a). The rising proportion of home deliveries suggests the breakdown of the local health care system and the inability of families to pay for medical care. Home deliveries are particularly risky for women who are malnourished or anemic. In 2002, 85% of pregnant women were anemic (GRT 2004c). Infant mortality rates, though also declining, remain high, and 48% of infant deaths occur in the antenatal period, indicating that babies face high risks similar to those of their mothers (GRT and UNDP 2003a).

b. Access to Family Planning and Contraception

Limited knowledge of and access to contraception also increase several risk factors. The high birth rates result in a correspondingly high frequency of delivery: 37% of women give birth at less than 2-year intervals and 5.7% of women give birth twice in a year (GRT 2004c). Government programs funded by international development partners have sought to increase access to safe contraceptives, but knowledge of family planning options or the importance of child spacing

remains limited. Contraception coverage of women age 15-49 has tripled since 1994, but prevalence rates, which were 20% in 2003, remain low compared to international standards (GRT 2004c). The 2003 TLSS reported that 15% of women 20–29 years of age stated their partners object to contraceptive use (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a), indicating that information needs to be disseminated more widely concerning the importance of family planning and child spacing.

Abortion was the most common form of contraception during the Soviet period, as modern alternatives were not available. The registered abortion rate remains high despite declines in recent years (88.5 per 1,000 live births in 2003) but according to rapid assessments carried out in 2002, the rate may be 1.5 times higher than the official data indicate (GRT and UNDP 2003b). The abortion rate has increased among adolescents, with some reports indicating that abortions have become a leading cause of death among young women.

c. HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases

The number of officially registered HIV cases in Tajikistan remains low. The United Nations Joint Fund for HIV/AIDS estimated only 4,000 cases at the beginning of 2004 and 6,800 at the end of the year (GRT and UNDP 2005, 41), but again, the grave concern is that the data fail to reflect the real situation. Diagnostic capacity is low and the social stigma associated with infection means that few who are most at risk are tested, so estimates consider the real number of HIV infections to be 10-20 times higher in some regions than the official level. According to official data, 73% of HIV carriers are drug users and the vast majority are under 30 years of age (GRT and UNDP 2003b). But the picture of the situation among other high-risk groups, such as migrants and their sexual partners in Tajikistan, primarily women, is limited.

Risks from drug trafficking and drug abuse. Since 1996, Tajikistan has been used increasingly by drug traffickers as a transit country, bringing with it an increase in drug abuse and criminal activity. An unpublished Panorama study noted that while the number of men drug couriers and dealers is estimated to be eight times that of women, the use of women as couriers has increased significantly in recent years (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003).¹⁹ The study showed that in 1993, drug crimes accounted for 4% of convictions against women, but in 2001 this rate had increased to almost 20%. Highly vulnerable women are enticed by offers of earning cash quickly into carrying drugs across borders, as officials question women less frequently than they do men. Of the women in prison for such crimes in 2001, 52% were widows or divorcées and needed the cash to buy food and other vital items for their family's survival, according to the Panorama study.

Payment to couriers is meager compared to the profits gained by the criminal organizations. The monetary return is poor considering the health and prosecution risks. Threats and acts of violence against women couriers are frequent once they become entangled with criminal organizations. Some women are forced into sexual relations with intravenous drug users linked to the trafficking rings, clearly the highest-risk community in Tajikistan. The health risks are also grave for the 60% of women couriers required to carry drugs internally. Any breakage or

¹⁹ The study carried out a gender analysis of criminal convictions and interviews with those in prison on drug-related charges.

leakage from the containers means almost certain death, and although many deaths have certainly occurred, they remain unreported. Women are poorly informed of the threats or are coerced by dismal circumstances into taking the risks. Clearly, only the most desperate of circumstances leads women into situations of abuse.

The Panorama study brought attention to the increasing involvement of women in drug trafficking. The government offered a general amnesty and release from custody in August 2001 for women with young children, pregnant women, and those older than 50. The criminal code should be reformed to cover women forced by circumstances into drug trafficking. These women are also at high risk category of HIV infection, and special programs should be considered to assist them.

Risks to migrants and mobile populations. Migrant workers of both sexes are a high-risk category for contracting HIV and other STDs. Migrant workers typically will have 2–3 sexual partners over the course of an 8– or 9–month work season outside Tajikistan. Younger men migrants use commercial sex workers more frequently than older men, and considering the high prevalence of HIV infections in the Russian Federation (IOM and Sharq 2003), most of these men are at very high risk of passing STDs and HIV/AIDS on to their sexual partners once they return home.

The limited understanding of contraception and strong aversion to the use of condoms among the male population is reflected in poor understanding of the issues or unwillingness to change sexual behavior. In the 2003 TLSS, only 2% of women aged 15–49 years reported their partners as using condoms, and noted that condoms are associated with sex workers and sex outside of marriage. These issues are rarely discussed in public and the belief is widespread that STDs and HIV/AIDS are diseases that only prostitutes and the dissolute can catch (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a, UNFPA 2003). Negative attitudes such as these make it difficult for wives to raise the subject of the need for protection against STDs with their returning husbands, especially in more traditional communities. The stigma is also profound against those infected, which discourages testing and open discussion of HIV and other STDs with adolescents and the general public.

3. Psychological Health

Poverty, poor physical health, the lingering trauma from the civil war period, and other stresses affect psychological health. Pressure on women is intensified by unequal gender relations in many households, threats and acts of violence, and the reversion to traditional practices such as polygamy. Chapter 7 discusses gender-based violence in greater detail. Suffice it to say that suicide and other psychological problems from these stresses are increasing among women.

The drastic cuts to health services have left Tajikistan without a single psychiatric critical care facility. Priority is no longer given to these health issues, especially for women. As was noted by several women interviewed, the psychological impacts of violence—both domestic and from the civil conflict—are not adequately recognized as a health concern. Similarly, despite the sharp rise in drug abuse and addiction, Tajikistan has no drug rehabilitation facilities.

4. Access to Health Services and Health-Care-Seeking Behaviors

As the quality of health services and infrastructure have declined, so has the use of services. Users have to pay for health services, including examinations, medicines, and other expenses for some equipment. Even where fees have been fixed for core services, unofficial fees exacted by underpaid professionals deter the poor from seeking services.

Despite efforts to improve health service provision, it appears that use of health care services has continued to decline over the last 4 years (Table 16). Affordability is both men's and women's main reason for not seeking medical assistance, with slightly more women than men stating this reason. The increase in children under age 15 being unable to afford medical assistance is particularly alarming. In many countries, the ability of women to command resources within the household has a direct impact on the health of their children. With the apparent decline in women's capacity to participate in household decision making, particularly in multigenerational households, more needs to be done to understand women's access to resources for health care services for women and their children.

Table 16. Reasons for not Seeking Medical Assistance
(by age and gender, as percent of total respondents)

Reasons Given	Men (%)			Women (%)		
	0–15	16–64	65+	0–15	16–64	65+
Age						
1999 TLSS—Could not afford	35	33	33	18	34	39
2003 TLSS—Could not afford	52	48	62	37	51	66
1999 TLSS—self-medicated	48	55	47	61	52	47
2003 TLSS—self-medicated	28	33	27	49	31	19

Source: World Bank, Tajikistan Living Standard Survey (TLSS), 1999 and 2003, cited in Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a.

Poor quality of services and difficulty with transportation are other reasons for the continued decline in using health services. Mistrust of the quality of services continues, even if full rehabilitation has occurred, and special measures are necessary to build confidence between health professionals and communities.²⁰ A high proportion of people not seeking medical assistance also self-medicate, with a higher proportion of women than men in all age groups resorting to these measures (Falkingham and Baschiere 2004a, World Bank 2005). These findings point to an urgent need to change health-seeking behavior, particularly among women, who are responsible for providing care to children, to complement the other investments in infrastructure and improvement of the quality of health services. Opportunity costs for women to access health care services are different from those of men, and need to be understood if the health status of women and children is to change significantly.

²⁰ Interviews carried out by the CGA team, December 2004.

5. Government Health Sector Reforms and Policies

a. New Initiatives

The Health Sector Reform Plan adopted by the government between 1998 and 2000 emphasized the rehabilitation of a primary health care system that could respond to the needs of the poor and women and children. This was originally supported by WHO and the European Commission, and more recently by ADB and the World Bank, focusing on rehabilitation of infrastructure and reequipping health care facilities. The following steps have been identified in subsequent government policy statements (including the PRSP):

- Revise the state's role in the health care sector.
- Strengthen primary care services. This will require changes in health-care-seeking behavior to encourage use of these services rather than hospital-based facilities. It is particularly important to undertake public health campaigns to counter trends where women no longer seek professional prenatal, child delivery, or postnatal care.
- Rationalize the hospital sector to eliminate inefficient use of scarce funds for the tertiary sector.
- Develop human resources, particularly through training for higher quality care to improve practices and morale among staff.
- Strengthen health care financing to eliminate informal fee charging, which is considered to be the main source of funding for many institutions and probably constitutes the greater part of payments to labor in the sector. Fear of demands for extra fees is a major deterrent to those considering using health care facilities, and is an important determinant of health-seeking behavior.
- Upgrade monitoring and information systems that can improve the development of public health messages and responsive policies and programs. All data should be sex-disaggregated and all factors influencing health care outcomes, including socially determined gender concerns, must be able to be analyzed.
- Rationalize the supply of pharmaceuticals, which consume a high proportion of funds available.

The government has also responded to other specific health priorities. For example, in 1997, the National Multi-Sectoral Committee on HIV was established to monitor the epidemic. In 2002 the Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS Prevention was approved and identified high-risk groups, including youth, drug users, commercial sex workers, migrants, soldiers, and prisoners. Increasing priority is also being given to the specific health problems of women and children in the 2004 Strategic Reproductive Health Plan. WHO funded a study of gender issues in contraceptive use as this plan was being prepared, but no funds have been made available to pursue the findings. An example of the effect of underfunding is that requests from health centers for training on women's reproductive rights, to pass on to patients, have not been met, as no resources have been made

available for this or other initiatives to increase understanding and awareness of gender concerns that influence health outcomes.²¹

6. Recommendations

The following actions are needed to improve gender equality in health care:

- Develop a better understanding of the broad range of factors that are beyond those directly associated with poverty and quality of health care service delivery and that influence the health of men and women, specifically gender relations and the unequal status of women.
- Develop HIV/AIDS prevention and information programs specifically for wives of men in high-risk groups. Much attention is focused on behavior change for high-risk men, but their spouses and other regular partners also need to be targeted as reproductive health strategies are developed. Other areas of program development to be considered include routine testing of pregnant women, with follow-up counseling for spouses of those testing positive for HIV/AIDS, and consideration of the role of women in caring for those infected with HIV/AIDS.
- Improve the understanding among health professionals and policy/program planners of all aspects of gender dimensions of reproductive health, including specific concerns of adolescents. This can be achieved through research and capacity building among health professionals, educators, and community workers.
- Increase efforts to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking. International treaties and regulations are being signed within the region. Training and infrastructure development is being provided along border areas through which drug traffickers are operating, but sensitivity training is urgently required to ensure that women couriers and victims are not further abused by enforcement officers. To limit the operations of drug traffickers, increase poverty reduction programs that specifically target women who are vulnerable to being coerced into acting as drug couriers and women who live in border regions. Develop programs to address the health concerns and economic security of women charged with drug offenses.
- Invest in the management and analysis of health-related data that incorporate a gender perspective regarding the full range of health risk factors, such as living conditions, gender relations within the family, and poverty.

C. Social Protection

During the Soviet era considerable, but unsustainable, state funding was allocated to social protection and was founded on a guarantee of full employment. An extensive system of invalid and old age benefits was available for people unable to work and generous child benefits were provided to families with young children. Cash benefits were complemented by “in-kind” benefits such as free preschool and child care, subsidized housing and utilities, and generous maternity leave. Social transfers made up an estimated 14% of total gross income within the former Soviet Union (ADB

²¹ Interview with the Vice-Minister of Health, December 2004.

2000, 76). During the immediate post-independence period and the civil war, the economic and social dislocation led to extreme economic insecurity just when the social safety nets were being dismantled. Demands for benefits for those unable to work increased sharply as the funds available disappeared, intensifying the effects of poverty and leaving the population with a strong sense of abandonment.

