

From ‘programme transplants’ to ‘local approaches’: the prevention of domestic violence against women in Tajikistan

Dissertation

zur Erlangung der Würde des
Doktors der Philosophie
der Fakultät für Geisteswissenschaften
der Universität Hamburg

vorgelegt von
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aus Düsseldorf

Hamburg, den 3. April 2015 (Druckjahr)

Datum der Disputation:

Dienstag, 14. Juli 2015

Prüfungskommission:

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Bonn, den 3. April 2015

For my sons,
Yamani, Oskar, Paul and Benno

This study would have not been possible without the help of many colleagues, friends and family, who advised and motivated me; thank you all for your unwavering support! I particularly want to thank Goulya Petrova, Firuza Jobirova, Dr David Cownie and Prof Dr Frank Bliss. Of course, nothing would have worked out without the generosity and patience of Mareile, whose love and friendship I am deeply grateful for.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AJJR	Alternative Justice and Justice Reform project
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CoFWA	Committee for Family and Women's Affairs
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOPA	Gesellschaft für Organisation, Planung und Ausbildung
GoT	Government of Tajikistan
GTG	Gender Theme Group
HDI	Human Development Index
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
JJAP	Juvenile Justice Alternatives project
KII	Key Informant Interview
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDS	National Development Strategy
NetLAC	Network of Legal Aid Centres project
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSI	Open Society Institute
PD4	Political Division 4 of the Swiss Foreign Ministry
PDV	Prevention of Domestic Violence project
PMU	Project Management Unit
ProDoc	Project Document
ProVAW	Project Against Violence Against Women
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RCT	Randomised Control Trial
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIAPAC	Social Impact Assessment and Policy Analysis Corporation
TJS	Tajik somoni (4,99190TJS = 1 USD, Sep 21, 2014)
TLSS	Tajikistan Living Standards Survey
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WHO	World Health Organisation

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1. Introduction

On a sunny day in the spring of 2012, I was invited to attend a meeting of community stakeholders in a village in Khatlon region, in southern Tajikistan. Gathered in the compound of a wealthy resident were the staff members of the local non-governmental organisation (NGO) that had called the meeting, the religious leader (*mulloh*) of the district, a representative of local government, a police officer, may be thirty or so members of the community and myself. I was participating in my role as the former manager of the project that was funding the NGO, and I was particularly keen to see how our partners were putting into practice the project's new advocacy strategy. For three years, I had been the project manager of the German firm contracted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to implement the 'Prevention of Domestic Violence' (PDV) project in Tajikistan. Our team had invested considerable energy into enhancing the project's strategy and supporting our partner NGOs to innovate their approaches. The afternoon turned out to reveal some interesting observations. Women were seated separately from the men, divided by a curtain to obstruct the two groups from seeing each other. However, female NGO staff and the female local government representative interacted openly with the men of the village. Taking turns, the police officer, the government representative, the NGO and finally the *mulloh* gave a speech on the importance of keeping peace in the family. Then the men had an intense exchange of views, while the women behind the curtain merely listened. After the meeting, the *mulloh* invited me for tea and a chat. He explained to me his view on domestic violence by interpreting the Quran: physical violence was not a proper Islamic way for a husband to solve a conflict with his wife. However, husbands did have the responsibility to discipline and educate their wives.

The almost invisible women at the community meeting and the opinion of the *mulloh* - apparently one of the most important change agents that the PDV project works with - are not what most people in Europe or the United States usually have in mind when thinking about initiatives for women's rights. Certainly, projects should challenge existing patriarchal norms and structures and provide a space for women's empowerment. However, for the local NGO partners this is

what they felt was an adequate response in the Islamic setting of rural Tajikistan. A community meeting is not considered an adequate space for women to express their views, and gender relations are often discussed in religious terms. This short anecdote highlights the tensions and intricacies of designing and implementing international development projects:

“In order for human rights to be effective ... they need to be ... situated within local contexts of power and meaning. They need, in other words, to be remade in the vernacular. How does this happen? Do people in local communities reframe human rights ideas to fit into their system of cultural meanings? Do they resist ideas that seem unfamiliar?” (Merry 2006: 1)

This study strives to answer these intertwined questions in regard to the prevention of domestic violence against women, a particular form of gender-based violence. It will analyse how international and local actors in Tajikistan create approaches that suit specific socio-economic and cultural contexts by appropriating global norms and discourses and appreciating local conditions; in other words: how they negotiate the ‘global-local interface’ of domestic violence prevention.

The use of locally suitable approaches is considered good practice in international violence prevention programming – often in contrast to the reality on the ground, where interventions are dominated by ‘programme transplants’ that inadequately reflect local conditions and the views of local actors. There is, however, little theoretical grounding, as well as a lack of evaluative evidence and programmatic guidance for the design and implementation of locally suitable prevention approaches.

At the international policy level, domestic violence is regarded a human rights violation, and global development policy and programming has started to recognise this. National governments have an obligation to put in place and enforce laws and policies for the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of domestic violence. The majority of women in Tajikistan experience different forms of domestic violence at least at some point in their biographies and for many it is a pervasive fact of everyday life. But despite its epidemic proportions, the Tajik authorities have not paid attention to the issue. Local NGOs that are

funded by international agencies implement initiatives for the promotion of gender equality and provide services for victims of abuse. However, since late 2012 a law on domestic violence is in place, and the current challenge is implementing and enforcing the law in light of the specific context, institutional challenges and little documented practice.

By analysing domestic violence prevention in the southern Khatlon region of Tajikistan, and the PDV project as a specific case, the study aims to enrich existing scholarship as well as provide practitioners - in Tajikistan and beyond - with a concrete framework for designing effective, locally suitable prevention approaches. It tackles three research questions: what are the context-specific factors that must be considered when devising local intervention approaches? Which local prevention approaches did the PDV project use, and how did the production and implementation of these approaches function? In how far were these approaches effective in preventing domestic violence?

Its overarching purpose and objectives situate the study in the field of development anthropology. But the interdisciplinary and applied character of the study's topic also requires insights from other fields, in particular public health and development studies, and the analysis of policy and programme documents.

1.1 The international challenge of domestic violence prevention

In 2013, WHO (2013: 20) published the most comprehensive review of global statistical data on domestic violence so far using a standardised set of violent actions; a detailed discussion of key terms and definitions is provided in the methodology section. The report shows that worldwide almost one-third of all women who have been in a relationship have ever experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partners. Prevalence rates were lower in high-income countries, as well as in low- and middle income countries in European and Western Pacific countries (around 25%) compared to low- and middle-income countries, with South-East Asia (37.7%), Eastern Mediterranean (37.0%) and Africa (36.6%) displaying the highest figures. Thus, the report concludes that a large proportion of women globally experience violence during their lifetime.

The WHO's estimates produce a rather even picture regarding the regional distribution of prevalence rates, which is due to the regional grouping of countries. The 2010 Global Burden of Disease Report for instance gives a global average prevalence of 26.4%, with Central Sub-Saharan Africa standing at 65.4%, the Andean region in Latin America at 40.6% and East Asia below the average at 16.3% (ibid: 47). The previous WHO multi-country study that covered only eleven countries, but distinguished between urban and rural sites, confirms this variation (see Tab. 1). The prevalence of lifetime physical domestic violence ranged from 12.9% in urban Japan to 61% in rural Peru. For having experienced domestic violence in the past twelve months, which provides a more accurate picture of the current situation, the variation was equally great, with only 3% of women in Japan and Serbia and Montenegro reporting current violence compared to 29% in rural Ethiopia. Prevalence of lifetime experience of sexual violence was equally diverse.

Tab. 1: Prevalence of lifetime physical domestic violence in international comparison (in %)

Location	Physical	Sexual
Bangladesh (urban)	39.7	37.4
Bangladesh (rural)	41.7	49.7
Brazil (urban)	27.2	10.1
Brazil (rural)	33.8	14.3
Ethiopia (rural)	48.7	58.6
Japan (urban)	12.9	6.2
Namibia (urban)	30.6	16.5
Peru (urban)	48.6	22.5
Peru (rural)	61.0	46.7
Samoa	40.5	19.5
Serbia (urban)	22.8	6.3
Thailand (urban)	22.9	29.9
Thailand (rural)	33.8	28.9
Tanzania (urban)	32.9	23.0
Tanzania (rural)	46.7	30.7

Source: WHO 2005: 28

The variation in the statistical prevalence rates is also confirmed by the findings of anthropological research. In an analysis of fourteen different societies, covering a wide diversity from rural Sub-Saharan Africa to Central America and Melanesia, five cases were classified as having high levels, five intermediate, three low levels and one with no wife beating (Campbell 1992: 230-232).

The 2013 WHO data also disguises the different forms of domestic violence, as it only refers to physical and sexual violence, whereas the 2005 WHO multi-country study distinguished emotional violence, capturing experiences of different acts of abusive and controlling behaviours by intimate partners. Importantly, women's experiences of physical and sexual violence tend to be accompanied by controlling behaviours. Almost 40% of women in rural Peru who had ever suffered physical and/or sexual violence, or both, had experienced several types of controlling behaviours as well (WHO 2005: 36). In several sites, including Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Peru, Thailand and Tanzania, between a fifth and a quarter of women were ever intimidated by their husbands. Great variation was found in regard to experiencing controlling behaviours: 70.7% of women in urban Tanzania, 67.9% in Samoa and 54.4% in rural Peru reported that their husbands insist on knowing where they are all the time, compared to 12.7% in Japan (ibid: 35). A 2006 survey in Afghanistan also registered very high levels of emotional violence, with 73.9% of women reporting having ever experienced controlling behavior by their husbands (Global Rights 2008: 15). The above figures on physical and emotional domestic violence provide testimony of the unfathomable suffering many women all over the world endure:

"The findings [of the 2013 WHO report] send a powerful message that violence against women is not a small problem that only occurs in some pockets of society, but rather is a global public health problem of epidemic proportions, requiring urgent action." (WHO 2013: 3).

1.1.1 The 'neglected obvious' of international development

In the international development arena it is accepted that gender equality is both a development goal in its own right, as well as an enabler for the achievement of other development outcomes. These two perspectives – on the one hand a

rights-based argument and on the other hand a so-called 'instrumentalist' perspective – are mutually reinforcing and can be used to promote the centrality of gender equality (OECD 2011: 10; World Bank 2011: 3). The same two lines of argument exist for domestic violence.

The instrumentalist line of argumentation is based on the well-documented positive effects of gender equality for the achievement of development objectives (UN Millennium Project 2005). For example, educated girls and women have greater control over their reproductive lives and can participate more effectively in public life. Greater empowerment of women increases the negotiation capabilities for safe sex and decreases the vulnerability towards HIV infection. Gender equality can also accelerate economic growth and increase agricultural production. In this vein, the World Bank (2006) has used the slogan 'gender equality is smart economics', and the Bank's 2012 World Development Report provides ample evidence of the positive correlation between gender equality and economic growth (World Bank 2011). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2011: 6) concludes that investments in gender equality yield the highest returns of all development investments.

Narrowing the focus to violence against women reveals that here too consensus exists that it impairs the attainment of other development outcomes. First and foremost, domestic violence is associated with a host of health hazards. The 2013 WHO review (2013: 8) summarises common pathways. It demonstrates that domestic violence can lead to physical injuries, psychological trauma associated with mental health problems like depression and suicidal tendencies and substance abuse, and fear that can stand in the way of contraception and health-care seeking, which can lead to unwanted pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted infections. Women are less able to negotiate safe sex when their spouses threaten them with violence, putting them at greater risk of HIV infection (WHO/UNAIDS 2010; UNFPA/UNIFEM 2005). Since knowing your HIV status is the precondition for receiving anti-retroviral treatment, by not going for HIV-testing, many women forfeit the chance to access life prolonging medication (WHO 2005b: 21). These negative effects on victims' physical and mental well-being can, of course, not be without implications for other dimensions of development. Agarwal and Panda (2007: 361-364) argue that it is a 'neglected

obvious' that marital violence undermines women's freedoms and human potentials in various ways. For example, injuries resulting from violence can hamper women's capabilities to earn a living or upgrade their skills, fear of violence restricts women's and girls' access to employment and education, and shame and self-stigma can undermine their ability to build social relationships. In addition, violence in the family also negatively affects the children in the family due to the reduced parenting capacities of mothers and fathers caused by depression and traumatic stress (Holt et al 2008). Violence also hampers economic development of countries through direct costs for policing, incarceration and medical care and indirect costs, such as lost wages and psychological costs. Data from Latin America shows that the loss of gross domestic product due to violence, including gang violence and crime, amounts to 1.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) in Mexico and 24.9% in El Salvador (WHO 2004b: 14).

As will be explained in more detail later, at global policy level domestic violence is regarded as human rights violation. This is enshrined in a number of United Nations (UN) conventions and declarations. But despite the documented magnitude of the problem of domestic violence in many countries and notwithstanding the political consensus about domestic violence as a human rights violation, it is only of recent that domestic violence has been recognised as a public issue:

"And although rape as a war crime, honor killings and dowry deaths are beginning to be talked about as human rights violations, both in the laws of individual countries and at the international level, 'ordinary rape and domestic violence' has not yet been so recognized." (Murray 2008: 126)

For many years, domestic violence was a 'blind spot' of international development. However, this is changing. Already in the mid-1990s almost all multi- and bilateral international agencies had some sort of gender policy and technical unit on gender in place (Bliss et al 1995: 3-6). The prominence of gender in development has clearly grown since. In 2000, the international community adopted the Millennium Declaration and committed itself to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs consist of eight goals accompanied by 16 global targets and 48 global indicators. MDG 3 is to promote

gender equality and empower women (UN 2011). Importantly, gender equality was not regarded as one among other cross-cutting issues, but MDG 3 made it an explicit goal in its own right. However, taking a closer look at the MDGs reveals that the issue of domestic violence was blatantly missing from the original documents. MDG 3 had one target, which was to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education, and three indicators, namely the share of girls and boys in schools, the share of women in non-agricultural employment and the proportion of seats held by women in parliament, which are all aspects of gender in the public sphere. The UN Millennium Project's Task Force on Gender Equality identified domestic violence as one of seven strategic priorities to achieve MDG 3. It raised concerns that the global community had not responded with the required sense of urgency to the problem and proposed to include an additional target 5 under MDG 3 (UN Millennium Project 2005: 18). It remains to be seen, however, in which way gender equality and domestic violence prevention will be incorporated in the international post-2015 policy framework.

Also, development agencies pay more attention to the issue than in the past. Remarkably, the World Bank's 2012 World Development Report on gender and development emphasises that increasing women's voice within the family must be key strategy of development cooperation, and this explicitly includes reducing domestic violence through shifts in norms and behaviours (World Bank 2011: 150). The inclusion of gender relations in the private sphere in the document represents a major breakthrough in as far as this is an opening for women's rights to be established as a field of operation for the World Bank, where up until now the focus was only on mainstreaming gender in lending operations. The World Bank published a flagship report on 'women's voice, agency and empowerment', in which it argued for the importance of fighting domestic violence as a precursor for development and growth (World Bank 2014). This report is intended to strengthen the case for multilateral financing for women's rights, in order to actually fund and implement initiatives. Also, other international stakeholders refer to domestic violence prevention in their policy texts. For instance, the human rights policy of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) underlines the importance of combating domestic violence (BMZ 2011: 22). Recently, BMZ has published its new gender policy, in which

fighting violence against women is listed as a priority area for German development (2014: 10).

International funding for gender equality programming has also increased over the last years. At multilateral level, the 2010 16th replenishment conference of the International Development Association saw a record donor contribution of US\$ 49.3bn and made gender one of four 'special themes' (IDA 2010). A 2011 report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that the funds made available by bilateral donors in pursuit of gender equality have also markedly increased over the past years (OECD 2011b). However, the mainstay of these funds is spent on gender mainstreaming initiatives, and it remains a constant challenge to mobilise funds for women's empowerment and domestic violence programmes.

1.1.2 Shaping a response to domestic violence in Tajikistan

Tajikistan is a small and landlocked, predominantly Muslim country in Central Asia. As will be shown later, in the two decades since independence from the Soviet Union it has seen a fundamental political, economic and social transformation process, a downturn of living standards and rising poverty, as well as a brutal civil war in the 1990s. After independence, Tajikistan became a signatory to the international human rights instruments, including CEDAW and the Millennium Declaration and committed itself to putting in place, as well as implementing and enforcing effective policies, legislation and programmes to promote gender equality. However, Soviet achievements in regard to gender equity have diminished and a neo-patriarchal backlash, including a growing Islamist influence, has impacted negatively on gender equality. While national legislation and policies reflect the country's commitments to promoting gender equality, Tajik government institutions - especially at the local level - are weak. Therefore, public gender equality initiatives are few. The second CEDAW Shadow Report by Tajik NGOs (2013: 1) criticises that the government does not fund the implementation of the national strategy on gender equality and has no communication strategy in place to overcome gender stereotypes. The 2010 MDG Progress Report (UN 2010b: 53) underlines this:

“Tajikistan has made a decisive step towards understanding the need for gender transformation ... However, it requires specific and practical measures and mechanisms to ensure fulfilment of the State’s obligations. On the way to achieve de facto equality between men and women, a number of economic, political, cultural and other barriers must be overcome.”

This study will demonstrate that the vast majority of women in Tajikistan experience different forms of domestic violence at least at some point in their biographies and for many it is a pervasive fact of everyday life. But despite its epidemic proportions and their obligation to implement international conventions, the Tajik authorities have not shown concern for this problem. Local NGOs that are funded by international agencies implement initiatives for the promotion of gender equality and provide services for victims of abuse. But there is almost zero public spending for a response to domestic violence - be it funding for victim support services or prevention campaigns -, and the institutions in charge are incapacitated and toothless. The Shadow Report (2013: 4) therefore goes on to say that a *“package of measures to improve women's access to justice and prevent and protect them from domestic violence needs to be adopted”*. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2006: 80) laments that while domestic violence is increasingly recognised as a contributing factor to poverty in many countries this is not well understood in Tajikistan. Many government employees deny the existence of domestic violence, in part not to tarnish the image of Tajikistan in the world. If domestic violence is acknowledged at all by government it is usually belittled as a private matter and ‘family scandal’ that the institutions have no business mingling in. In the report on the UN review of member states human rights records (UN 2011b: 7) the Tajik delegation even made the following statement:

“The delegation expressed its disagreement with the assessment that between 33 and 50 percent of women in Tajikistan experienced physical, psychological or sexual violence as the facts which were in the disposal of the Government contradicted those number: only 2 percent of individuals who applied to advisory centres for help claimed to be subject of domestic violence.”

The same argument was employed in the production of the 2010 MDG Progress report, in which government used figures from the Crisis Centres' database to report on the progress towards achieving target 5 of MDG 3 (GoT/UN 2010: 66), which is a case of gross manipulation of the available data. This implies that the government rejects the findings of several surveys conducted with the approval of and in partnership with its State Statistics Committee (PDV 2011, 2009; SDC 2005; WHO 2000).

At the same time, Tajik NGOs supported by international development agencies are advocating for gender equality and promoting women's empowerment by educating women about their rights and providing support services for victims of domestic violence, including psychosocial counselling and free legal aid (Haarr 2008; Ishkanian 2003). In fact, domestic violence has become the central gender theme that civil society has rallied around in post-Soviet countries, including Tajikistan, over the last decade (Fábián 2010; Johnson and Zaynulinna 2010).

However, Tajik NGOs working in the field of domestic violence operate under very difficult circumstances. As will be shown in detail in the third chapter, the situation in Tajikistan is characterised by a glaring disparity between gender equality *de jure* and *de facto*: a neo-patriarchal backlash implies that women's role in society is increasingly associated with the home, the achievements of the Soviet era in regard to gender-balanced labour market participation and equitable access to social services have largely diminished. Domestic violence is an integral part of many Tajik women's lives and is tolerated by a large proportion of the population, public institutions are dysfunctional and social services are underfunded.

An important activity for Tajik gender equality activists over the past years has been to lobby for the adoption of a specific law on domestic violence that would criminalise domestic violence and provide a basis for the police and other public institutions to act upon cases of abuse. A draft law had been pending before parliament for more than five years, but in 2010 there was a renewed drive on the side of the government to take up the issue and a new draft was produced and tabled before parliament. According to gender activists in Tajikistan, this new dynamic stemmed from international pressure, including the 2007 recommendations of the CEDAW committee and the 2010 results of the

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Tajikistan's human rights record. But the continued advocacy work of local NGOs and their international partners also played an important part.

In December 2012 a draft law was tabled in parliament and this time it was adopted. This marked a major breakthrough, as the government can no longer belittle domestic violence and a legal basis is now in place on which an effective public response can be moulded. The challenges ahead is implementing the law in light of the specific socio-economic and cultural context and challenging institutional conditions. As one project coordinator in Tajikistan remarked: *"The law is not a panacea."* Enforcing the law entails dealing with the difficult local context, in which the response to domestic violence takes place.

1.2 Exploring new ground in theory and practice

Its focus on the embeddedness of domestic violence prevention in its broader social and cultural context posits this study within the field of development anthropology. Due to the interdisciplinary and applied character of the study's topic, insights from other fields, such as public health and development studies, and from documents relating to development policy and practice are also required. The following literature review therefore looks at the anthropological scholarship, as well as additional sources.

1.2.1 Expanding the anthropological engagement with domestic violence

Murray (2008: xviii) states that little has been studied about women in poorer countries and that the issue of violence in the home was largely 'taboo' in research until the past ten to fifteen years. Most research on domestic violence and domestic violence prevention stems from public health, psychology, psychiatry, criminology and social work, where a long tradition exists and a host of theories has evolved to explain violent dispositions and behaviours of individuals (Merry 2009: 19). However, less has been published in other social sciences, including in cultural anthropology.

Of course, the anthropological discipline has a long history of studying violence, starting from the early scholars that engaged with issues such as warfare, conflicts over material resources or rituals. But, as the entry on violence in Barfield's Dictionary of Anthropology (1997: 483) noted, violence in the private domain, especially by men against women, is dominated by a preoccupation with violence outside the home. Volumes on the history of feminist anthropology and anthropological textbooks include little reference to gendered violence (for example Lewin 2006; Luig 2003). Hence, Wies and Haldane (2011) arrive at the conclusion that acts of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, have been left *"largely undertheorised"*.

This might be explained in different ways. Firstly, domestic violence is a phenomenon that is not easily recognised, because it is hidden within the private realm of the home and interpersonal relationships. Colleagues that I questioned about their encounters with domestic violence in their practice of ethnography in different settings confirmed that even in many months of field work in the same locations they never came across or were able to observe such an instance.

However, when reading ethnographic analyses of gender relations, it is puzzling that sometimes issues of marital abuse and violence in the family emerge, but are then only mentioned in a rather by-passing fashion. The detailed account of gender relations in Tajikistan by Harris (2004) exemplifies this, and this study complements Harris' work by adding to the available analysis of gender relations the dimension of domestic violence. A reason for this kind of handling of the issue and a second explanation for the relative underrepresentation of domestic violence in the anthropological literature might be that acts of domestic violence are not necessarily recognised as such and intra-family conflicts are not framed as violence. In contrast to other forms of gendered violence, domestic violence has multiple manifestations and the classification of some of these as violence is disputable. This is especially so for acts of violence that are classified by WHO as 'emotional violence', as will be explained later. Within the 'New Kinship Studies', conflicts within families are proposed as a relevant topic for future research, albeit without referring to such conflicts as 'violence' (Schnegg et al 2010: 37). In her work on gender relations in Mexico, Pauli (2008: 176) provides a detail account of the hierarchical and often abusive relationships between young women and their

mothers-in-law, which she refers to as 'mother-in-law problems'. However, following the WHO classification, many of the behaviours that Pauli describes qualify as 'emotional violence'.

Thirdly, the tradition of cultural anthropology as a discipline that seeks to confront societies without prejudice and cherish cultural diversity might serve as explanation. Citing encounters with fellow anthropologists, Counts (1992: xi) listed various reasons why her colleagues reacted apprehensively towards the topic:

"Some argued that we should not exploit our host's hospitality by exposing a dark side of their culture; others said that they would talk about the problem but would not publish it because they feared such publication would result in their being denied permission to return to the field; some were concerned that their informants might be punished if it were known that they had discussed the subject with an outsider. ... Others argued that if we raised the topic we would be imposing our political agenda on other societies."

Describing and framing family conflicts in terms of domestic violence indeed means to employ a normative, human-rights based view. Such a stance, as will be discussed in the methodology-chapter, is still subject of controversy within the discipline today.

The first major anthropological work on domestic violence was the cross-cultural study published by Levinson (1989). He performed statistical tests on ethnographic data from ninety societies to investigate which factors positively correlate to the incidence of domestic violence. His work is still widely referenced to demonstrate the links between gender inequality and domestic violence. A few years later Counts, Brown and Campbell (1992) published a collection of fourteen anthropological case studies on domestic violence, which can be granted the achievement of establishing violence against women as a research domain within the discipline. Counts and colleagues then inspired a new generation of anthropologists to study gender-based violence (Snadrj 2010, 2007, 2005; Hearn 2009; Hautzinger 2007; Plesset 2006; Merry 2006; McClusky 2001; Shrader and Sagot 2000; Cribb 1999). Merry (2009) also published an anthropological

textbook on gender violence, and Wies and Haldane (2011: 3-7) recently produced a collection of essays with ethnographically informed accounts of 'frontline workers', meaning shelter managers and counsellors, in which they also provide an overview of the recent anthropological scholarship. In addition, there are a number of articles on domestic violence written mainly by 'frontline workers', who base their analyses on ethnographic methods (Haarr 2008; Johnson 2007; Zakirova 2005).

As Wies and Haldane (2011: 7) note, much of the contemporary anthropological literature on gender-based violence shares two concerns. It considers the relationship between the individual and structures of power and explores how victims, perpetrators and service providers grapple with the cultural foundations of violence. Also, the anthropologists researching gender-based violence regard violence as a human rights violation. Two additional observations emerge from my review of the anthropological literature. Firstly, domestic violence is indeed recognised as a culture-bound form of violence, but other forms of gender-based violence, for example female genital mutilation (FGM) (Feuerbach 2011), are more prominent research topics. Merry's textbook does not list domestic violence among the forms of 'violent practices in the family' (2009: 127-155). Secondly - and crucial for this study -, the question of how to arrive at and implement effective prevention approaches suitable in specific local contexts has not received much attention; relevant studies are discussed further below. This might be explained with the 'critical turn' in anthropology that took place around the same time as domestic violence became a research subject and that implied a scepticism towards the utility and morality of international development in general (Mosse 2005: 2-5).

The main work tackling the questions analysed in this study is by Merry (2006). Using several case studies, she conclusively demonstrates that effective human rights initiatives must fit their respective local settings. Merry describes the 'global-local interface' of the women's rights movement that is characterised by a paradox: rights need to be presented in local cultural terms in order to be persuasive, but they must also challenge existing power relations to be effective in furthering gender equality. She theorises that globally agreed human rights are more easily adopted by local actors if they do not disturb established hierarchies,

but they are then also less transformative. It is this balancing act that practitioners in violence prevention have to master. 'Glocalisation' processes are shaped by respective stakeholders, who look for and negotiate ways of making human rights intelligible in local settings. The conceptual framework for my analysis of approaches in Tajikistan will extensively draw on, but also extend Merry's work.

A specific publication worth mentioning is by Haarr (2008), whose article is the only ethnographically informed research that deals directly with my study's topic and study area. Haarr discusses the shortcomings of the legal and medical system in Tajikistan in responding to cases of domestic violence. However, her assessment falls short of locating domestic violence in its local context. She fails to cater for the features of family life in rural Tajikistan and underestimates the constraints and weaknesses of public institutions and social service providers in resource-poor settings. This study will arrive at a more nuanced analysis that takes into account the fact that successful prevention interventions are contingent upon their ability to take local specificities serious and respond to them adequately.

1.2.2 Programme transplants and local approaches

Merry (2006: 19) identifies 'transnational programme transplants' as the dominant form of 'global knowledge flow' in women's rights programming, whereby 'model' interventions are exported from one country to another. These programme transplants have their origins in the so-called 'shelter movement' in the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1970s and 1980s (Dobash and Dobash 1992) that promoted a response based on the provision of victim support services and a central role for law enforcement (Barner and Carey 2011). In the 1990s, the 'shelter movement', through its global NGO networks, successfully put the issue of domestic violence on the international agenda. In the absence of a public response, the mainstay of violence prevention programmes in developing countries were implemented by local civil society organisations with funding and technical support of international women's rights NGOs (Fàbiàn 2010:13-17).

Merry (2009: 48) shows that – even though projects often claim to localise their work - approaches implemented in different settings are in fact often surprisingly

similar. There is criticism of 'programme transplants', because they do not adequately reflect the socio-economic situations of violence victims in poor countries.

Firstly, assisting victims is given priority over preventative action. However, as demonstrated above, in many countries domestic violence is not limited to specific high-risk groups, but rather touches all segments of society. The question therefore arises whether helping individual victims or changing attitudes to violence should be prioritised in programming, especially in light of limited resources for and coverage of victim support services (Tifft 1993). WHO (2010: 7) notes that

"Primary prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence, i.e. stopping them from occurring in the first place ... has been relatively neglected in the field, with the majority of resources directed towards secondary or tertiary prevention."

Violence prevention interventions are typically classified along the categories primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (Krug et al 2002: 15). Primary prevention seeks to discourage violence from happening in the first place. Primary prevention is universal in as far as it aims at the general population. Secondary prevention focuses on women and men who are most at-risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. They are also called 'selected' interventions because of the targeting of most at-risk groups. Tertiary prevention deals with perpetrators and victims of violence and consists of 'indicated' approaches for perpetrators to avoid and victims to safeguard themselves against recidivism. Secondary and tertiary interventions also have a curative function in that they help victims of violence to cope with injury and trauma and perpetrators to overcome aggressive dispositions. However, a meta-study by the World Bank (2014: 77) demonstrates that there is little evidence that the provision of victim support services has a positive preventative effect.

