

R E P O R T

ON THE EXTERNAL FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT:

“Creating WSG and strengthening shelter in Kulob Region-

conducted by the public organization

“Najoti kudakon”

This project is funded by the UN Trust Fund

**The final assessment of the project was carried out by:
EXPERTS-CONSULTANTS OF NGO "Iktidor" (IEC «Manizha»)**

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**Tajikistan, Khatlon region, Kulob city
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The project executing organization:

Public organization “Najoti kudakon”, Khatlon region, Kulob city

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General information about the organization

Public organization “Najoti kudakon” (NK) was formed in 1993 in the midst of civil war. The founders of the organization were five women who lost their relatives in the war and wanted to support other war-affected people to overcome the difficult moments of life together and become independent.

One of the most valuable techniques that was chosen by the PO “Najoti kudakon” was Self-help Group Concept (SHG) based on the philosophy that “it is better to teach a person to fish rather than to give him the fish”. This concept allows women who have experienced violence, including victims of domestic violence, as well as socially excluded ones (Tajik women often become victims of this type of violence...) to acquire the necessary skills to struggle for their rights and access to basic social services.

Women's Resource Center of PO “Najoti kudakon” has the following model of providing comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence:

- **Crisis Center:** Provides psychological, legal, first aid to victims of domestic violence;
- **Shelter:** Provides a temporary shelter for women and girls who become victims of domestic violence (from 3 days to 3 months);
- **Women's Center:** Provides information services - education, business skills, organization of information campaigns, establishment of self-help groups.

The PO “Najoti kudakon” is a member of the Coalition of Women “From de-jure equality to de-facto equality” and struggles for women's rights in Tajikistan and lobbies their interests at all levels.

The mission of the organization

The organization's mission is to improve the living conditions of women (particularly vulnerable women) in Tajikistan by strengthening democratic mechanisms in society and raising the voices of the poor and socially excluded women; to form social capital in the communities, to mitigate gender inequality and to combat the stigma associated with domestic violence, poverty, and HIV/AIDS.

The aims and objectives of the organization

- ❖ Promotion of the active participation of women in public life and decision-making processes by increasing their awareness, legal knowledge and the protection of their civil rights

- ❖ Provision of information and legal assistance to victims of violence
- ❖ Provision of integrated quality services for victims of domestic violence
- ❖ Implementation of the Self-help Group Concept (SHG)

The geography of activities of the organization

The organization works in Kulob area of Khatlon region - the south-eastern province of Tajikistan with a population of over one million people. Women account for 52% percent of population in this region and 37% of them are of reproductive age. The organization's programs are implemented successfully in seven districts of Kulob region (Kulob, Hamadoni, Shuroobod , Farkhor, Khovaling Muminobod, Shuroobod). The organization works directly in 12 jamoats covering more than 10 000 households which represent about 64 000 inhabitants.

General information on partner – Public Organization “Dunyoï kudakon”

The organization was created on March 30, 2011 and is officially registered at the Ministry of Justice of the RT.

The aims and objectives of the organization:

Improving the legal, social, economic, environmental, health and culture, and awareness of children with disabilities and their parents, protection and realization of their rights and interests

Address of PO “Dunyoï kudakon”: Tajikistan, Khatlon region, Kulob city Somoni Str., 122, Apt 34

Project title:	“Creating WSG and strengthening shelter in Kulob Region and improving of the shelter in Kulob city”
Project area:	Tajikistan, Khatlon region, Kulob city, Muminobod, Shuroobod , Vose, Farkhor and Hamadoni districts
The project duration:	24 months
Implementation period:	January 1, 2015 - January 1, 2017
The project director:	Qurbongul Qosimova, director of the PO “Najoti Kudakon”

Introduction

The report on assessment of the project of “Creating WSG and strengthening shelter in Kulob Region and improvement of the shelter in Kulob city” conducted by the public organization “Najoti kudakon” and funded by the UN Trust Fund consist of:

- Project executive summary

- Comparative analysis of the achieved results with the expected results in the process of project implementation and their compliance deadlines;
- **Efficiency of completed project tasks**
- **Relevance of undertaken activities**
- The quality of the activities undertaken as well as the results obtained.

The Project assessment is carried out according to the Terms of Reference developed by the PO “Najoti kudakon” in the framework of the signed bilateral agreement.

In the preparatory phase of the project assessment a work plan and appropriate budget were developed for the assessment which were further discussed and approved by the leadership of the PO “Najoti kudakon”.

In the process of the assessment the project management and implementers provided all the necessary conditions for the assessment; they provided the use of project documents and access to key sources of information.

This report consists of the following components:

- ❖ Project summary
- ❖ Objectives and aims of the assessment
- ❖ Methodology and data collection tools
- ❖ Review of the assessment
- ❖ Organizational matters
- ❖ General conclusions and recommendations
- ❖ Abbreviations

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Project of “Establishment of the Women's Support Group and improving of the shelter in Kulob city” was implemented in partnership of the two non-governmental organizations – “Najoti kudakon” and “Dunyoj kudakon”.

Gender equality - is not only a fundamental human right, but also a necessary foundation for peace, prosperity and sustainable development. Promotion of gender equality largely depends on the awareness and systematic treatment at all levels - from Parliament to local administrative bodies, enterprises, families and individuals.

Gender equality, the empowerment of women, the rights of women and girls are priority in all aspects of the development program for the period after 2015 year. “Our goal is a complete equality” – was a concept that was used by the PO “Najoti kudakon” during the development of the project

“Establishment of the Women's Support Group and improving of the shelter in Kulob city”. The project aims at supporting women and girls living in remote mountainous areas of Kulob region of the Republic of Tajikistan. In these remote rural areas of the country the level of domestic violence against women and girls is higher according to the committee on women and families affairs under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan . Victims of domestic violence often have no information of how neglecting such situations and where to get support from. Despite the existence of Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On Prevention of Domestic Violence” which was adopted on March 29, 2013, its mechanism of implementation needs to be improved and the initial stage of implementation of the Law is to increase public awareness in order to improve the conditions of victims of domestic violence. Having analyzed the whole situation , the PO “Najoti kudakon” set a goal to provide improved access to basic integrated services in a safe environment of the Safe House for women facing domestic violence and promote the protection of their rights, gender equality, women empowerment.