The collapse of the social protection system had a particularly harsh impact on women, who had relied on the extensive system of benefits for families with children. These benefits ranged from maternity leave and cash payments to multiple supports for education and child care. Informal social networks among families and communities had to fill in the gaps, such as the sharing of food from home production among extended family members; caring for the children of other family members or neighbors; cash remittances from migrants; and a return to more traditional reciprocal practices between families, such as preparing feasts for the whole community when migrant workers return to their homes. Many of these social networks rely on unpaid family labor, particularly by women, adding to the time pressures of caring for children and sick family members who would in other times have been covered under state programs.

Informal transfers in cash or kind from outside the household are reported to have a greater impact on a household's living standard than official social transfer payments. Informal transfers account for almost 10% of total household average income per month according to the 2003 TLSS, a proportion similar to findings in the 1999 TLSS. However, these figures may underestimate the real importance of the transfers to households in the poorest quintile, as they make up almost 50% of total household income when only recipient households are taken into account (World Bank 2005).

The formal social protection system in Tajikistan consists of social insurance (pensions, unemployment, and family benefits), social assistance (cash compensation payments for poor children and assistance in kind), and social care (residential care and social services). Delivery of government-supported social protection programs in Tajikistan is the mandate of the MLSP. The Social Protection Fund provides pensions (except military and law enforcement pensions, which are not subject to insurance arrangements and are paid directly out of the province's budget) and sickness, unemployment, and maternity benefits. The fund accounted for 15% of government expenditure in 2002.

1. Pension Schemes

A pay-as-you-go scheme was established following radical reforms to the Soviet system. The number of recipients per 1,000 people in 2000 was 66 for old age pensions, 12 for survivors of conflict, and 13 for disability (World Bank 2005). This is one of the lowest levels of recipients among CIS countries: a total of 91 per 1,000. The recipient level has fallen only marginally from 107 in 1992. Clearly, considering the high levels of poverty, many people have to survive without pensions.

Pension payments are established according to length of service and average incomes, but a minimum pension cannot be lower than the minimum wage. These levels were raised by

presidential decree in 2002 to improve the situation of both employees and pensioners. As demonstrated in Figure 3, average pensions have not increased at the same rate as average wages, causing additional deprivation for pensioners living below the poverty line. Further reforms to balance the pension scheme's income and expenses have not been put in place because of limited funds.

More women than men are receiving pensions. The 2003 TLSS noted that 8.8% of all women are pensioners compared with 6.6% of men. The low allowances mean other sources of income have to be found to secure survival. Pensioners rely particularly on household plots to grow food and supplements from remittances and other household members. Because women earn considerably less than men in all sectors, have their length of service interrupted by child bearing and care, and live longer, as full pension reforms take effect, women's pensions will be much lower than men's. Other social transfers will have to be used to keep female pensioners out of poverty, negating the savings to the government from pension reforms. More studies of the gender impacts of pension reforms are required to avoid these circumstances in the future.

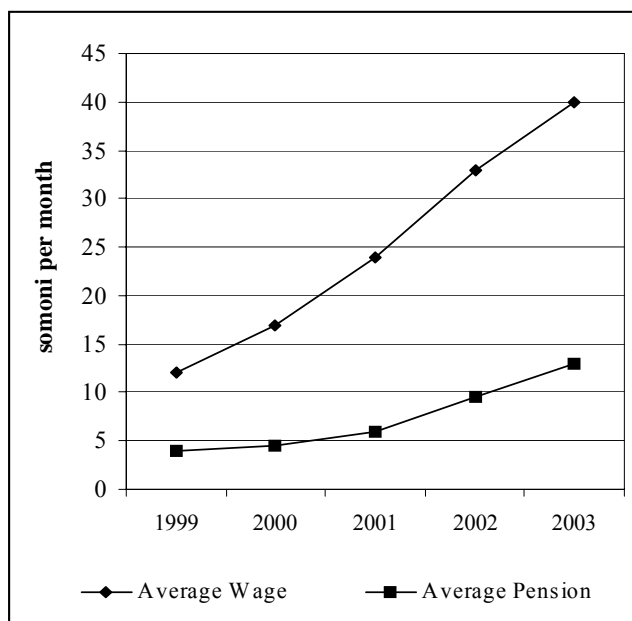
2. Unemployment Benefits

Employers deduct a percentage from each employee's wages to cover unemployment, sickness, and maternity benefits; in addition, employers are required to make matching contributions. It is not possible to monitor the effectiveness of this program, as enterprises are not required to provide a breakdown of their employer

remittances. Consequently, assessment cannot be made of which benefits due are actually paid, or to which target group, leaving considerable scope for enterprises to underpay social benefits.

The gender budget analysis commissioned for the CGA found it was also not possible to track from available data how unemployment payments are allocated between men and women (see Appendix 4). Without knowing who is receiving benefits, the system cannot be made more efficient nor encourage recipients to remain in the job market. Only 35% of women registered at the Sino Employment Centre found jobs following training programs, according to the CGA gender budget analysis study, but officials did not analyze why the rest failed to find employment.

Figure 3. Average Wages in Public Sector and Average Pension by Year



Source: GRT 2004a.

If many migrants from poor households are no longer able to enter the Russian Federation because of the costly new passport requirements, the pressure on the unemployment benefits system will be considerable and could well push the targeted programs for women off the agenda.

3. Cash Compensation Program

The Cash Compensation Program (CCP) was introduced in March 1996 to replace the old system of child allowances and a universal bread subsidy. Initially it targeted payments to four categories of people: each child under 8 years in poor families; single-parent families with children under 16; disabled and nonworking pensioners; and students in higher, vocational, or specialized secondary education, regardless of other scholarships received. By late 1998, only about 15% of those eligible were receiving payments and the system was in arrears. Many families were unclear about eligibility or found it too complicated to claim payments that might not be made anyway. By 1999, the CCP was being reformed so that payments were made quarterly to cut transaction costs, and application forms were simplified (ADB 2000). Since 2002, eligibility has narrowed to poor families with children from 6 to 15 years attending school, with the intention of targeting the 20% poorest children in each school, totaling 292,500 children in 2003 (World Bank 2005). Eligibility is still determined through community committees to ensure that local conditions are taken into account. The proportion of eligible households actually receiving benefits has improved since 1999 and arrears have decreased (World Bank 2005).

The CCP is an important supplement to income for families with children, and hence particularly important for women. But the difficulties are many: the amounts paid are still very low and are not indexed to consumer prices; officials claim that many poor children in school are not covered; and the requirement for community-based decision making makes administrative mechanisms complicated, given the amounts actually paid out. The CCP is now also complemented by energy compensation payments for poor families; the payments are made directly to the supplier, causing distortions in the reforms to the energy sector. Targeting of the energy compensation program is widely criticized, but for many families these kinds of benefits remain vital.

The transferring of responsibility for child care onto women as previous state programs were abolished requires broader acknowledgement than simply substituting CCP or similar programs paying small cash amounts to families with children. Investments in other supports such as kindergartens are also required, as are programs to encourage men to take greater responsibility for child care and other household tasks. Data collection at the community level, analysis, and monitoring of how schemes might be adjusted to reduce the culture of dependence on the state need to be strengthened. The capacity to assess eligibility for social assistance should be improved. Profiles of recipients could be developed based on data from MLSP's own records and a better understanding of what combinations of supports are required.

Considering the high levels of poverty experienced in Tajikistan and those with special needs (e.g., civil war widows, families with large numbers of children, and families with migrating men whose remittances reach their families irregularly, if at all), it is important to understand what types of support would best suit a variety of needs in the face of a variety of circumstances. To

build self-reliance, family and neighborhood networks can provide appropriate support with funds channeled to institutions such as community-organized child care facilities rather than to individuals. The gender differences in the way social networks are used are considerable, e.g., women share child care among relatives to facilitate income generation, men share assets through kin groups (*avlods*).²² These gender-based differences need to be understood if a different approach to programs is to be appropriate and cost effective.

The social investment funds (SIFs) offer an opportunity to overcome some challenges in Tajikistan and potentially target the needs of women. SIFs use a number of informal financial institutions, mostly microfinance NGOs, to deliver a range of different supports based on the needs of the vulnerable in a particular region or community. The World Bank, under the first SIF program, has implemented 184 projects affecting approximately 600,000 people. The microcredit subcomponent has provided 30,182 loans to 8,604 clients, mostly to women. The SIF approach encourages self-reliance and provides opportunities for recipients to access other services that NGOs might be offering, such as training or group mobilization to build alternative social safety nets for future support. But the very poor are often not able to benefit from these types of programs and therefore require different types of support, such as humanitarian assistance.

4. Humanitarian Assistance

Reliance on humanitarian assistance from external sources has decreased to some extent in recent years, although environmental rather than economic disasters or those associated with civil conflict continue to leave many families in extreme food deficit situations. The most common form of support is through food assistance and includes food-for-work, agricultural support, and institutional and vulnerable group feeding supported by the UN, European Community, and several international NGOs. Support is also given for improving disaster management mechanisms.

Women's specific needs must be taken into account in implementing and monitoring programs. These kinds of programs can contribute to strengthening women's active participation in development planning and monitoring, and hence empowerment. Humanitarian assistance has in the past often reinforced women's dependency on welfare rather than encouraging their participation as active agents of change. Disaster preparedness programs must also build women's self-reliance and reinforce social networks that support their specific needs, e.g., child care.

5. Recommendations

The following actions are recommended to improve equity of participation in social protection programs:

²² The *Avlod* (also known as *qaymi* or *toyfa*) is a patriarchal community of blood relatives who have a common ancestor and common interests, and in many cases shared property and means of production and consolidated or coordinated household budgets.

- Monitor gaps in pension incomes between men and women and ensure that in the longer term women are not penalized for their more limited opportunities in the labor market.
- Provide gender analysis training to government and NGO staff to ensure that social protection programs are planned, implemented, and monitored to meet the needs of men and women.
- Improve targeting and create innovative social assistance that builds independence through improved monitoring of existing programs. Ensure that findings from gender-sensitive monitoring are fed back into the program planning and implementation cycle, e.g., positive impacts of SIF programs on women and other vulnerable groups are incorporated into other forms of social protection programs.
- Reexamine the negative impacts of the erosion of social protection on women and vulnerable groups. Advocate the reestablishment of affordable or free child care through NGOs and community-organized child care facilities.
- Ensure that all humanitarian assistance programs address the needs and priorities of men and women, and that women are actively involved in program design, implementation, and monitoring.

D. Domestic Violence

The State Program acknowledges the pervasive way that violence and the threat of violence against women limits their potential to realize their rights and equal participation in public and social life. The State Program sets out the definition of gender-based violence, based on internationally accepted definitions, and presents the findings of a survey conducted in 1998–1999 that reveals shocking statistics. According to the survey, 50% of women have experienced sexual violence from their husbands, 47% are faced with violence in the family, and 47% have experience psychological violence from strangers (GRT 2001).

No detailed studies correlate the incidence of domestic violence with particular socioeconomic situations. Nor are there data on its incidence in families with male out-migration, for example between wives left behind and other family members. Many impacts of violence against women during the civil conflict remain (ADB 2000). While many communities seek to put the experience of violence behind them, many rape victims continue to suffer post-traumatic psychological harm, and health complications following STDs or abortions.

In many of these families, the post-conflict trauma and economic insecurity has led to alcohol or drug abuse, and additional stress on men who feel extreme social pressure when they can no longer earn sufficient funds for their family's survival. Many women speak of these pressures driving their husbands or other family members into violent outbursts in the home. Women rape victims from the civil war period, young widows forced to live with extended family members, and new wives entering multigenerational households seem to be particularly vulnerable to abuse because they are economically and socially dependent on others. At the same time, economic pressure may force women in more conservative areas to travel to marketplaces to sell home-produced goods and face verbal abuse and other types of harassment. Social pressure may be brought to bear by other household members on these women for not conforming to suitable

behavior, and these family members in turn provide no support if abuse by outsiders gets out of hand. Husbands may respond with violence if women complain, leading to more disruption within the community, so many women suffer humiliation in silence.