Secondly, the 'programme transplants' are biased towards providing formal justice using the state judiciary. However, there is ample evidence that the state penal systems in many countries are ineffective in dealing with cases of domestic violence, due to weak laws, lack of capacity of law enforcement agencies and

corruption (Lazarus-Black 2007; Mason 2000; Garap 2000). A case study on the resolution of domestic violence disputes in Indonesia analyses how efforts to strengthen international human rights principles promote the use of the state criminal justice system, while contradicting legal empowerment approaches that build on the local capacities of communities to resolve conflicts (Venning 2010). Indonesia has three parallel legal systems: the state-system, Islamic law and various customary systems, providing practical and flexible methods of problem solving that balance competing interests and normative systems in society. The authour argues that violence victims need and should have access to a range of mechanisms to choose from in their response to abuse, rather than to the state system only.

Thirdly, there appears to be a tendency to seek solutions for female victims that presuppose the individual autonomy of women. A study of victim support services in India demonstrated that women typically wanted reconciliation and not separation, unless their children were in danger (Poonacha and Pandey 1999). Divorce was only a last resort. Counselling in support Centres and police stations thus focussed on reconciliation between marital partners, rather than separation. The service providers found that shelters do not fit into an environment where women as a norm have to live with a husband or natal family. Some also said it was unsafe for women to live outside a family setting and would isolate women from their communities. Murray (2008: 128) argues that

“community-based approaches to dealing with violence are more appropriate in some countries than an approach that encourages the wife to leave (to go where?) and/or seek formal legal help (from whom? with what resources?)”.

Merry (2006: 221) demonstrates that it is a precondition for successful realisation of women's human rights that they *“have to be tailored to the local context and resonate with the local cultural framework.”* Based on numerous case studies from the Asia-Pacific region, she identifies three aspects that must be considered in devising local approaches.

The first aspect is the need to frame interventions *“in images, symbols, narratives, and religious or secular language that resonate with the local*

community". Successful interventions use a discursive strategy that is palatable to local stakeholders. Johnson (2007) provides the example of how Russian activists were able to garner the support of local officials for their women's 'Crisis Centre' by re-framing the discourse on domestic violence from a radical feminist perspective to a terminology including economic violence, thereby using the Marxist-influenced thinking that existed. They were then able to open up dialogue with government officials.

In Kazakhstan, NGOs used images of a 'glorious past' in their workshops with policemen, playing on their nationalist sentiments to get their support for violence victims (Snadrj 2010). This worked much better than the feminist rhetoric used previously by American consultants who worked with the NGOs. Snadrj (2007: 615) states that

"women's activists who seek partnerships with the police have no doubt learned to present the issue of Kazakh identity tactically. [In] their work with police officers, they have found utility in promoting if not a wholly nationalist essentialism, then an idealized and mythologized materialist analysis of Kazakh culture that could be sympathetically received by members of a state in the process of revitalizing ethnicity."

Hemment (2011) shows how in the mid-1990s the transnational women's movement and its funders brought to Russia the 'Crisis Centres' as a model around which to organise. The 'Crisis Centres' offered a framework that was easy to learn and replicate, complete with handbooks on 'how to create a women's Crisis Centre'. Russian NGO activists referred to this as the 'international model'. However, in her research she found that in the provincial towns' 'Crisis Centres' did not actually address issues around domestic violence, but rather economic issues that were prevalent in the aftermath of the Soviet economic collapse. The local concerns were clearly different from those that the 'international model' assumed.

In terms of successful campaigning, a project in Turkey identified football as an important avenue for sending preventive messages to men as the main perpetrators of domestic violence (UNFPA 2006b: 57-63). Football players are idols for young Turkish men and role models for their gender identities. The

project had developed a campaign with a logo and short film. The campaign reached a vast TV audience of men, when on one weekend players of all super league teams donned jerseys with the campaign message, the TV station showed the campaign logo throughout the broadcast and aired the film at half-time.

Secondly, Merry argues (2006: 220) that local approaches must take into consideration structural conditions, including the economic and political situation as well as institutional weaknesses, for example of the legal system. A comparative study found that levels of violence were lowest where sanctions against violence were in place (Counts et al 1992). In settings where the state is weak communities themselves can also impose different types of informal negative and positive sanctions, ranging from disdain by family members and neighbours for the perpetrator to court-ordered punishment, as well as positive sanctions like the support and admiration of the wife's kin (Brown 1992).

The Indian *nari adalats* (women's courts) are informal courts to handle women's legal problems, including cases of domestic violence and marital disputes (Krishnamurthy 2002). The courts have no legal power, but rely on pressure and shaming. But they also use state symbols, such as stamps and call for the protection of the police. They move creatively between community and state to gain recognition in the villages and access to formal institutions.

A local NGO in Kazakhstan developed services for violence victims outside the state system. These were explicitly Islamic and based on what Snadjr (2005: 302) calls 'tools of tradition'. For example, as part of their counselling, staff members reiterate that the Quran does not permit wife beating. Central to their approach are self-organised community courts, in which cases of marital conflict are brought to the attention of the whole community, rather than only local religious leaders, who in most cases side with the perpetrator:

"In arranging their own community court ... activists drew inspiration from what they saw as both a traditional and a legitimate forum to counter the power of possibly corrupt local clerics. At the same time, their religious performance in this pre-Soviet form of dispute resolution also enabled members to serve as advocates for victims who otherwise would not come

forward to elders with their complaints and as moral interlocutors for relatives who might seek vigilante justice.”

Thirdly, Merry shows (2006: 137) that the target population needs to be defined carefully, since the dynamics of domestic violence in societies with extended family settings differ from those in Europe or the United States, where domestic violence typically takes place between intimate partners. For example in China violence is also common between adults and elderly household members and between parents and children.

In addition to the three aspects listed by Merry, cases also point to importance of building alliances with local stakeholders in devising local approaches. For example, the SASA!-project in Uganda found positive effects of its programme in regard to a reduced acceptability of domestic violence among the population in the project areas (Abramsky et al 2012). It works through a community-mobilisation advocacy strategy that brings together four groups of stakeholders: community activists selected from the more progressive men and women rooted in the community, community leaders including traditional marriage counsellors, professionals such as health care providers and police officers, and institutional leaders who have the power to implement policy changes within their institutions.

A project in Bangladesh formed a group of opinion leaders to regularly discuss issues around gender relations and sensitise their communities (UNFPA 2006b: 75-84). One success factor of the project was that it was able to garner the support and participation of religious leaders, who lent legitimacy to the project and its agenda of ending violence against women. They also preached about ending violence in their Friday prayers by citing respective passages in the Quran.

1.2.3 Lack of evaluative evidence and programmatic guidance

Prevention programmes are often initiated in response to public demand for better security, and many interventions against violence against women have developed out of women's rights advocacy and activism (Gugel 2006: 15-16). But however well-intentioned programmes might be, it remains a challenge that

interventions are oftentimes not designed based on evidence of successful or failed practice (WHO 2010: 62). The coordinated community response approach ('Duluth'-model) is the current domestic violence intervention of choice in the United States, the country with the longest tradition of an explicit public response to domestic violence. However, criticism has been expressed even here that the model has been made a mainstream intervention without sufficient proof of its effectiveness (Barner and Carney 2011). Also in international development, good practice collections (Funke et al 2005; UNFPA 2006b), while providing a degree of conceptual orientation for practitioners in international development - as is their purpose -, are often not based on sufficient evaluative evidence.

Efforts to produce robust evidence on the effectiveness of prevention approaches, both in high- and low-income countries, are still in their infancy. Hence, WHO (2010: 76) lists investments into better understanding what worked in violence prevention as one of its future research priorities:

"Research is urgently needed to build the evidence and address the current lack of information on effective programmes for primary prevention."

In 2010, WHO (2010a) produced a meta-study of the global scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of prevention approaches, which represents the most far-reaching and up-to-date study of its kind. The study reveals that overall there are only three interventions against domestic violence that are 'well supported' by evidence: interventions for problem drinkers, school-based programmes and advocacy support programmes. The PDV project in Tajikistan that serves as this study's case aims at reducing the acceptability of domestic violence among the population. It is thus an intervention that seeks to modify social norms and create a societal climate of non-tolerance towards domestic violence. The so-called 'sanctions and sanctuary'-paradigm (Counts et al 1992) is based on a comparative study of community responses to domestic violence in fourteen societies around the world, which found that violence was less frequent in settings where perpetrators knew they were likely to be punished and women's were aware that they could find protection. As said, the sanctions can also be informal, outside the state legal system. There is also evidence that

criminalisation of domestic violence through laws and justice systems have proven to be very important to shifting norms. However, there is a lack of evidence of the deterring effect of sanctions in regard to the actual violence, with some studies indicating an increase in violence. However, there is also little evidence of the preventative effect of victim support services. Finally WHO (2010: 36) argues that *“dismantling hierarchical constructions of masculinity and femininity predicated on the control of women ... are likely to make a significant contribution”* to reducing the acceptability of domestic violence, albeit without providing evidence on the effectiveness of respective interventions.

WHO also points out that a change in norms is a long-term goal and that respective strategies should therefore be integrated with other approaches (WHO 2010a: 100). However, in regard to interventions that strive primarily to modify norms regarding violence, WHO finds that there is ‘emerging evidence’ only on the effectiveness of social marketing campaigns. The respective intervention listed by the WHO meta-study is the ‘Soul City’-project from South Africa that uses mass media and ‘edutainment’ for campaigning as its main approaches (Usdin et al 2005). The World Bank meta-analysis (2014: 74) adds the case of the SASA!-programme in Uganda, which employed a community-based approach that centred on an advocacy campaign. However, due to their methodology, which is based on randomised control trials, the ‘Soul City’- and SASA!-studies contain no information on how and why they have been effective.

Considering the dearth of evidence, building on monitoring and evaluation of ongoing prevention interventions is therefore crucial for evidence-informed programme design (Morrison et al 2007). However, to inform programme design processes, analyses must also contain qualitative elements (Abramsky et al 2012). Based on an analysis of the PDV project in Tajikistan, this study will complement the current understanding of interventions to modify social norms in regard to violence.

Conventional wisdom in domestic violence programming in international development considers the use of locally suitable approaches good practice:

“Programming experience over the last four decades has shown that strategies that proved effective in one socio-cultural context may not be

equally effective in others. Thus governments, NGOs, and women activists have resorted to adapting ... strategies ... to the specific contexts within which they work.” (UNFPA 2006b: v).

However, apart from selected good practice-collections, there is in fact little programmatic guidance for the design of such adapted prevention programmes. Internationally, the main model for analysing violence is the WHO's ecological model (Krug et al 2002). As will be explained in the methodology-chapter, it champions a systemic view based on risk factors at individual, relationship, community and societal level. As the combination of risk factors may differ from one setting to the next, there is always the need for risk factor analyses. The identification of risk factors and their interplay should then form the starting point for the design of prevention interventions. Hence, the notion that 'blueprints' should be avoided is part of the ecological model's logic. However, there are no concrete messages in the ecological model to aid the development of local approaches. Programming handbooks touch upon the issue of local adaptation only in passing-by. In its handbook for planning youth violence prevention programmes, GTZ (2009: 19) suggests that in order for programmes to be effective every design process must start with a sound risk factor analysis of violence in the respective context. A recent WHO publication (2010: 66) merely notes that *“planners decide what is likely to be most ... effective in their local context”*, pointing out that some approaches from high-income countries are expensive, and that one should make sure *“language and cultural approaches selected are respectful of the anticipated audience”*. The exception is the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), which has published a number of documents informing development practitioners tasked with designing programmes under the heading 'working from within', in which it explicitly aims at providing examples of and tips for local approaches (2006, 2004b). However, these documents also lack a coherent framework for designing and implementing locally suitable interventions.

In view of Tajikistan, the available literature analyses the gender and violence discourse (Hegland 2010, 2008; Fábíán and Sharipova 2008; Kasymova 2008; Harris 2006, 2004; Ishkanian 2003; Tadjbakshs 1998; Akiner 1997), but it is not instructive in regard to prevention strategies. Up until now, very little practical

experience with different strategies and methods is documented in the country (Amnesty International 2009; Haarr 2008; Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights 2008). Haarr (2007: 268) is therefore absolutely correct in her remark that additional research is needed to better identify more effective intervention strategies for the specific setting in Tajikistan.

1.3 Objectives and structure of the study

At the international policy level, domestic violence is regarded a global public health problem and a human rights violation, and global development policy and programming has started to recognise this. National governments have an obligation to adopt and enforce laws and policies for the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of domestic violence. In the past, the Government of Tajikistan has paid little attention to the issue, but since late 2012 a law on domestic violence is in place. The current challenge in domestic violence prevention in Tajikistan is implementing the law in light of the specific context, institutional challenges and little documented practice.

The use of locally suitable approaches is considered good practice in international violence prevention programming – often in contrast to the reality on the ground, where interventions are similar across diverse settings and ‘programme transplants’ dominate that inadequately reflect socio-economic and cultural conditions and the views of local actors. There is, however, a lack of theoretical grounding, evaluative evidence and programmatic guidance regarding local prevention approaches.

This study aims to enrich the available scholarship and contribute to a process of enhancing interventions through designing and implementing ‘local approaches’. The study will analyse how actors create such approaches by appropriating global norms and by appreciating local conditions and derive a concrete framework for devising local approaches. It will also provide evidence on what worked in domestic violence prevention in this specific setting in, complementing the available evidence on the effectiveness of interventions to modify social norms around violence. The study will use the PDV project as its case. PDV is the major intervention against domestic violence in the country, and there are

many experiences and lessons from PDV that will be unearthed, which can be of interest to practitioners in Tajikistan and beyond.

At first glance, the question of how to 'vernacularise' prevention situates this study in the 'instrumentalist stream' of the anthropology of development. Also called the 'policy-oriented' stream, such applied research is mostly driven by concrete challenges of projects (Green 2006). The main question tackled is: how can development projects improve through tailoring them to the specific local contexts in which they operate? Some methodological and ethical considerations emerging in such kind of research will be discussed in the methodology chapter. Proponents of the critical-constructivist stream of the anthropology of development (Cooke and Kothari 2001; Escobar 1995), however, fundamentally question the utility and morality of international development and focus on the power relations within international development, within agencies and between donors and recipients of external aid. Such basic research poses a fundamental challenge to the system. Criticising the antagonism between the two strands, Mosse (2005: 5) in his 'new ethnography of aid' searches for a middle ground for the discipline:

"Instrumental views are only too obviously naïve in relation to the institutional politics of development. But the critical turn in the anthropology of development is also an ethnographically blind alley, which merely replaces the instrumental rationality of policy with the anonymous automaticity of the machine."

An interactionist or actor-oriented approach (Campregher 2008; de Sardan 2005) instead presumes that development is always based on the interaction of various players with different strategies and stakes. The risk here is that of losing sight of the bigger picture in the sense that all stakeholders' actions are embedded in the nexus of global policy and strategic frameworks and social practice at the local level. The creation of local approaches for violence prevention is the result of appropriation by and negotiations between various international and local stakeholders in a potentially contested space (Merry 2006: 1). Internationally funded prevention programmes present an interface where the global normative framework and the local setting meet and where actors can 'glocalise' hybrid

approaches. In fact, building partnerships between and actively facilitating the discussions of stakeholders is an integral part of creating local approaches. This study therefore looks at the interactions of stakeholders as a critical element of creating local approaches.

The study's conceptual framework that is outlined in Chapter 2 (section 2.2) is derived from Merry's (2006) theorisation of the processes for the creation of locally suitable human rights-based approaches and a review of case studies from around the world. Merry identifies three aspects that should be considered in developing local approaches: framing, acknowledging structural conditions and re-defining the target groups. In regard to recognising structural conditions, next to socio-economic factors, the study also takes into account the aspect of institutional capacities of organisations for responding to domestic violence. The study's conceptual framework further extends Merry's points to be considered by adding to the list the building of partnerships between stakeholders as a fourth 'key element'. The creation of locally suitable approaches is not restricted to devising methodologies for service provision. In prevention intervention, local adaptation is also a project management task that must be reflected in managerial choices in regard to staffing, funding flows and decision-making processes.

Chapter 3 then deals with the first research question, which context-specific factors must be considered in regard to the four key elements when translating global frameworks into successful local intervention approaches in the Tajik setting. Processes of local adaptation and appropriation take place under social, political and economic framework conditions, and the chapter provides the context necessary for understanding the circumstances in which the case study project PDV operates. There are four sections, one for each of the conceptual framework's key elements. First, the current public discourse around gender, Islam and Tajik identity is analysed (section 3.1). Then structural conditions to be considered, like income poverty, the labour market situation and the state of social services, are presented (section 3.2). Thirdly, relevant stakeholders and the political economy shaping local governance structures are discussed, since this needs to be recognised when building partnerships (section 3.3). Fourthly,

statistical data on domestic violence in Tajikistan, in specific in Khatlon region, is provided (section 3.4).

Chapter 4 then presents the analysis of the case study project PDV. The second research question is as follows: which local approaches did the PDV project make use of, and how did the production and implementation of these approaches function? Firstly, it is discussed how the project responded to the demand for local solutions at the managerial level, including an analysis of the different viewpoints and spheres of influence of stakeholders involved in PDV (section 4.1). Secondly, the project's strategic concept – its 'intervention model' or 'theory of change' – and the activities supported and carried out by the PDV project in its various components are presented to analyse how the context factors identified under the four key elements of the conceptual framework were acknowledged by PDV at the methodological level (section 4.2).

The next section (section 4.3) seeks to answer the third research question that asks in how far the local approaches employed by PDV were effective. By assessing a set of indicators of success, the study will provide evidence of the degree to which the local approaches implemented by PDV and its NGO partners contributed to domestic violence prevention.

Chapter 5 concludes the text with a summary of the study's findings.

2. Conceptual framework and methods

This chapter discusses the key terms and presents the conceptual framework used in the study (sections 2.1 and 2.2). Also, an explanation of the research process and methods employed, as well as the constraints faced is given (section 2.3). This includes a critical reflection of my dual position as project manager and researcher.

2.1 Key terms

This study deals with domestic violence as a particular form of gender-based violence. However, there are several terms to be found in the literature that are used interchangeably, such as violence against women, gender violence, gender-based violence, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, marital violence, wife abuse and wife battering. Also, the list of forms of violence acknowledged in development practice and research is long and includes sex trafficking, honour killings, female infanticide, dowry-related violence, to name but a few (Funke et al 2005: 16). It is therefore important to precisely define the object of this study.

The most widely used definition of violence stems from the WHO 2002 World Report on Violence and Health (Krug et al 2002: 5), according to which violence is

“the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.”

This definition captures several aspects in respect to the type of violence, its victims and consequences. To systematise these different facets, the WHO proposes a typology (see Fig. 1 overleaf). Acts of violence are either self-directed, interpersonal or collective. Self-directed violence contains suicidal behaviour and self-abuse. Interpersonal violence, between two individuals, takes place either within the family (against intimate partners, children or the elderly) or outside the family (against strangers or acquaintances). Collective violence is committed by groups to advance a certain social agenda, political programme, or for economic

gains. Violence is then further classified according to whether it is physical, sexual, psychological violence or a form of deprivation or neglect.

Fig. 1: WHO typology of violence

Type of violence Nature of Violence	Violence									
	Self-directed		Interpersonal					Collective		
	Suicide	Self-abuse	Family/partner			Community		Social	Political	Economic
			Child	Part-near	Elder	Acquaintance	Stranger			
Physical										
Sexual										
Psychological										
Deprivation/neglect										

Source: Krug et al (2002): 7

This study deals with the manifestations of interpersonal violence within the family, in particular between intimate partners. Interpersonal violence against children and elderly family members is not addressed. WHO (2010: 11) defines the term ‘intimate partner violence’ (IPV) as

“behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual and psychological harm, including acts of physical progression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviour.”

There are two aspects of this definition that require further clarification: the question of the persons involved as both perpetrators and as victims, and the

different forms of violence. Regarding the first aspect, it is clear that globally men are by far the majority of perpetrators of IPV, and the violence they carry out is primarily physical. Violence at the hands of a male partner is one of the most common forms of violence against women, and women are much more likely to be the victim of IPV than men (Krug et al 2002: 89). Women also commit acts of violence, although such violence is more often self-directed - like self-immolation and suicide - and psychological. When women do engage in physical violence against their intimate partners, the severity of injury is much lower; men do not live in fear of their life, and women's violence is often in the form of self-defence (WHO 2010: 14). But women also act as 'cheerleaders' of male physical violence, accepting, justifying and supporting it (Gugel 2006: 88).

However, violence in the family is not limited to marital partners. Pauli (2008: 173) notes that the *"male-female (husband-wife) dyad has to be viewed as one type of relation in which women live their lives"*. Everyday interactions in extended families living in intergenerational households differ from that in small nuclear families. In the former, as often found in Tajikistan, conflicts may arise and be carried out between a much larger diversity of family members – including brothers, uncles, fathers, as well as fathers- and mothers-in-law - and conflict patterns are more complex. Haarr suggested to use the term 'wife abuse' (2007). However, this fails to account for women's multiple roles in the family as wives, mothers and mothers-in-law, daughters and daughters-in-law (SDC 2005: 5), and for women's perpetration of emotional violence on other female household members.

Especially emotional violence of mothers-in-law against their daughters-in-law is well-documented in several settings. Brown (2004) describes a 'mother-in-law belt' reaching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. For example, in Algeria mothers-in-law see themselves in a kind of competition with their sons' wives for the affection of the son and thus try to drive a wedge between the marital partners, provoking conflicts over alleged shortcomings of the wife. These usually refer to the poor performance of the housework (Minai 1981). In rural Iran, by abusing their daughters-in-law older women were demonstrating to their communities that they had their home in order, which enhanced their husband's and their family's social standing (Hegland 1992). Daughters-in-law typically

occupy a low rank in family hierarchies. However, they can move up the power structure with progressing age, especially when they have adult children of their own. This phenomenon of intergenerational perpetuation of intra-familial power structures has been documented by various scholars in different cultural settings (for example Tillion 2007 for Southern Europe). Brown (2004: 168) has described this system as follows:

“At marriage the wife enters into a life of servitude and is expected to be obedient, submissive, and stoic in the face of gratuitous mistreatment, both psychological and physical, until she becomes a mother-in-law herself”.

Hence, women become agents of the patriarchal order (Salhi 2013: 30). For women in this system *“patriarchy, subordination to men is offset by the control older women attain over younger women”* (Kandiyoti 1988: 279). Harris (2004) has documented the role of mothers-in-law for gender relations in Tajikistan, which will be explained in detail later on.

The labels IPV and ‘wife abuse’ are thus too narrow to capture adequately the phenomena that this study deals with. The term ‘domestic violence’, however, can be used to emphasise that the violence is perpetrated in the home by various household members. Johnson (2007: 48) argues the terminology used - for example ‘family violence’ or ‘violence in the family’ – has sometimes reflected efforts of downplaying the role of gendered power structures. The use of the term ‘domestic violence’ in this study in no way seeks to denote the importance of patriarchal norms and structures. The next sub-section will explain that domestic violence should be considered a form of gender-based violence. But the broad definition employed here offers the opportunity to view domestic violence from a wide angle, touching upon the structures and mechanics of family life and its gendered and generational conflict patterns.

The second question arising from the WHO definition of violence is the range of actions classified as violent behaviour. A central issue in researching violence is that it is notoriously difficult to measure. Theoretically, domestic violence can be measured as both perpetration and victimisation rates. However, it is hard to find male respondents who are ready to admit to having been violent (SDC 2005). Studies investigating the victimisation of men are also rare, because men’s self-

reported levels of physical violence victimisation are usually too low to yield useful findings. Hence, violence is usually measured by registering women's experiences of victimisation. But when asking women if they have ever experienced domestic violence, the answers are likely to refer to a host of different things. Some may count insults expressed during an argument as violence, while others may fail to classify a slap as violence. Victims of violence do not report harm, but their interpretation of harm (Merry 2009: 183). When international agencies and their local partners started working on domestic violence in Central Asia in the 1990s, the concept was alien to the people of the former Soviet Union, including officials, social sector professionals and academics (Johnson and Zaynullina 2007: 90). However, for domestic violence research and programming it is essential to develop a common understanding and terminology of what constitutes violence to enable comparability of prevalence rates and meaningful knowledge sharing at an international level.

Often data from the monitoring systems of institutions involved in providing services to victims of violence, such as health centres and shelters, and punishing perpetrators, notably the police and attorneys, is used. However, their records are prone to many distortions that arise on the one hand from technical weaknesses in data management and on the other hand, and most importantly, from underreporting. The lack of credibility of institutions, for example because the police has a reputation of siding with violent men or because health personnel is not trusted to maintain patient confidentiality, deters victims from reporting their cases and produces dark figures (Ellsberg and Heise 2005: 27). In consequence, the standard instrument for measuring the prevalence of violence is population-based surveys, rather than institution-based client monitoring systems.

WHO has developed a standard list of violent actions to be measured through population-based surveys, and the data that will be presented later on is based on the WHO's standard measurements. Physical violence includes slapping, hitting with fists, kicking, choking, use of weapons, coercion into sex and rape. The 2005 multi-country study conducted by WHO (2005: 5-9) further operationalised the types of violence. For physical violence women were asked whether they had experienced being slapped or having something thrown at; being pushed or shoved; being hit with a fist or something else that could hurt;

being kicked, dragged or beaten up; being choked or burnt on purpose; being threatened with or been attacked with a gun, knife or other weapon used against; being physically forced to have sexual intercourse against their will.

According to the WHO standards, emotional violence includes restricting social interactions and controlling movements, insults, intimidation and public humiliation (ibid: 89). Emotional violence is divided into acts of emotional abuse and controlling behaviour. Women were asked if they had experienced being insulted or made to feel bad about herself; being humiliated or belittled in front of others; being intimidated or scared on purpose; being threatened with harm or threatened with harm of someone they cared about; being kept from seeing friends; having contact with the birth family restricted; being pressurised to report on where they are all the time; being ignored or treated indifferently; being met with anger if talking to other men; being accused of unfaithfulness; having access to health care controlled.

The statistics show that physical violence and emotional violence tend to accompany each other, with emotional violence serving as a marker for an increased risk of physical violence (ibid: 36). Domestic violence is often associated with physical violence - or wife beating – alone. But while emotional violence is often subtle and difficult for outsiders to detect, it is usually more prevalent, and many women find verbal abuse and humiliation more frightening (Krug et al 2002: 93).

The need for standardisation aside, the next sub-section will demonstrate that violence is in fact a fluid construct and that it is important it is to acknowledge the existence of competing interpretations existing in different societies. Congruently, Salhi (2013: 14) ascertains that

“in many Muslim countries in general ... certain forms of violence are not seen as violent acts such as verbal abuse and intimidation especially by intimate partners and/or family members.”

Hence, people make the distinction between ‘acceptable’ and ‘unacceptable’ behaviour: in some societies it is the right and even the responsibility of husbands to discipline their wives if they fail to meet certain expectations, while in others it is totally unacceptable (Campbell 1992). From an anthropological point of view,

the abovementioned list of violent actions is thus questionable in as far as it at least partially reflects normative aspects in regard to gender equality. Classifying men's controlling behaviour as emotional violence reflects a liberal stance that assumes that women should of course be able to meet with whoever they wish and their physical mobility should not be restricted.

2.1.1 An anthropological perspective on domestic violence

The central feature on an engagement with violence from the perspective of cultural anthropology is that it locates acts of interpersonal violence in larger systems of structure and cultural meaning (Merry 2009: 3). In this vein, Galtung (1990) distinguished three types or levels of violence: direct personal violence with clearly identifiable perpetrators and victims, structural violence that refers to unequal societal structures, and cultural violence that provides the ideologies, value systems and justifications for direct and structural violence. Galtung suggests the image of the three types of violence forming a triangle. When the triangle is stood on its 'direct' and 'structural' feet it provokes the image of cultural violence as the legitimiser of the other two. Standing the triangle on its 'direct violence' head produces the image of structural and cultural violence as the sources of direct violence. Interpersonal violence should therefore not be detached analytically from structural and cultural aspects.

In their overview of anthropological literature on violence, Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) conclude that the social and cultural dimensions of violence are what give violence its power and meaning, or as Schmidt and Schröder (2001: 18) put it: *"Violence must be understood as a cultural quest for meaning."* Depending on its context, violence can have meanings that make it despicable, but also meanings that make it heroic, justified, necessary, or at least acceptable. Understanding what shapes such meanings in different settings is the purpose of contextual analysis, which is one of the main features of an anthropological perspective on violence (Merry 2009: 19). The focus on the structural and cultural aspects of violence distinguishes the anthropological dealing with violence from other disciplines that concentrate on psychological or biological dimensions.

The focus on cultural meanings and interpretations ties violence and gender together as intimately connected concepts. In fact, gender permeates Galtung's three types of violence. Cultural violence consists of sexist gender norms at the societal level. Structural violence includes all gendered forms of structural inequalities in the public space of the community and private sphere of human relationships. Interpersonal violence is a manifestation of direct violence that can be justified by gender norms and promoted through gender inequalities.