While carrying out their mission, the developers of the project of “Establishment of the Women's Support Group and improvements of the shelter in Kulob city” tried to make a contribution to improving the situation of victims of domestic violence by increasing their awareness and seeking help from state authorities in case of need. The project developers suggested the improving of access to complex of timely social services through the formation of active Women's Support Groups (WSG) which can be a bridge between the “Safe House” of PO “Najoti kudakon” and women.

To enhance the effectiveness of the project it was necessary to establish reliable communication with bodies of local self-government (BLSG) and between the mobilized women’s groups.

The project aims at creating 12 Women's Support Group which are based on the self-help groups concept. The main objective of the WSG is:

- To inform the local population of the district
- To identify victims and, where appropriate, to direct them to the “Safe House”
- To become a platform of dialogue and consultation for representatives of mobilized groups of PO “Najoti kudakon”

The overall objectives of the project:

- To ensure access of women and girls who become victims of domestic violence to obtain basic comprehensive services in a secure environment of the “Safe house” of the organization and its subdivisions (Women's Resource Center, Crisis Center (Shelter) in Kulob area of Khatlon region).
- To promote gender equality; to empower women and girls in Kulob area of Khatlon region in defending their rights, to improve their access to education and social services in partnership with the PO “Dunyo kudakon” and cooperation with state self-government agencies.
- *The specific objectives of the project:*
 - ❖ To ensure genuine access for women and girls, including victims of domestic violence, to comprehensive services in a safe environment in the units of the “Safe House” of the PO “Najoti kudakon”

- ❖ To create twelve Women's Support Groups (WSG) to help women who become victims of domestic violence in the target areas of the project
- ❖ To increase the **susceptibility** of government authorities to the problems of domestic violence and to expand the circle of supporters by the holding of 10 round tables in the target areas of the project

The target audience of the project: women activists, victims of domestic violence, representatives of local government authorities

The project coverage area:

- Shuroobod district - Doghiston and Yol jamoats
- Muminobod district - Khirgatarosh and Khonatarosh jamoats
- Hamadoni district - Chubek jamoats
- Farkhor district - Ghayrat and jamoats
- Vose district - Rudaki and Tugarak jamoats
- Kulob region - Ziraki and Korezi bolo jamoats

Expected results of the project

The final result of the project is: women and girls who experienced domestic violence have access to basic comprehensive services in a secure environment (Safe house of the PO “Najoti kudakon”) and support of their rights conducive to promoting gender equality and empowering the women and girls in the Kulob area of Khatlon region of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The direct result number 1

Women's Support Groups in the twelve targeted districts will provide basic services to women and girls, including victims of domestic violence, raise their awareness about women's rights, in particular about the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence” and support their access to a secure environment.

Intermediate result 1.1

12 WSG have been set up in the target areas and they provide assistance to the victims of violence and, they are send them to the Safe House if it is necessary

Intermediate result 1.2.

12 WSG conduct information work among the activists on the law "On the Prevention of Domestic Violence".

Intermediate result 1.3.

12 WSG are platform for dialogue and place for counseling specialists of a mobile group of women and girls in target areas

Intermediate result 1.4

Women which are members of the Women's Support Group , have the skills to train women (victims of domestic violence) and refer them to the Safe House .

The direct result number 2

The awareness and sensitivity of the government authorities will increase regarding the implementation of the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence”, the cooperation with NGOs will improve.

Intermediate result. 2.1.

There is an increase in the s of susceptibility of government agencies to the problems of domestic violence (round tables, there are resolutions of organized round tables, signed memorandums on cooperation and cooperation with all self-governing agencies in the project implementation areas).

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS OF ASSESSMENT

- Evaluation of the results of the Project and their compliance with established goals;
- Identification of the impact of the Project on improving the access of women and girls, including victims of domestic violence, to timely and comprehensive basic services in a secure environment;
- Assessment of the functioning of the 12 women's support groups and the level of their institutional development
- What is being done to enhance the role of WSG in the public life of communities?
- Identification of the degree of development and opportunities for the future sustainability of the created 12 WSG;
- Evaluation of mechanism for cooperation and referral of victims of domestic violence between the PO “Najoti kudakon”, WSGs and government authorities?
- Assessment of the role of WSG as a dialogue platform for the mobilized groups, the PO “Najoti kudakon” and victims of violence in targeted areas of the Project
- Reviewing the approaches of the PO “Najoti kudakon” to improve the sensitivity of government bodies to the problems of domestic violence
- Identifying whether the number of help seekers from the distant mountain villages of Kulob region had increased
- What methods are used to explore the interest of local people to obtain information about the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence”
- What kind of innovative approach was used by the project to raise awareness of girls?
- How the WSGs provide professional legal and psychological assistance on the ground?

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

To gather information for the assessment the following methodology has been used:

Selection of sources of information:

- The dates of the individual meetings with the coordinator and the project executors were defined and agreed
- The terms of meetings with project partners and stakeholders were agreed
- Key project documents: plans, reports, developments, etc.
- Face-to-face meetings with project beneficiaries
- Other alternative sources

The methods and data collection tools:

- Analysis and study of project documents
- Conversations and interviews with beneficiaries
- Interviews, observation
- Focus group discussions

REVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENT

The Project assessment is carried out according to the Terms of Reference proposed by the PO “Najoti kudakon”.

In the preparatory phase of the project assessment a work plan and appropriate budget were developed for the assessment which were further discussed and approved by the leadership of the PO “Najoti kudakon”

During the process of assessment the team used the work plan of performers of the project:

❖ Activities to achieve the project goals and objectives in 2015

- Establishing communication with government bodies in the targeted areas of the project. Signing of the Memorandums of cooperation with executive authorities
- Working visits of the project mobile team to the targeted communities. Information about the project, its goals and objectives
- Conducting a baseline study
- Working meetings in the communities to form women’s groups for mobilization
- Establishment of 6 women's support groups
- Preparation of social cards of members of self-reliance groups
- Organization of 5 round tables in the targeted areas of the project
- Organization of educational trainings

❖ Activities to achieve the project goals and objectives in 2016

- Information work with the mobilized women's groups.
- Establishment of 6 women's support groups
- Organization of education and information trainings
- Conduct 5 round tables in the targeted areas
- Purchase of equipment for WSGs
- Establishment of information center library on the basis of the established WSGs
- Evaluation of the project by local experts

Project results for 2015 year

All the information received and the examination of documents in the evaluation process shows the achievement of certain project objectives, as well as the results obtained. In the assessment process, the fulfillment of the assigned tasks with the real picture was compared.