Suicide by immolation, a particularly desperate response to living in difficult or violent circumstances, is occurring more frequently among young women. An NGO reported that last year that 10 suicides by burning and 2 through drinking medicines had occurred in Kolyab alone.²³ That these suicides have been officially recorded shows that government officials acknowledge them, which is an important step toward addressing an effect of domestic violence. As part of a 2002 study funded by the Soros Foundation, the Women Lawyers Association identified 10 cases of family members being charged in suicides of women by burning. Whether these cases are limited to women from poor families and the true extent of such responses to domestic violence are unclear. Additional studies of individual cases are urgently needed if this disturbing trend is to be understood and then stopped.

The population is poorly informed about gender-based violence, and many respondents in a recent UNIFEM study could not even recognize some forms of violence, particularly psychological forms, such as intimidation through use of sexually explicit jokes, or prevention of women from meeting friends or relatives. Sexual violence remains the most evident, but limited numbers of women report incidents: only 3.9 rapes per 100,000 women ages 15–49 were reported in 2002 (GRT and UNDP 2003b). Given the proportion of women admitting to encountering sexual violence in their family, this level of reporting is extremely low. Attitudes are pervasive that conflict within the household is a personal affair, and that punishments in the Criminal Code are too severe, discouraging many from reporting incidents. Law enforcement officials are also unwilling to file cases and prefer to seek conciliation, making it difficult to assess the true extent of the problem, particularly within families.

The extent of domestic and other forms of gender-based violence in public (e.g., sexual harassment in the workplace and humiliation of women in public places by young men) places a considerable burden on women already coping with other forms of social and economic vulnerability and insecurity. The economic cost in lost work days and ability to care for children and fulfill other family responsibilities is large, but not well understood. Domestic violence also leads to considerable disempowerment of women, who fear disapproval from their spouse or other male family members (and sometimes mothers-in-law, who also carry out violent acts against younger wives in the household). Living under these conditions limits women's choices and increases their risk of dependence and economic insecurity. Domestic violence and harassment or insecurity in public spaces is increasingly recognized as a significant contributing factor to the feminization of poverty in many countries, but is not well understood in Tajikistan.

²³ Interview with Save the Children nongovernment organization (NGO) in Kulyab during preparation of the CGA, December 2004.

1. Government Policy and Programs Regarding Domestic Violence

Tajikistan has no separate law on domestic violence, but the criminal code can be used to address certain types of violence, such as beating, torture, and damage to health. Filing criminal cases against family members is very difficult for women, as the male-dominated police and judiciary do not see domestic violence as a crime but rather as a family matter. Women are often blamed for beatings they receive, with the reason given that they should have changed their own behavior to avoid such actions. Criminal courts also have stringent evidentiary requirements that strongly discourage women from filing cases. Support services are not available in almost all areas of Tajikistan, particularly in rural areas, to provide counseling to victims of domestic violence or shelters during legal proceedings, or to help women remove themselves from violent situations. Some traditional practices that exploit or coerce women into marriage are not recognized under the criminal code as a contravention of women's basic human rights.

The government has acknowledged that a domestic violence law needs to be put in place, as existing legislation does not provide an adequate framework. The Women Lawyers Association has drafted a bill that is being discussed by the government. Since 2001, programs to establish government-sponsored crisis centers in several regions of Tajikistan have been implemented with funding from foreign development partners, and 46% of respondents in the UNIFEM survey stated that they are aware of these centers. The vast majority of women questioned acknowledge that outside help is necessary to overcome these problems (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003). Many women-focused NGOs with their main programs in areas such as microcredit have also established crisis centers, reflecting the fact that for most women, addressing violence in their family cannot be ignored or referred to an agency. The Swiss Development Corporation has been funding NGO programs in this area for several years and recently helped to establish an NGO network in Tajikistan. The Soros Foundation and UNIFEM have also linked NGOs in Tajikistan with ones in other CIS countries.

2. Recommendations

The following actions are recommended to reduce domestic violence:

- Provide funding urgently required to establish more crisis centers, toll-free crisis lines, and shelters and safe houses for women. Offer a range of services including financial, legal, medical, and psychological counseling, and skills-building and income-generating opportunities, so that women are not forced to return to dangerous situations simply through economic dependence.
- Provide funding for professionals to deliver innovative grief and trauma counseling that is not clinical in nature and thereby does not carry social stigma. The counseling should be delivered through NGOs and other community-based entry points, to address the continuing post-traumatic effects of the civil war.
- Create residential alcohol and drug treatment programs for addicts, taking them outside their households and providing trauma counseling and skills building.

- Advocate the inclusion in school curricula, from primary level onward, of awareness of the criminality of violence against women and of women’s rights to protection under the law. Teach boys respect for girls at an early age.
- Provide adequate funding and technical support to develop culturally appropriate outreach and public education and media campaigns to challenge widespread social attitudes and claims that “culture” and “family” traditions endorse violence against women, with a view to educating the public that no religion or culture endorses violence against women. Carry out the campaign through print, radio, and television media.
- Reform the law in ways that provide an adequate definition of gender-based violence to cover all its forms in Tajikistan, and provide an extensive sensitization program for police and judiciary to help them acknowledge that domestic violence is a criminal act, not a private family matter.
- Support broad-based capacity building to ensure that judiciary and law enforcement agencies can apply new legislation.
- Hold specialized sessions integrated in training programs for all health professionals, so they can identify and address the physical and psychological effects of domestic violence. Health professionals require training to prepare and give evidence in court as new laws are enforced. Similar skills are also required for people who work with victims of other forms of sexual abuse.

E. Trafficking of Women and Children

Trafficking in women and children is an increasingly significant form of gender-based violence, in which criminal organizations and individuals prey on women’s vulnerabilities to secure profits. The rising incidence of trafficking of women is also inextricably related to the sharp increase in migration. The dynamics of human trafficking are always complex and are linked to combinations of economic, social, and opportunistic factors. The need to leave home to find employment is a strong push factor in Tajikistan, coupled with the vulnerabilities of women and adolescent girls who have had limited exposure to the outside world.

Poverty forces women to make choices they would not otherwise consider for the sake of their own or their family’s survival. Women are frequently lured into responding to advertisements for domestic workers—the only skill many women may have to offer—that turn out to be commercial sex work. Many women accept commercial sex work as all they can do to survive, and may later be trafficked or forced into slave-like situations and unable to remove themselves from violent and unsafe conditions. A large number of trafficked victims state they were offered “shuttle” trade jobs that turned into opportunities for traffickers to move their victims on to other countries as sex workers. Based on IOM estimates, as many as 45,000 women may be traveling regularly to neighboring countries as “shuttle traders,” many of whom are highly vulnerable to being coerced by criminals (IOM and Sharq 2003). An increasing number of trafficked women are also forced into drug smuggling (UNIFEM 2005). The use of Tajikistan as a transit country for drug trafficking is having significant impacts on impoverished communities. Organized criminals involved in trafficking drugs and humans are often linked with the commercial sex industry in other parts of the world.

The groups most vulnerable to being trafficked are

- single women aged 20–26, usually secondary school graduates but with no higher education, and therefore excluded from professional opportunities;
- heads of households, with children;
- rural women who have migrated to Dushanbe or Khujand and have difficulties settling in the urban centers; and
- ethnic minorities, especially those of Slavic origin, among whom the incidence of trafficking was particularly high in relation to the size of these groups in the population overall (IOM 2001).

The major destinations for trafficked women are the Russian Federation and the Middle East, especially Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and United Arab Emirates. Pakistan is also mentioned as a destination country. Many Tajik women transit through Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan to the Middle East or the Russian Federation. Recent evidence from IOM's work with trafficking survivors points to Osh in the Kyrgyz Republic as a burgeoning collection point for traffickers from surrounding countries. Up to 40 people may be sent weekly from Osh to the Gulf States, including women, girls, and young boys.

The demand for cheap labor (maids, cleaners, and nannies) in the major trafficking hubs such as Dubai and Moscow provides a ready market for human traffickers. The entertainment industry, linked to tourism and travel and Internet-based pornography are other areas of demand for trafficked labor from Central Asia.

Increasing restrictions on labor migration are also causing many would-be migrants to resort to irregular or illegal channels. Passports are now required to travel to the Russian Federation and immigration restrictions are increasing for those seeking to travel from Tajikistan to the European Union. Under these conditions, women are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked or harassed by officials, criminal organizations, and employers.

Men are also vulnerable to abuse and trafficking under these conditions and many men have been caught up in human trafficking incidents. Many of the recommendations to ensure safe migration need to be applied for men as well as women. However, women are vulnerable in specific ways because of their inexperience in the public sphere and the demand for types of workers that are particularly vulnerable to abuse, i.e., domestic workers.

The criminal nature of human trafficking makes it difficult to assess accurately the scope of activities in any country. The increasing evidence of drug trafficking would indicate increased human trafficking, as is the pattern in other countries.

1. Government Policy and Programs

The Criminal Code of Tajikistan was amended in 2003 to criminalize human trafficking and the government has recently passed specific anti-trafficking legislation (Article #130 under the Criminal Code) to strengthen the mechanisms available to prosecute traffickers. Enforcement

remains minimal, however, despite support for training and strengthening border controls. Only two cases were filed against traffickers in 2003, one involving several persons operating as a ring (US State Department 2004). Criminal cases were also filed against two low-level officials for issuing falsified documents; but both fled the country before being convicted. A special human trafficking office has been established under the Interior Ministry and an interministerial committee has been formed to consider countertrafficking programs. IOM has worked with enforcement officers to increase their understanding of human trafficking.

Few prosecutions and almost no state protection for trafficking survivors are the main reasons the United States (US) State Department placed Tajikistan on the Tier 2 Watch List for the second year running in 2004, under its Trafficking in Persons Act (US State Department 2004). The report notes that the government of Tajikistan is increasing its efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking, but needs to do more to protect victims and prosecute their exploiters. It also notes that no national action plan has been developed to address these concerns. The government is concerned about this continued censure and has responded with some specific actions. IOM states, much room remains for improvement; however, progress made should be recognized. Trafficking of women was formerly considered to involve only commercial sex work, but this understanding has broadened in recent years, the Palermo Protocol (2001) has been adopted, and greater consideration is given to specific concerns identified by IOM and the US State Department.

A variety of programs is being funded by IOM to provide protection and repatriation assistance to trafficking survivors and to increase awareness in vulnerable communities. These efforts are being limited by lack of access to safe shelters where survivors can await criminal cases or remain until either their families or other resettlement options can be found. The harm to survivors is often very great and psychological as well as medical assistance is required. Those involved in commercial sex work may also return with HIV/AIDS and require long-term care and other support.

NGOs are incorporating trafficking awareness into other programs involving women and children, to include safe migration messages, and are setting up help lines to assist migrants. IOM is also supporting these prevention programs with funds and excellent materials. But again, more needs to be done to develop a stronger network of activists and programs across the country, particularly to promote safe migration.

Trafficking survivors face considerable social sanctions, making it difficult for them to return to their homes. Public attitudes need to be changed, both in terms of resisting dangerous situations and in accepting returning survivors so they may integrate into a normal life once their usually horrific experiences have passed. In conditions of social marginalization and poverty, many survivors may return to dangerous situations as their only option. Little work has been done in Tajikistan to understand the complex interrelationships in the dynamics of human trafficking.

The need is urgent to raise awareness among the population in general about trafficking, and to increase discussion and debate about the nature of trafficking. This will require campaigns in the mass media, information dissemination agencies, and government bodies to take responsibility for the awareness-raising activities.

Improving border controls is one means to limit the activities of traffickers. If Osh is becoming a central collection point, many traffickers must be moving across the road border points. Several initiatives in the region are improving border crossings. This presents an opportunity to ensure that steps are taken to limit human trafficking and other forms of smuggling. Physical facilities can be improved to incorporate special safe areas for trafficking survivors, or for NGOs working on safe migration issues. All border officials, not only those specifically responsible for immigration, should be made aware of the enormous costs of human trafficking, to the victims as well as to their communities. Many border officials see only the short-term gains and costs, and have little respect for the young women involved, often connecting their plight with loose morals. Partnerships with organizations such as IOM and local NGOs should encourage the identification of ways to incorporate such measures into all infrastructure projects.

Poverty reduction programs in regions where migration levels are high can also seek opportunities to incorporate trafficking awareness programs into other community mobilization activities. These types of initiatives have been important for reinforcing mass media campaigns in other Asian countries. Policy dialogue opportunities should also be used to increase the dialogue regarding the negative and positive impacts of migration, as an integral part of poverty reduction programs.