Merry (2009: 3) provides a useful anthropological definition of gender violence: *"Gender violence is violence whose meaning depends on the gendered identities of the parties. It is an interpretation of violence through gender."* This definition reflects a performative understanding of gender and violence that focuses the attention on the individual interpretation and appropriation of societal norms and roles. In her book 'Feminism and Anthropology', Moore (1988: 31) criticised her peers' work on gender and rejected the use of binary categories like male/female, culture/nature and public/private to assume cross-cultural homogeneity of gender concepts. In this vein, Zimmermann and West (1987) talked of 'doing gender', distinguishing between 'sex' as the biological traits, 'sex identity' as the socially ascribed characteristics, and 'gender' as the validation of sex identity through social interaction. Philosopher Butler, in her seminal contribution 'Gender Trouble' (1990), took this argument a step further by arguing that there are actually variant gender performances. In current anthropology and the scientific community in general today, gender is no longer regarded as a set of categories, but as a repertoire of signs and images that are put to use by individuals according to setting.

A good example of such anthropological research is Harris' work on gender in Tajikistan (2004), in which she demonstrates that Tajik women and men deliberately vary their gender performances according to their audience by wearing 'gender masks'. Women and men may have their personal views and feelings about gender, but if these are not in line with the majority they can perform a different role. This can be a woman who is the primary breadwinner of her family, but acts submissively in public to avoid embarrassing her husband or the unemployed husband who boasts about his virility towards his peers to disguise his inadequacy as head of family. Since norms exert pressure on

individuals to comply, women and men who do not adhere to dominant gender norms run the risk of being frowned upon, ridiculed and sanctioned. Harris' shows that wearing 'gender masks' permits the existence of individuality beneath the surface conformity.

The above in mind, gender-based violence is *"a performance directed at certain audiences, either at the person subject to the violence or others surrounding it"* (Merry 2009: 184). Doing violence, including domestic violence, is a way of doing gender. For example, when a man hits his wife because he alleges her to have flirted with another man, his actions are based on a sense of masculine entitlement to control her. Women accepting, excusing and ultimately putting up with abuse by their spouses acquiesce to submissive norms around desired feminine behavior. An anthropological study in Iran (Hegland 1992) showed that men and the senior women of the household used the degree of control of the women to publicly display their outstanding performance as members of the community, since a reputation of being unable to control the family's women is equal to 'not having the house in order'.

A performative view of gender-based violence is useful in different respects. Firstly, it appreciates diversity and keeps in check the usage of stereotypical images of men and women. The realities of Muslims around the world are manifold, including varied gender identities of women (Bodman and Tohidi 1998) and men (Ouzgane 2006). But also moving away from communism in post-Soviet countries has provided opportunities for gender concepts to multiply (Johnson and Robinson 2007), whereby women and men are not just victims of transition, but agents of change (Buckley 1997: 5). *"The reductionist and essentialist view ... that 'boys will be boys' does not hold up in the face of the variety of young men and their realities"* (Barker 2005: 145).

Indeed, screening the available statistical data on domestic violence reveals that the acceptability of domestic violence varies across countries. The 2005 multi-country study by WHO measured the acceptability of domestic violence by asking respondents for their approval or rejection of circumstances under which they find physical domestic violence acceptable (see Tab. 2 overleaf). These circumstances reflected different transgressions from patriarchal gender norms,

such as disobedience or refusing the husband sex. The study concludes that patriarchal gender norms are an important risk factor for domestic violence, as it is especially women in countries with the highest prevalence rates that are likely to endorse domestic violence in case of transgressions from patriarchal norms. The acceptability of domestic violence is thus a good proxy for gender norms in a given society.

Tab. 2: Acceptability of circumstances for physical domestic violence (in %)

Location	Wife does not complete housework	Wife disobeys her husband	Wife refuses sex	Wife asks about other women	Husband suspects infidelity
Bangladesh (urban)	13.8	23.3	9.0	6.6	10.6
Bangladesh (rural)	25.1	38.7	23.3	14.9	24.6
Brazil (urban)	0.8	1.4	0.3	0.3	2.0
Brazil (rural)	4.5	10.9	4.7	2.9	14.1
Ethiopia (rural)	65.8	77.7	45.6	32.2	43.8
Japan (urban)	1.3	1.5	0.4	0.9	2.8
Namibia (urban)	9.7	12.5	3.5	4.3	6.1
Peru (urban)	4.9	7.5	1.7	2.3	13.5
Peru (rural)	43.6	46.2	25.8	26.7	37.9
Samoa	12.1	19.6	7.4	10.1	26.0
Serbia (urban)	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.9
Thailand (urban)	2.0	7.8	2.8	1.8	5.6
Thailand (rural)	11.9	25.3	7.3	4.4	12.5
Tanzania (urban)	24.1	45.6	31.1	13.8	22.9
Tanzania (rural)	29.1	49.7	41.7	19.8	27.2

Source: WHO 2005: 37.

However, the study also points to variation. Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Peru have the highest approval rates - underlining that patriarchy transcends cultures -, and Japan and Serbia have the lowest rates. The diversity of approval rates is also evident when limiting the analysis to Sub-Saharan Africa, where higher levels of

acceptability are found in rural areas. Another study of 17 sub-Saharan countries revealed that violence against women is widely accepted by women and men all over the continent (Uthmann et al 2009). For example, in Burkina Faso, 54.7% of women agreed that a husband was justified in beating his wife if she goes out without telling the spouse, 55.7% if she argues with him and 37.6% if she refuses sex.

According to Spierenburg (1998), the link between male honour and violence appears to be less pronounced in some non-Western societies, such as Bedouin society and possibly the Arab world as a whole. However, a meta-analysis of studies from North Africa and the Middle East showed that the acceptability was high across the region (Boy and Kulczycki 2008). Approximately 70% of ever-married women in Egypt agreed that refusing sex and arguing with the husband were both justified reasons for being beaten. 54% of Iraqi women agreed that disobedience was a legitimate reason, in line with 48.6% of Palestinian women in Jordan.

What these figures demonstrate is that domestic violence is used to create and safeguard male dominance. Violence is a tool for cementing patriarchal gender norms and roles, for example regarding household decision-making and structural inequalities, like women's restricted social and physical mobility. The literature shows that there are two dynamics at play here. Domestic violence functions either as an 'educational device' or a 'policing mechanism'. These dynamics are linked to different degrees of gender inequality.

There is a lot of research grappling with the relationship between different dimensions of gender equality and domestic violence, and there is evidence pointing in two opposite directions. On the one hand, there is research indicating that unequal gender relations support domestic violence against women. In his landmark cross-cultural analysis, Levinson (1989) revealed that wife beating occurs more frequently in societies that show gender inequalities in regard to access to resources and participation in household decision-making. His findings showed that domestic violence is highest in societies in which men control the wealth, have the final say in household decision-making and are able to prevent their wives from leaving marriage through divorce. In settings characterised by

such patriarchal systems, both women and men rarely regard domestic violence as problematic. Here, domestic violence is not necessarily the climax in an escalating conflict, but rather a legitimate act of ensuring societal order (Campbell 1992: 231). As Baobaid (2006: 176) illustrates for the case of Yemen, wives are often sanctioned and beaten if they do not perform their domestic duties satisfactorily and if they deviate from submissive female norms, such as talking back to their husbands or talking to other men. However, the ensuing violence is often seen as a necessary responsibility of men to 'educate' their wives:

"It is not believed that women have the right to live in a marriage free of violence. Rather, much of Yemeni society sees the use of physical and emotional violence against women as a right owned by men to ensure the integrity of family life and family honour is maintained."

On the other hand, there is research indicating that violence against women is more prevalent in settings, in which gender relations are undergoing transformation and a certain degree of equality has already been achieved. Women's integration into the labour market and their increased role for the family income challenge male superiority. A wife with a higher income than that of her husband is sometimes seen as a threat to the men's status, rather than as a boost to the household income. Here, domestic violence is a reaction of men to the economic pressure they are under, because of which they are unable to fulfill their role as providers of their family. Based on their analysis of household statistics in India, Agarwal and Panda (2007) found that women's enhanced economic situation can have the perverse effect of increased domestic violence against women and that it is only women's ownership of immovable assets, especially a house that can protect from abuse. Another study in India found that for all castes and religions, domestic violence is frequently linked to men's failure to fulfill masculine roles (Kumar et al 2002). The capacity of Kenyan men to support their families economically in fulfillment of their male role as the primary breadwinner has been eroded by the undermining of the rural livelihood systems, while women display higher levels of resilience for coping with changing economic circumstances and challenge the traditional notions of male superiority (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo and Francis 2006). In Russia, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the media and academics suggested that women's equal role in the

workforce and their financial independence emasculated Russian men, who rightfully vent their frustration on their wives (Lyon 2007; Sinelnikov 2000; Novikova 2000; Attwood 1997). The same dynamic has also been documented for Germany, where the more men subscribe to a dominant concept of masculinity the more likely they are to compensate their perceived loss of authority through violence (Buskotte 2007). Domestic violence is therefore also referred to as a 'policing mechanism' (Funke et al 2005: 17) that safeguards men's dominance and serves to 'put women in their rightful place'. Consequently, women can often only overcome gender inequalities at the heightened risk of experiencing violence.

Secondly, a performative perspective on gender-based violence opens up a discursive space in which essentialist thinking can be deconstructed. An essentialised understanding of culture contributed to the universalism versus cultural relativism debate of the 1990s (Merry 2006: 8-19). In short, 'universalists' argued that their principles applied to all cultures, while 'relativists' argued that their local standards trumped the universal standards. This antagonism was short-sighted. Relativists resisting human rights often claimed to be defending culture, but ignored the fact that cultures are not static and homogenous entities. Universalists ignored the fact that those arguing in favour of respecting local cultures could at the same time be critical of oppression practiced in the very same culture. Since, an understanding of culture as an open space that is ever-changing and syncretistic rather than a closed system of symbols has become the mainstream (Beer 2003; Lang 2003; Zukrigl and Breitenbach 2000). This is an important insight in regard to defending human rights and creating locally suitable violence prevention approaches.

There are always various, sometimes competing segments of society that struggle for influence and the power of naming. Culture, and hence gender, is a heavily contested space and those claiming to defend cultural rights are often at the same advocates of restricting women's rights. Also, it is dangerous to create a traditional/modern dichotomy, whereby 'cultural practices'- often referred to as 'harmful traditional practices' - are attributed to allegedly 'traditional cultures' that require cultural engineering in order to fully reap the benefits of human rights (Phillips 2010). Hence, the way culture is conceived is important in regard to how

processes of social change are envisaged. If culture is fixed and unchanging, then it is barrier to human rights that must be removed. If culture is dynamic, it is also innovative and negotiable. Such an understanding of culture *“challenges those who claim that reforms violate their culture at the time as it encourages activists to take seriously meaning and practice in local contexts”* (Merry 2006: 228).

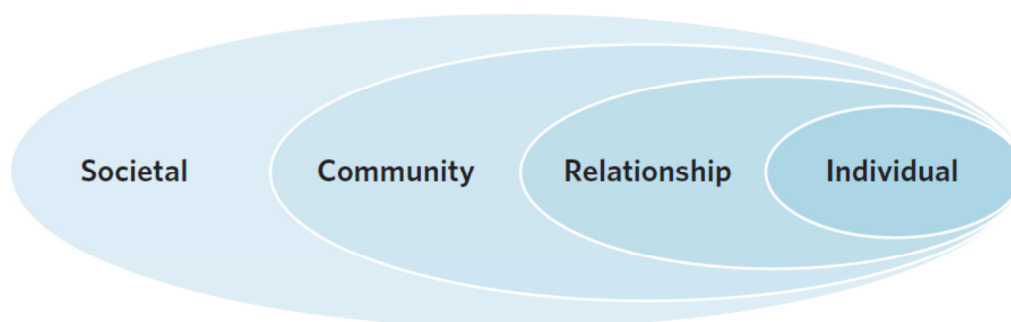
Anthropology's focus on the interdependent relationship between cultural gender norms, structural gender inequalities and individual gender-based violence is reflected in the state-of-the-art of public health prevention programmes. Internationally, the main model for analysing and preventing violence is the WHO's ecological model (GTZ 2009; Mercy et al 2008; Morrison, Ellsberg and Bott 2007; Gugel 2006). Precursors to the ecological model were the publications of Belsky (1980) on child maltreatment and Heise (1998) on violence against women, but it has only been endorsed fully by the international discourse after the publication of the aforementioned WHO's 2002 World Report on Violence and Health, which made it a conceptual centrepiece. Previously, theories to explain violence have looked at either individual psychological factors, such as a prior history of aggression in the family, or societal factors. Early feminist scholars on the other hand analysed gender norms that promote male dominance (Dobash and Dobash 1979).

“The feminist community ... rightly points out that although theories based on stress, social learning, personality disorders, or alcohol abuse may suggest why individual men become violent they do not explain why women are so persistently the target. At the same time, the feminist emphasis on male dominance and gender hierarchy ... fails to explain why some men beat and rape women when others do not, even though all men are exposed to cultural messages that posit male superiority.” (Heise 1998: 263)

The ecological model seeks to bridge this gap. It is based on the idea that a bundle of risk factors exists that may increase the likelihood of someone becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. Risk factors are classified into four levels: individual, relationship, community and society (see Fig. 2 overleaf). The

individual level characteristics include biological and personal history factors, such as educational attainment, substance abuse and a previous history of aggression. The relationship level relates to factors stemming from the interactions with family members, intimate partners and peers. The persons closest to an individual significantly help to shape attitudes and behaviours, and the nature of the specific relationship - for example how conflicts are solved – present important factors. The community level refers to the contexts in which social relationships are embedded, such as schools, workplaces or neighbourhoods. Factors to be considered here are the availability of community sanctions and the effectiveness of policing against perpetrators of violence. At the societal level, the ecological model is concerned with the wider structures, such as social norms that promote violent behaviour. Importantly, these can include social norms supportive of violence as a conflict resolution technique as well as patriarchal gender norms that foster female subordination.

Fig. 2: WHO ecological model of violence



Source: Krug et al (2002): 12.

The achievement of this integrated perspective is that it helps researchers and practitioners to understand the embedded causalities and complexities of violence by systematising risk factors. The identification of risk factors and their interplay should form the starting point for the design of interventions. As the combination of risk factors may differ from one setting to the next, there is always the need for risk factor analyses.

2.2 Conceptual framework

Taking context factors that influence individual violence into consideration in the design and implementation of interventions constitutes an anthropological perspective on violence prevention. However, there is a lack of programmatic guidance on how this could be achieved.

The starting point for the development of the conceptual framework for this study is Merry's argument that in order to be enforceable human rights principles need to be translated into local justice. Processes of translation are required to make international norms, discourses and strategies intelligible in different political, social and cultural settings. She theorises (2006: 6) that these 'glocalisation' processes take place at 'global-local interfaces', at which global norms meet local value systems in discourse and practice, and where actors negotiate and appropriate the meaning of human rights. In 'vernacularising' human rights, various context factors need to be considered, and the focus on context analyses leads to a specifically anthropological perspective on domestic violence prevention.

2.2.1 *The global normative framework*

At the international policy level, domestic violence is regarded a human rights violation. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines the equal rights of women and men. In addition, in 1979 the United Nations (UN) (1979) adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that up until today represents the central instrument for the promotion of women's human rights – it is also referred to as the 'women's

international bill of rights'. Article 3 of CEDAW requires governments of signatory countries to take action, including corresponding legislation, to guarantee women human rights. However, originally CEDAW did not make any reference to violence against women. It took over a decade until the CEDAW committee in its 1992 General Recommendation No. 19 made a direct reference to violence within the family and the traditional attitudes by which such violence is commonly excused (§11 and §23). It also demands that states take measures to overcome violence (§24). The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna marked another decisive moment in the recognition of domestic violence as a human rights violation (UN 1993). Article 18 of the Vienna Declaration states that gender-based violence is incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and must therefore be eliminated. In 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in which article 2 defines violence against women in a way that encompasses violence occurring in the family, including battering and marital rape. Thereby, the Declaration transcends the crucial distinction between 'public' and 'private affairs' and enables domestic violence to be recognised as a crime equal to others (Wölte 2003: 9). Another international key document in support of gender equality is the 2000 UN Millennium Declaration. Article 6 of the Declaration confirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be ensured, and article 25 resolves to combat all forms of violence against women (UN 2000).

Development agencies have in the past years subscribed to a human rights-based programme approach. German development cooperation, for example, launched a human rights policy according to which all programmes funded by German Official Development Assistance (ODA) are analysed for risks and potentials towards undermining and enhancing human rights (BMZ 2011). The case study project PDV is funded by Swiss ODA, and SDC also commits to human rights-based programming (SDC 2006). Consequently, internationally-funded prevention interventions are often based on a human rights-based perspective. Also, the PDV project, in its guiding documents, links domestic violence prevention to the realisation of women's human rights. It highlights (SDC 2009: 10) that *"the awareness of domestic violence as a ... violation of basic*

human rights of women is underdeveloped” and that this “is the greatest stumbling block for sourcing support for the project at all levels.”

It is essential to acknowledge that such a human rights-based perspective views domestic violence as gender-based violence and thus interlocks domestic violence and gender inequality, thereby equating the prevention of domestic violence with the promotion of gender equality. This is also reflected in the international classifications used for measuring domestic violence, as shown earlier. Acceptability of domestic violence is measured through asking about the legitimacy of violence in case of transgressions from patriarchal norms. And emotional violence includes controlling behaviours by male partners. In sum, the global normative framework to be appropriated in the creation of local approaches implies that domestic violence is a human rights violation and that it is a manifestation of gender-based violence.

2.2.2 ‘Glocalisation’ processes

Merry identifies three ‘global cultural flows’ in regard to the global production and local appropriation of human rights, the first one being ‘transnational consensus building’. The fact that the Government of Tajikistan has ratified CEDAW means it is part of the global production of human rights. But while governments who ratify international conventions must accept their responsibility for implementing policy measures and programmes for human rights, the ‘how to’ of implementing global norms is in fact not predetermined, providing space for contextualised policies, laws and interventions. Secondly, Merry (2006: 21) identifies ‘transnational programme transplants’ as the dominant cultural flow, whereby *“social service programmes and legal innovations created in one society are transplanted into another”*. However, she argues that in order to be effective, human rights ideas must be appropriated through the ‘localisation of transnational knowledge’ and the global normative framework translated into local meaning. This translation presents Merry’s third global cultural flow, and this study will analyse such a process using the PDV project in Tajikistan as an example.

On a general note, it is important that in contrast to ‘programme transplants’, the ‘localisation of transnational knowledge’ is not about planting something entirely

new, but about appreciating and building on what is already available, in order to create eclectic and hybrid forms of interventions. Importantly, the use of the term 'local approaches' in this study does not refer to 'traditional' or 'customary' practices as an antipode to 'international approaches'. Rather, 'local approaches' are the product of 'glocalisation' processes in which ideas and concepts are discussed, negotiated and innovated, in order to come up with interventions that fit the local setting.

In 'glocalisation' processes, items might be contested. This firstly relates to the role that gender should play as an analytical and strategic category in programmes. For Merry (ibid.), there is a difference between the translation and the transformation of human rights in that 'vernacularisation' should not mean to give up challenging patriarchy:

"in order to be part of the human rights system, [local approaches] must emphasise individualism, autonomy, choice, bodily integrity and equality, ideas embedded in the legal documents that constitute human rights law. ... In the field of violence against women, the power of the rights framework is its challenge to ideas that gender violence is a normal and natural social practice. Although human rights are repackaged in culturally resonant wrappings, the interior remains a radical challenge to patriarchy."

However, she does not further explicate what forms the non-negotiable core of women's human rights versus their more elastic periphery, but simply takes the position that human rights law is fragmented and in a constant state of negotiation. However, it is precisely at this juncture that the gendered nature of domestic violence is negotiated and appropriated. In her work on post-communist countries' compliance with CEDAW, Avdeyeva (2007: 897) shows that governments conform to international obligations through a *"process of diffusion of international human rights treaties around the globe"*. In Poland, for instance, the government came under pressure from the Catholic Church and women's NGOs in regard to its position on a programme fighting violence against women. In the end, the government implemented a programme dealing with alcoholism to reduce family violence, rather than promoting women's empowerment. The example shows that acculturation does not always provide full compliance with

international standards and, in this case, can also serve to circumnavigate potentially controversial gender issues. This does not mean, however, that such approaches are necessarily ineffective in preventing domestic violence. However, a challenge to be dealt with is that stakeholders meeting at the 'global-local interface', including international funders and local partners in development initiatives, may differ on whether gender equality should be a feature of domestic violence prevention approaches.

Secondly, the dominant role of legal approaches using the state judiciary is controversial, since informal, customary systems for conflict resolution often co-exist (Venning 2010). Again, stakeholders might have contradicting views. For example, the Fijian practice of *bulu bulu* is a reconciliation mechanism, whereby a person apologises and asks for forgiveness by offering a whale's tooth and a gift (Merry 2006: 114). However, the application of *bulu bulu* to rape cases was also heavily criticised internationally, because it appeared to lend legitimacy to sexual violence. On the other hand, local activists might resist the state system. Snadrij (2005: 299) shows how Kazakh women's NGOs promote 'underground approaches' outside the state system, which they consider discriminatory towards Kazakh tradition. They thereby create a space for Muslim women outside the male space of the mosque and promote *"the traditional Central Asian family as a female spiritual domain"*.

A central question whether it is *"possible to find a space that respects cultural differences and at the same time protects women from violence?"* (Merry 2006: 25). It is important to appreciate that the value systems and socio-political structures in the local settings that global legal norms are transferred to are not necessarily at loggerheads with individual liberties of women and the rule of state law. Rather, the analysis of the 'global-local interface' of human rights explores intersecting, layered value systems and mechanisms in order to identify areas of convergence. As regards Tajikistan, for example, study will show that the fabric of society is a mixture of pre-Soviet customs, Soviet legacy and current influences like mass labour migration, global *jihad* and international development. Depending on the unique blend, some aspects of international human rights may be more or less contentious than others. In a Muslim setting, such exploration is particularly timely, since the relationship between women's human rights and

Islam is often regarded as purely antagonistic (Snadri 2005: 299). However, as will be shown later on, Islam is pluralistic and authors like Al-Attar (2013: 64) argue that “*universal normative values are in total agreement ... with the ethos of the Quran, the first source of legislation in Islam*”. Hence, even though they may be portrayed as a mismatch in popular literature, there is a basis for joining Islamic values and human rights. On the basis of overlaps and convergences, traditions and customs can then be innovated and modified, where deemed useful. In the case of *bulu bulu*, Fijian politicians and women’s activists insisted that the practice was absolutely indispensable for conflict resolution in villages and restoring community peace, but responded to the international criticism with a legal provision that *bulu bulu* should no longer apply to rape cases (Merry 2006: 123). What this example shows is that the perceived cultural boundaries of approaches are negotiable.

Various stakeholders meet at the ‘global-local interface’ of human rights and violence prevention programming. On the global side these include representatives of international organisations, donor country representatives and staff of development agencies. At the local level, actors include national and local government representatives, traditional and religious community leaders, judicial and law enforcement personnel and social service providers, like health professionals, counsellors and social workers. A third set of stakeholders then acts as intermediaries. Merry (ibid.: 20) identifies national and local actors who move between local and transnational settings, for example through their involvement in international networks or conferences, as key players, since they “*provide transnational knowledge to local and national activists and contribute local knowledge to transnational settings.*”

However, international consultants and project managers that are in charge of funds, design and implementation - even though they may represent organisations that are committed to promoting global conventions - can also take over the function of knowledge brokers. Whether they take over this function depends on various aspects. Individual managers need to possess the competence to steer respective processes. This encompasses intercultural sensitivity, communication and moderation skills, awareness of the importance of the political-economy next to purely technical questions as well as a realistic

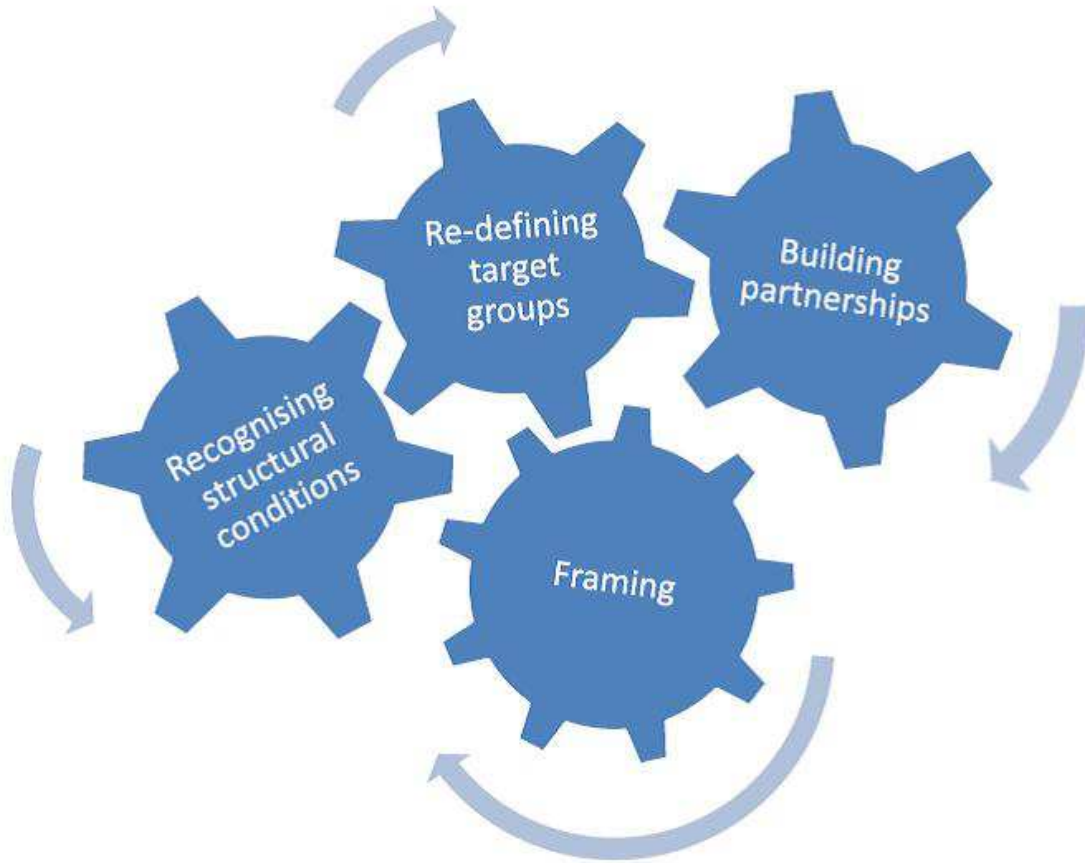
assessment of ones' role and scope in promoting social change. However, the opportunities for individual managers is influenced by the creative leeway provided to them by their organisations or funders and the understanding of these decision-makers for the necessity and benefits of local adaptation in terms of producing results. A project's managerial set-up, for instance its modes of delivery, decision-making processes, funding flows or staffing choices, can hamper efforts of local adaptation. Managing for local approaches should therefore constitute an explicit project management task so that conditions are created within projects that are conducive for processes of local adaptation and individual managers regard it as their task. However, as said earlier, there is a lack of guidance for practitioners in violence prevention on how to fulfill the task of creating successful local approaches.

2.2.3 Identifying key elements for creating local approaches

From an instrumentalist perspective, the concept of the 'global-local interface' brings up the question which context factors need to be considered for the successful 'localisation of transnational knowledge'. Merry (ibid.: 220) identifies three key elements according to which context factors may be grouped, to which this study will add a fourth aspect derived from the review of programming guidebooks: framing messages, acknowledging structural conditions, building partnerships, and redefining the target group.

Considering these key elements in project design and implementation reduces the risk of falling in the trap of 'transnational programme transplants'. They provide a hands-on framework assisting practitioners' decision-making that complements the available guidance on programme design. The four elements neither follow a specific order, nor do they describe a neat step-by-step process for arriving at local prevention approaches. Rather, they are interdependent building blocks, and the processes by which they are put in practice consists of iterative loops of analysing, exploring and testing creative ways to respond to specific circumstances. The diagramme overleaf illustrates the intertwined character of the key elements (see Fig. 3 overleaf).

Fig. 3: Conceptual framework: key elements for creating local approaches



Framing

Referring to Ferree (2003), Merry (2006: 136) defines framing as “an *interpretative package surrounding a core idea*”. She shows that messages disseminated by projects to fight violence against women must be framed in narratives, images, symbols and language that resonate with the respective local communities. This is a notion also supported by international agencies’ documents on project design (GTZ 2005). The studies cited in the literature review earlier point to a number of aspects that should be considered here.

First, sensitivity for ongoing public discourses is required. For example, in many Sub-Saharan countries, HIV and AIDS is a topic with high public interest and so prevention projects attach themselves to respective discussions about responsible masculinity and safe sex (UNFPA 2004: 30-32). There are examples of how Russian gender activists in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse focussed on providing advice on a broad range of social topics, especially in regard to the sudden economic deterioration of their client's situation (Hemment 2011; Johnson 2007).

Snadri (2007: 616) demonstrates how stakeholders in Kazakhstan load domestic violence with different meanings of ethnicity:

“Muslim women play up the legacy of Russian domination and downplay Kazakh linkages to violence in an effort to promote their political agenda of ethnic revitalization through religion. ... Kazakh police use ethnicity as a means to explain the problem in the face of a lack of systematic data and to excuse their own ineffectiveness ... Women's NGOs play along with cultural themes as a strategy to open up dialogues with the state about other important factors such as gender inequality and patriarchal power. In all of these cases, the topic of domestic violence becomes a screen on which local stakeholders project and challenge essentialisms both for political purposes and for their individual ideas about how best to deal with the problem.”

The differences in framing imply variations in the kinds of services offered and approaches employed, with the state structures and collaborating organisations proposing legal responses to provide individual justice to female victims, in contrast to Muslim groups that favour community-based methods of marital reconciliation (Snadri 2005: 302).