The project began with the formation of team of executors. The team of executors consisted of the project coordinator, lawyer-consultant, psychologist, social worker, accountant and driver. The head of the PO “Najoti kudakon” Qurbongul Kosimova led the overall project. Each executor of the project has a personal data file - a photo, a copy of the diploma, CV, personal form, a signed contract describing his/her duties. According to the employment contract, each executor keeps a register for consultations which reflects the main points of consultations, key issues and information about the beneficiary. For conducting the educational trainings qualified trainers were involved who had experience in the community.

At the first stage of the project official letters had been prepared on behalf of the administration of the project, and were organized visits to Hukumats - the executive bodies of government authorities (EBGA) in the targeted areas. During the working visits presentations of the project were conducted that covered information on the goals and objectives, the expected results of the project.

In each target district there was signed a Memorandum of understanding and cooperation with the representatives of EBGA and jamoats. On the basis of the signed memorandums working visits were carried out also to the targeted jamoats – the bodies of local self-government (hereinafter - BLSG). A Memorandum of understanding and cooperation was also signed with the Committee for Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan.

On the basis of the signed memorandums at 6 targeted areas were developed joint action plans for the implementation of the project.

The project's mobile team the team worked in a certain format and facilitated information sessions in communities, formation of WSGs and consultations. Participants at the information meetings included active members of the communities - men and women of 25-55 years old. The information meetings were held in a friendly and trusting atmosphere. The meeting participants shared their views on issues related to domestic violence and its consequences, as well as on migration and poverty. At these information meetings the project's mobile team talked about the criteria for selecting members of WSGs:

- ❖ Activity in public life
- ❖ Skills to work with the community
- ❖ Community recognition
- ❖ Communication skills
- ❖ leadership qualities, etc.

At the information meetings were distributed information booklets and prepared ribbons with address of the women's resource center of Kulob city.

During the first year of the project 6 WSGs were created in the targeted areas which included women and girls who have suffered from domestic violence. The WSGs combine women and girls from the same area with the same problems who want to solve their problems together. The specialists along with the SHG Concept pay considerable attention to obtaining of communication skills, self-organization and self-realization issues.

During the evaluation process a number of meetings were held with members of WSGs of Muminobod (WSGs “Manzara”, “Childukhtaron”) Shuroobod (WSGs “Durakhshon”, “Kuhsor”) and Vose districts (WSGs “Rukhshona”, “Bunafsha”) as well as with representatives of bodies of local self-government and the executive bodies of government authorities.

Group discussions and observations contributed to get maximum information about the project. Despite the fact that the WSGs were established in different areas of the region, they have the same structure and the same action plan.

But the problems of communities differ from each other: in some communities, some people, especially women, suffer from alcoholism among men, somewhere people suffer from unemployment and infringement of their rights and somewhere – from domestic violence, etc. The local WSGs define their strategic activities and plans of action and approach on the basis of these issues.

It should be noted that another innovative approach to raise awareness among women are the local traditions and customs. For this purpose leaders of the WSGs actively use traditional social events such as weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. They believe that such an approach helps to increase awareness among women without the organization of seminars or meetings. These positive experiences tend to continue even after the completion of the project. This is one of the most effective instruments of increasing awareness of women and girls on how to react in domestic violence case.

During the group discussions was told that rural women desire and demonstrate their willingness to be an active member of society; they want to improve their skills and awareness. Leaders of local WSGs are highly motivated, communicative and show interest to work actively as an independent public organization. In turn, the BLSGs provide them with support and assistance in the framework of the signed memorandums of cooperation that enhances the cooperation with educational, social institutions and the local population. Members of the WSGs actively participated in training sessions on the SHG Concept and domestic violence.

The bodies of local self-government (BLSG) provided the members of the WSGs and other women with comprehensive assistance to change their lives, to develop personal safety plans and to provide access to potential resources. To date, the most important aspect of the WSGs is the ability to cooperate not only with bodies of local self-government but also with representatives of departments of internal affairs, district and city departments of education and other community groups. It should be noted that close cooperation of WSGs with the departments of women and family affairs in the targeted districts increases their potential and image, as well as their self-confidence.

The established WSGs have the power to consult and provide information support for women faced a domestic violence. The members of the WSGs are active mobilizers in their communities; they are recognized in their communities and people ask for their advice. They provide consulting support and direct women and girls facing domestic violences to the Women's Resource Center of the PO "Najoti kudakon".

All established WSGs have the same structure - the chairman, facilitator and accountant. They are all equipped with necessary equipment (computer and printer/copier) and have an information library. Head of the WSGs are provided with mobile phones.

During the first year of the project 12 representatives of the WSGs (from 6 established WSGs) participated in a special training on computer and facilitation skills and upon completion they received certificates.

The WSGs' activities mostly focus on the legal, cultural and social aspects as well as lobbying for the interests and rights of women, especially victims of domestic violence. The trainers of the PO

“Najoti kudakon” have conducted series of training courses for the members of the WSGs on “Basis of SHG Concept”, “I have the right ...” (the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence”) which are the legal aspect of the work of the established WSGs. During the trainings special attention was paid to the interaction of the WSGs with the community - meetings, search for victims, providing information and advice, and referral of victims to the Women's Resource Center of the PO “Najoti kudakon” for high-quality services of psychologist and lawyer.

The cultural aspect of activities of the WSGs is related to distributing of information booklets, training of activists in their communities, conducting of activity “From house to house” and participating in the preparation of round tables.

Social aspect of activities of the created WSGs is that helping women the WSGs increase their capacity and authority to protect gender rights and interests of women and are actively involved in BLSG events. Direct lobbying element of the WSGs is that the groups represent the interests of women in Jamoats and the district Hukumats.

As a result, it should be noted that today each member of the WSGs knows features of her work and has the skills to provide the necessary services to women and girls, including victims of domestic violence.

The assessment process revealed a new approach to inform target groups about the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence” and ways to protect their rights. Under the project and at the request of some target groups were created “Home sewing workshop”. Seamstresses are the members of the WSGs.

In the process of working in the sewing workshop the project mobile team members talked about the legal issues, in particular on the law, ways and possibilities to protect the women’s rights. Thus, learning the skill of sewing the local women and girls joined in the discussion and raised their awareness.

After the course all graduates received certificates. Certificates were prepared on the basis of the memorandum signed between the PO “Najoti kudakon” and the Employment Agency of the Ministry of Labor, Migration and Employment of population of the Republic of Tajikistan. Training courses were held at home of a member of the WSG and the necessary materials were provided by the participants. The home sewing workshops were established on the basis of the interest of women and the available learning opportunities. Every member of the home sewing workshop has own personal file - a copy of passport, residency certificate. At the moment new groups of interested women and girls are being recruited.