2. Recommendations

Actions recommended to combat human trafficking are as follows:

- Increase, on an urgent basis, the government's understanding of the current dynamics of human trafficking in Tajikistan. Put mechanisms in place to track migrants, follow up on experiences of trafficking survivors, and seek experience from other countries.
- Target poverty reduction and social protection programs more effectively to those most vulnerable to being trafficked.
- Integrate trafficking prevention activities into existing infrastructure and community development programs. For example, in the design of infrastructure projects now opening up, consider how the flow of goods and services across international borders will also influence the flow of migrants and other factors that intensify risks of trafficking.
- Take opportunities to learn from others in Asia and to draw on experience in developing programs. Mainstream countertrafficking activities into many areas of work.

A. Women's Involvement in Political and Other Forms of Decision Making

Tajikistan is a centralized country governed under a presidential system. The Tajik Bicameral Parliament (*Majlisi Oli*) consists of the National Assembly (*Majlisi Milli*) with 33 seats and Assembly of Representatives (*Majlisi Namoyandagon*) with 63 seats. Three fourths of members are indirectly elected by people's deputies (delegates) of administrative-territorial units in their joint meetings, and one fourth are appointed by the President. Deputies are elected under a single-member majority system. The Executive branch of the republic includes the Chairman of Government, the Prime Minister, and the ministries.

Under the Soviet system, quotas were set for women in administrative posts and in the deputy corps, with compulsory election of a woman as one of the party committee heads and deputy chair of executive committees. Based on these quotas, women held 26% of the posts in 1989, although women were generally allocated posts in the social and cultural sectors and held middle- or low-level positions. One or two women held ministerial posts in social security or health care (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003).

Table 17. Proportion of Elected and Administrative Positions Held by Women

Position	Proportion of Women
Majlisi Namoyandagon (national level)	18% (2005 election)
Majlisi Milli (oblast level)	12.1% (2002 election)
Local Majlisis	11.5% (2002 election)
Managers in Administration in General	15.5%
Managers of:	
Ministries and State Committees	7.3
President's Office	12.3%
Presidential Bodies and Government	10.6%
Heads of Agencies	20.5%
Representation in Local Government:	
Heads of Cities or Rayons	9% (7 women)
Deputy Chair of City or Rayon	34%
Heads of Jamoats (Village-Level Government)	22.7% (93 women)
Deputy Chair of Jamoat	43%
Judges in All Courts	20.8%*
Heads of Prosecutor's Office Departments	45%

Majlisi Milli = National Assembly; Majlis Namoyandagan = Assembly of Representatives.

Source: UNIFEM 2005, and GRT and UNDP 2003b.

Once quotas were abolished, only 3.9% (9 of 230) of the deputies were women in the first post-independence Supreme Council of the Republic, reflecting the immediate post-independence attitudes toward women in decision making during this troubled period. Yet the proportion of women in all areas of decision making is gradually increasing. In February 2005, 11 women were elected to the *Majlisi Namoyandagon*, representing 18% of the total, which is the same proportion

as were sitting prior to the election. The proportions are slightly smaller in other elected bodies, with 12.1% in the *Majlisi Milli* and 11.5% in local *Majlisis*. This is a higher proportion, though, than in other CIS countries (GRT and UNDP 2003b).

As can be seen in Table 18, more women are in decision-making positions in local and rayon-level government than at the higher level. This is common in many countries, as it is easier for women to participate in political activity close to home. While it is important that women are visibly involved in decision making for programs delivered within the communities, it is also important that more women be present in the highest levels of government.

Table 18. Comparison of Characteristics of Dekhan Farms and Households by Gender of Leader

Character	Men	Women
Size of Dekhan Farm:		
- 0–5 shareholders	22%	38%
- 6–10 shareholders	—	30%
- 20 shareholders or staff	30%	—
Average Size of Landholding	5.8 ha	4.1 ha
Education Attainment	40% higher education	56% secondary education (some not completed) 18% higher education
Previous Experience in Agriculture	24% collective farms 11% agricultural specialists 32% specialists in other fields	56% from collective farms 28% agricultural specialists
Average Size of Household to Support	Larger households with 54% with more than 9 members	Slightly smaller household with 53% 6–8 members
Household Structure	35% nuclear family	44% nuclear family inferring greater influence over decisions
Ability to Provide for Family from Dekhan Farm Income	30%	33%

Ha = hectares; — = data not available.

Source: Country Gender Assessment study team.

Some people have argued that the stereotyping of women's areas of interest is also changing because women have headed powerful committees such as the Committee for the Economy, Budget, Finance, and Taxes (Hotkina and Rabieva 2003). However, many report that gender equality is not a high priority even for elected women deputies, or among other senior decision makers.

The President has issued an order to increase the number of women in political office, and each level of government has sought ways to put this into effect. In the elections in February 2005, more women with political and administrative experience were on the list of candidates for all parties, but the same proportion was elected as in the previous election. Many women activists are

advocating that more leadership training should be put in place to improve women's skills and confidence to participate in political and community life. During the Soviet era such programs were commonplace in all communities. UNIFEM and some NGOs have been training newly elected women officials, but much more could be done.

More women must be active in decision-making positions to give added momentum to implementing the state policies and legislation concerning gender equality. While it is vital that men be actively involved in shaping a more equitable society, women's experience and specific needs and interests tend to be better expressed by women themselves in positions where these opinions can influence the direction of policy and priorities for implementation. As in many countries, solid legal frameworks may be in place, but implementation has fallen short of expectations, mostly from lack of political will. Increasing the number of women influencing key decisions within the government and the elected bodies is the single most important factor to move the agenda forward.

B. Public Sector Reforms

The 2002 PRSP and the 2005 MDG Needs Assessment report note that many reforms are required to ensure that government institutions and structures are more accountable and efficient in the delivery of services for poverty reduction. These include reforming the public sector to improve the efficiency of the public service; streamlining and strengthening the national budgeting process so it matches the priority policies and programs identified under the PRSP; continuing privatization of public enterprises; eliminating red tape that hampers private sector development; and indirectly encouraging the growth of an informal, unregulated business sector.

A central step in improving the efficiency of public services and strengthening the national budgeting process is monitoring the impact of previous programs (and their budget allocations) to learn how and what initiatives can be adjusted or continued. Poverty reduction is the main priority in Tajikistan, so ensuring that government programs have indeed been pro-poor and can demonstrate progress on poverty reduction indicators is fundamental.

Gender is one of the key factors influencing who is poor and who can remove him- or herself from poverty. An important consideration in the effective management of government resources, therefore, is ensuring that gender variables are understood and that measures are taken to address and reduce distortions and discrimination. This requires a gender analysis of policy and program impacts that links budget allocations to program effectiveness, i.e., performance-based budgeting. Such analysis provides opportunities for consultation with men and women to ensure that their needs and priorities are understood. It also promotes accountability and transparency in governance, and strengthens women's participation in decision making.

Performance-based budgeting in the public sector reform strategy, as supported by the World Bank and other development partners, relies not only on complying with project budgets and ensuring efficiency of expenditures (i.e., tracking inputs and outputs), but also on effectively achieving or delivering against specified goals (i.e., tracking the extent to which outputs have been transformed into outcomes). This is challenging for all governments. While it is relatively easy to

track quantitative outputs linked to outcomes such as economic growth through GDP or trade data, it is much more challenging to identify social costs from different patterns of spending, some of which might take several years to become evident. For example, cuts in primary education spending might in the longer term result in increased social ills, as school leavers receive poorer quality education, cannot find work, and sink into despair. This in turn affects men and women differently within a household.

Cause-and-effect relationships involving social changes are hard to track and wide-ranging impacts are difficult to predict. The transition period has demonstrated in many sectors that social costs cannot be ignored; deteriorating trends in social development indicators are proving difficult to reverse despite recent economic growth. This emphasizes the need to undertake broad-based policy impact analysis that incorporates gender dimensions prior to budget allocation, which is then tracked over time and considered as the next budget cycle is started. This process can be incorporated into the public sector reforms currently being planned and undertaken as an integral rather than a separate activity.

Employment equity is not identified as a priority in either the PRSP or the MDG Needs Assessment Report. Affirmative action measures can be taken to encourage women to compete for middle and senior management positions, and programs can be developed to offer management and leadership training to potential women candidates. The Civil Service Department also could lead in creating a work environment free of discrimination against women and other groups.

Putting in place more effective employment equity regulations within the civil service as part of civil service reforms, creating model tribunal systems for appeals against discrimination that other employers can follow, and publicizing cases and how to address them are all measures that could be taken. Sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace are extreme forms of discrimination that feed on gender stereotypes. Conditions of employment within the civil service should be the starting place for challenging these attitudes and making the workplace accessible and the work experience more rewarding for women. Such measures will, in the longer term, increase productivity, improve the quality of government services, and ensure that women's rights are fully protected.

C. Civil Society and Development Partners Supporting Gender Equality

Civil society organizations, including an expanding number of NGOs, have been evolving rapidly in Tajikistan, particularly those seeking to address the stresses placed on communities through the transition period and growing poverty. The government has recognized the potential contributions of all sectors of civil society, particularly of women-led and -focused NGOs. These NGOs play a central role in mobilizing the women's movement in Tajikistan, as well as in delivery of services to address gender concerns. By 2003, of the 1,130 registered NGOs, 224 (19.8%) were headed by women and are active from the national to rayon levels. Most are located in Dushanbe and Sugd Oblast, and few have the capacity to serve remoter areas. Women-led organizations were recognized as highly effective in many areas of NGO activities in an analysis of the emerging role of civil society in Tajikistan in 2001.

Many organizations have grown out of the women's committees and unions organized during the Soviet period. Others are more active in supporting social justice concerns and are linked with the global human rights and women's movement. Women's professional associations have also developed, as well as research organizations that have specialized to a greater or lesser extent in increasing the understanding of gender equality issues in the country. An extensive list of research undertaken between 1995 and 2003 was included in UNIFEM's *For Life Free of Violence* (UNIFEM 2005), which demonstrates the extent to which information is becoming available on all aspects of promoting gender equality. Most studies have been funded through international organizations; through initiatives such as women's studies departments at the universities, interest among the younger generation is being sustained.

Several international NGOs and development partners such as the Aga Khan Development Foundation, CARE, UNDP, UNIFEM, etc., have supported the strengthening of community-based organizations that are now delivering services and helping to implement many foreign- and government-funded poverty reduction activities. These NGOs have enabled many women to be more directly involved through group formation or user committees in projects such as water or irrigation rehabilitation. But the coverage of this approach remains limited, especially in remote areas. In areas where NGOs are active, they may be the only contact that communities, and particularly women, have with the outside world. NGOs have assisted with identifying suitable government agencies for support, and how to identify needs that might be addressed through a project or outside funding.

Many NGOs are consulted in the development of policy and legislation: for example, the drafting of the recent Gender Balance Law involved consultation on several occasions with women's organizations. International organizations have also strengthened the capacity of these organizations to identify strategic interests and build advocacy campaigns in several crucial areas for women and gender equality, for example for voter education and women's leadership.

Women-led NGOs, members of which were interviewed during the CGA mission, noted that they always seek to work closely with local government bodies in all programming. Increased trust and communication between communities and government leaders is vital if the needs of a community are to be understood and programs adapted to meet those needs. Sometimes old negative attitudes toward NGOs persist, making it challenging for them to cooperate fully with government agencies, but these attitudes are gradually disappearing as NGOs are increasingly seen as an effective means for delivering certain types of services to communities, and to women in particular.

Care has to be taken, however, that NGO approaches that have been more successful in achieving sustainable outcomes from poverty programs are adopted by government agencies as well. Of particular importance is the need to build capacity within government agencies to consult with local communities, including women, and not just leaders of village-level administrations (*jamoats*), and then plan based on priorities identified. Top-down planning, with no monitoring of outcomes, continues at all levels of government, and the NGOs' experience in the fight against poverty is a valuable asset that the government should draw upon more effectively.

Enabling legislation is gradually being put in place to facilitate the work of NGOs. An example is the recent legislation regarding MFIs. The energy from these organizations must not be lost as they are forced to become more organized and to collaborate more fully with the government. It is also important to ensure that responses will be forthcoming as needs and aspirations of communities are brought to government at all levels and mechanisms are strengthened. As communities start to develop their own organizations, through mobilization by NGOs, their members must see benefits and be able to use their new-found skills so they do not become disillusioned and the emerging spirit of self-reliance is not quashed.