As will be shown later, in Tajikistan today, as in many Muslim countries, there are tensions about the different interpretations of Islam and what role religion should play in shaping public life and politics. Interventions must be aware that they in any case - perhaps unwillingly - position themselves in public discourses and are ascribed a certain position. Al-Attar (2013: 64) argues that as long as the discourse on women's rights is seen as westernised

“it will be resisted, not only by conservative patriarchal parties who are against any social change or reform by also by ordinary people. Patriarchal discourse will remain the prevailing discourse and will continue to marginalise any attempt for social reform in the name of opposition to Western culture and its associated colonial ideology.”

Secondly, using images and language that local actors can relate to is part of this element. This includes using religious or secular wording or references in campaigns, as well as local art, including music, poetry, storytelling, drama and dance. In the example from Bangladesh cited before, Muslim clerics developed messages based on the Quran, and similar experiences are documented from the fight against female circumcision in Mauretania (UNFPA 2004b: 1-10). But sometimes it is not what might be considered ‘traditional’ entertainment that resonates best, but pop culture. Working with mass media is also an option. There are good examples of projects developing soap operas, like the Soul City-project in South Africa to convey messages and working with youth idols as so-called ‘champions of change’ (Usdin et al 2005).

Framing, however, needs to master a paradox. Merry (2006: 137) argues that human rights must not only be presented in a way that resonates with local communities, but also that it must challenge patriarchal ideas at the same time. However, in practice framing is about choices and trade-offs. It is possible to choose a radical and therefore less resonant approach at one point in time to induce change in the long run. On the other hand, a led radical tactic might yield results that are not as far-reaching, but the tactic may be necessary to enable the intervention in the first place. For example, in her analysis of anti-FGM interventions in Kenya, Feuerbach (2011: 267) finds that alternative rites of passage other than genital cutting could only be promoted in local communities through a discursive strategy of maintaining order; alternative rites of passage were portrayed as a means of maintaining traditional societal order through adapting the rituals. In the intervention, only changing the ritual itself was considered, at the expense of the underlying patriarchal norms and structures that were not targeted.

Acknowledging structural conditions

Structural conditions refer to the economic, political and social factors that impact upon the dynamics of violence. They often reflect gender inequalities. The study from India quoted earlier (Poonacha and Pandey 1999) showed that counselling in support centres and in police stations focused on reconciliation between marital partners, rather than on punishing violent husbands. One structural condition that promotes this is that it is the abused women themselves who typically seek reconciliation and not separation, because they fully rely on their husbands and their husband's family for their upkeep. Alimony and property cannot be secured and enforced through the legal system. Income opportunities, be it through employment or small-scale entrepreneurship, are few, since many women lack education and skills and access to financial products. For women divorce thus often means losing their livelihoods and being subjected to abject poverty. Being divorced is also frowned upon, implying a loss of social standing and being ostracised by their communities. Projects must be aware of unintended negative effects and that they do no harm to the people they serve.

In addition, institutional capacities also matter. Accounts of 'frontline workers' who work with the police or manage shelters shed light on the challenges posed by institutional framework conditions in developing countries – and the fact that they are often not taken into account, even though they provide essential context (Bargach 2011; Haarr 2008). As said, there is ample evidence that working through the state penal system to punish perpetrators of domestic violence is ineffective in many countries, due to weak laws, a high tolerance of domestic abuse among public officials, corruption and weak capacities of law enforcement agencies. Shelters or safe houses have to deal with security concerns and often need protection by the police, they are costly, require rarely available specialised expertise and, above all, only have limited spaces to offer (Merry 2006: 151-159). It is also not practical to use health services as the main entry point for victim support services where the health system is in shambles. In such a situation the institution does not serve as an entry point, but as a barrier stopping women from accessing help. The realisation that institutions do not work should inspire the search for creative solutions. For example, intersectoral multi-stakeholder networks in the form of 'round tables' or prevention councils that include

government, civil society and traditional institutions have proven effective in terms of referral networks, coordinated monitoring and case management (GTZ 2009). The set-up of such networks then influences the choice of local partners.

Building partnerships

The third key element is another extension of Merry's work. Building partnerships refers to the process of establishing collaborative relationships between actors involved in development projects. A collaborative approach is based on the recognition that sustainable results require complex change processes that involve several actors with their various interests. Consequently, a central task of project management in international development is the organisation and moderation of dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders (Roehl and Barina 2009: 43). Effective cooperation has come to be regarded as a crucial success factor for the management of projects. Stakeholder interests, opinions and roles as well as adequate forms of working together need to be defined as a prerequisite for any planned change to happen (GIZ 2014b: 55).

Tapping into the strengths of community-based initiatives and harnessing the energy of local activists is considered an important success factor in violence prevention (UNFPA 2006: 64). Firstly, in order to foster the ownership of communities, projects should ideally work in partnership with local decision-makers and domestically grown initiatives. International agencies should remain in the background and only play a facilitating role. Projects must gain the support of local power structures that can support the project, lend legitimacy to its objectives and mobilise communities to participate (UNFPA 2004: 3). Projects should therefore bolster their service provision for violence victims and behavior change initiatives with advocacy campaigns (UNFPA 2006: 23). Community opinion leaders, such as elders, traditional and religious leaders, local council members and other respected members of the community, like teachers or businessmen, are all potential allies to consider. In many societies, religious leaders' theological interpretations of social norms are central to family life. In choosing partners, projects should support the efforts of local change agents.

Secondly, building partnerships with local stakeholders is also useful for the process of effectively framing the intervention. Naturally, the whole process of creating local approaches must be based on knowledge of specific conditions, but being able to utilise local partners' knowledge is an invaluable asset. After all, they know their communities best.

That being said, the choice of partners is crucial and part of framing. Working in human rights and gender equality means to work at the centre of different groups in society struggling for the power of naming and ending violence against women is often met with resistance, including by stakeholders claiming to defend 'culture'. However, there will always be local forces seeking to change this. Feuerbach (2011: 266) illustrates how in fighting FGM in Kenya communities are typically divided in two sections, those who represent change - commonly NGOs - and those who seek to maintain the status quo - typically traditional authorities. Hence, in partnering with local stakeholders projects must keep in mind that they are taking sides in a controversial public discourse.

Consequently, dialogue and negotiation between international funders and project managers and their local partners are required. This requires establishing relationships of trust. Being transparent about project objectives, honouring commitments, seeking to find common ground and discussing issues as equal partners are all preconditions for building partnerships (UNFPA 2004b). Yet there may be steep power asymmetries between stakeholders, especially between international funders and local partners, let alone so-called 'beneficiaries'. Whose ideas get to be implemented can turn out to be a 'terrain of struggle' (Li 1999). However, the questions may not so much be 'whose reality counts' (Chambers 1997), but more about *"public and hidden transcripts; between the 'monotheistic privilege' of dominant policy models and the 'polytheism' of scattered practices surviving below."* (Mosse 2005: 7).

Re-defining the target group

Merry argues (2006: 137) that effective local approaches need to 'redefine' the target groups of violence prevention. Whereas in Europe and North America it is couples in romantic relationships that are the focus of the response, in other

societies many more actors are involved in domestic violence perpetration. For example, in China domestic violence is also common among adults and their elderly parents, as well as between parents and children. As we shall see for the case of Tajikistan, members of extended inter-generational households take on different, sometimes shifting or concurrent roles as instigators, perpetrators, mediators and victims. However, Merry does not explicate on the basis of which information programmes should structure this process of re-defining their target groups.

Sound knowledge of the particularities of the respective domestic violence situation to be dealt with is a precondition for successful programme design (WHO 2010: 62). Yet interventions in both high- and low-income countries are often not designed on the basis of a sound analysis, but in response to single events that receive wide media coverage. Myths and misconceptions surrounding the characteristics of victims and perpetrators can further distort the design of policies and programmes, undermining their effectiveness. For evidence-based programming, accounts of abused women and service providers are crucial to understand the underlying dynamics of domestic violence. However, WHO cautions against using such information as a basis for programme design. Firstly, approaches based upon testimonials might lead to expenditure in ineffective programmes. Secondly, since the majority of victims do not seek help, data from registers of law enforcement agencies and social service providers on cases of domestic violence tend to under-represent an issue when compared to the findings of representative population surveys. The study of how often and for what reasons a health problem occurs in specific groups of people is known as 'epidemiology' and epidemiological information is crucial in planning and evaluating strategies for violence prevention. The absence of epidemiological data has been recognised internationally as a bottleneck (WHO 2005: 1), although improvements could be registered in last years, as the literature review showed. Hence, there is a call by public health organisations for more investment in the carrying out of population-based surveys as a basis for effective targeting (WHO 2010: 62): *"It is only through obtaining accurate information and replacing conjecture with facts that misconceptions can be dispelled."*

Putting the four key elements into practice in projects is a central task for practitioners in violence prevention. The 'global-local interface' needs to be actively managed and potential tensions between stakeholders on what constitutes an adequate response to domestic violence mediated. Creating local approaches means navigating the complexities and cultural contingencies of domestic violence. This requires an in-depth understanding of the context in which domestic violence is embedded, based on a broad analysis that encompasses socio-economic and cultural factors, institutional and stakeholder-related aspects, as well as epidemiological data. The third chapter of this study will therefore analyse these factors in detail.

2.3 Methodology

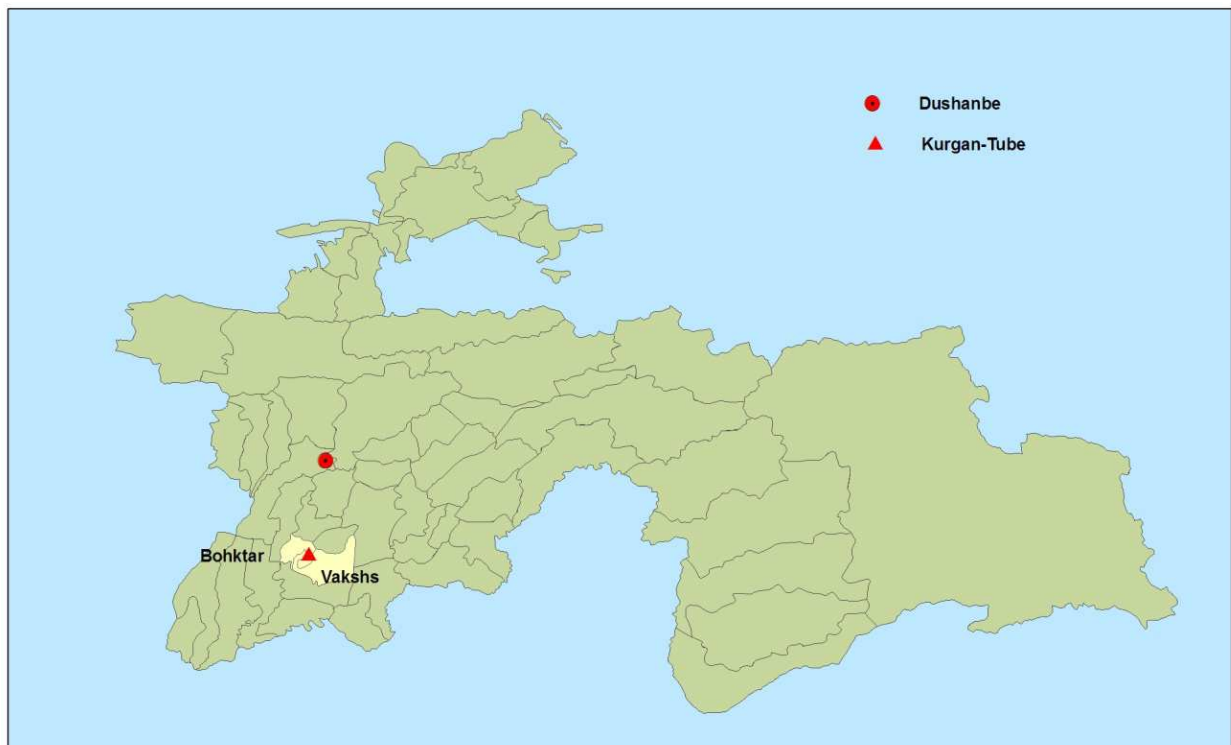
In total, the research process lasted over a period of roughly six years between mid-2008 to mid-2014.

The study was designed to answer the three research questions: what are the context-specific factors to be considered when devising local intervention approaches in Khatlon? How did the PDV project design and implement local approaches for the prevention of domestic violence? In how far were these approaches effective in contributing to the prevention of domestic violence? It employed a multi-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, as well as secondary data analysis and primary data collection. In the following paragraphs, the choice of methods is presented in the order of the three research questions.

2.3.1 Research methods

The geographical scope of this study is focused on the urban and rural areas in and around Kurganteppa town, which is the capital of the southern province of Khatlon. The study area consists specifically of three locations that constitute the project areas of the case study project PDV, which are Kurganteppa town and the two adjacent rural districts of Bohktar and Vakshs (see Fig. 4 overleaf).

Fig. 4: Location of study area in Tajikistan



Source: PDV 2011: v.

Analysis of key elements

The analysis of the key elements is mainly based on a review of available literature, secondary data as well as policy and programme documents on the cultural transformation, political situation and socio-economic trends in Tajikistan.

The situation is fairly well documented, including in regard to various markers of gender equality (GoT/UN 2010; GoT 2007b; GoT 2005; UNICEF 2009; World Bank 2009). However, the situation is far less satisfactory for statistical data on domestic violence against women, which is crucial for the key elements of re-defining the target groups. Internationally, the availability and quality of data on domestic violence has greatly improved over the past decade (WHO 2013, 2005; BMFSFJ 2010; Hindin et al 2008). The data situation on domestic violence against women in Tajikistan has also somewhat improved. The first attempt to collect statistics on domestic violence was the nation-wide WHO 1999 Pilot Survey (WHO 2000). In 2005, SDC sponsored a baseline survey in three districts

of Khatlon region (SDC 2005). In addition, the government's 2005 Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) contained variables on women's attitudes towards domestic violence, but did not measure prevalence (GoT 2005). In 2009 and 2011, the PDV project carried out two surveys in its three project locations in Khatlon region, thereby using the WHO standards to make the findings on the prevalence rates comparable internationally. The surveys provide the first internationally comparable data on domestic violence in Tajikistan. The surveys also took into account recent developments in Tajikistan, such as mass labour migration, and their findings consequently update the existing evidence. The surveys have not been published so far, and the author has been granted permission to use the findings in this study. They will be drawn upon especially when analysing the domestic violence situation in Tajikistan, as a basis for the key element of re-defining the target group.

In addition, I conducted qualitative field work to probe into and validate specific questions. In contrast to the general gender equality-situation, there is almost no literature on the specific situation of gender relations in the study area in Khatlon. This, however, is a crucial aspect of the key element of framing local approaches for violence prevention. The relevant contributions in this regard are by Harris (2006, 2004) whose books provide in-depth analyses of gender relations and family life in Tajikistan. However, Harris findings required an update. In her analytical framework, she makes a distinction between 'modern' Soviet/Russian and 'traditional' Tajik families and theorises that families can be located along a continuum between these two poles. My observations, however, pointed to a situation whereby this discourse has been replaced by a controversy around Islam as the main marker of gender identity.

In April 2012, I therefore travelled to Tajikistan to validate a range of questions with a small sample of respondents. Key Informant Interviews (KIs) were conducted with a total of nine people representing the most important international stakeholders involved in the response to domestic violence in Tajikistan. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were carried out with staff members of PDV's partner NGOs Bovary in Dushanbe and Ghamkori, Dilafruz, Hamroz and Mahbuba in Khatlon region. I conducted five FGDs with a total of 35 NGO staff members. FGDs were also done with community leaders, as well as

community members of different gender and ages from different villages in Bohktar and Vakshs districts, where the NGOs operate. I conducted two FGDs with a total of eight abused women, five FGDs with a total of 44 community members from three villages, one FGD with six community leaders from different villages in Bohktar and one FGD with six religious leaders from both districts. One religious leader was female and was interviewed separately. References to respective KIIs and FGDs are provided in footnotes.

The FGD participants were not selected randomly. Many of the respondents played active parts in the PDV project. This includes of course the NGO staff, but also the community and religious leaders who function as the NGOs partners at village level. The community members invited to the FGDs were chosen by the NGOs, and they represent women and men that are targeted by the NGOs' community work. In particular, the respondents participate in the weekly meetings, in which pre-marriage aged girls, young women, old women, young men and old men separately discuss issues around gender relations, family life and domestic violence.

Analysis of local approaches

For the analysis of how PDV developed and implemented its local approaches, the study draws on my observations during my time as Project Manager of PDV. In July 2008, SDC announced an international tender for the mandate as Implementing Agency for Phase VII of the PDV project in Tajikistan. The German consulting firm GOPA Consultants decided to participate in the competition and submit a proposal. At that time, I was employed at GOPA's headquarters in Bad Homburg near Frankfurt am Main in Germany. As gender equality-programmes fell in my portfolio, I was put in charge of coordinating the proposal development, which signalled the beginning of my involvement with Tajikistan and domestic violence. In September 2008, SDC awarded the PDV project to GOPA. Phase VII was to commence in December 2008 and last until November 2011. I was made the Project Manager at GOPA's headquarters, a position I held until March 2011. I became a stakeholder in the response to domestic violence in Tajikistan and in Khatlon in specific. In this role, I had interactions with individuals and

organisations at different levels, from policy discussions with international agencies and national government bodies to technical and strategic debates with local NGOs and emotional encounters with individual violence victims. However, I was not a 'frontline worker'. My duty station was headquarters in Germany, but I travelled to Tajikistan in December 2008, April 2009 and June 2010 to visit my colleagues, project partners and to conduct analyses and planning sessions. As I will show later, the project had a Team Leader located in Dushanbe and coordinator in Kurganteppa and I also had regular, sometimes daily telephone conversations and email-correspondence with the project team on the ground.

Pic. 1: Author (right) and staff of NGO Ghamkori, December 2008



Source: A. Erich

This intensive involvement was demanded by our client SDC and had to do with the specific situation PDV was in when GOPA took over its management. In its previous phases, PDV and its local NGO partners carried out pioneer work and experimented with different approaches. The strategy of the project and the details of its approaches grew 'organically' over the years, adding and subtracting aspects as they saw fit. When I took over management, SDC explicitly demanded from GOPA that the project should be more strategic in its interventions and that innovations to the approaches should be made to yield better results (SDC 2009, 2008). Consequently, PDV embarked on a process of careful change management, essentially checking all interventions against their utility. My role as project manager was to provide leadership and technical inputs to this process.

Even though I was a newcomer to the field of domestic violence, after scrutinising the project documentation, it was immediately clear to me that PDV required greater clarity in its strategic outlook and this required checking whether its design was addressing the local conditions adequately. I had previously worked on other social development projects, such as community-based youth promotion in different places, like Uganda, Liberia or Kosovo, and to me tailoring approaches to local contexts was part and parcel of my professional doctrine. The project's partner NGOs, as became clear early on in our discussions, were also very much aware of the local boundedness of the issues they were addressing and made clear that certain things that had been proposed to them in the past would just not work in rural Tajikistan. As will be analysed, PDV supported women's Crisis Centres and a behaviour change campaign, and sought to do so with a distinct 'Tajik flavour'.

Devising local approaches thus became a joint undertaking that shaped PDV during the time of my tenure as Project Manager. It is this experience that sparked my interest the 'glocalisation' of prevention approaches as a research topic. Together with the Team Leader in Tajikistan, I took on the role as 'intermediary' (Merry 2006: 2), translating between the international discussions taking place between the international agencies in Dushanbe, the views of the local NGOs and the demands of SDC. Often times, this brought me into the position of a 'cultural broker' (Schönhuth 2004), negotiating the opportunities and limits of local appropriation.

I consequently approach this study in dual roles, as former Project Manager and researcher. On the one hand, this is an advantage, since I can draw on first-hand experiences, which are documented in field notes, official correspondence, minutes of meetings and workshop documentations, which will be referenced in footnotes. I also had access to programme documents. On the other hand, there are implications of this positioning for the researcher role in regard to risking biased findings and questions around impartiality. These will be discussed in the next section.

Assessment of effectiveness

The assessment of PDV's effectiveness is based on the approach known as contribution analysis. Contribution analysis has been developed by Mayne (2008) and is specifically designed for the evaluation of complex interventions. Contribution analysis offers an alternative to 'rigorous impact evaluations' (RIE) that have dominated the international debate on evaluation methodology for the last decade (Delahais and Toulemonde 2012; Kotvojs and Shrimpton 2007). RIE seek to attribute results to an intervention through quantitative methods, especially experimental designs (randomised control trials, RCT), quasi-experimental designs and econometrics. The methodological essence of RIE is the creation of a 'counterfactual' that simulates a 'with-and-without' scenario by sampling from treatment and control groups or by reconstructing counterfactuals using statistical methods (Hemmer 2011; Khandker et al 2010).

However, rigorous evaluation designs are increasingly criticised for their limited practicability in the project context. In practice it is rarely possible to create treatment and control groups, since beneficiaries of and participants in interventions are not chosen randomly. 'Spill-over' effects can often not be ruled out (GIZ 2011). Also, rigorous designs fail to account for people's perceptions of change, which are better captured through qualitative and participatory methods that also have their place in evaluation methodology (DeGeval 2010; Bliss and Neumann 2007; Chambers 1997). The utility of RCTs is also questionable from an efficiency perspective, since funds and time for monitoring and evaluation are

usually very limited and the costs of rigorous evaluations are seen to outweigh the benefits by far:

“Given that RCTs are expensive and require a lot of effort, one must diligently weigh the costs and benefits. After all, the money spent on evaluations is not available for development action” (Dinges and Schweitzer 2014: 299).

But most importantly, RCTs are not suitable for understanding why and how interventions worked (ibid). In terms of learning from evaluations, RCTs are often of little use for practitioners tasked with conceiving and managing interventions. Examples of this are the aforementioned RCTs of the SASA!-project in Uganda and the Soul City-project in South Africa, whose write-ups are not particularly instructive for future programming. The authors of the RCT on SASA! (Abramsky et al 2012) admit that

“there is increasing recognition of the need ... to include extensive process and qualitative data collection to complement quantitative approaches. These additional elements allow researchers to better understand the processes through which the intervention is delivered and the mechanisms by which change occurs.”

The aim of contribution analysis is not to provide proof of a linear causal linkage between a program and its intended results, nor is it to determine the exact contribution of the program. Its aim is to provide *“evidence beyond reasonable doubt that the program to some degree contributed to the specified results”* (Lemire 2010: 6). Contribution analysis is therefore a useful design option in instances where an experimental evaluation design is impractical or not necessary. Not in every case is the statistical isolation of cause-effect-relationships the main aim of an evaluation. If learning for future concepts is the primary interest, other, qualitative methods are better suited, since they enable an investigation into the processes and context factors of an intervention.

Contribution analysis composes of the following steps (Mayne 2008): First, the cause-effect issues to be addressed must be determined. Secondly, the postulated ‘theory of change’ is reconstructed. This includes the intended results, the hypotheses of how the project seeks to contribute to change and external

factors that influence the project, including risks. Thirdly, empirical evidence on whether the envisaged changes took place was, i.e. if hypotheses made during conceptualisation of the intervention were correct, is gathered. This third step can encompass the full range of methods. Contribution analysis does therefore not rule out RCTs as a means of testing causal effects (GIZ 2014). However, it leaves room for carefully weighing the advantages and disadvantages of different methods in light of the specific purpose and intended use of the evaluation (Neubert 2010). The various hypotheses in the theory of change can be tested using different methods with different degrees of robustness.

The main challenge that evaluation theory in international development has been grappling with in the past years has been how to attribute indirect results observed to specific interventions (OECD-DAC 2006). The concept known as the 'results chain' provides for an internationally accepted common terminology. In short, interventions provide 'inputs', such as financial and human resources, which are used to carry out 'activities', such as constructing infrastructure or conducting training. These activities generate 'outputs', which can be products developed, services delivered or capacities enhanced. If such outputs are used by professionals, government officials or other stakeholders, development results can be generated. In describing results two levels are distinguished. 'Outcomes' are the direct results of an intervention in the sense that observed changes can be attributed to the intervention. The 'impact' is the indirect result, which can no longer be assumed to be an effect produced by the intervention alone (OECD-DAC 2009). Here, only RCTs can provide certainty that results are attributable to a specific intervention.

This logic is transferred in similar ways into programme logic by international agencies. Usually, a project goal would be formulated at the impact level, while its objectives would represent outcomes. The fact that project objectives are formulated in a modest fashion reflects a realistic view on the potential achievements of interventions and scepticism towards social engineering. The effectiveness of an intervention is defined as the extent to which it achieves its objectives or intended outcomes. It is also possible that a project formulates lower and higher level outcomes and impact (Hemmer 2011). The planning logic then also contains outputs and activities, as well as assumptions and external

risks. There are various formats that projects use for planning, which commonly cover the aforementioned dimensions, such as the logical framework-approach employed or the 'theory of change'-approach (GIZ 2013).

In the case of PDV, the project's logical framework (see Annex 1) defines a reduction in the prevalence of domestic violence as its overall goal, or long-term vision (impact 2) and a reduced acceptability of violence as its project goal (impact 1). In other words, a decrease in acceptability is the precondition for a reduced prevalence, and changes in attitude precede behavioural change. The project has three objectives (outcomes), each relating to a different set of activities: enhanced support of local stakeholders for the response to domestic violence, improved access to support services for violence victims, and increased exposure to preventative messages by the population in the project areas. In each component, local approaches were carried out and outputs produced. The project's 'theory of change' will be outlined in detail in the case study later on.

The fourth step in contribution analysis is then the assembling of the available evidence to produce a so-called 'contribution story'. Mayne distinguishes three types of 'stories' that can come out of contribution analyses, each relating to a different level in a project's 'theory of change'. The first type, a so-called 'minimalist contribution analysis' can be construed when the expected outputs were delivered and observed. Such an analysis is crucial for understanding how projects delivered their specific activities and outputs. This is sometimes called the 'theory of action'. Secondly, a 'contribution analysis of direct influence' can be construed when expected outputs and immediate results were observed, and evidence suggests the programme was instrumental in creating those results, in light of other influencing factors. A third type, a 'contribution analysis of indirect influence', can be construed when evidence is available that outputs, immediate results and indirect results have taken place and that these are effects of the intervention. At all three levels, the analysis seeks to infer plausible associations between cause and effects (Lemire 2010: 5). However, the three types Mayne describes reflect the fact that the 'higher up' in the theory of change the hypothesis to be assessed is the more difficult it is to find evidence and produce robust findings.

This study will present all three types of contribution analyses defined by Mayne. It will provide a 'minimalist' contribution analysis by scrutinising how the outputs were delivered and how the project responded to external factors. In doing so, the first two research questions will be answered. Then a contribution analysis of direct effects is conducted by analysing if the PDV project has contributed to its intended direct results (outcomes) in its three components. Thereby, the study will answer the third research question on the effectiveness of the local approaches employed by PDV. Finally, the study also attempts a contribution analysis of indirect effects by assessing PDV's contribution to the indirect intended result of reducing the acceptability of domestic violence (impact 1), albeit without employing a RCT.

This will be done on the basis of the findings of the 2009 and 2011 surveys conducted by PDV. The surveys were financed by SDC through the PDV project's budget and implemented by GOPA as the implementing agency. Both organisations have granted me permission to use the data from the surveys for this study. However, they have thus far not been published and material on the methodology is therefore provided in Annex 2.

The purposes of the surveys were two-fold. The 2009 baseline survey fulfilled a formative function, informing project design, as well as establishing reference points with regard to the project's indicators that could be used for measuring its results. The data available at the time of project inception could not be utilised as baseline information, since questionnaires and sampling frames were not available, which made a reliable replication of the methodology impossible. Instead, the 2009 survey would serve as a baseline with the 2011 survey providing information on the project's effectiveness, however, measuring only a two-year time period. The purpose of the second exercise was to assess the project's effectiveness and to generate lessons learnt for the preparation of the next project phase. Since at the point of conceiving the surveys another phase (Phase VIII) had already been envisaged by SDC, the 2011 survey was planned as an end-of-phase appraisal and midline survey, with a comprehensive endline

survey planned for late 2014. Currently, the endline survey has been postponed to early 2016.¹

In March 2009, PDV commissioned the survey firm Social Impact Analysis and Policy Analysis Corporation (SIAPAC) to conduct the baseline survey. In April 2011, PDV sub-contracted SIAPAC a second time to carry out the end-of-phase appraisal/midline survey. SIAPAC's tasks included the development of the survey design and field instruments, the training and supervision of enumerators, quality control of data collection in the field, supervision of data entry, data analysis and report production. I was intensively involved in the conceptualisation, creation of the questionnaire and overall quality control of the surveys, but not part of the actual primary data collection exercise and analysis. SIAPAC's lead researcher carried out the statistical analysis. The statistical data presented in my analysis later on are largely taken from SIAPAC's survey reports. Where I required additional quantitative information from the dataset, my colleague was so kind to compute further statistics.

The questionnaire for the surveys was designed to measure indicators of success laid down in PDV's planning documents. A draft questionnaire of medium administrative length consisting of close-ended questions was developed and tested in the field. After intensive pre-testing, especially to ensure correct translation into Tajik, version 19 of the questionnaire became the final document used during data collection (see Annex 2A). The questionnaire used in the end-of-phase appraisal/midline survey is an abbreviated version of the 2009 questionnaire that focussed only on the variables of interest for measuring the project's effectiveness (see Annex 2B). Before commencing with the data collection in April 2009, a Russian copy of the draft questionnaire was given to the State Statistics Committee and approval obtained.