The PO “Najoti kudakon” in its work on formation of the WSGs widely used the following materials for SHG Concept (methodology, including a comprehensive approach):

- Participatory method ensures the participation of the target group at all stages of activity and is based on learning
- Integrated approach method promotes the development of WSG in the legal, cultural, social and economic aspects.

During the assessment process working meetings also held with representatives of the executive bodies of government authorities and BLSG. The representatives of EBGA noted that project

“Creating WSG and strengthening shelter in Kulob Region and improving of the shelter in Kulob city” was one of the effective projects implemented in the region. The created WSGs and mobilized rural women have the capacity and are able to contribute to the development of communities.

To date, members of the WSGs actively participate in various activities organized by government agencies and bodies of local self-government.

In particular,

- 24 members were actively involved in the holiday “Navruz” in Jamoat of Ziraki of Kulob district
- thanks to WSG efforts, 63 members were mobilized to clean their village in Jamoat of Khonatarosh of Muminobod district
- 45 members in cooperation with the state structures organized an “Open door day” which contributed to entry of 3 girls into higher education, Jamoat of Ghayrat of Farkhor district
- 30 active women signed a letter – request for opening kindergarten in the community, Jamoat of Tugarak of Vose district,
- 75 women participated in lobbying the construction of roads, Jamoat of Yol of Shuroobod district
- 15 women activists involved in informing the public about the free legal advice, Jamoat named after Radzhabov, Kulob district.

As it was noted by the representatives’ bodies of local self-government, the members of the WSGs are the initiators of the various activities in their communities, for example:

- Volunteer clean-up were carried out in the territory of their villages
- Girls are taught sewing free of charge
- The members raise awareness of women and direct victims of domestic violence to the Safe house of the PO “Najoti kudakon”
- Contribute to the preservation of young families, etc.

In particular, the head district department of Committee on the Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the RT of Muminobod district Shahlo Razoqova during an interview was positive about the work of the local WSG. She was grateful to the PO “Najoti kudakon” for mobilizing women in remote communities. She believes that the WSGs can be sustained because they are perceived as mobilized group of women working for the good of the community and as agitators of life without violence. Nevertheless, there is a need for their further support in the form of informational consultations and providing opportunities for legal registration as independent public organizations. It was noted that the most valuable event organized by the WSG was “Education and information from house to house” campaign as well as WSG involvement in enhancing the role of women in society. All information concerning the activities of WSGs is submitted to the state authority of the district on a regular basis. Representatives of EBGA participate in all events organized by the WSG. Razoqova Shahlo noted that here is an urgent need to increase the number of such women’s support groups in other Jamoats of the district Based on the achieved positive results on decreasing domestic violence, CWFA fully supports the establishment of WSG in other districts and villages and serve as a partner to conduct project activities and take initiatives. Unfortunately, they can’t offer funding to WSG and rely on donor funding. (Total population of the district is 84,000, including 44,000 women). She said that the WSG became the link between the population and government agencies, in particular families at risk of domestic violence. Meeting with members of WSG “Manzara” which is located in Higararosh village of Jamoat Childukhtaron of Muminobod was held in the house of the leader of the group - Davlatmoh.

The leader of the group is an open and sociable woman. She is grateful for the opportunity of self-realization and self-affirmation. She proudly told us how the works started in the framework of the project, how grateful the women of the Jamoat are for the support and she read poems dedicated to the Po "Najoti kudakon" and social workers of the project. The author of the poems was daughter of the WSG leader who is also one of the project beneficiaries. Office of the WSG "Manzara" is equipped with computer and the project banners. Information corner of the WSG is diverse and accessible to all members of the community. In its activities the WSG primarily is guided by its Charter as well as the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence", 100 questions and answers about domestic violence and the Guidance on the rights and opportunities for women in society. The WSG "Manzara" has its paperwork properly, keeps all minutes of general meetings and a list of group members.

It is observed that the leadership of the active women is manifested in the everyday life of communities. At the training seminars they learned about their rights and about the different types of domestic violence. Today they are recognized by the community and are ready to continue their work as members of an independent public organization. 5 most active women of the group can independently conduct information campaigns among the population.

The group unites women of 7 villages of the Jamoat. During the focus group discussions the women told that thanks to the initiatives of the PO "Najoti kudakon" and the established WSG the local young girls and women gained sewing skills through attending the Home sewing trainings. All graduates received certificates. Each course graduate has paid 70 TJS that is half the cost of the certificate, and 10 TJS for training, for a total of 80 TJS (over \$10).

This activity was carried out within the framework of the signed memorandum of "Najoti kudakon" with the Employment Center and the Adult Education Center of the district. This is the initiative of the WSG "Manzara" to create access to the education and skills of girls from remote villages. This event was not funded by the project.

WSG "Durahshon" in Shuroobod district consists of 18 members, including 4 males. At the beginning of works the group has 15 members, and later three new members joined it. The group unites women who are real leaders and each of them has an assistant. At the beginning of activities the group members walked through communities to search for victims of domestic violence. .

The community has become more active, it began to pay attention to the situation associated with domestic violence. The role of the communities was to disseminate information about the activities of the WSG and their services. The accession of men to the WSG is perceived by the community positively. According to the culture of the Tajik people, moralism of young families from men is perceived positively and is welcomed. In the process of project evaluation, it was observed that men are respectful of the activities of the WSG and conduct information work among men in the community to reduce domestic violence. Men joined to the WSG by different ways. Some of them are interested in conducting information work among young people and young families.

Today they know about new victims with help of local communities and the victims themselves seek their help and advice.

In the days of the campaign "16 days against violence against women" the members of the WSG were dressed in orange uniform. Local people are used to the uniform of the WSG members; they

recognize them and seek their support. During the meeting the WSG members noted that they protect the confidentiality of information on victims of domestic violence. **Confidentiality is ensured by the fact that all personal data of victims of domestic violence is encrypted by specialists and all documentation is stored in the organization's safe. Only specialists of the Safe House - lawyer and psychologist have the opportunity to communicate with victims of domestic violence using their personal mobile phones.**

The women are mobilized and they work in the group on their own initiative; they know their role and work very well. As members of the WSG had remarked, they are psychologically prepared and know how to behave, how to ask the question, how to prepare their interlocutors to discuss the problem. They have a special approach to families at risk. The representative of local Jamoat is a member of the WSG. "Durahshon" WSG works in three main areas: support for disabled children, teaching skills of sewing, collection of medicinal plants. The group has its logo - embroidered emblem with the name of the group (photo is attached).