In addition, as monitoring activities are strengthened for the PRSP, plans are being rolled out for stronger community participation in the monitoring activities. NGOs will play an important role in this, as networks are being established. NGOs are being consulted, but also need to have continual contact with the Government as indicators are refined, methods for data collection finalized, and lines of responsibility set out. While the government is consulting with NGOs more regularly as policies and legislation are drafted, it is still difficult to obtain certain types of information—for example, budget allocation information—making it hard to track how decisions were made and where planned programs will actually receive funds for implementation. This is vital if communities are to know how to access poverty reduction resources for themselves as they become more aware and self-reliant.

Recommendations for political participation are as follows:

- Increase public awareness of the importance of women’s political participation. Civil society in particular has an important role to play in increasing awareness within political parties and among voters.
- Increase women’s awareness, as voters, of their role in making elected officials accountable to them for gender equality, for women’s empowerment, and to ensure that their specific needs are addressed in policies and programs.
- Increase the capacity of elected officials, particularly women, to address gender equality and women’s empowerment issues.
- Strengthen the capacity of local government officials to consult with women and incorporate a gender perspective into the budgeting and planning process at all levels of government (including gender analysis, gender budgeting, and gender-sensitive indicators for program monitoring) to ensure that the needs of women (as well as of men) are addressed.

Recommendations for public sector reforms are as follows:

- Elements of the policy and budget management reforms proposed by the government and in the MDG Needs Assessment Report provide excellent entry points for gender budgeting that need to be formalized in the indicators selected to track progress in this area. Training has to be given to decision makers at national and local levels, drawing on growing experience in other countries (including the Russian Federation, as supported by UNDP and UNIFEM), as well as tools

adapted to increase understanding of gender gaps in budget allocation and program outcomes in all sectors of the PRSP.

- Mainstream strengthened gender budgeting technical capacities into current public service training in all areas, supported by a range of programs to reform and strengthen the civil service and governance mechanisms at all levels.
- Take measures to ensure that employment equity and sexual harassment considerations are brought into the civil service reform process; the government has an opportunity to take leadership in this area as an employer that respects and protects women's rights.

Recommendations for civil society and nongovernment organizations are as follows:

- Promote gender-sensitive approaches to poverty reduction among all civil society organizations and pass on experiences of effective collaboration with government in gender-sensitive planning and implementation of programs that effectively target the needs and priorities of women.
- Continue to advocate and support a rights-based approach to poverty reduction work and pressure the government to take its commitment to protecting women's rights more seriously.
- Provide gender sensitivity and gender analysis training to other civil society organizations and government staff at all levels, based on the experience of women-led and -focused NGOs and civil-society organizations. The training will aim to increase understanding of the ways in which gender mainstreaming and the addressing of gender gaps can maximize poverty reduction efforts.

ADB's portfolio in Tajikistan is quite new, with operations commencing in 1998 and focused on rehabilitating infrastructure destroyed in the civil war and creating a basis for a successful economic transition. The main sectors for support have been agriculture (with complementary loans for microfinance sector development), energy, transport, and social sector rehabilitation (particularly in education and health care). Loans have also supported regional cooperation through infrastructure rehabilitation (roads and power transmission) and capacity strengthening within government. The country briefing paper, *Women and Gender Relations in Tajikistan* (ADB 2000), included an analysis of sectors of focus for ADB operations with suggested entry points where women's specific needs could be addressed.

Shortly after the PRSP was adopted in 2002, the government agreed with IMF to limit borrowing on concessional terms. Therefore, ADB refocused its support in the 2004–2008 country strategy program (CSP) under three objectives: (i) to strengthen rural development through institution building that will support policy implementation and the private sector; (ii) to rehabilitate power and rural infrastructure; and (iii) to strengthen regional cooperation through improved customs services and transport links, both within the country and to its neighbors (ADB 2003c). Grant support from bilateral development partners is providing longer-term support to social sectors.

In line with ADB's long-term strategic framework and policy statements, the CSP also contains a commitment to address gender and the environment, albeit indirectly, as crosscutting themes. Specifically, the Tajikistan CSP states that "promotion of gender equality will be through creating economic opportunities for women (primarily in rural development loans)" (ADB 2000, 21). ADB's lending operations and commitment to continued policy dialogue on poverty reduction provide broader concrete opportunities to mainstream gender at both the strategic and operational level than is stated in the CSP. Ensuring that women participate fully in project activities can help ensure access to economic opportunities and improve their capabilities (accessing improved education and health services), contribute to decision making regarding projects and community development (empowerment), and significantly improve their security.

The following sections provide a general framework for gender mainstreaming activities, as well as suggestions for strengthening project interventions in 2004–2008 CSP foci to support narrowing of gender gaps and empowering of women so they can benefit equitably from ADB operations.

A. Gender Mainstreaming in Strategic Program Areas

This section examines sectors of focus from the CSP to identify gender entry points and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. It begins by listing mechanisms that have proven essential

in project design and monitoring²⁴ for gender mainstreaming to effectively contribute to achieving results, particularly those associated with poverty reduction.

General recommendations for strengthening gender mainstreaming in projects are as follows:

- Carry out a detailed social and gender analysis during the project design phase. The analysis will systematically identify constraints that limit men's and women's participation in and benefiting from projects, with recommendations for how these constraints might be addressed.
- Develop a gender action plan (GAP) or gender strategy for all projects that include specific, realistic targets, linked to loan objectives through a step-by-step progress. Allocate adequate resources (financial and human) to implement the GAP. The gender targets should be incorporated into the overall project logical framework with objectives and corresponding indicators identified to ensure systematic monitoring and reporting on those aspects of the projects' implementation, including the collection of sex-disaggregated baseline data.
- Include gender capacity building in the GAP to ensure that the executing agency and other team members are familiar with the rationale for mainstreaming gender concerns and understand how they can contribute to and promote gender-related project targets. ADB resident mission staff could also benefit from gender training to facilitate monitoring of projects and awareness of gender concerns to be incorporated into policy dialogue.
- Support and encourage the employment of women on project management teams, particularly at senior levels, and ensure that all employment opportunities are available to women on an equitable basis. Special facilities (separate toilets, safety gear of suitable sizes, etc.) and conditions of employment may need to be set up to ensure that women can work on an equitable basis with men.
- Ensure wage parity for men and women staff on project teams and as employees under contract.
- Ensure that a gender specialist is contracted to participate in regular ADB monitoring of project progress to facilitate identification of constraints to integration of the GAP and resolution of problems as they occur.
- Work with women's NGOs wherever possible, or NGOs with an active female constituency. Engaging with women in NGOs provides opportunities to support women's leadership and participation in forums beyond a project's immediate scope and hence promotes women's empowerment.
- Monitor key gender gaps in poverty reduction and raise these concerns regularly in policy dialogue to give impetus to people in the government and civil society who seek to increase the visibility of gender issues.
- Seek specific ways that ADB operations can support the government's State Program and the work of the CWFA. Consult regularly with the CWFA regarding

²⁴ For further details regarding lessons learned in gender mainstreaming in ADB operations, see the series of reports published in 2005–2006: *Gender Equality Results in ADB Projects* in four countries and the synthesis report.

gender priorities in different sectors, or include CWFA representatives during policy dialogue on issues beyond health care and education (i.e., challenging stereotypes on issues of concern to women).

B. Strengthening Sector Results through Gender Mainstreaming

1. Rural Development

As about 70% of the population of Tajikistan lives in rural areas, poverty reduction in the country depends to a considerable degree on the government's effective agriculture policies. More women than men rely on employment in agriculture, but as unskilled, poorly paid labor. The limited return on women's labor is compounded by a growing wage gap reinforced by attitudes that women are less efficient and knowledgeable workers than men, and downward pressure on average wages increased because the female labor pool far exceeds the work available.

Women are now frequently left alone when their husbands migrate looking for employment, with limited support for their new role as household head. Many women are managing dekhan farms with employees, or producing all of a family's food needs and selling the surplus from small plots, despite their persistent image solely as mothers and wives. The CGA-sponsored survey noted that women farmers are just as productive as men, despite having more difficulty accessing credit and other agricultural inputs, having very limited access to market knowledge, and being barred from registering privatized land in their names. All these factors limit women's opportunities to be more productive, while their total contribution to overall production may be more than that of men.

Small and micro enterprises are forming in rural areas, but women lack access to resources and face discrimination and harassment from officials and other entrepreneurs, discouraging them from increasing the return on their labor. The pressure on women's time has intensified with the deterioration of social services, which is sorely felt in more remote rural areas where infrastructure has yet to be rehabilitated. Living conditions are deteriorating and this impacts the health and well-being of family members, placing greater pressure on women to care for the sick while also having to contribute to family livelihood.

Women's access to new opportunities to increase productivity in rural areas needs to be assured. This may require identifying special measures to make women aware of new services or technologies, since agriculture suppliers or bank officials may not communicate with women farmers frequently, or may consider women unlikely or unsuitable to be customers, despite their potential.

2. Project Interventions to be Considered in Rural Development

Project interventions to increase women's equitable participation in rural development are as follows:

- Ensure that women participate in planning all future projects and that gender issues are taken into consideration as priorities are set. This might be accomplished through (i) specific technical assistance activities to fill in information gaps (e.g., understanding attitudes toward women farmers and how these might be changed through project interventions; carrying out time-use surveys to understand, in particular, flexible cropping areas and how new technologies might be developed to relieve the drudgery that limits productivity); and (ii) consultation on a regular basis with women-led NGOs working in rural areas to identify emerging issues of concern to women, as happened when leading women’s NGOs, with support from UNIFEM, presented the impact of women’s inability to access privatized land in 2004.
- Ensure that women participate in community-based resource management committees and training opportunities, as has been done in the Irrigation Rehabilitation Project through the incorporation of appropriate targets in the project framework. Participating in community resource management can provide opportunities for women to build their skills and experience in decision making, which will encourage more women to become involved in a wider scope of political activities.
- Proactively seek means to support women’s efforts to access privatized land, through joint registration with men household members, as sole registrant, as share holder, or as a dekhan farm leader. The government has initiated programs in this area, but implementation is limited to selected regions and much can be done to inform decision makers, farmers, and women of their equal rights regarding land privatization and how women can have these rights protected in practice.
- Ensure that the constraints faced by women in accessing credit, agricultural inputs, new technologies, and market information are understood and addressed in future projects. Particularly in the area of microfinance, experience of lending to women can be drawn upon to design appropriate financial service packages for women as well as men.
- Seek ways to change prevailing attitudes to be more positive regarding women’s potential contribution to increasing agriculture productivity and private sector development in rural areas. Having women participate fully in project activities and decision making can lead by example. This may require some additional activities and effort by executing agencies; gender training for all team members can help explain how women can contribute to achieving project results more effectively.

3. Rehabilitation of Rural Infrastructure

The ADB focus on transport rehabilitation will be to improve government capacity to manage this sector and identify strategic priorities for investment, and to strengthen regional cooperation by reducing transportation costs. Road improvements will increase access to markets and social services for rural areas. Men may see improved access to markets and personal mobility as a primary benefit, whereas women will first appreciate improved access to health care services and education for their children. Performance indicators in the CSP for this subsector do not

include improvements in social development indicators but rather focus on benefits from economic growth and transportation cost reductions, i.e., they respond only to the priorities identified by men.

Support to rehabilitate irrigation and other water infrastructure also must ensure that the specific needs of women are identified, for productive and household use, and that women participate in water resource management, particularly at the community level.

The current Irrigation Rehabilitation Project identifies the important role that women play in irrigated agriculture and in the management of domestic water supplies. Specific targets for women's active participation in project activities (in water user associations, as ministry staff, and in farmer training) have been incorporated in the project framework, which stipulates that women are to be given access to employment opportunities from construction activities. Steps for achieving these targets have been set out in a GAP that includes operational issues and policy dialogue areas. Resources have been allocated for a gender specialist on the team, who will be responsible for fleshing out the GAP during the implementation and monitoring progress.

Increasing the volume of vehicles moving through more remote regions can bring risks as well as benefits. Transport workers will increase the demand for commercial sex workers at rest stops, bringing new dangers, especially to poor and destitute women and adolescent girls. HIV/AIDS has been spread along transportation routes. Women are exposed to risks of being trafficked from roadside brothels to other countries, where coercion and the risk of violence is even greater.