The baseline survey sampled a total of 1200 respondents, comprising 600 males and females each. 300 interviews with 150 men and women each were conducted in the four locations in Dushanbe, Kurganteppa, Bohktar and Vakshs (see Annex 2C and 2D). The midline survey sampled the same number, but left

¹ Personal communication to author by SIAPAC lead researcher on March 30, 2015

out Dushanbe for budgetary reasons. Only one person was eligible in each household, regardless of the number of eligible people in each household. Eligible people had to be between 18 and 49 years and had to be the same sex as the enumerator. Note that the data from the Khatlon locations is representative of the districts' population, but that the 2009 Dushanbe data is not representative of the population in the capital city as the respondents were only sampled from the catchment area of the office of the partner organisation Bovary.

The interviews were carried out by staff members of PDV's partner NGOs. The enumerators went through an intensive two-week induction and training process coordinated by a field coordinator of SIAPAC. Enumerators were divided into small gender-balanced teams, and the enumerators worked largely in their home districts. However, it was made sure that the enumerators did not know any interviewee personally, but no such case was encountered. Confidentiality was assured and consent of the selected interviewee obtained by the enumerators.

To ensure comparability with the 2009 data, sampling and data collection in 2011 followed the same process as during the baseline survey. A detailed account of the methodology is documented in the baseline survey report prepared by SIAPAC (PDV 2009), which is on file with the author.

2.3.2 Limitations and positioning

Technical constraints

The research process encountered some technical constraints. One limitation was of course the language barrier, as I am proficient in neither Tajik, nor Russian. As a Project Manager, this was mitigated by always being accompanied by excellent interpreters during visits to Tajikistan. Also, all major documents were routinely translated into English. During fieldwork, FGDs were conducted in Tajik and English with the help of an interpreter. My questions were translated into Tajik and responses were summarised for me in English. I recorded the proceedings by taking notes, but a certain degree of information loss must certainly be factored in. To minimise loss, respondents were also requested if they agreed to audio taping the discussions and, apart from one FGD with pre-marriage aged

girls, respondents agreed to the recordings. With the help of the interpreter, the recordings were later used to cross-check my notes. Also, the interpreter produced English transcriptions of five selected recordings.

In regard to the robustness of the findings of the PDV surveys, it was not possible to include a rigorous measurement of the project's impact in regard to the overall acceptability of domestic violence (impact 1) and its prevalence (impact 2). The possibilities of identifying control groups and/or applying econometric techniques were discussed during the design stages of the surveys, but quickly discarded due to a lack of funds and time. At the impact level, the contribution analysis is thus not based on a statistical attribution of project results. While the aforementioned 'Soul City'- and SASA!-studies provide robust evidence on whether these interventions contributed to change in terms of changing norms, but do not explain how the change was brought about, this study focusses on how locally suitable approaches were developed and created, but its assessment of the approaches' impact at attitudinal level is less robust. However, the population in the project areas was divided ex post facto into those that had been reached by messages against domestic violence and those who had not been exposed (PDV 2011: 14).

Moreover, the surveys experienced a measurement flaw in regard to assessing the project's contribution to the reduction of the acceptability of domestic violence (impact 1). In line with WHO standards, the indicator to measure the reduction of acceptability was formulated as follows: "The proportion of women in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) who believe that a husband has the right to use unacceptable physical violence (as internationally defined by WHO) against his wife is reduced by 30 November 2011 (acceptance of the use of physical violence "if she has her own male friends (non-family members) reduced by 20% from 38.1% to 30.4%; if "she leaves the house without permission" reduced by 20% from 38% to 30.4%).“ This is a measure of individual acceptance of the right to use physical violence. However, in the questionnaire the respective question was formulated "Under what circumstances, if any, is it *culturally acceptable* for a husband to strike his wife/long-term partner hard, to the point where she bruises or something is broken (broken skin, bones, bleeding eyes or ears, lips, etc.)?" This is not a measure of individual acceptance, but rather asks the respondents

to provide their opinion on what, in their view, is acceptable according to Tajik culture. This measurement disguises whether individual respondents agree or reject what they believe to be culturally acceptable. Hence, the survey's findings do not provide valid evidence on whether the PDV project has succeeded in attaining its goal *vis-à-vis* its respective impact 1 indicator. However, the findings nevertheless provide important pointers as to whether the project has contributed to the creation of a societal climate of non-tolerance towards domestic violence. Also, as a mitigating measure to the aforementioned limitations, the questionnaire of the 2011 end-of-phase appraisal/midline survey included a set of so-called 'recall'-questions and additional FGDs were carried out to capture perceptions of change in the acceptability of violence at the end of the project phase.

Regarding the prevalence of domestic violence in Khatlon, the PDV surveys collected data using WHO international standards, which will be referred to when describing the epidemiology in Khatlon. However, without a rigorous impact evaluation design is not possible to measure the extent to which changes in the prevalence can be attributed to PDV (impact 2). There is a criticism in the literature on violence prevention that effects of interventions on actual violence are not measured by studies (WHO 2010b; Morrison et al 2007). This study is unable to overcome this frontier. However, the PDV project has an earmarked budget for conducting a comprehensive endline survey at, in which the effect of PDV on prevalence levels could potentially be measured. This would also represent an opportunity to rectify the abovementioned measurement problems in regard to the acceptability.

Dual position as researcher and project manager

Since this study is a contribution to the instrumentalist stream of development anthropology, it is also a piece of applied research. Development anthropologists have criticised the German anthropological practice for its lack of practical application (Antweiler 2004; Bliss 2004). Bierschenk (2013) shows how the question of the practical application of cultural anthropology has accompanied the discipline from its beginnings, citing classic works of the likes of Malinowski and Mead and pointing out that the applied character has been strong throughout the

discipline's anglophone history. He laments that non-academic anthropological practice appears not to be considered worthwhile anthropology and argues that the practical application of anthropology in development cooperation has great theoretical potentials.

One reason for the scepticism towards development anthropology is the general risks associated with applied research. This includes the threat of findings being influenced, complicity with funders, and lower scientific standards (Bliss 2004: 209). While applied research is indeed often confronted with sub-optimal conditions for research - like unrealistic deadlines, insufficient budgets and compromised data quality -, practising applied research does not mean relinquishing scientific rigour or theoretical grounding (Bierschenk 2008: 2). Rather, in applied research the challenge is to meet scientific standards under constrained conditions and to make resulting limitations in the robustness of findings transparent. Also, practising applied research means to appreciate that the value of ones' findings must be assessed against their utility for stakeholders involved in the research's subject matter - in my case international and local development practitioners and service providers in charge of programming, designing and implementing prevention programmes.

Finally, the proximity of researchers with their subject-matter – as is the case here - does not automatically imply a lack of critical thinking. Yet there is a trade-off here between the opportunity for first-hand experiences and access to internal information on the one hand and having sufficient distance to ensure non-biased findings on the other. Similar to Mosse (2005: 12), I would argue several benefits of being part of the project to be studied. Since projects treat information as a private good rather than a public asset, it is near to impossible to understand the internal dynamics of projects as an outsider. It is virtually impossible to do long-term participant observation within a project without making a practical contribution. And finally, it is only by partaking in the project itself that one can acquire a *“performative knowledge of the discourses and relationships”* (ibid.).

It is nevertheless paramount to critically reflect on potential biases in the findings that may arise from this positioning. In regard to the findings of my own field work, it is important to note that I approached respondents in the villages as a

representative of PDV's management. All respondents showed a high level of cooperation and eagerness to discuss issues around gender relations and family life with me. The respondents are, of course, not representative of their communities, and it must be assumed that they are biased in favour of the messages critical of domestic violence spread by PDV. Also, being interviewed by a project representative from Germany is likely to have sparked responses representing social desirability. However, on the other hand, with the assistance and hospitality of the NGOs I was able to meet a large number of respondents who are difficult to access otherwise, including religious leaders and rather closed communities. Although I had originally not envisaged talking about violence itself, respondents brought the topic up and spoke openly about it. This may be attributed to the fact that the respondents were grouped by age and gender, which reduced inhibitions. The focus groups were also done in the context of the usual interactions of the respondents with the NGOs, which represents a clearly demarcated space for addressing such sensitive issues.

In analysing the local approaches supported by PDV, it is important that the views and opinions of the partner NGOs in Khatlon, the 'frontline workers' were gathered. By focusing on the "*small spaces of interaction*" (Merry 2008: 520), the study is able to show how local NGOs create meaningful frameworks in their context, while at the same time unveiling the ways in which they are influenced by global discourses. My analysis is based to a large extent on interactions with the NGO staff members, whose views and personal accounts I try to capture as best as possible. During field work, I also conducted FGDs with the NGOs to probe into specific issues. As Wies and Haldane (2011) put it: "*The majority of workers ... receive little attention and rarely admiration. Yet their stories hold important lessons for us all.*"

In fact, conceptualisation of PDV was a joint undertaking of the project's management and the local NGOs as the main partners, and reflection on what could work how under the specific circumstances of Khatlon was a feature of project implementation, reflected in its managerial set-up. For example, regular meetings and workshops took place to this end. It would be naïve to assume no power asymmetries between the different actors and the different perspectives and interests of stakeholders will be discussed in this study. However, as Mosse

(2005: 7) argues, it is important to note that project managers do not exercise a 'perfect hegemony' over development initiatives, but rather that *"development schemes cannot be imposed; it requires collaboration and compromise"*. While partnerships do take place within asymmetrical relationships, they are necessary. The question is how to shape and live partnerships. Without negating the asymmetrical relationships that exist, I believe that it is important to grant development practitioners the benefit of doubt that they seek genuine partnerships.

Regarding the findings in respect to the project's effectiveness, it is important to note that the PDV surveys were conducted by SIAPAC's independent consultants. They were not involved in designing or implementing the PDV project and have no affiliation to SDC or GOPA. As Project Manager, I commissioned the surveys and assisted in conceptualisation and implementation. However, as said, I did not carry out any data analysis myself. In this study, the survey findings and consultants' reports are cited as secondary data. That being said, it is self-evident that my interpretation of the local approaches and the effectiveness of PDV are constrained by my position as Project Manager. 'Writing from within' also demands caution against self-acclamation. The 'new ethnography of development' that Mosse (ibid.: 11) describes *"turns a self-critical lens onto the anthropologist-actor as member of a transnational community, speaking from within and in the first person."*

Ethical dilemma: taking sides

The dual role also raises questions about the moral stance of the author. Its purpose and objective mark this study as engaged anthropological research. I take sides in the discussion on gender equality by criticising the practice of domestic violence, both as a human rights violation and as a factor hampering socio-economic outcomes and by seeking to assist stakeholders engaged at the 'frontline' of violence prevention. As a researcher practising anthropology, this situation presents a dilemma: on the one hand, I am personally invested in the response to domestic violence, both through my personal and professional ethos and through the fact that I was the Project Manager of the case study project - it

would be foolish to attempt or claim impartiality. On the other hand, cultural anthropology has a deep tradition of rejecting ethnocentrism, which implies neutral description as an integral part of the researcher's ethos.

One reason for the schism between basic and applied anthropology that was explained earlier lies in the epistemology of the discipline itself. Development and anthropology have been described as 'unequal siblings' (Antweiler 2004). Development has also been labelled the 'evil twin' of anthropology; both anthropology and development are inherently based on an evolutionary perspective. While the anthropological discipline claims for itself a neutral observer status: *"to be critical of the 'concept of 'development' requires ... critical re-evaluation of the discipline of anthropology itself"* (Ferguson 1997: 160). Ferguson's point yields an important discussion: *"the anthropology of development brings up an old question: how to combine social analysis with moral responsibility"* (Bierschenk 2008: 14).

That being said, there is also the tradition of an engaged anthropology, which explicitly takes sides for disenfranchised and marginalised populations, also known as 'action anthropology' (Tax 1975). An explicitly feminist anthropology in the service of women's rights and gender equality is part of this tradition (Luig 2003: 310). From being a *"quixotic venture"* in the 1970s, feminist anthropology has exploded over the past decades, now consisting of a diverse literature (Lewin 2006). Feminist anthropology aims at using anthropological evidence about unequal power relations between genders as a basis for political strategy. Ortner (1974: 67-68) explained her motivation as follows:

"My interest in the problem is of course more than academic: I wish to see genuine change come about, the emergence of a social and cultural order in which as much of the range of options is open women as is open to men. ... I try to expose the underlying logic of cultural thinking that assumes the inferiority of women ... I also try ... indicate wherein lies the potential for change."

This standpoint is still the common denominator of feminist anthropology today. However, with gender becoming an established topic in cultural anthropology, it is no longer necessary to couple ones' research interest in gender with a

commitment to social change, and there is a rift in the anthropological dealing with gender between those whose interest is primarily theoretical and those for whom feminist anthropology is a question of ethics (Lewin 2006: 21).

Illiuss (2003: 91-92) notes that many moral dilemmas that anthropologists encounter during fieldwork arise because they strive to fulfil two ethical standards at the same time: their own and that of the communities they study. He goes on to recommend that when presented with injustices it is helpful to remember that researchers have not been called for help. Bierschenk (2008: 14) on the contrary argues for an engaged position of anthropologists, who, in the name of methodological rigour, cannot *“shy away from, and in fact [have] to address, the question of moral and political values”*. Armbruster and Laerke (2008) state that nowadays few anthropologists see themselves as neutral scientists, and, in German development anthropology, it has become an essential part of the sub-discipline's ethos to take sides. The ethical guidelines of the German Society for Development Anthropology (AGEE 2013) recommend subscribing to the universality of human rights, while appreciating that the superiority of individual dignity over collective interests may not be shared in all cultural contexts. In case of human rights violations, the guidelines go on, means of contributing to ending these should be looked for. This, in fact, resonates with the objective of this study: only by examining the processes by which global human rights principles are translated into local approaches is it possible to understand how rights can be made a reality. The search for local approaches presents a constructive solution to the supposed predicament of engaged development anthropology.

For analyses of gender and violence it is neither helpful to stigmatise culture as the main contributing factor, nor to use it to excuse violence. In regard to the relationship between religion, particularly Islam, and gender-based violence the current academic debate is polarised, with scholars either emphasising religion as a force legitimising violence or potential space that religion offers for emancipation (Rew 2011). Johnson (2007: 42) warns that feminist critique of non-Western societies is *“rife with risks of universalising Western experiences”*. But taking a stance in support of human rights does not have to hinder an awareness of the euro-centric trappings of concepts like gender and violence. Appreciating the relativity of viewpoints expressed in different cultures is not the same as

moral relativism. The anthropological research presented in this study thus oscillates between relativist positions during the description of the research subject and normative concepts when assessing and attaching meaning to it, switching between the roles of human rights advocate and anthropological researcher.

3. Key elements for creating local approaches in Tajikistan

This chapter serves the purpose of embedding domestic violence prevention in Khatlon, in particular of the case study-project PDV, within its cultural, economic, political and institutional setting. The chapter provides the context that is necessary for understanding the factors that need to be considered when devising local approaches. The study's conceptual framework is based around four key elements that must be considered in doing so – framing, recognising structural conditions, building partnerships and re-defining the target groups -, and in the following sections each of these will be analysed.

In respect to the first element of effectively framing the response to domestic violence, the first section contains an investigation into the complex discourse around Tajik identity (section 3.1). Domestic violence is inextricably linked to gender, and in Tajikistan gender is a heavily contested and controversial concept, especially in light of the transformation after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the recent rising of Islamist tendencies. The major publication on the subject of gender relations in Tajikistan is by Harris (2004), and this section, by drawing on field work findings, updates and expands her work. Secondly, consideration of structural conditions is required for tailoring local approaches. Therefore the current situation is outlined in regard to Tajikistan's economic and social development (section 3.2). Thirdly, when devising local approaches, projects need to build partnerships with local stakeholders. The next section thus provides an account of governance and institutions in Tajikistan (section 3.3). Finally, the fourth key element is an effective targeting. The last section in the chapter therefore presents the findings of the 2009 and 2011 PDV surveys on the prevalence and acceptability of domestic violence in Khatlon (section 3.4). This is hitherto unpublished material that closes a gap in the global domestic violence data.

3.1 Framing: Tajik identity, Islam and gender

Tajikistan is a small and landlocked country in Central Asia. It borders Russia and Kyrgyzstan in the North, Uzbekistan in the West, Afghanistan in the South and

China in the East. It shares its Soviet history with Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and the five 'stans' together are referred to as the Central Asian region (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: Map of Tajikistan



Source: United Nations Cartographic Section.

The oldest excavated settlements in the area known today as Tajikistan date back to the fifth century BC. In the fourth century AD it was incorporated into the empire of Alexander the Great. Starting in the seventh century AD, Islam slowly took hold of this formerly Zoroastrian and Buddhist region. Between the tenth and thirteenth century, the Tajik city of Bokhara, today in Uzbekistan, is considered to have been one of the cultural centres of the world, with Islamic theology, philosophy and the sciences flourishing (Bräker 1996: 280). Bokhara lay on the Silk Route that connected the West and China, which accounted for its previous

glory. In the twelfth century Genghis Khan and his Mongol hordes conquered the region and between the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries the region was ruled by Timurids and split into small khanates. The exploration of maritime sea routes taking over global trading from the late fifteenth century onwards exacerbated the decline of the region. The result was the almost complete isolation of the area for nearly 400 years (Harris 2004: 26).

3.1.1 Pre-Soviet *Tajikistan*

To understand the current controversy about what 'Tajik identity' should constitute, it is useful to look back at pre-Soviet Tajik society. This period provides the first of several historical layers of that shape identities. The most insightful source on this period is by Meakin (1903), and the following description is derived largely from her travel report.

In Bokhara, a strict version of Islamic law (*sharia*²) was enforced, and family life and gender relations were thus organised along Islamic principles. In the nineteenth century Tajiks lived in large patrilineal and patrilocal extended families, spanning at least two generations, who lived in one compound with up to 40 people, and who were controlled by one male family head (Kislyakov 1959, cited in Harris 2004: 36). Income generated by all family members was pooled and major spending decisions taken by a male-only family council. Tajik families in Pre-Soviet times thus displayed strong mechanisms of patriarchal control and an overall gender asymmetry of authority and prestige (Akiner 1997: 266). In this historical period, marriages were arranged by the families, and neither bride, nor bridegroom had a say in the choice of their marital partners. Also, marital partners would not meet before the wedding. Frequently, there was a considerable age-gap between marital partners, due to the customary bride price (*kalym*). The *kalym* was a huge financial obligation, which only older men were able to meet. The minimum age for girls to be married was set at nine years. Pre-Soviet Tajik society permitted polygamy. Men could have up to four wives under the condition that they were all treated equal. In theory, both husband and wife had the right to

² Tajik, Russian/Soviet and Islamic/Arab terms and idioms are presented in italics.

initiate divorce, especially in case the husband did not provide sufficiently for her, but in practice it was only men who took such action by saying three times ‘*taloq*’ (ibid.). There is no information on the extent of divorce in pre-Soviet times, but it is likely to have been rather rare since shouldering the financial burden of yet another wedding and the *kalym* was only possible for rich men. For women, divorce was only possible in case she could prove the husband's failure to live up to his obligations and if she had sufficient sources of income and other housing options (Harris 2004: 45).

In married life, women and men socialised and communicated relatively little with each other. Meakin reports of a discussion she had with a wealthy man in Bokhara who was astonished by her asking how often he conversed with his wife. His response was: “*About three or four times a year. Why should I talk to her? She is an uneducated and ignorant person.*” The gender asymmetry also manifested itself in the strict division of male and female spaces, with men dominating the public domain and women being confined to the home. Accordingly, men's responsibility was to serve as breadwinners, while women took care of domestic duties. In urban areas, girls and women were segregated from men through separate housing arrangements. In rural areas, there was not such a clear segregation, but there were clearly demarcated male public and female domestic spaces. Until a girl reached nine years of age, she was allowed to play in the streets with the boys, but after that she was strictly confined to the women's quarters. In public, women had to be accompanied by a male relative or the mother-in-law and they had to cover themselves entirely with a cloak-like over-garment (*parandzha*) and a veil made from horse-hair (*chachvan*). In nomadic and semi-nomadic communities, as well as in remoter settled areas, women were not veiled. Instead they wore a headgear that kept their face visible and covered only parts of their upper body (Akiner 1997: 266). The quality of the *parandzha* indicated the social status of women, and being able to veil in public was a means of securing a good reputation. According to pre-Soviet Tajik gender norms the idea of a virtuous woman was thus synonymous with the seclusion in which she lived. It was regarded a privilege of prosperous women never having to leave the house; Meakin reports of an encounter with a woman who proudly reported having never left her house since marriage.

However, within the limited space accorded to them, women were able to carve out certain niches of personal development. In settled communities, women could acquire a certain degree of autonomy through belonging to crafts guilds. It has been documented that women made important contributions to their family's income by producing and selling foodstuffs and handicrafts. Girls would also engage in entrepreneurial activities, such as hatching and selling silkworms, and they would be allowed to keep the proceeds from this trading. There were also girls' schools in Bokhara, and some upper class women were apparently very well-read. The profession of school headmistress was passed down from mother to daughter. Within the limits of their own domestic domain, women had some freedom. There were bathhouses for women. But women would not only be able to wield power in the home through their control of food preparation and reproduction, but they could exert considerable influence on community matters through their husbands and sons (Akiner 1997: 266). However, women had parallel hierarchies amongst themselves that were just as rigid as those of the male world, and there appears to have been considerable friction between the women of a household.

In 1865, Tsarist Russia conquered Tashkent and in the following decades colonised the entire region that became subsequently known as Russian Turkestan. Most of present-day Tajikistan remained in the Emirate of Bokhara. There was not much interference with traditional institutions, and thus the emir of Bokhara - whose khanate covered the area of present-day Khatlon region - was allowed semi-autonomous status. The most serious crimes were referred to Russian jurisdiction, but *sharia* continued to regulate the lives of the indigenous Tajik population (Akiner 1997: 264). Travelers' accounts from that period show that a strict version of the *sharia* was enforced, which including severe punishments for crimes, such as stoning or being thrown off the Bokhara Kalon minaret (Burnes 1835).

A sharp contrast between Tajik-Islamic and the Russian-European society was visible from the beginning of the colonisation. The Russian population that came to Bokhara in the second half of the nineteenth century looked down on the Tajiks and had a strong distaste for their practices. The negative opinion was particularly pronounced in regard to the treatment of women. One Russian

woman remarked about the newly built home of a wealthy Tajik: *“But the ladies, poor things, have no share in its comforts, they are still imprisoned in the old one; anything seems to be good enough for them.”* And when asked by Meakin whether he thought the Tajik people had a future, one Russian replied: *“They can have no future as long as their women are veiled.”*

At the turn of the century the topic of women's status in society was in the air in the Muslim world. Tsarist rule was not only accompanied by in-migration of Russians and other European ethnicities, but also of other Muslim peoples from the Russian empire, most notably Tartars. The Tartars introduced to Russian Turkestan the debates raging in other Muslim countries, like Turkey and Egypt, over the question if and how the Muslim world should join Western modernisation efforts. Two topics stood out, which were secular education and the status of women, and in regard to the latter especially women's mobility and veiling. The discourse was dominated by Tartar women and men, while the vast majority of the Tajik population was opposed to the ideas of the reformers (Harris 2004: 47-48).

The Tajik population eyed the colonisers and immigrants with suspicion, and conflicts occurred frequently throughout the years of Tsarist rule. The most serious was the 1916 uprising against the conscription of local men into the Russian army. Interestingly, the protest was initiated by women who were angry at having their breadwinners taken away from them. Women gathered in large crowds and shouted and threw stones (ibid.). Thus, issues of social norms, religious customs, family life and gender concepts were a source of conflict.

3.1.2 Soviet period

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Turkestan and with it Bokhara came under the Bolshevik rule and was reorganised into separate republics. In 1924, Tajikistan became an Autonomous Republic, obtaining full union status in 1929. The territorial units that made up the Central Asian Soviet republics were new inventions that sought to consolidate the regions ethnic groups within single boundaries. This was unsuccessful in the case of Tajikistan, where the historical Centres of Samarkand and Bokhara came under Uzbek jurisdiction together with

a third of the Tajik population. Due to Stalin's nation-building exercises and the recent displacement of large parts of the population through the civil war in the 1990s, nowadays people who consider themselves ethnic Tajiks live in Tajikistan, but also in large numbers in northern Afghanistan and in south-eastern Uzbekistan.

The period after the Russian revolution was marked by civil unrest in all of Central Asia, as the Soviets were seen as intruders and imperialists. The colonisation meant that Tajik Muslims were subjected to be ruled by 'non-believers'. A guerrilla-type group known as the *basmatchi* fought a 'holy war' in defence of Islam and traditional values. It took until the 1930s for the Soviet army to finally crush the *basmatchi* (Akiner 1997: 267).

Throughout the Soviet period, politics towards the Unions' periphery oscillated between overt attempts to abolish Islam and national identity and relative freedom of worship, in order to strike a balance between pacifying the region and eradicating religion in favour of a Soviet atheist identity (Bräker 1996: 286-294). While Lenin had promised the peoples of the colonised territories freedom of worship, Stalin was uncompromising. In 1917 there were 26.000 mosques in the empire, of which roughly 90% were shut down by 1942. In 1980 there were only 200 mosques left in the whole of the Soviet Union. However, the communist party failed to fully control its own organs in the peripheral republics, where high-ranking officials were selected from among the local elites. Bliss (2006: 263) asserts that the political system was far less monolithic than often portrayed, and that the communist party in Tajikistan was on a relatively long leash from Moscow:

"There is a need to modify the wide-spread notion ... of a homogenous Soviet system exerting control over every aspect of life. In the post-Stalin era, at least ... alternatives [were] more readily accepted, than has generally been believed."

This meant that the state authorities tolerated the practice of Muslim rituals in private, which was the main characteristic of Islam under Soviet occupation.

Over the years, many non-Tajiks, especially Russians, settled in Tajikistan in reaction to the demand for industrial workers or as representatives and civil

servants of the state. The capital city Dushanbe became so 'Russified' that Russian was the dominant language heard in the streets. However, there was little integration between Tajiks and Russian, partially as a result of the incomers' racist attitudes that regarded Tajiks as backward. Thus, a Soviet identity never really took root and Tajiks fostered their customs and practised their religious rituals, even if in private. During the Soviet era 'being Tajik' was generally used to distinguish oneself from the Soviet imperialists and their non-Muslim cultural heritage. It was a means of protecting ones' own culture and Islamic faith. Clinging to Islam was part of Tajik resistance to Soviet imperialism (Bräker 1996: 278). Soviet population policies did not eliminate regional identities within Tajikistan. The concept of a Tajik nation was essentially invented by Stalin. Neither did Tajiks abolish their identity in favour of Soviet ideology, nor did they accept the Tajik nation fully (Harris 2004: 28). The rejection of Soviet imperialism, however, provided an issue that unified the population.

A policy of women's emancipation was the centrepiece of Soviet nationality politics in Central Asia. Ishkanian (2003: 478) explains that according to Soviet ideology:

"the peasant household, in particular, was seen as the very embodiment of tradition and backwardness and the bearer of counterrevolutionary values. ... Muslim women in Central Asia endured a triple oppression of class, nationality and family."

Massell (1975: xxiii) illustrated how the Soviet propaganda machinery accorded the so-called 'woman question' the function of substituting a class war, whereby gender became the decisive lever for effecting social change:

"It may be said that Moslem women came to constitute in Soviet political imagination, a structural weak point in the traditional order: a potentially deviant and hence subversive stratum susceptible to militant appeal – in effect, a surrogate proletariat where no proletariat in the real Marxist sense existed."

Shortly after the revolution, the Bolshevik government opened local affiliates of the Women's Department of the Communist Party (*zhenotdel*) in major cities of what was then Eastern Bokhara. The primary function of the *zhenotdels* was to

oversee the implementation of the new family laws that overruled the *sharia* and to win over women for the cause of gender equality; *de facto* they were part and parcel of the state's campaign to eradicate Islam in favour of a '*homo sovieticus*'. *Zhenotdels* organised women's clubs and supported gathering of women in tea houses, the so-called 'red *chaikhanas*', where women would meet and interact away from their families. As Akiner remarks (1997: 269), given the segregated existence of women in urban areas at the time, these gatherings were remarkable innovations. However, most of the *zhenotdel* activities in Tajik-inhabited areas in the 1920s were confined to larger urban areas of Khujand, Samarkand and Bokhara, but due to the *basmatchi* rebellion they had very little influence on the areas of present-day southern Tajikistan (Tadjbakshs 1998: 170). In 1930, Stalin ordered the shut-down of the *zhenotdels*, apparently because of feminist tendencies in its ranks, and declared the 'woman question' solved. Its activities continued to be carried out by other party organs, but a public discourse on gender issues was largely muted, as themes like production and economic output dominated (Ishkanian 2003: 481). In 1956, Chrustov created the women's organisation called *Zhenskii Sovety*, abbreviated as '*Zhensovety*', with similar tasks as the former *zhenotdel*, most prominently the monitoring of Islam and family life in Central Asia. By 1980, there were 1,310 local *zhensovetys* at different levels, all the way down to the village (Tadjbakshs 1998: 171).