WSG "Rukhshona" in Rudaki Jamoat of Vose district. The group consists of 15 people, including three young men. The group is one of the youth groups and is established 4 months ago. To date, mobilized member of the group actively carry out their mission. Office of the group is located in the building of Jamoat's clinic and is equipped with a computer. It has a library. The Group conducts paperwork properly and all information is documented. According to the female members of the group the population comes to them mainly in regard to the issues of family quarrels and unemployment. The problems are discussed by the leader of the group and other community members.

During the visits to selected WSGs it was found that group leaders independently use the available literature and information materials and together with the executors develop project information sheets for further distribution among women in their communities.

The established WSG have a significant role in reducing violence in target communities by following ways:

- **raising awareness through activists' actions in search of victims of violence;**
- **providing them with all possible assistance with their resources, creating conditions and access to the services of mobile team specialists in the field (in their communities), and in difficult situations, redirecting them to the Safe House, having their own badges in their hands, like a list of directions.**

During the evaluation we were convinced that all these actions are conducted strictly confidential. Also, when collecting information, the project executors asked the evaluators to subscribe to the confidentiality of the information available.

During the meetings the leaders and members of the WSGs noted that the project executors visited them in order to increase their awareness and advised them on sensitive approach to each member of the community, particularly to the victims of domestic violence.

The WSGs use mini-libraries, booklets and posters about domestic violence as an additional resource to raise their potential and to work independently. **A visit to the WSG, and meetings with women activists showed that information resources play a big role in raising awareness of women, girls and the general population. According to the members of the WSG, after the**

project is completed, they will continue the work with the consultative support of Najoti Kusikon. According to the executors of the project, several WSG (3 WSG ready and have developed charters) will prepare documents for legal registration and obtaining the status of the Public Organization. According to the leader of the Manzara WSG, information mini-libraries are used by local self-government agencies. According to report of the executors, WSG members and local women are being advised by the specialists of the PO "Najoti kudakon" (psychologist, lawyer, social worker) on a monthly basis. In general, within 2 years of the project 4,800 beneficiaries from mountain communities were counseled.

Группы работают и дальше будут работать

As a result of intensified activities of the WSGs significantly increased the number of women from the distant mountain communities that had requested support and they were provided with necessary assistance. Round tables helped to increase the sensitivity of the state agencies to the problems of domestic violence and to expand the circle of persons involved in the discussion and solution of the problems of women. It should be noted that only 10 round tables which were conducted in the centers of the targeted districts (Kulob, Shuroobod, Muminobod, Vose, Hamadoni, Farkhor) were attended by over 200 people.

Based on the meetings held with representatives of the communities, it can be concluded that today, women and girls in the targeted communities receive timely assistance; there is an accessible and confidential platform for dialogue and they can freely discuss their problems. Members of the WSG live in these communities and are always informed about the problems of women in their villages, and are easily guided by problems. They can provide timely information and consulting services as needed.

They know well and use in a timely manner the norms of the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence."

The male members of the WSG enhance youth awareness about the ethics of family life and the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence". The Jamoat has a large number of young people and they want to learn computer skills. **Based on the discussions with the project executors, it is assumed that the members of the WSG can further organize training courses for young people in computer skills. By attending computer skills training courses, young people can simultaneously obtain additional information about the existing Domestic Violence Prevention Act. Awareness of youth will contribute to a further reduction in cases of domestic violence. While attending the WSG the youth can hear / listen to new information, take advantage of information resources about the project and about the laws. In three WSG there are trends in the creation of home sewing shops, where girls can come without much fear and parents willingly allow them to attend these courses. In turn, the members of the GPA use these courses as information and girls have the opportunity to get advice from the mobile group's experts.**

For example: WSG "Childukhtaron" (village Dehi Baland), a psychologist was able to help a girl to retire from suicide for 14 years. The lawyer held a family conference and it was revealed that the girl's parents were in migration, and her uncle was trying to rape her, there were a lots of attempts. Lawyer, explained the fact of preparing the documents for trial.

The leader of the Jamoat is interested in the activities of the WSG and supports such initiatives. According to women of the community, the WSG members serve as family peacekeepers, they helped to recover several young families.

According to the working plan of the project in August were organized and successfully held 5 round tables in Hamadoni, Farkhor, Muminobod, Shuroobod and Vose districts. The round tables on “Gender equality. The call for cooperation” were attended by representatives of EBGA of the targeted areas and active members of WSGs. Program of the round tables included a presentation of the current project, discussions on domestic violence against women, and the importance of their involvement and mobilization in remote villages. The organized round tables helped to raise awareness of the representatives of state structures and to increase their sensitivity to gender equality, in particular to the consequences of domestic violence. In the process of the round tables the representatives of EBGA expressed interest in the project and its expected results.

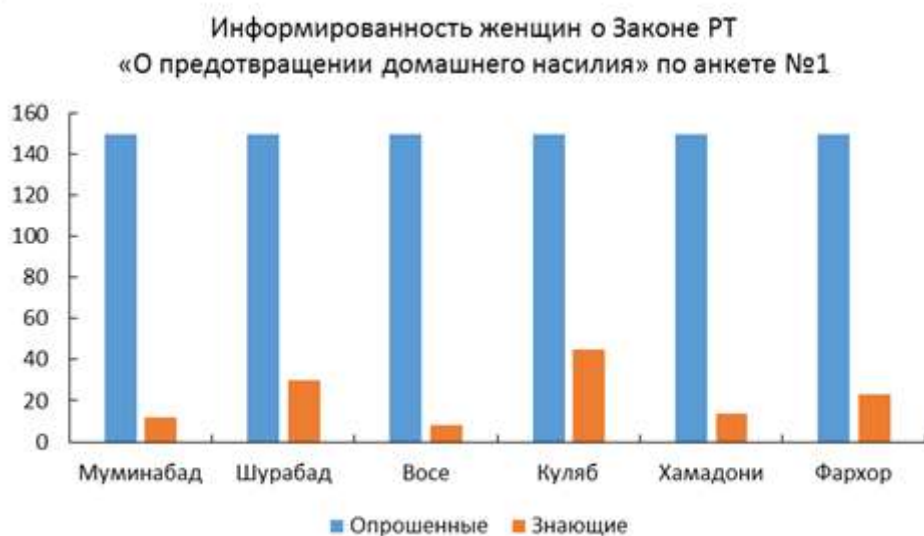
Currently, the capacity and authority of the established 6 WSGs corresponds to Phase of “Strengthening” of SHG Concept. Women’s Support Groups are equipped by electronic equipment, trained specialists, motivated leaders, community recognition and the available literature. WSG members have the capacity to print and distribute information sheets among the population.