4. Strengthened Project Interventions to be Considered in Rural Infrastructure

The interventions to be considered are as follows:

- Incorporate social (nonincome poverty impacts) as well as economic performance indicators into projects and other assessment frameworks, providing more opportunity to raise women's priority needs and benefits, and hence increase the potential for women to influence future planning priority selection, i.e., contribute to women's empowerment and potential to participate in community decision making.
- Work with local NGOs familiar with risks presented by human traffickers to build resistance against these risks among those most vulnerable, e.g., poor women and commercial sex workers. The NGOs can help assess potential risks and changes in migration flows during the project planning phase and can recommend additional project initiatives to ensure that human trafficking concerns are addressed.
- Build a combined information campaign to encourage safe sex and to counter trafficking in project areas (i.e., along proposed routes and in rest areas for transport workers) and to raise public and official awareness and understanding of these issues. Collaborate with local NGOs, with support from other national NGOs already experienced in these areas, with a view to building local NGO capacity.
- Raise awareness among government and law enforcement officials of the potential impacts of increased volumes of vehicles and flow of goods and migrants,

particularly regarding human trafficking and health risks from mobile populations. While training officials in these issues may not be within the scope of a particular project, avenues for collaboration may be created between the government and other organizations addressing migration and related issues, e.g, by incorporating offices or desks for NGOs working with migrants into rehabilitated bus stations or border crossing areas and then encouraging government officials to collaborate with the NGO in identifying migrants in difficulty and in creating services to address their needs.

5. Rehabilitation of the Energy Sector

Rehabilitation of power transmission networks and support for management reforms has been the focus of ADB's support to the energy sector, as well as emergency assistance following environmental disasters and the civil war. A major activity has been support for reforms in tariff setting for electricity and other energy supplies. Women are primary users of domestic energy, but are rarely consulted regarding the impact of tariff changes or structures. Investment in identifying different energy sources for household use is also limited, but may prove vital in relieving women of the drudgery of finding wood or coping with interrupted energy supplies during cold winter periods, which put the health and well-being of the family at risk.

Strengthened project interventions to be considered in the energy sector are as follows:

- Ensure that assessments of the impacts of reforms to energy tariffs and structures take into account the different uses of energy by men and women for commercial and domestic purposes.
- Consult with women regarding their priorities in investments in new or alternative energy sources and seek ways to invest in labor-saving technologies that can contribute to greater energy efficiency within the household.

6. Regional Cooperation

The focus of support in this area is for rehabilitation of roads that contribute to regional networks, e.g., links with the Kyrgyz Republic and on to the People's Republic of China. Assess potential impacts on men and women from increased flows of vehicles, migrants, and goods. Several regional initiatives exist in areas such as social protection, HIV/AIDS, and management of education reforms. All of these initiatives offer opportunities to ensure that gender concerns are identified and systematically integrated into project activities and targets. Specific recommendations noted in relevant sections of the CGA can provide guidance.

Appendix 1. Overview of Gender Dimensions of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

1. MACROECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

Increase allocations of public resources to social sectors through enhanced planning and monitoring.

Relevant Indicators in PRSP

Millennium Development Goal (MDG) #8, target 15.

Related Objectives/Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

- Government policy shift from focus on women to gender equality.
- Interpretation of the shift reflected in budget allocation process.

Gender Equality Issues

Restoring higher budget allocations to social sectors is vital for women to restore capabilities eroded during the transition period. Women have also had to absorb cuts through unpaid labor in family putting great pressure on time and overall well-being: Government acknowledges unequal access to benefits from development programming but this is not articulated as a priority in reforms to structures and delivery mechanisms.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

Improve targeting of programs (identified as priority in the MDG Needs Assessment). Strengthen gender budget analysis skills to assess women's access to government programs.

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

Disaggregated by sex, social sector spending accessed by women.

2. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM

- Institute public service reforms, particularly decentralization, audit function etc.
- Institute budget management reforms to ensure policy priorities are reflected in budget allocations.

Relevant Indicators in the PRSP

None noted but several related priorities identified in the MDG Needs Assessment

Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

- Increase the role and influence of institutional mechanisms that promote gender equality at all levels.
- Improve social partnerships with nongovernment organizations.
- Increase the proportion of women in decision making in public service (including the legislature, executive, and judiciary).

Gender Equality Issues

The low proportion of women in decision-making positions in public service and employment equity is not identified as a priority in civil service reform programs; improved linkages between policy priorities and budget management is limited by a lack of skills to carry out gender analysis and inconsistent monitoring of gender-sensitive indicators, particularly at the local government level.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

- Identify employment equity as a priority to increase the proportion of women in decision-making positions in civil service.
- Conduct gender training of government officials to strengthen articulation of the needs of men and women into policies and targeted programs.
- Performance-based budgeting incorporates gender issues into analysis through the development of formats to guide analysis and regulations regarding the requirement to carry out gender analysis of who accessed programs on an annual basis.
- Engage directly with women's organizations at the local level to increase the voice of women as government accountability is increased.

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP

- Actual budget spending disaggregated by sex of program recipient (where appropriate).
- Extent of gender-sensitive planning, budgeting and monitoring training delivered.
- Proportion of men and women in decision-making positions in public service.
- Number of consultations by local government with organizations led by men and women.

3. PRIVATIZATION, LABOR, AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

- Identify the job creation target for women.
- Reform vocational training.
- Improve the business environment (taxes, inspections, and licensing).
- Promote self-employment through microcredit.
- Manage migration.

Relevant Indicators in the PRSP

MDG #8, target 16: unemployment rate by age group and gender.

Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

- Increase competitiveness of women (through education and training).
- Reduce segregation in the labor market.
- Promote women leaders in business.

Gender Equality Issues

Distortions in the labor market limit women's opportunities and competitiveness or access to resources from process of privatization.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

- Analyze trends in workforce participation of women to identify appropriate policies and programs to ensure efficient use of labor potential.
- Increase competitiveness of women as a specific target group in reforms to vocational training (especially in nontraditional areas).
- Reduce discrimination against women in the labor market (vertical and horizontal) through restoration of support to mothers of young children, relieving domestic burden, and public campaign to challenge gender stereotypes of women as caregivers rather than significant contributors to economic growth of the country.
- Provide equitably to men and women business development services and other support that respond to their specific needs.
- Identify specific programs to support spouses of labor migrants to facilitate reinvestment of remittances in productive activities for women.
- Improve awareness among women and children (in particular) of risks to trafficking from migration.
- Monitor implementation of the State Program more effectively in cooperation with PRSP monitoring.

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP

- Proportion of economically active population, by sex.
- Percentage of average nominal wage of women compared to men.
- Proportion of male and female students attending vocational training, by sector.
- Number of start-up companies registered, by sex of owner.
- Proportion of remittances invested in new enterprises, by sex of owner/registrant.
- Number of trafficking cases that reach conviction.

4. SOCIAL PROTECTION

- Improve targeting of social programs in general.
- Increase pensions.
- Improve/rehabilitate infrastructure.
- Provide cash payments to the most vulnerable through local government mechanisms.

Relevant Indicators in the PRSP

None identified but improve targeting of cash transfers noted as a priority in the MDG Needs Assessment.

Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

Increase women's economic independence.

Gender Equality Issues

Effective targeting must ensure that programs respond to the needs of both men and women and build self-reliance. Therefore, require improved monitoring and analysis of findings from existing programs and of specific vulnerabilities and risks of different community members (e.g., monitoring of unemployment programs is currently very limited). Pension reforms must take into account that women have lower average salaries and correspondingly lower contributions through employment, which over time will increase women's vulnerability to poverty during old age.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

- Adjust to existing pension schemes to ensure that women have secure incomes when they retire, taking into account disruptions to contributions from employment because of child care.
- Undertake a gender training program with government officials at state and local levels to strengthen skills to integrate gender equality concerns into program planning, delivery, and monitoring.
- Ensure that monitoring of programs is based on sex-disaggregated data of recipients to ensure targeting of cash transfer programs is efficient and effective

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP

- Proportion of pensioners (male and female) living below poverty line.
- Percentage of men and women who find employment from the total number of job applicants through employment centers.
- Percentage of men and women accessing all forms of social protection programming.

5. AGRICULTURE AND LAND REFORM

- Facilitate land reform.
- Facilitate other forms of privatization in the agriculture sector (e.g., inputs, marketing mechanisms, and financial services).
- Improve water resource management.
- Increase independence of farmer decision making.

Relevant Indicators in the PRSP

None identified but several associated priorities are noted in the MDG Needs Assessment

Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

- Increase proportion of women dekhani farm leaders and landholders.
- Increase proportion of women with access to agricultural inputs (including microcredit).

Gender Equality Issues

Currently women have very limited access to land because they are unaware of their rights, because government authorities do not consider women as good farmers, etc.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

- Ensure equitable access to resources for men and women, specifically land.
- Provide training and access to information for men and women regarding women's rights to land.
- Develop public campaigns to increase the understanding of women's contribution to the agriculture sector and potential as dekhani farm leaders.
- Improve delivery of inputs to all farmers (men and women) including information, appropriate technologies, and credit.
- Take special steps to ensure that women participate effectively in community-based water associations and other natural resource management activities.
- Offer special business development training for women as well as men to increase their decision-making capacities and knowledge.
- Train government officials, particularly at the community level, regarding the importance of gender balance in social mobilization activities, and how to ensure women's voices are heard.

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP (as recommended at the Country**Gender Assessment National Consultation Workshop)**

- Average size of landholding by sex within one dekhani farm.
- Proportion of all dekhani farms registered, by men and women.
- Proportion of men and women among dekhani farm shareholders.
- Proportion of men and women among leaders of collective dekhani farms.
- Proportion of men and women "owners" of lots for summer houses and for group farming.
- Proportion of men and women receiving credit for development of dekhani farms and agricultural enterprises.
- Proportion of men and women receiving agricultural training and services.
- Proportion of men and women participating in water associations and other community natural resource management organizations.

6. INFRASTRUCTURE

- Increase investment in rehabilitation of roads, irrigation, energy, water, and communications.
- Restructure and privatize infrastructure, including needed revisions to tariffs, and reforms to the regulatory environment.
- Improve access for remote and underserved areas (particularly the poor).

Relevant Indicators in PRSP

- MDG #7, target 10.
- MDG #8, target 18.

Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

None identified.

Gender Equality Issues

Deteriorating infrastructure puts extra pressure on the capacity of women to carry out household responsibilities, e.g., energy shortages in households put extra pressure on women's time for food preparation; exposure to water-borne diseases through lack of access to safe water places pressure on women to care for sick; and lack of access to transport contributes to poor health indicators for women, especially the maternal mortality rate.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

- Ensure that the needs of men and women are understood and integrated into the design of all infrastructure, e.g., men identify economic benefits from improved transportation, whereas women identify improved health of family.
- Facilitate the involvement of men and women in community-based infrastructure committees managing the construction, operation, and maintenance of infrastructures. This may require special training and awareness-raising sessions for both men and women to ensure support for women's involvement.
- Consider risks as well as benefits from improved transportation networks (e.g., increased vulnerability to human trafficking from the transport industry).
- Train government officials, particularly at the community level, regarding the importance of gender balance in social mobilization activities, and how to ensure women's voices are heard.

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP

Proportion of men and women participating in community-based infrastructure development and management organizations.

7. EDUCATION

- Ensure equal access to all levels of education for girls and boys. Target the poorest girls in particular with scholarship program for rural girls in higher education.
- Improve the quality of education (increase teacher's salaries and improve the curriculum to prepare students for labor market).
- Reform financing of the education system.

Relevant Indicators in the PRSP

- MDG #3, target 4.
- MDG #2, target 3.

Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women

- Ensure equal access to all levels of education for boys and girls.
- Increase the number of girls in different and nontraditional specializations.
- Increase the number of girls in technical skills and professional education.

Gender Equality Issues

The growing gender gap in secondary education is associated with several factors, including changing attitudes regarding the value of education for girls, the potential for future employment, and the cost and quality of education.