In the mid-1920s, the Bolshevik government launched what is known as the *hudzhum*, or assault. The *hudzhum* aimed at encouraging women to abandon their *parandhas*. On March 8, 1927 women were ordered to gather in public squares where they were demanded to burn their veils. Apparently, 10.000 women burnt their veils in Uzbek city squares alone (ibid.: 170). However, what the Bolsheviks had not counted on was the fact that the material function of the veil - shielding women from the gaze of strange men - was only part of its function. More importantly, the veil was a symbol of female obedience. Veiling was integral to women's social status, and to that of their husbands, as it signified men's capability in controlling their wives (Harris 2006: 50-52). The *hudzhum* campaign was traumatising and is embedded deeply in the collective memory of Tajiks:

“For the Russians, the success of the hudzhum was an ideological victory. For the Central Asians, it was a defeat and a brutal rape: the honour and dignity of the community was suddenly and monstrously violated. No other measure of Soviet policy ... provoked such violent and outspoken resistance.” (Akiner 1997: 271)

Hence, the mass unveiling led to considerable resistance from men, who murdered their wives in large numbers as a punishment for dishonouring them, or had *basmatchi* members do it for them.

In line with the historic-materialist imprint of their ideology, Soviet leaders argued that, as women took on roles in the economic, social and political life, they would also emerge from the confines of the household, and this would better male-female relationships (Lapidus 1978: 55). Hence, the state undertook targeted gender equity measures to rectify imbalances between women and men in the public sphere. As early as the 1920s, the state adopted legislation establishing women's equal rights over land and their right to act as household head. Provisions for civil marriage were also introduced (Ishkanian 2003: 478). Political and economic mobilisation was supported by heavy propaganda, epitomised by images of female tractor drivers and cosmonauts. Any issue of the Tajik women's magazine *Zanoni Tojikiston* from the 1960s and 1970s would devote many pages to heroic women workers engaged in the cotton fields (Tadjbakshs 1998: 172).

There is consensus in the literature that the Soviet Union must be commended for its achievements in improving the lives of women in the public sphere; although the improvements were less prominent than in other parts of the Soviet Union. There was universal literacy among women, who were on average slightly better educated than men (Ishkanian 2003: 482). However, parents in Khatlon feared that sending their children to Soviet-run public schools would interfere with their Islamic upbringing and, most especially, 'spoil' their daughters, and girls' education remained controversial throughout the Soviet period.³ The health care system throughout the Union provided a high level of quality, but most importantly medical care was free and access to services excellent. However, this did not

³ FGD with *mahalla* members in Bokhtar on 7 April 2012

translate into lower fertility rates. One reason is that there was a widespread ignorance of sexual matters, with virtually zero knowledge among women, which was also the result of little family planning counselling and inadequate supply of contraceptives (Akiner 1997: 280). High level of abortion was a major health care issue in the Soviet Union (Ishkanian 2003: 482). Public childcare and maternity pay were introduced by the state to promote gender equality in the labour market. However, the goal of gender equality at work was never fully attained. With male and female segregation in terms of professions, women were mostly trapped in low-skilled and low-paid positions. While the pay was the same for women and men in the same profession, women were employed primarily in lower paying jobs. In the Soviet Union jobs classified as 'heavy', such as those in construction and mining were highly paid, while 'light jobs', such as in teaching and health, commanded lower salaries (Bliss 2006: 268). Also, the experiences in the job market were often quite limited due to the frequent and many disruptions produced by the seemingly endless cycle of pregnancy, child-birth and parenting (Akiner 1997: 275). Women's work in Khatlon was mainly limited to picking cotton, a labour-intensive work industry with notoriously low standards of occupational safety. Most importantly, women's engagement in the workforce was not compensated for by men taking over larger shares of domestic duties at home. Rather, this produced a double burden for women (Ishkanian 2003: 478). In addition, after picking cotton, women tended to vegetable gardens in their compounds.

In consequence, the retrospective assessment of life during the Soviet era is somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, the majority of Tajiks think fondly of the Soviet era; which is not surprising considering the relatively high standard of living people enjoyed (Bliss/Neumann 2014; Bliss 2005: 94). During my field work, I heard a lot of praise for the Soviets, almost bordering glorification: *"Soviets were great people and made our lives better. The Soviets left and the good life is gone, too."* (Older woman in Vakshs)⁴ On the other hand, respondents confirmed that women suffered restrictions of their freedom and mobility. Many of my respondents remarked that a Tajik woman's life in Khatlon was extremely

⁴ FGD with community members on 10 April 2012

harsh and consisted only of two things: cotton picking and household duties. Formal equality in the workplace did therefore not translate into opportunities for women's self-realisation, at least not at a larger scale.

To capture the full picture of gender in the Soviet Union, one also needs to distinguish between the role of women in the public sphere - where they enjoyed formal equality and enjoyed advances in employment and education - and the home - where they occupied a subordinate position. Traditional institutions and religious practices, such as polygamy and *kalym*, and traditional concepts of masculinity and femininity were labelled 'backward' by the Soviets and officially frowned upon. While Sharipova (2008: 69) says that traditional customs and patriarchal stereotyping had been abandoned in most urban areas, feedback from my respondents in the field align with the statement of Kasymova (2008: 36) that the vast majority of Tajiks never subscribed to Soviet gender norms and that patriarchal gender relations and identities remained largely intact, especially in rural areas.⁵

There are different explanations why the Soviets, despite their heavy investments, failed in transforming pre-Soviet patriarchal gender identities. One explanation is that, because of its geographical location at the periphery of the Soviet Union's territory, Tajikistan was the least affected area in terms of ideology and policies. Tajik society was not penetrated intensively enough by the Soviets to stamp out national, ethnic and religious customs and beliefs (Wiegand 2009: 73). But considering the coverage of the Soviet state in respect to education, production and propaganda, even reaching the remotest places in the high altitude areas of the Pamirs (Bliss 2006: 249), it is more likely that there were inherent weaknesses in the Soviet gender ideology.

Several authors point out that Soviet gender ideology was contradictory in that female equality had to coexist with 'natural' female vulnerability (Attwood 1997: 101). Patriarchal gender ideology heavily pervaded the symbolism of Soviet propaganda. Stalin represented the archetypical Russian father, teaching Mother Russia to be the perfect Communist women and wife (Sinelnikov 2000: 204).

⁵ KII with NGO staff member on 4 April 2012

Further, Soviet pro-natalist policies converged with attitudes in traditional society that valued large families. The state reduced the financial strain on large families by providing child and maternity allowances, the amounts granted rising with every additional child. In Central Asia, these provisions considerably subsidised family incomes, thus providing an incentive for having many children. The status of motherhood was also emphasised by the award of honours, such as the highest rank of the 'heroine mother' for those who had born more than ten children (Akiner 1997: 279).

To take this argument further, Kasymova (2008: 35-37) argues that the Soviet authoritarian state structure actually reproduced a patriarchal family system, in which the men represented the state with the right to dominate women and children. In the traditional Muslim societies of Central Asia, the patriarchy shining through Soviet gender ideology fell on fertile ground. The two systems of hierarchy then became mutually reinforcing:

"Modernisation generally turned out to have been rather superficial and formal, as the Soviet regime itself soon proved to be just another manifestation of patriarchal power ... any dramatic intervention into the family structure ... would have jeopardised the political system. It is very likely that for this very reason the stereotyped gender roles in the private sphere ... did not enjoy any radical transformation".

Finally, the modernisation of the economy went hand-in-hand with a social engineering process coined the 'cultural revolution', or 'Sovietisation', that aimed at transforming the national cultures in the Soviet territory. While the socio-economic and political advancements for women under the Soviets remain unchallenged, several authors critically question the success of the 'cultural revolution' in terms of equalising gender relations. On the whole, the enormous and unquestionable improvements in women's well-being did not offset the negative effects of Sovietisation on private life. Crucially, the Soviet's efforts at promoting women's emancipation were closely associated with Russian cultural imperialism and the repressive state machinery, and the quest for women's emancipation was inextricably linked to the nationality question and the anti-Islamic campaign.

As Tadjbakshs (1998: 172) demonstrates, women were bearers of honour and by extension the symbols of traditional culture and religion in Tajikistan. Women's emancipation thus never gained much credibility among the population, because for women to support it would have meant to relinquish the national interest in favour of their gender's interests. In local vernacular the *zhenotdel* was often referred to by women as the *jinotdel*, literally meaning the 'department of bad spirits' (ibid.: 169). Fostering tradition and religion thus became a national anti-colonial resistance strategy, implemented with the knowledge of the local authorities:

"In a quasi-colonial, interethnic situation, the family would function as the bastion of resistance against assimilation (here Russification). The family thus becomes the 'dar-al-Islam' (domain of Islam) to be protected from the penetration of the dominant 'other'" (Tohidi: 155).

3.1.3 The quest for Tajik identity since independence

In 1991, in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse, Tajikistan declared its independence. The political vacuum that followed plunged the country into a devastating civil war that lasted from 1992 to 1997 with tens of thousands dead and many more displaced. In the war, factions of the political elite representing different regions of the country battled for power, effectively pitting Tajiks against each other.

Under Soviet rule the political elite came primarily from Khujand, and Tajikistan's first president after independence, Rahmon Nabyev, was also from the same area. Groups from Kulyab supported Nabyev. Representatives of other regions - namely Kurganteppa, the Rasht valley and the Pamirs - opposed the Northerners' stronghold on power and started demanding their inclusion in the political process (Wiegmann 2009: 68). The Islamic Renaissance Party played an important part in the opposition, which is why the conflict is often portrayed as a fight between the former communist elite and Islamic fundamentalists. However, the Islamic party was and is still in fact a moderate group willing to cooperate with non-religious counterparts (Bliss 2006: 273). In October 1992, amidst fighting, Imomali Rahmonov, who hailed from Kulyab, was elected as new president by parliament,

sparking further resistance by the opposition. With the support of the UN, a Peace Accord was signed in 1997 and a government of national unity formed under the leadership of Rahmonov. Importantly though, positions in government were filled with family members and close allies of the president, finally shifting the power from Khujand to Kulyab. Consequently, a central feature of the peace accord was never implemented, and the regional power balance is still a contentious issue in Tajikistan today (Wiegmann 2009: 70).

Independence and the civil war changed the composition of the population in Khatlon. Until the mid-1920s there was no settlement in the area around the town of Kurganteppa. Settlement began when Stalin ordered that the area be used for cultivating cotton. Over 100.000 people were resettled to the Vakshs river valley to develop the virgin land and work in the cotton industry. Kurganteppa and the surrounding areas subsequently attracted professionals and workers from all over Tajikistan and the Soviet Union, including Pamiris, Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks and a large community of ethnic Germans. Hence, the population was multi-cultural and the area had an international air. Some of my older respondents talked fondly of these times, where people of different origin would share good times and their customs.⁶

The collapse of the Soviet Union saw an exodus of Russians and other Europeans from Tajikistan, disposing the country and its economy of many qualified specialists. The war changed the population mix further. The war actually started in Vakshs district and Kurganteppa and the surrounding areas were the ones worst hit by the destruction. Pamiris were displaced in large numbers, who fled to the Pamirs. A large proportion of the population of Khatlon became refugees in Afghanistan and Pakistan. After a few years they returned to their old villages and rebuilt their compounds and houses. Had they been made of brick and mortar prior to the war, they are now made from clay. Also, many Kulyobis moved to the area around Kurganteppa, sometimes occupying property of displaced people. The Pamiris never returned and there is still a great deal of hostility towards them among people in Khatlon. Today, there is much less of a multi-cultural society than during the Soviet period, with only a very small Russian

⁶ FGD with older men on 8 April 2012

minority and some Uzbeks left. By the mid-1990s Tajik had regained its status as the dominant language.

Bliss and Neumann (2014: 221-228) arrive at the conclusion that structures of traditional kinship, such as traditional communities and clans (*avlod*) or council of elders (*mashvrat*) are no longer relevant, if they ever were, in terms of shaping identity for Tajiks. Rather, regional affiliations are more relevant. Present-day Tajik society is divided into the Pamiris of the high-altitude areas in the mountains of Eastern Tajikistan, who are Muslims of the Shia faith and followers of the Aga Khan, and the rest of the country, which are Sunnis. It is generally accepted that the Pamiris form a distinct ethnic group; they are more liberal and espouse more egalitarian gender concepts than the rest of the country (Bliss 2006: 267-271). Among the non-Pamiri population, however, there is further diversity, framed in respect to regional origins. It is possible to broadly distinguish three groups, namely people from Khujand in the North, from Kulyob in the South-East and from Khatlon in the South-West. People from Dushanbe usually identify with one of the four groups listed above. If a Dushanbe-identity exists, this is only a pronunciation of an urban lifestyle. However, it is hard to identify distinct markers of these regional grouping and their affiliation is more regional than cultural (Harris 2004: 28), and the result of their relationship with the Soviet state and the role they played in the war.

Many Tajiks feel strongly about their regional origin, partially because of the role the regions played in the recent civil war. The current government is trying hard to forge a national identity that would transcend regional affiliations. It is reviving national heroes, promoting Tajik as the official language and frequently appeals to the patriotism of the population. As a demarcation towards outsiders it is common to hear Tajiks refer to 'our culture' and 'this is the Tajik way'.⁷ However, when probing deeper, it is not easy to pin down exactly what 'being Tajik' means.

When Tajikistan started its post-war recovery, the discourse was built around a dichotomy between Soviet and traditional Tajik identity (Akiner 1997: 265), namely:

⁷ Field notes, December 2008 and April 2009

“two, mutually contradictory, mythologizing projects: that of the Soviet activists, who used it to promote a negative image of traditional society; and that of anti- and post-Soviet nationalists, who created from it an idealised image of a ‘golden age’, uncorrupted by Europeanising/Russifying influences.”

Harris (2004) recognised that binary categories were of little use and extended this idea to a continuum from modernity to tradition. However, today the quest for a ‘true Tajik culture’ is no longer about being modern versus traditional and Harris’ hypothesis should be modified. Rather, as I will show in the following analysis, it is a contest of different interpretations of Islam.

The Islamic faith is the most readily accepted common denominator for Tajik identity, with over 90% of Tajiks adhering to either a Sunni or Shia faith. But even Tajiks who consider themselves atheists will still refer to themselves as Muslims, and Tajiks who do not partake in prayers and fasting will still carry out some Islamic customs, like having their sons circumcised. But since independence a discourse has emerged about what it means to be a ‘good Muslim’ that accompanies everyday life in the country.⁸

The discourse in Tajikistan is similar to that in other Muslim countries around the world. There are various streams of Islam and a permanent theological debate about interpretations of the faith. Regardless of the schools of thought in Islam, a common denominator across the Islamic world is that there is only one, Arabic version of the Quranic text, which is unanimously regarded as the word of god (*allah*) as received by his prophet. However, to get to the point of *sharia* law additional sources were required to help interpret the Quran. The *sunna* includes the prophet’s regulations of everyday life. For example, the Quran prescribes praying, but makes no further statement on frequency and time of prayer, which is then specified in a *sunna*. These rules are laid down in the texts known as *hadith* (i.e. records of the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, revered as a major source of religious law and moral guidance). However, not all aspects of life are actually clarified in the *hadith*, so Islamic theology developed the principle of

⁸ Field notes December 2008, April 2009, June 2010 and April 2012

consensus, which became the *ultimo ratio* for Islamic law. Hence, theological and legal practice differs from a narrow reading of the Quran. On the basis of these sources four main legal streams developed, but in practice every Muslim can pick from different streams. This explains the pluralism in Islam, which is in fact an inherent feature of Islam.

Different interpretations of Islam divide Tajik society as a whole, and the communities in Khatlon in specific. NGOs working in Khatlon pointed out that certain communities were known for being especially conservative in respect to religious matters, while others were rather 'modern'.⁹ Where one positions oneself in the discourse about 'true Islam' is a major marker of identity in present-day Tajikistan. On a continuum from fundamentalist-conservative to liberal interpretations, the vast majority of Tajiks is located somewhere in the middle, following a traditional lifestyle to which a moderate form of Islam is central. But then there are those at the extreme ends, with a small minority of educated and urban upper class Tajiks propagating a liberal form of Islam ('liberals') and a growing number of Tajiks subscribing to a self-proclaimed Tajik version of Salafist teachings ('fundamentalists').

Tajikistan knows an 'official Islam' with legally recognised structures, including registered mosques whose teachers (*imom-khatibs*) reject political Islam and support the supreme institutional Islamic body in Tajikistan. Official Islam practically depends on the local authorities because the election of *imom-khatibs* is possible only on approval from local government (*hukumat*). In rural areas, local religious teachers, known as *mulloh*, are the representatives of Islam and here religious teaching is not fully regulated by the state. The proponents of 'official Islam' complain that the *mulloh* promoting Islamic fundamentalism are self-taught preachers without theological training.¹⁰

Official Islam in Tajikistan – also called 'popular Islam' - is rather moderate and tolerant. I often heard that Tajiks fear being forced into an Islamic lifestyle similar to that of Afghanistan under Taliban rule, especially since religiously conservative

⁹ Field notes, April 2012.

¹⁰ FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012.

groups have gained popularity in the last years.¹¹ The trend can be felt in Dushanbe, but is strongest in the rural areas of Khatlon. Religious leaders in Khatlon confirmed to me that Khatlon was probably the religiously most conservative area of Tajikistan today¹². Many respondents said that increasing numbers of families, especially young people support and follow so-called Salafist teachings.¹³ The NGO staff members that I interviewed made a clear distinction between more open and tolerant communities and closed and religiously conservative communities. What is striking is the close proximity of their location, and the degree of being 'liberal' versus 'fundamentalist' differs virtually from village to village.

There are, of course, interpretations of Islam that espouse more egalitarian gender concepts and those that promote patriarchy. In current Muslim societies, gender is the terrain on which different groups are competing for the power of naming. Salhi (2014: 26) describes Muslim women as belonging to one of 'two camps':

"that of Islamist women who believe that salvation lies in the re-Islamisation of the region since Islam guarantees women's human rights, and that of the secular women who believe that Islam is detrimental to women's human rights as it harbours a misogynist ideology"

Since the common denominators in Islam are the Quran and the *hadiths*, the controversy between conservative and liberal Muslims all over the world is about how to handle these sources. Jones-Pauly shows that the dispute actually lies in the nature of the Quranic text itself, because it is written in a way that enables different interpretations; a literal reading of the text can be used to underpin contradicting arguments:

"The sources of Islamic law – the Quran and the hadiths – contained two kinds of seeds: one for emancipation and one for continuing pre-Islamic mentalities. ... This was the source of their brilliance." (2011: 457)

¹¹ Field notes, December 2008.

¹² FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

¹³ FGD with PDV staff on 3 April 2012; FGDs with NGO staff on 5 and 7 April 2012

To overcome this deadlock, Al-Attar (2013) argues in favour of a historical method of studying the sacred texts, rather than a textual interpretation, in order to emphasise a universal Quranic ethos and normative moral theory, leading to a 'Quranic liberation theology'. However, in everyday practice liberal Muslims apply the Quran as their basis for arguing in favour of a liberal model of society, while conservative Muslims use the text to strengthen their positions (Bliss 1986: 26). The Quran's messages in regard to gender equality are not always clear cut. For example, women and men can both enter paradise in the afterlife depending on their good deeds (sura 40:43, sura 40:70), but there are also sura that make women appear as sexual objects and women are compared to 'fertile land to be ploughed' (sura 2:223). Fundamentalists argue that the minimum age of marriage for girls stipulated in the scripture is nine, while liberals point to a passage that says that orphans should be married at an age when they can exercise sound judgement (sura 4:6). Using the example of divorce, Jones-Pauly, taking a liberal stance, argues that Islamic practice nowadays is the result of centuries of interpretations of the Quran and *hadiths* by jurists that continuously narrowed the choices availed to society (2011: 450-453). Early Islamic law permitted divorce by either spouse, but under tight restrictions. For example, the husband had to utter the word *taloq* in three consecutive menstrual periods of his wife. If the wife was pregnant, divorce could not take place. Over time, the timetable laid out in the Quran was shortened and it was enough to repeat *taloq* three times for a divorce to become effective. It is this competition of interpretations of Islam that is the source of controversy in current Tajikistan.

Consequently, the question of how legitimate domestic violence is according to Islam and whether it condones or prohibits it concentrates on sura 4:34 of the Quran: *"As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them, refuse to share their beds, and beat them."* The divergence in the interpretation of this verse is indicative that the Quran is open to many interpretations (Salhi 2013: 36). Ammar (2007) explains that there are varying interpretations of this verse in the Muslim world. She distinguishes four interpretations and ranks them from the most to the least patriarchal. The first one deduces a God-given permission to men to discipline women violently. The second one, which Ammar views as the dominant one in current Muslim

societies, is that violence is permissible within certain parameters, but that the disciplining should be done in a spirit of reconciliation. The third understands violence as permissible, but not desirable. The fourth interpretation refutes the literal meaning of the Arabic word *idribuhunna* as not meaning 'hitting' at all. Feminist author Bakhtiar (2007) provides a translation of sura 4:34, in which the term 'hitting' is replaced by 'go away', which are the same word in classical Arabic. As the analysis later on will show, *imom-khatibs* and *mulloh* in Khatlon adhere to the second interpretation and condone particular forms of domestic violence under certain circumstances.

3.1.4 Gender as an identity marker

The post-Soviet gender discourse after independence centred on the perceived crisis of masculinity; men were emasculated during the Soviet period now masculinity has to be restored (Novikova 2000: 119). This view was initially fuelled by general anti-Soviet sentiments, which already emerged during the years of Glasnost (Sinelnikov 2000: 205). The call for gender reform was thus a call for neo-patriarchy. It is noteworthy that because in the Soviet Union there existed nothing that could be compared to the Western tradition of gender studies, gender was never regarded as socially constructed, but as biological destiny. The whole post-Soviet gender discourse is thus pervaded by a disturbing misrepresentation of gender equality as 'sameness'. Thus, the reversal of the gender rhetoric was elevated to represent reinstalling a supposedly natural order (Johnson 2007: 43; Kay 1997: 81).

The role of patriarchy as an integral aspect of the re-nationalisation process of post-Soviet states has been widely documented for several newly independent states (for Uzbekistan see Kim 2008: 134; for Lithuania see Novikova 2000: 119). Rediscovering national identities meant to foster anti-Soviet sentiment and glorify the pre-Soviet past. In respect to gender this implied to reverse the Soviet rhetoric of women's emancipation. The neo-patriarchal reform had the *leitmotif* of returning to national authenticity (Hämmerle et al 2008: 15). In primarily Muslim countries, like Tajikistan, this included the abovementioned revived role of Islam (Akiner 1997: 284). As Tohidi (1998: 139) put it for Azerbaidjan:

„Gender-related images and issues ... are part of the ideological terrain upon which questions of national identity, ethnic loyalty, Islamic revival, and cultural authenticity are being debated“.

The ‘true Tajik’ identity opposed women’s emancipation because it was a Russian idea symbolic of the imperialist experience just left behind (Tadjbakshs 1998: 167). The reversal of women’s emancipation implied the attempt to revive pre-Soviet gender ideals of domesticity, motherhood and submissiveness (Sharipova 2008: 71).

Since independence, the role of gender as an identity marker among the Tajik population has diversified. The following analysis is based largely on field work conducted in Khatlon in 2012. It shows that the different interpretations of Islam can be located along a continuum from liberal to fundamentalist, with the majority traditionalists somewhere in the middle. Such a continuum enables the identification of recurring discursive patterns and a typology in regard to gender markers. There are broadly accepted gender norms. However, taking a closer look at a range of gender-relevant variables - such as women’s education and employment, participation in family decision-making, mobility and marriage – shows that Tajik women and men adopt different views and practices depending on their positioning on the continuum.

The primary characteristic of gender relations in Khatlon is that men are always the head of the family. This implies several things. First, men should be the sole family breadwinner. I asked my respondents what it means to be a ‘good Tajik man’, and being able to provide a decent life for the family turned out to be quintessential. When I asked what characterised a ‘good Tajik woman’, it became very clear that women derive their social status from fulfilling their domestic duties diligently. One man, who identified himself as being a ‘modern man’, said that women should be good managers, because they spend all the money that the man brings home.¹⁴ And even if a woman works and earns equal amounts or more than her husband, or if the husband is an absent migrant who does not send any money from Russia and the woman’s income is the only feeding the

¹⁴ FGD with community members on 10 April 2012

family, men still remain the family head.¹⁵ According to Harris (2006: 71) women can never be conceptualised as family heads. This is somewhat contradictory considering the fact that a quarter of all households are headed by women (Falkingham and Baschieri 2004: 12). However, female headed households are regarded as something of a historical ‘freak incident’.

Several of my respondents in Khatlon said that widowed women may be an exception but that even in such instances there will often be a lot of pressure by their families and peers to remarry and hence it rarely happens. The role of family head is thus detached from the degree to which men fulfill their function as breadwinner. This appears to be accepted across the whole society. Even liberal women I spoke to in Dushanbe subscribed to this line of argumentation. However, they justified it by saying that this would not be an issue of male domination, but actually of men shouldering all the responsibility, which was an advantage to women.¹⁶ But for liberal women, living in a relationship with a male head of household does not mean being tied to the home and domestic duties and not working. To them, such an equation is puzzling. However, for liberal Tajik men, the idea of preferring their qualified wives staying at home is not as far-fetched. Many argue that they would prefer this, since women can then look after the children and the home with adequate care:

“From the Islamic perspective, women are allowed to work. But there are certain preconditions: she should not interact with men at the workplace. My own opinion is that if the woman is provided for and has everything for a good life, it is better for her to stay at home and take care of the children and husband. (Religious leader in Khatlon)”¹⁷

From the local-fundamentalist point of view, women should not be permitted to work at all. In one community I spoke to a group of young girls who at the age of twenty had rarely – and some never - left their villages and only been outside their family compounds to work on the cotton fields. When asked about their dreams, none of them mentioned anything to do with a profession; it is just not

¹⁵ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

¹⁶ KII with local representatives of international agencies on 11 and 12 April 2012

¹⁷ FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

fathomable to them that they should ever have such a choice.¹⁸ Also, many respondents provided examples of cases where qualified women who were in relatively well-paid jobs were pressured by their husbands to stop working; such cases also occur in situations in which men are far from able to provide for their families by themselves, as the following statements illustrate: *"I do not work, because my husband doesn't want me to work saying that my duty is sitting at home and taking care of the children"* (Young woman from Vakshs town)¹⁹; *"My husband allows me to work, but only in an environment, where there are no men"* (Young woman from Vakshs town).²⁰ As men's status in society depends so much on their ability to provide, working women are a demonstration of men's inability and failure to act within the norm. Hence, the decision to exert pressure on the wife to quit her job is economically irrational, but explicable through the need of men to display their conformity. This is especially difficult for women whose men are in migration, but do not send enough money. Such women are caught in a dilemma - having to make ends meet by acting outside the norms.

The majority of traditionalist Tajiks appears pragmatic in regard to women's employment. Due to high unemployment rates and low salaries, as well as the only infrequent transfer of remittances from migrant men, women have to work and contribute to the family income simply to make ends meet. However, only few women and men see women's work as a means of individual self-realisation. In an ideal situation men would be able to provide for his family by himself, leaving women to tend to the children and the household. Congruently, women should be educated, but this education should not necessarily be put to use in a job. Instead, women's education is regarded an important pre-condition for a good upbringing of the children.²¹ Interestingly, liberal women I spoke to disagreed in as far as they argued that women did have the right to work and should work for self-realisation regardless of their husband's ability to provide. But they maintained that it was the men who had to provide for the family. But if he

¹⁸ FGD with young women on 8 April 2012

¹⁹ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

²⁰ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

²¹ FGD with male community members on 8 April 2012

provides sufficiently, the women should be able to keep the income they earn for themselves.²²

The issue of women's work is also connected to the question if men should be helping in the household. Some respondents, including the *mulloh* I spoke to, said that true Islam stipulates that men should help their wives at home, but also admitted that men who did so were mocked as womanly. The expression commonly used for such men is 'wife-boss'. Even many women said that such men had lost their masculine power. But young educated women from Dushanbe and older women from villages in Khatlon said that they wanted their men to help them and that real men would be supportive of their wives.²³ Older men I talked to said that it used to be more common for men to help at home during Soviet times than it is now. One told the story of a man who did the laundry, but asked his wife to hang the clothes on the line so as to avoid being seen by the neighbours.²⁴ This sentiment resonates in a statement made by one female respondent in Vakshs: *"A man should never wash the dishes or do the laundry. ... The real man should not do that. And for Tajik men it is especially not good."*²⁵

The second dimension of men as family heads is that men must exercise authority over their families. It was reiterated many times by my respondents that men are always the ones to take decisions in the family. Women should not be involved in decision-making, and mostly men do not discuss any issues with their wives, but among the male family members. Income generated by all family members, including women, is usually pooled, but spending decisions are made by men, especially older men, alone. Even if men discuss issues of common interest with their wives, it is clear that a good Tajik man should not listen to or follow the wife's opinion. Importantly, the right to participate in household decision-making is detached from women's and men's inputs to family life, including the household income. More liberal women argue that they should of course be part of family decision-making.

²² Field notes, April 2012

²³ FGD with NGO staff in Dushanbe on 3 April 2012

²⁴ FGD with community members on 10 April 2012

²⁵ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

Gender norms in Tajikistan are reinforced by a deep-seated importance of family honour, which needs to be protected at all cost. The work of Harris (2004: 67-91) conclusively demonstrated that Tajik society is strongly conformist and the social standing of an individual is derived from his or her family's reputation. Family honour, in return, is assessed by how well the family members adhere to norms. Deviation thus results in shame to the family. Community control mechanisms exert extra pressure on men and women to conform to gender norms, because it is not only their individual reputation at stake, but that of their whole families.