Research in the framework of the project

According to the goals and objectives of the project, at a particular stage of the project the WSG executors prepared the questionnaire number one to conduct a baseline study on the ground. The study aimed at determining the degree of awareness among women and girls in the targeted areas of the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence” before and after the educational activities at the end of the first year of the project.

In the first phase of the study in each targeted area 150 women were interviewed. The total number of respondents was 900 women. The study was conducted by two local women activists in each district, with consulting support of the WSGs and project executors.

The key issue of the study was the question: Do you have information on the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On Prevention of Domestic Violence”?



The analysis results show the following in the context of the targeted areas:

Muminobod: 12 out of 150 women heard about the Law, but do not know in detail (8%)

Shuroobod : 30 out of 150 women are aware of the Law (20%)

Vose: only 8 out of 150 women have heard about the Law (5.5%)

Kulob: 45 out of 150 women are aware of the Law of (30%)

Hamadoni: 14 out of 150 women know about the law (9.3%)

Farkhor: 23 out of 150 women are aware of the Law (15.3%)

In December 2015, in coordination with local observers/monitors the second phase of the study was held in the same communities using the questionnaire number 2.



As can be seen from the chart above, due to the organized activities of the project women's awareness of the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence" has significantly increased.

Muminobod: 30% of women are aware of the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence"

Shuroobod : 52% of women and girls know and understand the features of Law

Vose: 12% of women have information about the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence"

Hamadoni: 25% of women and girls know about the Law

Kulyab: 51% of women and girls are aware of the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence"

Farkhor: 21% of women and girls know about the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence".

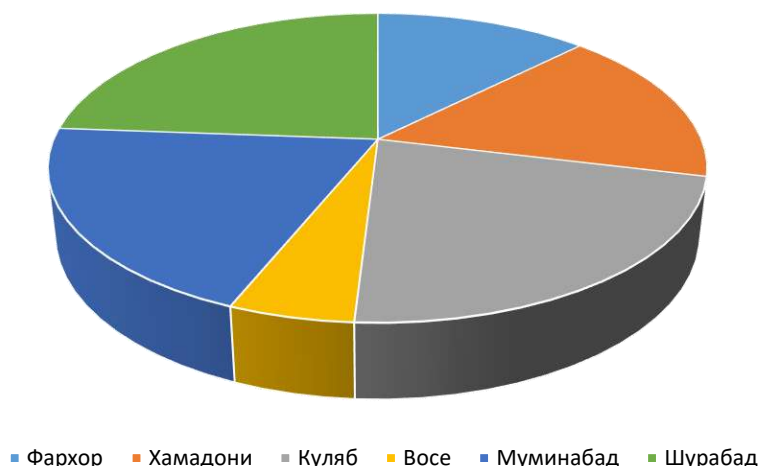
Summing up the results of activities for the first year of the project the following target results were achieved:

- The girls and women, including victims of violence in 6 Jamoats of the targeted areas (Kulob, Shuroobod , Hamadoni, Vose, Farkhor, Muminobod) have real access to information and services to prevent violence;
- 6 women's support groups successfully work in the targeted areas that unite 90 active women, including 34 women who experienced domestic violence;
- 90 active women from the WSG members have been trained on the SHG Concept and they have the skills to help others;

- For 1 year the established WSGs assisted a total of 1058 women. The maximum number of beneficiaries were assisted by WSG in Shuroobod district (252 women), and the minimum - by WSG in Vose district (55 women);
- The WSGs provide victims of domestic violence with a special badges with which they are sent to the Crisis Center of the PO “Najoti kudakon” for legal and psychological support. Every WSG has its own typical badge;
- Registration victims of domestic violence is recorded in coded form and the confidentiality of the primary information is ensured;
- Since the beginning of the project 51 women directed to the Crisis Center (CC) of the PO “Najoti kudakon” including 38 victims of domestic violence as well as 10 wives of migrant workers, 3 girls of 18-23 years old with disabilities. Five of the women were sent from the CC to the shelter of the regional maternity home. During their stay in the shelter psychologist and lawyer of the PO “Najoti kudakon” provided them with advice, prepared their legal documents, accompanied them for forensic examination and later in the trial.

The total number of women who have received help and support from the established WSGs in 2015 is as follow: Farkhor -132, Hamadoni -73, Kulob - 234, Vose – 55, Muminobod - 212, Shuroobod - 252

Женщины, получившие поддержку и помощь в 2015 году



It should be noted that in addition to the established WSGs the state agencies also direct victims of domestic violence to the CC of the PO “Najoti kudakon”. In particular:

- ❖ 6 women and 2 girls up to 16 years were referred to the CC of the PO “Najoti kudakon” by the Committee of Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. They were provided by legal, medical and psychological care.
- ❖ 16 women and a girl of 13 years were referred by the Department of Women and Family Affairs of the government of Kulob city. They received timely assistance from a lawyer and a social worker
- ❖ 6 women were referred by departments of internal affairs of Kulob, Farkhor and Muminobod districts whose problems are being solved in cooperation with the police of these districts.

The project activities and results in 2016

In the second year of the project activities of the executive team focused on the formation of the remaining 6 Women's Support Groups.

During the first 5 months (January-May) the project's mobile team worked in new communities in order to establish scheduled WSGs. The next stage of activities was devoted to organizing and conducting of informational and educational trainings on specific topics.

In the second year of the project 5 round tables were planned in the targeted areas on the theme "Gender equality. Presentation of the Women's Support Groups".

New WSGs were created in other Jamoats of the same targeted areas based on the previously signed memorandum with executive bodies of the government authorities and bodies of local self-government in the targeted communities. The new WSGs as well as those established in 2016 are based on the principles of the SHG Concept and are guided by the Charter and the rules of the WSGs.

Currently, all the 12 WSGs in 6 targeted districts support the local women and girls including victims of domestic violence and provide access to information about their rights as well as to a safe environment in the safe house of the PO "Najoti kudakon".