Recommendations for Gender Entry Points

- Address all factors contributing to falling educational achievements of girls and young women, including social factors (attitudes toward potential careers for women beyond marriage etc.).
- Analyze the scholarship program to understand how it could be improved, e.g., identify causes for drop outs and target those most in need.
- Adjust the curriculum to challenge gender stereotypes in the labor market, to increase competitiveness of female school leavers.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that education governance reforms (e.g., parent teacher associations) seek gender balance in representation from community. <p>Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDG targets. • Increased involvement of the community in school governance mechanisms by sex.
<p>8. HEALTH CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve primary health care services. • Improve the quality of care through training and by rehabilitation of infrastructure. • Reform funding structures. • Adopt a new reproductive health policy. <p>Relevant Indicators in PRSP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDG #4, targets 5 and 6. • MDG #6, targets 7 and 8. <p>Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women Support for MDG and PRSP targets.</p> <p>Gender Equality Issues Despite increases in gross domestic product, modest growth in incomes, and some improvements in health indicators for women and children, the health status of women continues to be of concern. Health-seeking behavior is deteriorating and access to services for women continues to decrease. Little is understood regarding the ability of women to command resources within the household to cover health costs for themselves and their children.</p> <p>Recommendations for Gender Entry Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure funding for sexual and reproductive health recommendations in the MDG Needs Assessment for girls and women and other health-related priorities. • Improve health information management and analysis to increase understanding of all factors contributing to the declining status of men's and women's health. • Ensure continued support for primary health care delivery points, particularly in rural areas, to ensure that the poor can access appropriate quality services. • Address increasing risks to women's health from drug abuse, psychological stress, migration, etc. • Increase understanding of the potential impact on women as caregivers due to anticipated increases in HIV/AIDS infection rates. • Increase understanding among health professionals and workers of impacts of domestic violence on women's health and how to provide medical and social supports to women and child victims of domestic violence. <p>Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDG targets (including those for MDG #3) in the MDG Needs Assessment. • Level of awareness of public health messages, available health services etc.
<p>9. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND TOURISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve environmental disaster management. • Increase investment in alternative energy sources for rural areas. • Promote and facilitate investments in tourism infrastructure. <p>Relevant Indicators in the PRSP MDG #7, target 9.</p> <p>Related Objectives and Programming in the State Program for Equality of Men and Women None identified.</p> <p>Gender Equality Issues Both men and women are actively engaged in natural resource management, but women tend not to be consulted in planning and implementation of environmental protection/conservation programming. Women bear the brunt of caring for those affected by unsafe water supplies.</p> <p>Recommendations for Gender Entry Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that women are equal partners in community-managed environmental initiatives for the improvement of protected areas and land reclamation/resettlement. This may require specific steps to ensure that men and women have adequate knowledge and skills to participate effectively in social mobilization, etc.

- Ensure that different energy requirements of men and women in households are incorporated into technological developments in alternative energy sources.
- Ensure that women are actively involved in community-based water associations so that their needs and priorities are addressed as potable water and sanitation infrastructures are designed, developed, operated, and monitored.
- Women could participate fully in the tourism sector if they have equal access to appropriate training and enterprise opportunities

Suggested Gender-Sensitive Indicators and Subindicators for the PRSP

Proportion of men and women participating in community-based infrastructure development and management organizations.

Appendix 2. Proceedings of the Country Gender Assessment National Consultation Workshop

**Asian Development Bank TA6177
Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Reduction Strategies
in Four Central Asian Republics**

**NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP
Hosted by the Committee on Women and Family Affairs
Government of the Republic of Tajikistan**

Dushanbe, April 11, 2005 - Kokhi Vakhdat

A. Participants

Organization	Representative
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Neeraj Jain, Country Director, Asian Development Bank Resident Mission, Tajikistan 2. Ms. Nazmieva O., Project Implementation Officer Tajikistan Resident Mission
The Executive Apparatus of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Mr. Anvarsho Muzaffarov, Senior Advisor to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan 4. Head of Department Ms. Khushvaktova N. 5. Senior Specialist Mr. Sharipov Z. 6. Senior Specialist Mr. Mirzoev I.
Committee on Women's and Family Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Head of the Committee Ms. Kurbanova R.A. 8. Head of the Department, Secretary of the Working Group Ms. Rajabova M. 8. Head of the Committee of Sogd Oblast Ms. Zakirova M. 9. Head of the Committee of Khatlon Oblast Ms. Kasymova S. 10. Head of the Committee of Gorno Badakhashan Autonomous Oblast Ms. Makbulshoeva M. 11. Head of the Committee of Dangara Ms. Hamidova N. 12. Head of the Committee of Rasht Ms. Loikova Z.
Ministries and State Committees	
Ministry of Agriculture	13. Head of Department Ms. Nizomova F.
Ministry of Education	14. Head Deputy Khisamutdinova D.
Ministry of Health	15. Head Deputy Ms. Sharopova N.M.
Ministry of Energy	16. Head of Department Azizova T.
Ministry of Transport	17. Head of Department Ms. Rustamova M.
Ministry of Water Resources and Land Reclamation	18. Head of Department Ms. Rahimova U.
Ministry of Labor and Social Protection	19. Senior Specialist Mr. Rizoiev I.
Statistics State Committee	20. First Head Deputy Ms. Muhammadieva B.
Land State Committee	21. Head Deputy Mr. Khabirov M.

Organization	Representative
Nongovernment Organizations	22. Coordinator of “Panorama” Ms. Bazidova Z. 23. Coordinator of “Panorama” Ms. Ashrapova S. 24. Researcher of “Panorama” Ms. Abdurafova G. 25. Acting Director of “Gender and Development, Ms. Khoshokova M. 26. Head of the Association of Women with University Education, Ms. Bobosadikova G.B. 27. Tradition and Modernity, Kuvatova A. 28. Najoty Kudakon, Ms. Kasimova K. 29. Madina, Ms. Dodkhudoeva N. 30. Bonuvon, Ms. Tabarova R. 31. Manija, Mr. Rakhmonberdiev A. 32. Sitorai Najot 33. Researcher of “Panorama, Mr. Mukhtarov N.
International Organizations	
World Bank	34. Project Director, Mr. Babajanov R.
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)	35. Gender Issues Officer, Ms. Robezhniece
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	36. UNDP Tajikistan, Ms. Azizova N.
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)	37. Project National Manager, Ms. Mirzoeva V. 38. Regional Representative Almaty, Djusaeva S. 39. Adviser, Rahimova B.
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	40. Program Coordinator, Ms. Amirjanova Sh.
Open Society Institute (OSI) Tajikistan	41. Programs Director, Ms. Abdushukurova T. 42. Program Coordinator, Ms. Valamat-zade N.
American Bar Association (ABA)	43. Women’ s Rights Liaison, Ms. Tefft C.
ADB Technical Assistance 6177	44. ADB Consultant, Helen Tomas 45. ADB Domestic Consultant, Bozrikova Tatiana
Mass Media	46. TIA Hovar 47. TV 48. Asia Plus 49. Journal “Gender end Society” 50. Radio “Swoboda”

B. Workshop Agenda

9:30 - 9:50 Opening

Ms. Rukiya Kurbanova	Chair of Committee on Women and Family Affairs
Mr. Anvarsho Muzaffarov	Senior Advisor to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
Mr. Neeraj Jain	Country Director, Asian Development Bank Resident Mission, Tajikistan
Ms. Helen Thomas	International Consultant for ADB Technical Assistance
	Overview of agenda and objectives for the Workshop

9:50 - 10:30 Presentations

Overview of Poverty Reduction Activities of Committee on Women and Family Affairs

Ms. Rukiya Kurbanova, Chair of Committee

Findings from ADB Country Gender Assessment for Tajikistan

Ms. Helen Thomas, International Consultant and Team Leader

Synopsis of Recommendations from the country gender assessment (CGA)

- Target poverty reduction programs to address needs of women as well as men.
- Combine programs to increase effectiveness of poverty reduction.
- Increase women's participation in decision-making.
- Promote community mobilization and group formation approaches to poverty reduction programming.
- Challenge gender stereotypes.
- Improve collection and analysis of data regarding gender gaps, particularly within households.
- Increase commitment to gender mainstreaming.

10:30 - 10:50 Break

10:50 - 11:20 Presentations

Findings from studies carried out under the technical assistance

1. Gender Budget Analysis of the Employment Sector—Ms. Tatiana Bozrikova, Consultant for ADB Technical Assistance & Chief, Public Foundation “Panorama”
2. Dekhan Farm Survey—Ms. Zarina Bazidova, Researcher, Public Foundation “Panorama”

11:20 - 12:30 Comments and Discussions

Participants were very appreciative that the CGA had carried out the two surveys, as they fill gaps in information with high-quality quantitative and qualitative data (dekhan farm survey), and provide an example of tools that can be used to understand better how to address gender gaps in poverty reduction programming (both surveys). Discussions focused in particular on various categories of dekhan farm registration and concern that a proportion of women identified as dekhan farm holders are not actually active farmers. Government employees are not permitted to hold dekhan farm shares or registration to maintain transparency of registration and allocation process, but many women hold certificates on behalf of their husbands who are civil servants, to avoid this restriction. So care has to be taken when interpreting data in light of this potential distortion.

The other main discussion point focused on women's participation in political decision making. Currently the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) #3 national-level target for women's political empowerment is the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament. This may not give adequate information regarding the proportion of women beginning to be active in political processes at the region (*rayon*) and local government (*hukumat*) levels. This is where change is most urgently required and much work of national and international nongovernment organizations has been at this level of participation. It was suggested that the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) targets should include the proportion of women elected at all levels of government.

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch Break

13:30 - 15:00 Discussion - Strengthening PRSP Monitoring with Gender Sensitive Indicators

Recommended additional indicators in two priority areas were circulated to participants before lunch. The discussion regarding improved indicators for access to land took up most of the time available, and in the end only limited reference was made to proposed indicators for employment. The following indicators were agreed to by the participants, and representatives from the PRSP Monitoring Unit agreed to take these forward for further discussion within their unit and consideration to be given to adding the following as primary and secondary level indicators.

A. Access to Land

- Average size of land holding by sex within one dekhan farm.
- Proportion of all dekhan farms registered by men and women.
- Proportion of men and women among dekhan farm share holders.
- Proportion of men and women among leaders of collective dekhan farms.
- Proportion of men and women “owners” of lots for summer houses and for group farming.
- Proportion of men and women receiving credit for development of dekhan farms and agricultural enterprises.

B. Employment

- Percentage of economically active population by sex.
- Percentage ratio of average nominal wage of women compared to men by sector.
- Percentage of men and women who found employment from the total number of those applying for jobs at employment centers.

In addition, participants suggested and discussed women in decision making. They noted that, under MDG 3, a national target for women's empowerment is the proportion of women in all elected offices, from rayon to national level, and that this should be an indicator of women's empowerment.

Appendix 6 lists the people that the country gender assessment met during the study.

Appendix 3. Background of the Tajikistan Legal Framework

The legal system of Tajikistan covers the principles and institutes of foreign law. The system's origin is the Romano-Germanic legal system. The legal system has conserved some institutions and norms of traditional socialist law, particularly in the areas of state property and land ownership. The Republic of Tajikistan is ruled by the Constitution (6 November 1994). The legal system has strict branch classification. Among the fundamental branches are constitutional, administrative, civil, criminal law, and civil and criminal procedure law. Recently international law (private and public) is undergoing significant development.

The sources of Tajikistan's law are as follows

- (i) **The Constitution of Tajikistan.** The Constitution holds the supreme position and possesses the highest legal power. Its norms have a direct action. The Constitution establishes the principle of separation of powers and three branches of government: *legislative, executive, and judicial*. The new Constitution contains the following principle: "Laws and other legal acts contravening Constitution are null and void." The state and all its authorities, officials, citizens, and their associations are obliged to observe and execute the Constitution and laws of the republic.
- (ii) **Laws.** Legislative acts are divided into constitutional laws, other laws, and codes. Constitutional laws are the laws indicated directly in the Constitution and regulating the most important activity of state. New Constitutional laws must be passed by a qualified majority of deputies of the *Majlisi Namoyandagon* and approved by two thirds of members of the *Majlisi Milli*.
- (iii) **Other Legal Acts.** Presidential decrees and instructions, orders and instructions of the Government and other executive bodies, acts of local authorities, rules and regulations of organizations are other legal acts.
- (iv) **International Legislation.** International legal acts recognized by Tajikistan are a component of the legal system of Tajikistan. In the event of discrepancy between the laws of Tajikistan and international laws, international legal acts are used.