However, it appears that men's adherence to norms is not coded as strictly. When asking my respondents what a good Tajik man should never do I usually met puzzled faces of people who had just before given elaborate monologues about correct and incorrect female behavior. The only two things that clearly transpired as being unacceptable male behavior were infidelity and alcoholism.²⁶ Traditionalist Tajiks, however, are tolerant towards drinking alcohol, many consuming it themselves. But a drunkard is generally enough reason to be embarrassed. Women's obedience, on the other hand, could be specified easily and must be displayed through the following actions:

Firstly, women should never argue or disagree with the husband. In Khatlon, a good Tajik woman should know her role in the family, hence, she should not come to think that she is in a position to partake in discussion, let alone argue or express her dissatisfaction. A number of Tajik men I spoke to hinted that women should not even express her feelings non-verbally by frowning, but that she should always carry a smile on her face so as not to bother the husband with any potentially irritating domestic issues:

"I really hate it when I come from somewhere and my wife, without asking me how I am doing starts arguing and criticizing me, where were I and what did I do ... It is very important to me that if I enter the house I see my wife smiling at me and giving me time to have some rest." (Mulloh from Khatlon)²⁷

²⁶ Field notes, April 2012

²⁷ FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

Secondly, male control also refers to the wives' sexuality, which according to Harris is the most vital feature of Tajik masculinity (2004: 113). Virility is a male strength, while chastity is a major female virtue. At their wedding, women must at all cost be virgins and defloration takes place during the wedding night. There used to be a practice of publicly displaying the bloody linen on the morning after the wedding, but several respondents were ambiguous if it was still being practiced in Khatlon.

Thirdly, obedience and chastity imply that women should have no contact with men apart from male family members. The distinction between a male public and a female domestic sphere thus serves as a means of deterring any potential infidelity, which would bring maximum shame on the families. The separation was abolished by the Soviets by requiring women to work, but I personally observed that some communities in Khatlon had reestablished the segregation. Some respondents confirmed that it was regarded as improper for women to move alone in public:

"For people in my village, if a woman leaves her house often or if she studies or does any activity outside her house then she is considered a spoiled woman" (Mahalla member from Bokhtar)²⁸

Fourthly, therefore, if women do want or need to enter the public sphere, they require permission from their husbands. Granting or withholding permission is a means for men to exercise control, which is justified by the supposed necessity to ensure women's chastity and fidelity. To many respondents the most important expression of women's obedience is that they request permission from their husband for leaving the house.²⁹ One older woman in Vakshs remarked that it had become a 'custom' in Khatlon that women must ask permission to go out.³⁰ I probed into this issue to find out if there were exceptions from the rule. A religious leader explained his position to me as follows:

²⁸ FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

²⁹ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

³⁰ FGD with community members on 9 April 2012

*“There can be exceptions. For instance, if the women have to go and pick the pension money or if she is at her parents’ house, she does not need permission ... this is not related to religion. It is mostly our culture that [stipulates] that women need permission”. (Mulloh from Khatlon)*³¹

But I was firmly told by the women that I interviewed that there was no such exception and that they would require permission even if they were “sick and dying” and needed treatment in a hospital. When I probed into whether this was even the case, when the husbands are away for work in Russia, I learned that in these instances the men either leave a senior household member ‘in charge’ of their wives or control them themselves via phone.³² It is interesting that the necessity for women to ask permission cuts across all segments of society in Khatlon. But there are some differences in how strict this norm is handled. Liberal Tajiks make the subtle distinction between requesting permission from and informing their husbands, whereas informing is seen as a sign of respect rather than obtaining approval. However, if after being informed the husbands’ attempt to limit the wives’ movements she will have to give in. The method of informing to adhere to the pressure to have to ask permission only works with liberal husbands, who relinquish their right to control women.

Fifthly, veiling, or at least wearing a headscarf, is another marker of obedience. In theory, it serves the function that, should women have to leave the home they can shield themselves from the looks of other men and non-Muslims. But the separation of spaces and the veil fulfill much more a symbolic function in that both are means of communicating to the public that women adhere to the norms and are good Muslims. Women who do not cover their hair and even wear pants are seen as modern. In more open communities I found that this diversion was tolerated. In the eyes of the women, wearing a headscarf may have a positive notion, which can be seen in women who have done the pilgrimage to Mecca and who thereafter wear a headscarf, like the liberal director of a NGO in Khatlon. However, in more conservative communities, displaying hair and wearing pants is equivalent to being indecent. While I also visited villages, in which women

³¹ FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

³² FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

rejected the idea that women in their communities would be forced to veil, it appears from my observations that there is a trend in Tajikistan as a whole and in Khatlon in particular towards more veiling. A number of respondents confirmed this, such as this older woman from Vakshs: *"During our University time we were very free and could wear pants, wear make-up and have nice hairstyles. It was a different time..."*³³ There is also a milder form of adherence to this pressure, which manifests itself not in wearing a veil or headscarf, but in donning traditional dress. Thereby, women signal their belonging to Tajik culture, but express a tendency towards more tolerant interpretation of Islam.

To understand gender relations in Tajikistan, it is necessary to take into account that patriarchy intersects with gerontocracy. Patriarchal power is derived from gender, gerontocratic power from age. The power system in the extended household is built on gender and seniority. The head of an extended household is thus always an older man, and the old men of the extended family make up a kind of family council. In the hierarchical order they are followed by the older women of the household. In theory, the male household head is at the top of the hierarchy, but in everyday life the senior woman of the home commands the younger generation, including her own boys and girls, as well as her daughters-in-law. She spends most of her time home and is responsible for the domestic sphere.

There is an expectation of young people in Tajikistan that they show unquestioned obedience to their parents, regardless of their gender. Men's reputation also depends on their ability to show obedience towards their elders, and conformity is rated highly also in men. This is regardless of the fact that many young men are the main earner of their extended families: *"Money doesn't change anything."* (Young man from Vakshs)³⁴ Sons have almost no space to negotiate with their fathers and older women also have authority over them. They are sandwiched between their obedience to their parents and the need to exercise authority over their wives. Family members have thus to navigate a multi-layered power structure:

³³ FGD with community members on 9 April 2012

³⁴ FGD with community members on 9 April 2012

“Although not publicly spoken of, mature women take on many characteristics usually attributed to males. At the same time, young men have to negotiate between living up to the masculine ideal of the mature male while simultaneously demonstration subservience to their elders.”
(Harris 2006: 73)

Young women, however, are inferior to both their husbands and parents. Young brides move in with their marital families after the wedding where they are thus subjected to the control of their mothers-in-law. The daughters-in-law (*kelin*) is thus at the lowest rank of the hierarchy. There is little room for negotiation and unquestioning obedience is expected from the daughter-in-law (Harris 2004: 72). However, she can move up the power structure with progressing age, especially when she has adult children of her own and gets to be in control of *kelins* herself

Marriages in Tajikistan are arranged by the families of the groom and bride in the vast majority of cases. Of the older women I spoke to during field work, only very few said that they had had a choice and married out of love.³⁵ The young girls I spoke to were not yet married, but their families had all made arrangements. Of these, only one had expressed to her parents a preferred husband, which is a relative.³⁶ Marriage out of love is rare, and the relationship between women and men within marriage is therefore rarely characterised by affection. Mostly, it is a functional relationship, in which husbands provide for the wives and children economically, while women provide domestic services, plus sex: *“For me the ideal man is one who provides for me very well and who respects me. The rest doesn’t really matter to me.”* (Young woman from Vakshs)³⁷

My fieldwork showed that the choice of marital partner, as well as the question of having a choice at all is a major topic of contention between the generations. Especially in more educated families there appears to be a trend towards more room for negotiation between children and their parents on the choice of marital partners. A few young men explained that they were able to provide a list to their parents with suggested brides. Others said that they were able to refuse their

³⁵ FGD with older women on 9 April 2012

³⁶ FGD with young women on April 8 2012

³⁷ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

parents propositions until the parents found a suitable candidate. Some older men said that in recent years more of their peers had started preparing lists of potential candidates for their children to choose from. This, however, refers primarily to sons, who have been given more choice, but not to daughters. In liberal families it seems that daughters and sons have a choice, but they need to obtain the approval of their parents, even if this approval is merely a display of respect for the parents and a refusal to approve would not hinder the children to marry their partner of choice.

A number of trends can be observed in regard to marriage that point to the grown influence of a fundamentalist Islam on gender relations, especially the rise of religious marriages and grown acceptability of polygamy. Even though official statistics are hard to obtain on this topic, anecdotal evidence points to a situation in which legally registered marriages are on the decline, while religious marriages (*nikoh*) are on the rise.³⁸ This was confirmed by the advocates working on family law issues in Khatlon. The rise of religious marriages is problematic because women in unregistered marriages have no legal means of claiming property, child custody and alimony. However, religious leaders tell of the abuse of *nikoh* in that men marry several wives without being able to provide for them economically. Further, they complained about the abuse of divorce (*taloq*), which can only be enforced by a *mulloh* with the consent of both families and representatives of both families present as witnesses. There appears to be an increase in the cases of *taloq*, especially by migrant men who start new lives and families in Russia and abandon their wives in Tajikistan. The story reiterated time and again by my respondents was the increase of *taloq* via phone or even by SMS, which the *imom-khatibs* and *mulloh* I spoke to bitterly complained about, lamenting it as a grave misuse of Islam³⁹.

Importantly, there is a controversy about the right to *taloq*. Virtually all my respondents were very clear in that women ‘never’ had the right to divorce their husbands. It was said that if a woman wants a divorce she can sue her husband in front of court, but that religious divorce was the privilege of men. However,

³⁸ Field notes, June 2010 and April 2012

³⁹ Field notes, April 2009.

religious leaders that I spoke to pointed in the opposite direction in that women could divorce their husbands, if he failed to fulfill his obligations or behaved sinfully. Importantly, the *mulloh* pointed out, it was only the religious leader who had the right to *taloq*. But women could come to the *mulloh* and ask to be *taloqed* under certain circumstances:

“If a man did not provide his wife with money and goods for six months she can give him taloq ... If the husband’s relatives confirm it then the mulloh has the right to separate the couple” (Religious leader from Khatlon)⁴⁰

Distaste for divorce is part of the explanation, why polygamy - even though prohibited by law – appears to be on the increase; again, there are no reliable statistics. But many Tajiks I spoke to were worried about this trend. There is a formidable pressure by society on widows and divorcees to marry or remarry. There is even a trend among the more educated women in Khatlon to agree to become second and third wives, some maintaining their own homes and jobs. This is justified by the supposedly Islamic principle that women have to be married. Some religious leaders thus preach that men, even though they cannot provide for women economically, should marry many women ‘out of charity’. So-called *eshons*, travelling religious figures, are said to preach to Tajik migrants in Russia to help Tajik women in Russia by marrying them as second or third wives. Being married is equated with being a good Muslim woman and being polygamous with being a good Muslim man.

In the above paragraphs it has emerged that there are nuances and spaces for negotiating and appropriating the dominant gender norms, and that the attitudes towards markers of gender equality depend by and large on the interpretation of Islam that broadly fit into a typology of either ‘liberal’, ‘traditionalist’ or ‘fundamentalist’ (see Tab. 3 overleaf). ‘Fundamentalist’ interpretations contradict women’s liberties in regard to education and employment, participation, mobility and marriage, while ‘traditional’ and ‘liberal’ interpretations offer women more possibilities for economic empowerment and personal self-realisation. The table below provides a typology of common attitudes to gender markers derived from

⁴⁰ FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

the above analysis. The categories are of course not static. Rather more, the three main interpretations of gender relations in Islam found in Tajikistan are located on a continuum. This finding extends the work of Harris (2004), who in the aftermath of Tajik independence used a 'traditional-modern'-continuum to describe gender relations between traditional (Tajik) and 'modern' (Russian/Soviet) values.

Tab. 3: Typology of gender markers according to interpretation of Islam

	liberal/ egalitarian	traditionalist	fundamentalist/ patriarchal
Women's education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education for self-realisation - employment as contribution to family income and for own spending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education to ensure proper upbringing of children - employment only in case of economic necessity as contribution to family income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no need for education and employment, even under economic hardship
Participation in family decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women provide opinions and are listened to, but decisions are rarely made jointly by husbands and wives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - senior male household members take spending decisions alone - women are not given a choice over numbers of children and spacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women never involved in decision-making
Women's mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women can move around freely, but need to inform husband of their movements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women can leave home with good reason (e.g. hospital, social functions), but always require the husband's permission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women only leave home out of economic necessity (e.g. to pick cotton or to beg)
Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - certain degree of participation in choice of marital partners (e.g. women and men can propose marital partners, but need approval from parents) - religious and civil marriage - divorce problematic, but acceptable - polygamy not practiced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - certain degree of participation in choice of marital partners (e.g. parents propose potential partners and women and men can chose from list) - religious and civil marriage - divorce only acceptable in severe circumstances - polygamy acceptable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women and men have no choice of marital partner - religious marriages only - divorce unacceptable - polygamy widely practiced

3.1.5 A new gender order?

A study by the World Bank (2011) in 19 countries shows that globally gender equality is not yet a reality. The most important characteristics of a man in most societies around the world are his ability to provide for his family and to hold authority over his wife and children. The role of men as heads of household is unquestioned, and women's most important characteristics are related to her performance as the manager of the home. However, the study also found that the definition of a 'good man' has been slightly altered over the past ten years or so to also include some elements related to caring for the family. This is not related to taking over domestic chores. Rather, this relates to his conduct within the family setting, spending time with the family, and also listening to his wife. What emerges is the picture of an ideal family man as a 'benevolent dictator'. Definitions of what it means to be a 'good wife', however, are more stagnant. Even if women have jobs outside the home and earn an income, this does not free them of their domestic duties, hence the well-documented double burden on women.

Research on gender in the post-Soviet region emphasise that independence has opened up new spaces for women and men to negotiate gender concepts (Johnson and Robinson 2007). Regarding Russia, however, the literature is very clear that patriarchy remains dominant (Zakirova 2005: 85). Russian boys are raised to understand that men should be tough and able to fend for themselves. Russian women are often portrayed as intent on finding a high-earning husband and being interested only in their outward appearance. In the aftermath of independence, young women to the motto 'girls should be girls', rejecting the masculine images of women tractor drivers typical of Soviet propaganda (Kay 1997: 80-90). In addition, global consumerism that entered the former Soviet republics in full swing in the early 1990s, with their images of happy women and their kitchen appliances, cleaning solvents and food items, also helped to foster women's images of domesticity (Sinelnikov 2000: 206). However, a recent qualitative study of twenty Russian couples found that the patriarchal backlash has not crowded out the idea of equality between women and men when it comes to labour market participation. While the vast majority of those interviewed agreed that a traditional division of labour within the family was best, only a quarter of

couples actually lived in such an arrangement. Women concede that they would not be happy with being at home full-time. Couples often experiment with different divisions of responsibilities, but men rarely take the conscious decision to let the women be the main earner and be in charge of the home (Lyon 2007: 33).

Gender is also in flux in present-day Tajikistan. As Kasymova (2008: 46) argues:

“Rapidly changing social, political and economic realities are constructing new norms, values, and new images of masculinity and femininity. A new gender order is being shaped ... and it will have new characteristics that will differ greatly from both the pre-Soviet and the Soviet orders. This new gender order includes pre-Soviet patriarchal elements as well as new non-traditional characteristics of male and female roles. In this new gender order men occupy polarised positions, depending on which characteristics prevail, and a very similar process is happening to women. Many young women submissively – and frequently willingly – take the position of a second or third wife... At the same time, a new type of women is being formed who identify themselves more as human beings than as individuals defined by their sex”.

It is thus useful to recognise the diversity within gender concepts present in Tajik society, which is often viewed as a backward macho society. Depending on the positioning on the continuum of interpretations of Islam different appropriations of gender norms emerged.

The literature on gender in Tajikistan that was published roughly a decade after independence paints a picture, in which women are torn between Lenin, Allah and the modern capitalist world, so-to-speak. But while the situation is still very dynamic, it seems quite clear that neo-patriarchy has been successful in gaining influence. Khatlon is in a situation of regressing from the liberties provided to women in the Soviet system towards an order with fewer social and economic opportunities, in which women are forced to retreat to the domestic sphere. The Soviet system succeeded in suppressing patriarchy, but failed in sustainably eradicating it (Bliss 2005: 100).

The neo-patriarchal backlash is further compounded by a growing influence of local Islamic fundamentalists. The tension between more liberal and

fundamentalist interpretations is similar to the situation in other Muslim countries and has implications for the analyses of domestic violence. Salhi asserts for the region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (2014: 25) that

“examining gender-based violence in the MENA region raises questions about its close association with ... the proliferating Islamist ideology in the last three decades... Women from the region live in a climate of fear and oppression ... which becomes even more exacerbated under the rule of Islamist regimes.”

On the other hand, Hegland (2008: 63) observes a women's 'discourse of complaint' about Tajik men, in which women are decreasingly ready to accept men's superiority if they do not fulfill their expectations. She argues that this may actually form the hardcore of a women's movement in Tajikistan. As will be explained in the following section, male labour migration and changes in household economies are altering gender relations and thereby supporting women's agency. Rowe (2009: 701) shows that women are increasingly involved in informal economic activities and contributing to family incomes. While in the Soviet era Tajik women were caught between their loyalty to the Tajik nation and claims for their individual freedoms, today they are trapped between an increasingly patriarchal set of supposedly Islamic norms and their individual human rights. Salhi (2014: 28) asks the pointed question whether

“Muslim women effectively challenge patriarchy and therefore enjoy a certain level of agency or do they maintain its rule and therefore collaborate with their oppressors? ... Is it still possible to be full agents while abiding by the rule of patriarchy and keeping to its set boundaries?”

3.2 Recognising structural conditions: economic and social development

The second key element in the conceptual framework for the creation of local prevention approaches is the acknowledgment of structural conditions. It is these conditions that the stakeholders involved in the response against domestic violence operate under and which shape the agency of target groups.

Tajik independence implied the transition from a planned to a free market economy. In a nutshell, transition was coupled with the loss of subsidies from Moscow, which led to high unemployment rates, wage drops in the formal and public sectors, the deterioration of education, health and social services, and a sharp rise in poverty levels. All former communist countries had to cope with similar challenges, but Tajikistan was particularly affected due to the devastating civil war and the unrivalled dependence of its economy on subsidies and access to the common Soviet market.

While Tajikistan was always the poorest of the Soviet republics, subsidies from the government in Moscow meant that living standards were higher than in non-Soviet countries in the region. The achievements were admirable, especially in comparison to neighbouring Afghanistan, Pakistan and mountainous Iran. Northern Afghanistan and Southern Tajikistan on both sides of the river Panj were both ruled by the emir of Bokhara for some time before the Russian annexation of Tashkent in 1868. But while the population on the Afghan side had to cope with abject poverty, the Soviets modernised the Tajik economy and provided free universal education and health care. In the last decades of Soviet rule and in the early years of independence the contrast between villages on opposite sides of the river, sometimes only a few hundred metres apart, was striking. On the Afghan side the majority of people were illiterate and material conditions were very poor. But even in the remotest Tajik village people were highly educated (Bliss 2006: 248). When it became independent in 1991 Tajikistan was thus classified a middle-income country by the United Nations' the Human Development Index (HDI), in which it ranked 88th out of 173 countries, at par with Turkey (UNDP 1993). Twenty years later, Tajikistan is ranked 127th out of 187 countries (UNDP 2011b). The reason for the country still being classified as having medium levels of human development, however, is due to its high levels of literacy and life expectancy, both legacies of the Soviet era.

Also, Tajikistan is the only former communist country where women's welfare decreased relative to men's status after independence from the Soviet Union (World Bank 2002: xvi). The Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2006: xii) concluded that women have been left more vulnerable to being poor than their male counterparts, which will be illustrated in the following paragraphs.

3.2.1 Income poverty

Tajikistan's HDI ranking conceals a massive increase in income poverty. In terms of income per capita alone, Tajikistan is at the level of poor African countries (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 40). Poverty is entrenched especially in rural areas, where 75.7% of all poor are located. Khatlon region is the most populous area in the country, and therefore contains the largest group of poor (35.7%) (World Bank 2009: 25).

In a survey in 2003, 44.7% of respondents in Khatlon called themselves extremely poor and 85.5% poor (Bliss 2005: 97). However, a report compiled on the basis of 2003 and 2007 survey data actually indicates a decrease in income poverty. Using a US\$2.15 per day poverty line, poverty headcount declined from 64% of the population in 2003 to 41% in 2007. In the same period the rate of people below the extreme poverty line - the cost of a typical food basket to achieve a minimum intake of 2250 calories per day – fell from 42% to 27% (World Bank 2009: 3). It is important to note that the calculation of the poverty rates is disputed, especially because purchasing power parity is fixed at a high level (Bliss 2010: 3). The apparent progress notwithstanding, a third of Tajiks is extremely poor.

The World Bank also points to the fact that the reduction in poverty is unstable. The data shows a clustering of the population around the poverty line, which means that even modest change in purchasing power would induce significant changes in the prevalence of poverty; a 10% decline in purchasing power would increase the poverty headcount from 53.5% to 62.6%. In the current environment of financial crisis, the Bank warns, such a scenario is increasingly realistic (World Bank 2009: 4-5).

Women's financial situation is influenced significantly by household dynamics. Survey data on income in Tajikistan does not show any marked difference in income levels by gender. However, Falkingham and Klytchnikova (2004) point out that this finding is based on a unitary household model, which assumes that all household resources are shared equally among all household members. Feminist scholars have long argued that the use of the household as a unit of measurement conceals gendered power disparities within the household (Wolf

2002: 118-120). As shown in the previous chapter, in typical Tajik families, income of family members is pooled, while the decisions on expenditures are made by men only. It is therefore more realistic to assume a non-cooperative model, in which individuals act as sub-economies below the household level and where men tend to keep some of their income for themselves. Falkingham and Baschieri (2003) modeled the survey data using different assumptions of actual resource pooling at household level. The exercise showed that significant gender differentials emerge even if when applying modest assumptions about male control over resources. For instance, if men are assumed to retain 20% of their income for their own use, on average women experience a headcount poverty rate of ten percentage points higher than men.

3.2.2 Employment and migration

During Soviet times, central government in Moscow dictated a division of production between the different republics, which meant that Tajikistan was made the second-largest cotton producer after Uzbekistan. Because it contained most arable land in the country, Khatlon became the centre of cotton production. In the 1920s Stalin ordered the clearing of virgin land in the Vakhsh valley to make space for large plantations. The administration then collectivised the land and created kolchozes (*kolkhoz*), later renamed sovkhoses (*sovkhos*), in which farmers were employed to work the land communally. Farmers were allowed to retain small plots in their compounds, where they grew vegetables to supplement their families' diets (Rowe 2009: 693), but commercial agriculture was done by the collectives only. But while output steadily increased, the *sovkhoses* were heavily overfunded and had never actually produced a healthy balance sheet (Bliss 2006: 250). Work on the farms was specialised and workers were given specific tasks, such as tractor driving, irrigation, mechanic, and so on. Women, however, were almost exclusively employed as cotton pickers.

Economic development in Khatlon is still intertwined with the cotton industry. Heavy reliance on subsidies and lacking global competitiveness meant that the cotton industry collapsed at independence and operates at much lower levels ever since. Agriculture is by far the most important source of employment in

Tajikistan, accounting for 45% of all jobs in the country. But wages in agriculture and the cotton industry in particular are extremely low, which accounts to a large extent for the income poverty in Khatlon (Bliss 2005: 103). At 80 somoni a month, median earnings in the agriculture sector are much lower than the total poverty line of 139 somoni. Hence, employment in agriculture is not associated with a reduced risk of poverty, and the high proportion of working poor is a “*dominant feature*” of poverty in Tajikistan, with half of those employed in the domestic labor market being poor. (World Bank 2009: 8, 27).

Despite Soviet affirmative action, women's labour market participation rates in Tajikistan always remained lower than those of men. Also, women were employed mostly in lower-paying jobs. Today, the gap between male and female labour market participation is much more pronounced in Tajikistan than in neighbouring countries (World Bank 2009: 36). The share of the economically active population reported in 2010 was 43.8%, including 58.1% of men and 31.1% of women (GoT/UN 2010: 58). The widest gap in labour market participation is in the 25 to 39 years age bracket, in which women often quit work due to childbirth (GoT 2007b: 116). 2007 data shows that the total population of the country is roughly seven million, with a domestic labour force - excluding labour migrants - of a little over two million. However, the number of housewives is just over one million, which presents a major untapped human potential (World Bank 2009: 35). Part of the explanation lay in the decline of the public pre-primary child care institutions. While crèches were available for all children during Soviet times, currently only 3% of pre-school children in rural areas visit such an institution (ibid: 76).

Agriculture is the predominant sphere of work for women, with between 50 and 75% of all women employed in agriculture, depending on the source of information. Also, the proportion of women in the agriculture sector has increased between 2000 and 2009, presumably due to increased male labour migration. In 2010, the ratio of average monthly wages of women to that of men was 59.8% (GoT/UN 2010: 57, 61). However, regular employees constitute only 40% of the employed population in Tajikistan, which reflects the importance of the informal sector and subsistence economy. Rowe (2009: 700-702) shows how in post-independence Tajikistan the so-called ‘kitchen gardens’, i.e. land adjacent to homesteads on which families could cultivate vegetables and livestock, have

become an important survival strategy. It is primarily women who, in the absence of men migrating in search of work, cultivate the kitchen gardens to feed their families.

Labour migration is another important coping mechanism of Tajik households. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that one in four families has at least one family member working abroad. The total labour migration out of Tajikistan is estimated to encompass between 500,000 to 800,000 people, which represent about 10% of the total population. In 2006, the largest group of migrants hailed from Sughd region and not from the poorest areas in Khatlon, which is due to the fact that migration requires considerable start-up capital. But Khatlon, with the largest share of the population overall, produces the second largest group of migrants, with between 33% and 41% of all migrants (Bliss 2010: 11). Migrants from Khatlon are mainly low-skilled seasonal workers that work on Russian construction sites during the summer months and who retreat to their homes in the winter. 90% of Tajik migrants from Khatlon are men, with over 60% between the age of 20 to 39 years (Mughal 2007: xix).

Tajikistan is one of the countries with the highest remittance share of GDP in the world, and seasonal migration and remittances have become a structural feature of the Tajik economy and labour market (Mughal 2007: xvii). An analysis of the 2007 Tajikistan Living Standards Survey (TLSS) revealed that 23% of households directly depended on remittances. In households with migrants, remittances account for as much as 35 per cent of household consumption, and even more for the households in the lower deciles of the consumption distribution. However, the utility of remittances for development is dependent on whether they are used for investment or consumption. Tajik families spend the largest proportion of remittances on consumption, as they use the funds to close gaps in their household incomes. Simulations carried out by the World Bank (2009: 4) indicate that had remittances in 2007 remained at their 2003 level, the incidence of both total and extreme poverty would be much higher compared to the actually observed 2007 poverty levels. As Mughal argues (2007: xx), remittances hold the key to explaining the reduction of poverty. His study concentrated on Khatlon and showed that 50% of the extremely poor households who reported receiving remittances were found to have made it out of poverty. Remittances have helped

people cope with transition in the face of poverty and compensated for pro-poor public action. Bliss reports that his respondents in three regions of Tajikistan confirmed receiving monthly remittances of between 100 and 200TJS⁴¹ – a fact that bolsters household incomes.

However, the reliance on remittances also makes Tajikistan vulnerable, as seen during the global financial crisis in 2008. Returns from migration fell during the crisis, because migrants started to save some of their incomes to cater for risky times abroad (Danzon and Ivaschenko 2010). This served to increase the numbers of migrants, because families broadened their migration patterns, now sending more migrants per family - including women.

But there are also signs that because of men's absence and the lack of sufficient incomes, be it wages or remittances, women are increasingly picking up work in Khatlon. Growing numbers of women cultivate land in kitchen gardens and trade goods in the bazaar and earn cash (Rowe 2009: 701). Respondents talked of women working as breaking of a 'taboo':

"Today the situation is different. Women are working on their own plots, they work for other people, they can go out more than they used to and some are also allowed to study. Some women are now working in the bazaars, which was taboo a couple of years ago." (Mahalla member from Bokhtar)⁴²

Therefore, if their communities and families permit, women in Khatlon are working again, primarily as small-scale entrepreneurs and informal labourers. While this is a far cry from the employment they had in the Soviet Union, it does mark a certain degree of recovery for women in as far as their labour market participation is concerned. As in other labour-sending countries (see for example Pauli 2008 on Mexico), out-migration of men has assisted women in appropriating spaces and enhancing their agency. However, the fact that women are working and earning is resented by Tajik men and perceived as symbolic of a 'crisis of masculinity' (Rowe 2009: 701).

⁴¹ Feedback by Prof Bliss to author in September 2014

⁴² FGD with *mahalla* members on 7 April 2012

3.2.3 Education, health and social security

Through its investments in education and health, Soviet social policy achieved almost universal literacy and increased life expectancy for both women and men. However, with the end of the Soviet Union came the collapse of the social services system in Tajikistan. Today, schools and medical facilities are in a very bad shape in terms of infrastructure, equipment and supplies. Also, in the wake of independence and civil war, many qualified people left the country, disposing Tajikistan of teaching and medical personnel.

Access to education is no longer guaranteed. Average monthly salaries for teachers do not exceed 130 somoni, which is less than 40 dollars⁴³ (Bliss 2010: 8). Teachers can therefore only survive by asking the population for bribes. In Central Asia the Tajik education system is known for its notorious corruption. It has been reported that schools openly charge tuition fees. As a result, private households, for all levels of education, spend at least as much per student as the government does on tuition, uniforms, repair of buildings, textbooks, stationery, meals and lodging. At the level of primary and secondary education, government and private households spend about equal amounts per student, but once pupils go beyond secondary education, households have to cover the lion's share of expenditures (World Bank 2009: 70).