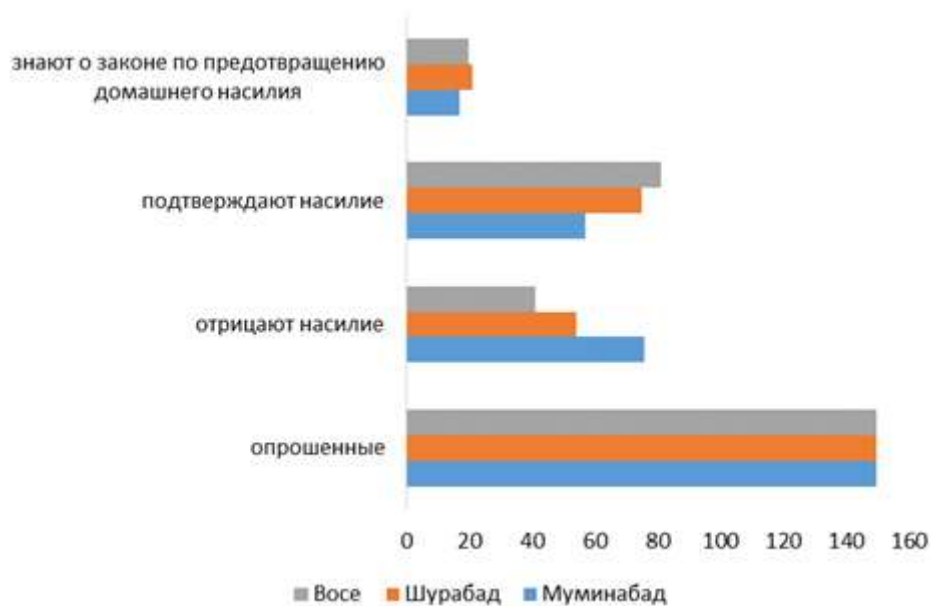
The potential of the newly-created WSGs become more stable and stronger through trainings for community activists. The WSGs invited a new category of community representatives i.e. teachers, nurses, policemen to participate in a two-day training seminar on theme "I have the right ... Call for cooperation". Participation in the training helped to increase their awareness about the activities and features of the approach to victims of domestic violence. With their help 76 persons from the remote mountain targeted areas were referred to the Crisis Center of the PO "Najoti kudakon" where they received timely help and support.

Today, each member of the WSGs knows features of her work and has the skills to provide the necessary services to women and girls, including victims of domestic violence. As a result of intensified activities of the WSGs increased awareness of community members about the importance of gender mainstreaming, and at the same time a special attention was focused on the key role of women in public life.

This work was carried out by organizing meetings, monthly mobile group visits to the communities, private conversations, distribution of booklets and newsletters and providing consultations.

In the second year of the project on the basis of the new WSGs was conducted the same study on the awareness of women about the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Prevention of Domestic Violence". Based on the results of the study in 2015 and also taking into account the suggestions of experts, the following questions were added to the questionnaires:

- Have you ever been subjected to domestic violence in your life?
- Do you know violent incidents?
- Do you have information on the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Prevention of Domestic Violence"?



Results of the study show the following information:

- Muminobod – 76 out of the 150 women who were interviewed did not confirm violent incidents against themselves, 57 of them confirmed that they know violent incidents, 17 women heard about the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence” (12 women heard about the law, but do not know the details)
- Shuroobod - 54 out of 150 women did not confirm violent incidents against themselves, 75 confirmed that they know violent incidents, 21 are aware of the Law (12 women heard about the Law)
- Vose – 41 out of 150 women did not confirm violent incidents against themselves, 81 have confirmed that they know violent incidents, 20 women have heard of the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence”

In addition the survey showed women's awareness of the law in the following way:

- Kulob – 45 out of 150 women are aware of the Law
- Hamadoni - 14 out of 150 women know about the Law
- Farhor - 23 out of the 150 respondents know about the Law

Cooperation with the state authorities in support of victims of domestic violence also continued during 2016 year. Thus, in seven months 12 women were referred to the Crisis Center of the PO “Najoti kudakon” by the Committee on Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and all were provided with legal, medical and psychological assistance.

4 women were referred by the Department of Women and Family Affairs of the government of Kulob city. They received timely assistance from a lawyer and a social worker

16 women were referred by departments of internal affairs of Kulob, Farkhor and Muminobod districts whose problems are being solved in cooperation with the police of these districts.

Analysis of the data regarding to of the women who applied to the Crisis Center of the organization shows the following: The figures are given during the evaluation period.

<i>Number of women who applied to to the WRC in Kulob area</i>	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>Farkhor</i>			8	13
<i>Muminobod</i>		1	12	17
<i>Shuroobod</i>	1		16	21
<i>Vose</i>			3	9
<i>Hamadoni</i>			12	16
<i>TOTAL</i>	1	1	51	76

This table shows that through increasing the awareness among the local women with help of WSGs the number of victims of domestic violence who request support is increasing significantly. Victims of domestic violence receive the necessary consultation of experts in the units of the “Safe house” in a safe and trusted environment. The data show that in 2016 the “Safe house” of the WRC served 76 women aged 16 to 57 years old.

For the second year of the project the following results were achieved:

- 6 new WSGs were established in the targeted Jamoats of Hamadoni, Muminobod, Vose, Kulob, and Farkhor and Shuroobod districts
- Trainings were organized and conducted on “SHG Concept”, “Implementation of SHG”
- Working meetings with the participation of the communities have been carried out which helped to spread information about the Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence” as well as about the services of the WRC of PO “Najoti kudakon” for victims of domestic violence.
- 5 round tables have been conducted on the theme “Gender equality. Presentation of the WSG, exchange visits” that helped to raise awareness of activities of the created WSGs as well as sensitivity regarding gender equality
- The girls and women, including victims of violence, in 6 Jamoats of the targeted districts (Kulob, Shuroobod, Hamadoni, Vose, Farkhor, Muminobod) have effective access to the Crisis Center and the Safe House
- Victims of domestic violence trust the WSGs and ask for assistance in the Safe House of the PO “Najoti kudakon”.

The project indicates establishing of a good partnership which contributed to the achievement of the expected results. Within the framework of the project a tripartite agreement on the partnership was signed and implemented between the PO “Najoti kudakon”, PO “Dunyo kudakon” and executive bodies of the government authorities (Hukumats of the targeted districts) on the ground.