Appendix 4. Findings from the Gender Budget Analysis for the Employment Sector

A special study was commissioned for the country gender assessment to assess progress of government programming to create employment for women (Kurbanov 2005). An analysis of government expenditures against outcomes from programs specifically targeting unemployment among women (gender budget analysis) was carried out on available data and supplementary information gathered during interviews at one employment center in Dushanbe (Sino Employment Center).

This is the first gender budget analysis of any government program in Tajikistan. While the scope was modest, and only limited data are available for the analysis, the study demonstrates the potential for such an approach to uncover areas where women do not have equal access to poverty reduction expenditures. The findings also point to areas where data collection and analysis needs strengthening if comparative access to benefits are to be tracked more effectively in future.

For this study, detailed indirect gender analysis was applied to a case study of the Sino Employment Center, to explore in practice how funds are disbursed as well as overall Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP) budget envelopes. At this urban employment center, 1,683 unemployed workers were registered, including 864 women (51.3%). Of the 1,683, 582 were later able to find work, including 314 women (36% of the women registered as unemployed). This provides an indication of the absolute numbers that can be projected for other employment centers.

As reflected in the numbers of registered unemployed, a slightly higher proportion of women than men apply regularly for assistance and take up retraining programs at the employment centers. Interviews with employment center officers indicated that the proportion of women beneficiaries is much higher in rural areas. Most women are under 25 years of age and have no primary profession or are poorly qualified; 80% of the women are willing to take up training opportunities. In 2004, most women trained at the Sino Employment Center took up computer courses, sewing, haircutting, and accounting.

The findings from the overall budget gender analysis of MLSP are as follows:

- In 2004, for microcredit programming, TJS80,500 (32% of total expenditures on microcredit activities) was received by 161 women.
- Of the education budget, 59% was allocated was given to women, which includes primary professional education in employment centers (323 women out of 553).
- The share of pro-women expenditures under public paid works was also relatively high at 49%.
- A separate sheet was provided under a budget line for employment policy, covering all costs not otherwise allocated and based on similar adjustments for the proportion of women beneficiaries, etc. An estimated 36.3% of these funds responded to women's needs.

- Overall, the share of pro-women expenditures is 38%, or TJS580,140 from the total budget for regional centers for employment, whereas women make up 53% of those registered as unemployed and seeking state assistance to find jobs.

When the global data are used, a significant gender gap emerges between the proportion of funds allocated for women's programs and related allocations. Table A4 shows the breakdown of the expenditure analysis by program; however, the amount of data available does not enable a meaningful analysis in areas of public paid works and professional education. For these programs, the actual allocations against sex of actual beneficiaries would be required.

Table A4. Disaggregation of Distribution of Expenditures by Sex
(2004, at all regional centers for employment)

Budget Item	Overall Actual Budget expenditures (TJS '000)	Gender-Oriented Expenditures (pro-women TJS '000)	Gender-Oriented Expenditures (pro-women, as % of total expenditure)	Absolute Share of Women Beneficiaries (%)
Allowances	336.7	79.525	24	39
Public Paid Works	318.6	156.11	49	49
Professional Education	385.1	227.7	59	59
Creation of Additional Jobs (microcredit etc.)	246.5	80.5	33	36
Employment Policy	197.4	36.3	18	-

Source: Kurbanov 2005.

The findings highlight the types of disaggregated data required to understand more fully where allocations need to be adjusted to respond to needs of beneficiaries and how to assess performance by outcomes from actual expenditures.

Appendix 5. Findings from the Dekhan Farm Survey

A study of dekhan farms was commissioned in preparation of this country gender assessment, with three objectives:

- to establish whether women-headed dekhan farmer's associations and households are productive in comparison to those headed by men in 12 subregions of Tajikistan;
- to identify priority constraints faced by dekhan farmer's associations/households headed by women as perceived by women and other stakeholders, and how these constraints might be addressed; and
- to improve the understanding of the dynamics of attitudes toward women decision makers in dekhan farmer's associations/households.

A total of 288 dekhan farms were surveyed, 50% male-headed and 50% female headed; 24 households were interviewed from each of 12 subregions using a quantitative survey questionnaire. This was complemented by 28 qualitative in-depth interviews with representatives from a commercial bank, the Land Reform Committee, an agroservice provider, and additional family members from one of the female-headed dekhan farmers.

Dekhan farms were selected as the focus of this study to demonstrate the considerable contribution women make to the development of the agriculture sector. The survey results provide a picture of the women most keenly wishing to benefit from agriculture programming and generate growth and improved productivity in this sector.

Women heading dekhan farms were mostly over 40 years of age and married; only 14% were widows. Only 6% of their husbands were unable to work and 4.2% of husbands were migrant workers. Of the dekhan farms heads, 53% were heads of family dekhan farms, 40% of individual dekhan farms, and only 7% of collective dekhan farms.

Table 18 (main text) compares the main characteristics of dekhan farm operations and households by gender. Women-headed dekhan farms tended to be smaller in land area and have fewer workers or shareholders than those headed by men. The women's level of education was lower than that of men, but contrary to common assumptions, more women than men in the sample had direct agriculture experience from employment on pre-1991 collective farms or had specific training. More women dekhan farm heads were from multigenerational families than nuclear families, but were nonetheless able to make decisions concerning how the dekhan farm operations are managed.

Addressing the main questions posed by this study, the following conclusions were drawn from the survey data:

- A slightly higher proportion of women-lead dekhan farms are able to support their families through dekhan farm income and produce. It can therefore be assumed women are at least as productive dekhan farm managers as men.
- Women dekhan farm leaders were considered to be as productive as their men counterparts by 80% of the dekhan farm farmers interviewed; 75% considered women capable of managing dekhan farms. Authority and respect for women dekhan farm leaders is growing in the family, as well as for her role as a decision-maker, according to in-depth interviews with other household and community members.
- None of the women dekhan farm leaders had received credit from a bank and they experienced greater difficulties than men in accessing agricultural equipment, having it repaired, and seeing agricultural specialists, and they received less support from other official structures, e.g., local government.

The scope of the survey and interviews was not sufficient to provide an accurate picture of poverty levels among families of women dekhan farm leaders. The households of women dekhan farm leaders appeared to have lower incomes than those of men. Some analysis was made of how remittances from the 4.7% of households with labor migrants were used, and demonstrated that among households of women dekhan farm leaders, 86% of remittances were applied to family use, whereas only 58% of households of men dekhan farm leaders applied remittances to the family.

Understanding needs of women is a first step to developing effective and appropriate programming. The following priority areas emerged:

- Greater recognition is needed from community and government officials that women are effective farm managers, as good as male counterparts and in some cases even better. This will stimulate initiatives to overcome gender stereotypes, e.g., annual competitions, invitations to participate in local-level discussions with men, and education materials that portray women in productive roles in agriculture and other sectors.
- Women should have greater access to credit, acknowledging evidence that they are good credit risks and potentially as productive as male farmers. However, microfinance institutions and banks need better understanding of terms and conditions that will suit the needs of women farmers.
- Women need increased awareness of their rights, including, in particular, the right to land. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has demonstrated an approach to achieving this through establishing information centers for women that provide a combination of services at one place. Additional services required include information and support (financial, technical, and legal); assistance with land reclamation, use of fertilizers, marketing, etc.; and the involvement of government officials who do not normally interact with women farmers. This program has been running on a small scale, but elements need to be integrated into all rural development programming to ensure that special efforts are made to help women overcome these difficulties, not just mainstreaming.

- Monitoring of the land reform process should be improved by including gender-sensitive indicators, e.g., the share of all dekhan farms registered in a woman's name, ratio of men and women among leaders of collective dekhan farms, share of men and women among dekhan farm share holders, owners of land plots, ratio of men and women who received credit for the development of dekhan farms and agricultural enterprises, and number of women who received training and workshops.

Monitoring such indicators will enable program planners to identify areas where progress is slow and lead to improved targeting of special assistance to women to ensure they can claim their rights.

- Women and the poor in general should have greater access to presidential lands for household plots, and the rights to these plots should be clarified for women.
- All programs designed to improve agro-services and agro-service organizations need to incorporate specific measures to ensure that women have equal access to these services, and that they address their specific needs.
- There is a high demand for training to improve skills and knowledge of both men and women dekhan farms leaders. Such programs should ensure that training meets the needs of both men and women.
- Self-help coalitions and groups should be established among dekhan farms. Women in particular respond well to these kinds of structures to reinforce learning, provide assistance to other farmers, and play mentoring roles. Self-help groups can be more sustainable if they also serve as a platform for the delivery of other services, e.g., agricultural extension, and information about inputs.

Appendix 6. People Met During Country Gender Assessment 2004

Name	Position/Organization
Ms. K. Motomura	Director, Asian Development Bank Resident Mission
Rustamova, Kimat	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
Sharopova N. M.	Deputy Minister of Health
Kurbanova Rukiya	Chair, Committee of Women and Family Affairs
Nozigul Khushvakhtova	Head, President's Office responsible for monitoring the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
Muhammadiyeva B.	First Head Deputy, State Statistical Agency
Buriev Negmatdjon	Head of Economic Reform and Investment Department, Executive Administration of President of the Republic of Tajikistan
Makhmudjon Khabirov	Dept. Chair of the State Land Commission
Mirzoeva Viloyat	National Project Manager, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
Bihogal Rahimova	Project Advisor, UNIFEM
Hans Peter Reiser	Deputy Country Director, Swiss Cooperation Office
Amirjanova Shahrigul	Project Manager, Reduction of Violence Against Women, Swiss Cooperation Office
Marina Zhukova	Project Assistant, Child Enrichment, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Tatiana Abdushukurova	Programs Director, Tajik Branch of the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation
Nargis Azizova	Program Analyst, Environment, United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
Sukhrob Khoshmukhamedov	Program Analyst, UNDP
Nigina Mamodjanova	National Program Officer for Counter-Trafficking, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Abdusattor Esoev	National Program Coordinator, IOM
Maya Kushakova	Gender and Development (nongovernment organization [NGO]) Kulyab
Zulayho Komilova	Umed (NGO), Director
Shafat Komilova	Head of Women's Committee, Kulyab Hkukomat
Rano Hobohomeva	NISO (NGO) and Head of Maternity Hospital, Kulyab dekhan farmers
Rasulova Ilolbi	Bahrani
Nurova Javarbi	Havali
Bozorova Rozyamo	Jaminol
Mirzoeva Ruksaramo	Ahmed
Morkeva Khanifa	Muslim
Olimov Zainiddin	Head of Jamoat
Rasulova Julbaher	Deputy Chair of Jamoat
Kurbongul Kasimova	
Jatama Verhoturzeva	Coordinator
Jusuf Iodohamov	Accountant
Hasim Kasimov	Coordinator, Youth Groups
Dilbar Murodova	Coordinator Micro Credits
Bahtijamol Mirzoeva	Coordinator
Khujand	
Sanavbar Sharipova	Executive Director, National Association of Business Women of Tajikistan
Bakhtier Abduvohidov	Head, Microfinance Program, National Association of Business Women of Tajikistan
Akmalova Munira Nabieva	Head of Women's Committee - Sugd Oblast
Domulojon Jabarov	Deputy Head of Sugd Oblast, Chairman of Committee of Economy and Trade
Isfaran	
Abbos Yulbaskojaevich	Dept. Head of Hkukomat, Isfaran, Chair of Committee on Agriculture
Rahmonov Bilol	Chief Assistant

Name	Position/Organization
Isroilova Nabuvat	Women Affairs Committee
Amakjonov	Jurist for UNIFEM Women's Crisis and Information Centre
Lazizova Bashorat	Farmer—2 hectares (ha)
Rahmona Asolatkhon	Dekhan farm holder, 9 members—2.8 ha
Shadieba Maruza	Farmer—2 ha
Tilloeva Nigora	Farmer
Ziyeva Marluda	Dekhan farm holder—32 ha, 12 members (4 women, 8 men) with 15 workers in summer
Rahimova Nasiba	Farmer—1.9 ha
Yahyokhojaeva Marziya	Farmer—4.75 ha
Boboeva Malika	Farmer—2.75 ha
Valieva Guljahon	Farmer—2.8 ha
Zebunisso Rustamova	Director, children's NGO

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