Through the implementation of this project relations have been established and improved with key partners i.e. representatives of the state structures, in particular:

- ✓ Nurlyaminova S., Chairman of the Department of Women and Family Affairs of EBGA of Kulob city
- ✓ Rahmonzoda M., Head of education department of Kulob city
- ✓ Yusufov S., Chairman of EBGA of Muminobod district
- ✓ Khidirzoda M., Chairman of the Committee on Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
- ✓ Sattorova M., Representative of the Ombudsman in Kulob city
- ✓ Mirzoyev, R., Chairman of EBGA of Farkhor district
- ✓ Ikromov R., Chairman of EBGA of Shuroobod district
- ✓ Rajabov Y., Chairman of Jamoat of Dogiston of Shuroobod district.

Awareness of a common goal, the distribution of responsibilities between the project partners and the desire to work in a team accompanied the executors for the entire duration of the project.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

The Project and Information Management

The assessment shows that the project management has created opportunities to improve skills of its executors. Each executor has a certain working place equipped with necessary equipment. Information Management is established properly - information is recorded in logbooks and archived in a timely manner. All the information is sorted by value and access, open and closed nature.

12 separate folders are prepared for each WSG including key information, i.e. the signed memorandums with BLSG, list of members, information on business meetings and trainings.

The project reports are conducted using data entry form provided by the UN Trust Fund. The data entry form is practical in use and helps to organize the key data of the project.

Difficulties during the Project implementation

During a meeting with the project evaluators the executors noted the following difficulties which were more noticeable in the process of implementation of the project:

- Lack of awareness among the population, particularly women, of the laws (in particular the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On Prevention of Domestic Violence”) protecting their rights
- Feelings of dependency of women
- Women's economic dependence on their husbands
- Radical religious sector and its influence on the behavior of communities
- Cross-border problems and isolation from communities.

These problems are real challenges for active civil society.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main conclusions

During the final assessment it was determined that

- Thanks to good management and cohesive teamwork the project goals and objectives are successfully achieved;
- The executive team of the project implemented all the planned activities to achieve the goals and objectives, despite the prolongation of some activities due to weather and roads' conditions;
- The executive team of the project has improved its capacity and skills to work in the communities and with victims of domestic violence;
- 12 WSGs are established in the targeted districts based on the SHG Concept. The executors of the project provided information and consulting as well as technical support for institutional development of the WSGs;
- The WSG become more sustainable and serve as platforms for dialogue between representatives of government agencies and residents of the targeted areas;
- Activities of members of the WSGs in improving the lives of women helped to increase their role in their communities;
- The WSGs serve as platforms for meetings of local women with mobilized group of the PO "Najoti kudakon" as well as a place where they can get expert advice and support;
- Women of the communities trust the WSGs and consider them as advisors and supporters;
- Analysis of the results shows that the created WSGs have great potential (being supported by EBGA and BLSG, community recognition) for further development;
- A real mechanism has been established for cooperation and referral of victims of domestic violence to the Safe House of the PO "Najoti kudakon" which includes the following: informing, consulting in the field, a characteristic badge which provides privacy and security of the victim;
- The local communities recognize the WSGs, trust and understand their mission and appreciate their work;
- As a result of intensified works to find victims of domestic violence as well as the "From house to house" campaign, greater public awareness and expanding the circle of supporters of the WSGs, the number of people who requested support from the WSGs has significantly increased;
- An innovative approach used by the project executors, i.e. informing girls and women in the process on sewing helped to raise awareness among women about the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence";
- The WSGs provide professional legal and psychological assistance in the field through working meetings in the communities;
- Representatives of EBGA are positive about the created WSGs and are ready to continue effective cooperation with them.

Achievements of the project's key objectives:

- ❖ Twelve Women's Support Groups (WSG) are established based on the SHG principles to help victims of domestic violence in targeted areas of the Project. The WSGs have manual documents, cohesive team, equipped facilities and trained staff;
- ❖ Sensitivity of the representatives of government agencies in the targeted areas has been increased to the issues of gender equality and domestic violence through their participation in the events organized by the project executors (working meetings and round tables);
- ❖ Victims of domestic violence in rural communities have accurate information about the Safe house of the PO "Najoti kudakon" and enjoy the services of a psychologist, social worker and lawyer;
- ❖ Victims of domestic violence are referred to the Safe House by both the WSG and the representatives of the executive bodies of government authorities.

The achieved results show the correct assessment of the needs of the community and identify problems in the region.

Establishment of WSGs on basis of the SHG Concept as test instrument is justified and shows the effectiveness of this approach in the framework of the implemented project.

Compliance with strict confidentiality of services of the Crisis Center and the Safe House ensures the success and effectiveness of the project. It should be noted that the Eastern mentality does not allow women to talk openly about their problems. The project executors strictly adhere to the non-disclosure agreement in particular regarding the personal data of women who requested support from the Crisis Center. The personal data of victims of domestic violence who asked for help and advice or have been placed in the shelter are coded; there are no photos or other personal data.

During the assessment of the project we were shown the logs of social worker, lawyer and psychologist. However, all the data has been fixed in the code form that ensures complete safety and confidentiality of victims of domestic violence. This condition contributed to the fact that the number of beneficiaries has increased since confidentiality is guaranteed.

All services provided by the project executors are accompanied by interviews and passive observation. These activities are conducted in conditions of strict confidentiality and with the consent of the beneficiaries. At the same time a victim of domestic violence herself makes the final decision to get the services and support or not.

Recommendations:

- ❖ Improve networking between 12 WSGs for regular exchange of information and practical experience;
- ❖ Provide the WSGs with mobile Internet and train them in the use of new ICT skills (blogging, social networking, etc.);
- ❖ Find financial resources and organize Forum of women –members of the WSGs with the participation of representatives of the government, stakeholders and donors; This forum is a platform where women can share with their experience and find possibilities for future sustainable development.
- ❖ Expand interaction with the media and raise public awareness of activities of the WSGs (using multimedia, photo stories, documentary, etc.);
- ❖ Carry out exchange visits of WSG leaders both domestically and in other countries where there are such self-help groups or women's support groups;
- ❖ Build the capacity of newly established groups (WSGs);
- ❖ Widely use coaching methods.

The report is prepared by:

Rahmonberdieva N. ([REDACTED])
Qarshiboev N. ([REDACTED])

Annex 1.

ABBREVIATIONS

WRC - Women's Resource Center

WSG - Women's Support Group

SHG - Self-help Group

EBGA - Executive Bodies of the Government Authorities

CC - Crisis Center

BLSG – Bodies of Local self-government

RC - Resource Center

Annex 2.

Photos taken in the assessment process