Notwithstanding, enrolment rates at primary and secondary level are still almost universal, with 99.5% of boys and 98.6% of girls aged 8 to 10 years in primary and 98.4% of boys and 95.2% of girls aged 11 to 15 years in secondary schools (World Bank 2009: 77). But there is also a sharp decline in girls' enrolment in secondary school and about 17% of girls aged fifteen are out of school (GoT/UN 2010: 54). This gender bias is strongest in rural areas, and it is most pronounced in Khatlon (World Bank 2009: 78). The gender gap grows with increasing levels of education.

Patriarchal gender norms that dictate that women are tied to the domestic sphere are a massive stumbling block to girls' access to schooling, and families often prioritise boys' education over that of girls. The government admits that

⁴³ The exchange rate used in the report was 1USD = 4,35TJS.

“major factors contributing to the decline in girls’ enrolment include [the] revival of traditional ideas about the role of women in family and society ... and an increasing trend in valuing to the education of boys above that of girls.” (GoT/UN 2010: 54)

According to Harris (2004: 97), girls' access to education is also restricted because it is feared by the older women in the house that educated women might challenge the gerontocratic family system. Thus, girls' education is not held in high esteem in Khatlon. I was able to verify through several interviews that in Khatlon the bride's education determines *kalym*: the higher the education level the lower the price. This explains why many girls are forced to drop out of school between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. It also explains why educated women have a hard time finding a partner:

“Because in our place, if a girl studies at a higher institution people will start talking bad about her and her behavior. People will say that maybe she misbehaved while studying. That’s why most of the educated girls remain single.” (Woman from Vakshs)⁴⁴

However, it is fair to note that a number of older, more liberal women I spoke to in Khatlon pointed out that they wished their daughters to have an education, but could simply not afford it. Communities that have a high share of students paying tuition fees also have the lowest enrolment rates. But it is only comparatively small segment who are forced to stay out of school for financial reasons. Only 6% of students in urban and rural areas outside of Dushanbe said that lacking funds kept them from going to school. The vast majority say that they are out of school ‘voluntarily’. For girls, this is related to their families’ wish for them to get married (World Bank 2009: 79).

Underfunding, the outflow of skilled personnel and high ‘out-of-pocket’-expenses limit access to quality medical services, including antenatal care and obstetrics. Almost 46% of the poorest households found it very difficult or impossible to pay for health care, compared to 28% among the richest households (ibid.: 84). 30 to 40% of pregnant women are not covered by antenatal care, and only 70% of

⁴⁴ FGD with community members on 9 April 2012

pregnant women receive prenatal counseling (GoT/UN 2010: 77). A major challenge is the rising numbers of home births – around half of all deliveries according to estimates – that are carried out without qualified people. This has an impact on maternal mortality. While average life expectancy at birth is comparable to neighbouring countries, infant mortality and maternal mortality rates are higher (UNICEF 2008; 2005).

During the Soviet era, the population in Tajikistan grew faster than in any other republic, with an annual growth rate of 3% in the 1970s. The current growth rate is about 1.5% and fertility has dropped from 6 children per woman in the 1970s, to 3.8 children per woman in 2005. In 2007, 37% of married women reported using some method of contraception, with 33% for Khatlon (World Bank 2009: 89). Tajikistan has the highest dependency ratio in Central Asia, and very many women, at the time of their first sexual encounter, have never heard anything about sexuality and are not even familiar with their own reproductive organs (Harris 2004: 149).

The public social security system also collapsed after independence. In 2007, 33.3% of all households had at least one member receiving pensions. However, the average old age-pension was a mere 38.6 somoni per month. By 2014, the amounts had not increased considerably.⁴⁵ Other social assistance components are subsidies for gas and electricity and a small programme of allowances to poor families with children of primary school age. Government expenditure on social assistance is around 0.5% of GDP, which is less than half spent in neighbouring countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (World Bank 2009: 57). Hence, Tajiks have no formal social safety net to fall back. In Tajikistan, families always provided for solidarity networks, but today they are the only safety net, and families' capacities are stretched to the maximum.

Whether the deterioration of incomes and social services will in the mid- and long-term lead to a measurable reversal of human development indicators is too early to ascertain. While the World Bank sees Tajikistan on a road to recovery, others see few prospects, especially due to the poor governance system

⁴⁵ Feedback by Prof Bliss to author in September 2014

(Bliss/Neumann 2014). The government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) for the period 2010-2012 was a comprehensive and coherent policy document, conceptually at par with international standards. It outlined measures to improve the public administration and investment climate, promote growth and develop human potential, and includes a monitoring system with indicators and targets (GoT 2010). But the sincerity and ownership of the government of president Rahmonov for the implementation of the strategy is questionable. As the data presented above show, the decrease in poverty incidence is not due to the efforts of the government, but because of the population's own coping strategies.

3.3 Building partnerships: local governance and institutional weaknesses

The third key element in the study's conceptual framework is the need for building partnerships with stakeholders, in order to promote local ownership of the response to domestic violence and to tap into local knowledge required for framing interventions. Keeping in mind the controversial nature of the gender discourse in Tajikistan, it is important to be aware of stakeholders' attitudes towards gender equality. Also, when promoting the response to domestic violence institutional capacities matter. In the following, these issues will be debated in general terms and in relation to the response to domestic violence in specific.

3.3.1 Challenges of local governance

Generally speaking, Tajikistan is a democracy on paper only, with a 'rubber stamp' parliament lending only a slight sense of legitimacy to the president. Rahmonov won the last parliamentary elections with over 70% of the vote, but an international observer mission cited ballot box stuffing (OSCE 2010). The regime is a kleptocracy, and corruption is rife at all levels of government. In the 2011 corruption index Tajikistan was ranked 152 out of 182 countries (Transparency International 2011). There is mounting evidence that the government not only relies heavily on foreign aid, but is also involved in trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan, as Tajikistan lies on the major transport route to Europe (Engvall

2006). Corruption and organised crime are coupled with an absurd personality cult. But while basic public services are deteriorating and the infrastructure crumbling, the president supports the construction of prestige buildings, like the largest library and the largest tea house in Central Asia; Dushanbe also boasts of the highest flagpole in the world. However, the regime has succeeded in manipulating fears of another civil war and protests in the form of strikes or demonstrations are virtually unknown in Tajikistan. A common saying is that a 'bad peace is better than a good war'.⁴⁶

There are several levels of governance below the central government. Tajikistan is divided into three administrative units at the province level (*oblast*), of which Khatlon is one. Below the province comes the district (*rayon*) with its district administration (*hukumat*), followed by the county (*jamoat*), the latter being composed of several villages (*kishlaq*). The lowest administrative unit is the neighbourhood committee (*mahalla*), a traditional institution that has only been incorporated legally into the formal government structure in 2008 by means of a specific *mahalla* law.

One problem that stifles development in Tajikistan is that local government is largely dysfunctional (UNDP 2011). In fact, there is no decentralisation in Tajikistan, but deconcentration (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 194; Bliss 2011: 8). Administrative units below the central government have no decision-making authority. *Oblast* and *rayon* officials do not act without direct orders from Dushanbe.⁴⁷ The entire apparatus, from the cabinet member to the *rayon* chairperson is appointed by the president:

"Hence, only one conclusion is possible: if the most important reform policies ... are not implemented in a perceptible way, it is neither the incompetence of the lower-level government staff nor their boycotting attitudes which are to blame, but the clear hidden agenda of aversion from the top of the political system." (Bliss 2010: 24)

Oblast, *rayon* and *jamoat* do not generate their own budgets by collecting income or commercial tax. Rather, tax collected has to be forwarded to the central

⁴⁶ Field notes, December 2008

⁴⁷ FGD with PDV staff on 3 April 2012

government, which accords annual budgets based on the lower levels' submissions. However, the centre does not disburse adequate amounts of funds for the local governments to carry out their mandate effectively, and in fact the budgets rarely cover more than the civil servants' salaries; from around mid-year officials oftentimes pay transport costs from their own pockets (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 199; Bliss 2011: 9). Local government officials whom I met as a Project Manager are frustrated by the small budgets they receive. Sometimes they even only get support in kind, like a tractor to fix a road. Thus, there is a real negligence of the people's needs on the side of the central government, which also frustrates local government officials, as they can hardly fulfil their mandate.⁴⁸

As a result of the weak formal governance structures, new 'rules of the game' have gained importance in Tajikistan over the last decade. On the basis of several case studies Wiegmann (2009: 143) conclusively shows that:

"Modes of governance are extremely localised. ... State structures that have been established after the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the end of the civil war are often still in flux. They are not well embedded in the local communities."

This is very visible in the rural areas. Firstly, NGOs take over a gap filling function in regard to basic social services. After independence, international agencies entered Tajikistan, especially in the context of the humanitarian efforts after the civil war, many working with civil society and making available large amounts of funds, actually bypassing government counterparts (Bliss 2013: 60). In response local NGOs mushroomed. Many of these were 'briefcase NGOs' founded by government officials to access donor funds. There are some larger and professionally managed NGOs in Tajikistan (Bliss 2010: 22), but the majority lack managerial skills (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 127). However, some NGOs have gained credibility in their local communities, especially because they do not ask the local people for bribes and usually compose of respected community members. Even though most NGOs try to stay clear of politics and limit themselves to providing community services (Wiegmann 2009: 48), there is a fair amount of suspicion on

⁴⁸ KII with SDC representative on 13 April 2012

the side of the government. Being funded externally, local initiatives have been largely operating under the radar of the regime. NGO representatives explained to me that the suspicion was compounded by the acronym NGO, which to the government implied that NGOs were opposed to government. With the recent history of civil war, NGOs were thus potential opposition groups (Akiner 2002: 32).

Secondly, the vacuum left by the state in rural Khatlon is used by religious groups, especially local self-proclaimed Salafists, to expand their influence in society. This goes together with a revived role of customary Islamic law (*adat*) and religious customs, such as Islamic marriage (*nikoh*), at the expense of formal regulations. These fundamentalist groups espouse not of a traditionalist interpretation of their faith, like the majority of Tajik citizens, but an Islamic state based on *sharia* law. There are rumours that link these groups to foreign funders from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Afghanistan, as part of the global war against 'non-believers' (*jihad*), which is why many locals that I spoke to in Khatlon referred to them as *wahabis*.⁴⁹ In response, the government of President Rahmonov has introduced strong secularist rhetoric, as well as concrete measures to fight fundamentalism. The Salafist branch of Islam, also known in Tajikistan by the name the organisation *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, has been officially outlawed by the government. In 2009, the government shut down neighbourhood mosques and madrassas run by these groups and has established new departments at *rayon* level to control this. *Mullo* found teaching there were taken into custody by the police. Girls are not allowed to wear the headgear (*hijab*) to school, while boys must wear suits and ties. In August 2011, the government then issued that youth below eighteen years are prohibited from visiting mosques without their parents. However, there is criticism that the government is increasingly violating freedom of worship and that this practice may only lead to more antagonism (Ignatov and Kocaoglu 2011). But despite the government's attempts, the local Salafists are gaining influence among the population in Khatlon. During field work, NGO staff repeatedly made it a point that when the *hukumat* calls for a community meeting it has difficulties gathering people, but

⁴⁹ Field notes, April 2012

that people flock in large numbers to meetings of religious groups. They also complained that young people were being brainwashed.⁵⁰

Thirdly, traditional institutions have experienced a revival, too. Especially the *mahalla* have gained much prominence. Whereas in Soviet times they were nothing more than a representative body, called upon only to decorate public functions, today they play an active role in deciding community matters and settling disputes. The role of *mahalla* has also grown because other traditional institutions based on kinship have lost their relevance (Bliss 2011: 29-33). The 2008 *mahalla* law says that local issues should be handled at that level. This encompasses responsibility for social infrastructure, including its financing. *Mahalla* do not receive budgets from the government. The Tajik government has thereby effectively outsourced state responsibilities to *mahalla* (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 219). *Mahalla* can enhance their position by partnering with external development agencies, and the *mahalla* law now formalises such co-operation. Although the *mahalla* law makes clear stipulations, they do not function according to democratic principles in practice. In terms of promoting social change the role of the *mahalla* is ambivalent, however, since it is highly traditional and may contain elements of repression, especially towards a nonconforming minority (Wiegmann 2009: 174). Most *mahalla* are dominated by older men and younger men and women often have no say (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 240). It is then interesting to ask in how far *mahalla* are agents of social change and what kind of change they espouse.

3.3.2 Policy framework for gender equality in place...

There is *de jure* gender equality in the Republic of Tajikistan (GoT/UN 2010: 53). The Government of Tajikistan ratified CEDAW in 1993. Tajikistan's constitution is gender-neutral. The constitution proclaims Tajikistan to be a democratic and secular state, in which human rights are inviolable and protected by the state. In Article 17 it provides that "*all persons are equal before the law and courts*" and that "*men and women have equal rights*". Article 34 declares the family unit to be

⁵⁰ FGDs with NGO staff on 5 and 7 April 2012

the foundation of society. It prohibits polygamy and provides for equal rights of women and men in marriage (MAHR 2008: 26). For more than a decade there have existed several national programmes seeking to promote gender equality (GoT 2010, 2007, 2001, 1998). All of the national policy documents on promoting gender equality contain provisions to step up the fight against domestic violence. In 2010 the Tajik government also started reporting on its progress in the area of domestic violence in its MDG Progress Report, by taking up target 5 under MDG 3 that requires governments to *“create conditions for women to lead a decent life without violence, and the eradication of all forms of violence in all social spheres, and in family”* (GoT/UN 2010: 65-67).

Tajikistan, up until recently, did not have any specific legal provisions or law against domestic violence. This is important because an examination of the country's criminal code shows that it disadvantages victims of domestic violence (MAHR 2008: 29). The majority of domestic violence cases fall under Article 116 on assault, but they can also be handled under Articles 110, 111 and 112 on bodily injury or Article 237 on 'hooliganism'. However, Article 5 of the code governs that cases are not subject to criminal prosecution in cases where reconciliation between the parties takes place. Article 5.1 allows the termination of a case due to changed circumstances, such as cases where the perpetrator is no longer regarded a threat. In practice, these provisions are often used to pressure domestic violence victims into terminating proceedings against their abusers.

Tajik gender activists from civil society and international agencies have therefore advocated for a specific law to criminalise domestic violence. In fact, the law on domestic violence has been the main topic that gender activism in Tajik rallies around. A draft law had been pending in parliament for several years. But then the government stopped the process, officially because of a lacking economic analysis that would estimate the costs incurred by the provisions made in the law, such as rising numbers of imprisoned men⁵¹. In 2007, the CEDAW committee reviewed Tajikistan's report on the implementation of the convention and urged the government to enact the existing draft law, albeit unsuccessfully. In 2010, the

⁵¹ Field notes, December 2008

discussion around the law on domestic violence picked up momentum again. With the help of the PDV project, a process came underway, in which a new draft was developed and adopted by the national parliament in December 2012. The law on domestic violence is a breakthrough for the gender activists in Tajikistan and their international partners – finally, the government recognises that domestic violence violates the rights and freedoms of women. Victims' rights are far-reaching and include the right to apply to court, to receive medical care, to receive legal counselling, to apply for protection orders and to receive social protection (GoT 2012: 3).

It is important to note, however, that the renewed drive of the government to pass a law on domestic violence coincided with international pressure on Tajikistan to make progress in this matter. The Universal Period Review (UPR) is an UN instrument that monitors states' human rights records once every four years. In 2011, Tajikistan was reviewed. The countries represented in a review group can provide recommendations, and the adoption of a law on domestic violence was a recurring theme in several country statements. The Tajik delegation expressed its support for such a move (UN 2011b: 12-14). The UPR process clearly stimulated the government to take the issue of the law on domestic violence serious, hence a high-level involvement in the consultative group that drafted the law followed.

However, the law could turn out to be little more than window dressing, since an analysis of the text shows that there are a number of questions to be raised in regard to its enforcement. First, the law is of poor technical quality. According to a local representative of an international agency involved in gender issues in Tajikistan, who is himself a Tajik lawyer, a lot of time will need to be invested after the adoption of the law to amend other laws and harmonise the criminal code.⁵² The law may actually cause more confusion for legal practitioners. The only real innovation coming from the law are court protection orders (GoT 2012: 9-12). Secondly, it is questionable whether a law is the most suitable means of providing a reference frame for a public response to domestic violence. A multi-sectorial policy and action plan could provide a platform to detail the tasks and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the response to violence beyond the

⁵² KII with representative of international agency on 13 April 2012

vague description in the law (ibid: 3-8). Thirdly, the question of funding is unclear. The government requested the international agencies to give figures on their financial contribution to the fight against domestic violence, but as of summer 2012 there was no commitment by the government to match these funds with own resources. Interestingly, the second draft law on domestic violence stipulates that *“financing of the specialised institutions for the victims of family violence ... is carried out by their own funds”* (ibid.: 13).

Finally, the law is vague in regard to prevention, even though it is titled ‘law on the prevention of family violence’. The law (ibid.: 1) defines the prevention of family violence as a:

“complex of legal, economic, social and organizational measures carried out by the violence prevention bodies that is aimed at protection of rights, freedoms and constitutional guarantees of individual and citizen in the sphere of family relations, prevention and elimination of domestic violence in a family, elimination of the causes and conditions contributing to the violence.”

Primary prevention is therefore included in the law. However, concrete measures are missing and all international stakeholders that I spoke to about the draft law agreed that there is an urgent need to rectify this.⁵³ Local government bodies and NGOs are given the responsibility for *“conducting information and awareness work with various social groups on prevention of family violence”* (ibid.: 4). However, no further specification is provided, apart from Article 20 that stipulates so-called ‘educational conversations’ as the main methodology (ibid.: 9):

“Educational conversation with the persons committed family violence and the victims, as well as disadvantaged family members are conducted ... in order to reveal causes and conditions of family violence, explanation of social and legal consequences of the violence and conviction of the law-abiding behavior. ... [The] person with whom [the] educational conversation is held receives warning on necessity to stop violent actions.”

⁵³ KIIIs with representatives of international agencies on 12 and 13 April 2012

However, “support and family preservation” are listed as basic principles of prevention, as well as the “lead of the preventive measures over the punishment measures” (ibid.: 2).

3.3.3 ...but no public response to domestic violence

Being party to CEDAW necessitates the creation of corresponding national legislation and programmes by governments. Under international law it is not sufficient for national governments to simply refrain from human rights violations. Rather, they have an affirmative duty to act to protect women from violence and to punish perpetrators. However, while the policy framework is largely in place in Tajikistan, especially since the passing of the law against domestic violence, this does not imply that there is public action on the ground.

In the Soviet Union, domestic violence was not officially talked about. There were reports of wife beating in the press, but these cases were usually blamed on alcohol abuse and relics of the past, who had not yet fully embraced the Soviet way of life (Attwood 1997: 101). Trade unions and party organs punished members who violated the standards of ‘socialist morality’ (Haarr 2007: 246; Attwood 1997: 102). While police did not explicitly respond to cases of domestic violence, the catch-all phrase of ‘hooliganism’, which referred vaguely to any form of creating public disorder, served to protect women from abuse (Johnson and Zaynullina 2010: 80). Legal and institutional mechanisms in the Soviet system therefore offered women a degree of service provision and protection. However, there were no specialised services or units that catered for abused women, but violence victims could be sure to receive treatment in hospitals. Also, there were no prevention strategies formulated to curb domestic violence (Sinelnikov 2000: 203).

Explicit discussions on domestic violence as a development issue only started after the end of the civil war. In March 2000, WHO held a workshop in Dushanbe, where the findings of the first nation-wide pilot survey on domestic violence against women were discussed among international and Tajik stakeholders (WHO 2000). Hence, the occupation with domestic violence by policy makers, civil society and international agencies in Tajikistan is a fairly young process. It is

important to note that gender equality, and domestic violence in specific, as development policy issues were exported to Tajikistan by international agencies via their humanitarian efforts in the wake of the civil war in the 1990s. While domestic violence was made a policy issue *de jure* through Tajikistan's government ratifying CEDAW, *de facto* agenda setting was externally induced. In fact, one could argue that promoting domestic violence as a policy issue was in itself a 'transplant'. In the last fifteen years, the gender discourse in post-Soviet countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia have concentrated on the issue of domestic violence (Fabiàn 2010). Domestic violence emerged as the key topic that the new women's movement rallied around. In fact one can confidently speak of a Russian shelter movement. It is noted as a great achievement by this movement over the last decade to have put domestic violence on the agenda and stimulate a public discourse around it (Johnson and Zaynullina 2010: 78). However, there is research indicating that states' formal ratification of international treaties does little to actually leverage improvements in human rights, especially if countries ratify treaties to conform and assimilate with other states in the global arena (Ayedeva 2010). It is prudent to say that the international obligations of the Tajik state are the result of the standard process of joining the international community after independence, without any meaningful internal discourse about the implications.

The 2010 MDG Progress Report by the Tajik government claims that activities to prevent violence against women are continuously carried out (GoT/UN 2010: 66). But in reality there is no public effort supported by governmental funds or structures. In fact, the government's National Development Strategy (NDS) itself criticises the insufficient efforts made by government in respect to gender equality (GoT 2007: 56). The self-criticism pertains to three aspects: a poor understanding of the need to address gender as a development issue, weak institutional mechanisms, and a lack of public expenditure for respective interventions. These three points are also valid in regard to the specific challenge of domestic violence. Firstly, there is a high level of tolerance towards domestic violence among government officials (ADB 2006: 80). In 2011, during the UPR review, the Tajik government outright denied the scale of domestic violence in its country (UN 2011b: 7), rejecting the findings of several population-based surveys carried out

in collaboration with the State Statistics Committee (WHO 2000; SDC 2005; PDV 2009, 2011). If domestic violence is acknowledged at all, it is usually belittled as a private matter and ‘family scandal’ that the institutions have no business mingling in.

The State Committee for Family and Women Affairs (CoFWA) was founded after independence to coordinate all gender-related policies and activities in the country. The committee is also represented at the local government level. However, it was less of an innovation and more of a continuation, or revival, of the *zhensovety*. But, in contrast to its predecessor institutions, CoFWA lacks an ideological base that enjoys top political support. Instead, it is nothing more than a showcase institution for international donors and civil society who press for gender reforms, but it is not adequately funded and supported by the government. CoFWA is thus totally toothless. One representative of an international agency called CoFWA a “*hollow body*” that has no functionality.⁵⁴ The committee is not part of a line ministry, but attached to the Office of the President. While this, in theory, provides for greater leverage in terms of influencing policy-making, in reality CoFWA wields no powers. Importantly, CoFWA does not have a meaningful budget of its own. The local committee structures thus receive no funds from the centre.⁵⁵ Hence, CoFWA cannot execute its functions properly without the support of line ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA), Ministry of Health (MoH) and Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MoLSP). These institutions are responsible for various aspects of fighting domestic violence, such as an effective justice system and law enforcement, health services and social security. The 2010 MDG Progress Report by the Tajik government talks of an Interagency Coordinating Council composed of CoFWA, the aforementioned line ministries, as well as the General Prosecutor and NGOs (GoT/UN 2010: 65). However, this structure is non-existent. In reality, the ministries are only peripherally involved in the fight against domestic violence.

⁵⁴ KII with representative of international agency

⁵⁵ FGD with PDV staff members on 3 and 4 April 2012

There is virtually no government funding for the fight against domestic violence in Tajikistan (MAHR 2008: 25). Funds are neither committed by CoFWa, nor by the line ministries. Hence, there is no source of public funding for NGOs that want to offer services to violence victims or engage in awareness raising. As a consequence, the response to domestic violence is solely financed by international agencies. Should international funding for activities to address domestic violence come to a sudden end, it is almost certain that intervention and advocacy efforts would cease in Tajikistan (Haarr 2008: 216).

The gap is bridged to some extent by numerous international agencies that are active in Tajikistan, including multilateral organisations, bilateral government agencies and international NGOs. The international agencies meet once a month in Dushanbe to harmonise their gender equality efforts in what is dubbed the Gender Theme Group (GTG). The GTG serves as a platform for donors to develop a joint position on matters of gender policy and coordinate their advocacy work. The group is coordinated by the UNWomen country office. Its membership fluctuates and participation in the meetings is mixed. There are some agencies that attend the GTG as part of their gender mainstreaming efforts and wish to stay up to date with gender activities in the countries. There is, however, a core group of agencies composed of those directly involved in the fight against domestic violence. Next to UNWomen these are Switzerland, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Open Society Institute (OSI) of the Soros Foundation. While UNWomen and OSI limit themselves to advocacy work at the national level, SDC and OSCE also support services at the community level. The government of Switzerland supports the response to domestic violence through two interventions, namely through the SDC-funded PDV project and as of 2010 through the human rights dialogue between the Swiss and the Tajik government implemented by the Political Division 4 (PD4) of the Swiss foreign ministry.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of effective cooperation between the national government and the international stakeholders. The agencies have undertaken efforts of collaborating more closely with CoFWA as their main government counterpart, but to no avail. Programmes have faced major difficulties in leveraging support in terms of promoting reforms of the policy framework, let

alone funding gender equality interventions and services for victims of violence from domestic budgets (SDC 2011: 9). Stakeholders complained that the new round of drafting the law on domestic violence was characterised by token participation of civil society only, and there were serious tensions between the government and NGO representatives during this process.⁵⁶

3.3.4 Weak support for victims of domestic violence

The government's 2010 MDG Progress Report (GoT/UN 2010: 65) states that there are public structures dealing with family affairs at provincial, municipal and district levels, when really these institutions are very weak. An important point of entry for victims to obtain support is the police. As Johnson (2007: 43) conclusively argues, the end of the Soviet state pulled into question the legitimacy of the state's interference in people's private affairs. Also, police are ill-equipped in regard to patrol cars, telephones, computers, and so on (Haarr 2008). The police do not keep records of cases of domestic violence, making it difficult to follow-up on violent husbands, and the procedure for filing a case takes a long time, in which the alleged perpetrator is not locked up (MAHR 2008: 11; 34). In addition, most policemen lack the proper training on how to handle cases of domestic violence and standard operating procedures are lacking. But the police are also a male-dominated institution. Policemen respond to cases of domestic violence not as law enforcement personnel, but as men. Their work is also impeded by their personal affiliations; due to the lack of anonymity in the rural areas officials are likely to know or have personal ties to perpetrators of domestic violence. Consequently, as gatekeepers to the justice system, they typically discourage women from filing a complaint by blaming them for provoking the abuse and shaming them through accusations that they are embarrassing their husbands and families (Haarr 2008: 209). If the police take action it is usually with a focus on reconciliation, rather than pursuing legal means.

However, none of this undermines the respect the population has for the police, probably as a late effect of the strong police force in Soviet times. Men's respect

⁵⁶ KII with representative of international agency

for the police was a finding of the 2005 SDC study (2005: 56), and the 2009 PDV survey confirmed that a majority of women and men in Khatlon perceived the police to be effective in fighting domestic violence. Yet still 32.2% of men and 40.4% of women agreed that there is little point for a woman to report to the police if she has experienced severe physical discipline, because the police would side with the husband.

If women do manage to file a case with the local police, they are then hindered in pursuing further legal steps by various layers of bureaucracy and stringent evidentiary requirements, as well as exaggerated costs and bribery (ADB 2006: 81). The 2010 MDG Progress Report by the Tajik government states 'legal nihilism' by officials as one of the causes of domestic violence (GoT/UNDP 2010: 66). The 2011 PDV survey found that of the women who reported sustaining an injury from physical domestic violence in Khatlon a mere 3.3% sought prosecution (PDV 2011: 46). Most women who take their husbands to court do not actually report domestic violence, but file for divorce. When examining the case at hand, the judges then find out that in the majority of cases domestic violence is the driver behind the wives' wish to separate. Women mostly do not press for charges against their husbands, they simply want to separate and receive alimony and child custody (MAHR 2008: 44). Of the cases brought before court only very few actually lead to prosecution, because most end in dismissal due to reconciliation. One judge estimated that up to 80% of cases closed this way. The rare cases of prosecution usually refer to extreme incidents, in which husbands have murdered their wives (MAHR 2008: 41). Only rarely does a court rule that domestic violence is the man's fault. This is commonly when the man is an alcoholic or drug abuser; the only substantial possibility for men to deviate from male gender norms. And in my discussions with stakeholders it was frequently pointed out how difficult it was for a woman to enforce her rights should she actually win a case in court. Often, husbands and their families do not pay alimony and refuse to hand over property.⁵⁷

Finally, access to medical care for abused women is an important aspect of victim support. In 2011, only 42.4% the women who reported having experienced

⁵⁷ FGD with clients of Crisis Centres on 5 and 6 April 2012

physical domestic violence in the past twelve months before the interview also reported accessing a medical, psychosocial or legal service. But of the women who reported having ever been injured as a result of the physical domestic violence only a third (27.5%) reported that they sought treatment, leaving the majority of injured women without medical assistance (PDV 2011: 45). One issue is affordability. The 1999 WHO survey found that a vast majority of women reported not visiting health services because they lacked the money to pay for the treatment (WHO 2000: 21). Participants of the 2011 FGDs confirmed that health workers asked for fees or bribes before attending to them. This is an explanation why many abused women prefer the Crisis Centres and NGOs, which provide free help, to obtain medical services. Another aspect that deters victims is that male medical doctors are often insensitive to abused women and usually join in the chorus of blaming the women. There is no medical protocol for handling cases of domestic violence in Tajikistan (MAHR 2008: 45). Haarr (2008: 208) reports that doctors usually do not refer cases to the police. In many cases, however, doctors will also breach patient confidentiality and communicate their knowledge back to the victim's family, thereby placing the women at a heightened risk of repeated abuse. Finally, abused women are often not permitted by their families to see a male doctor, which is not allowed under *sharia* law.

In consequence, the government's response to domestic violence at the local level is insufficient. The vertical disconnect between the policy and the implementation level means that local government stakeholders receive no policy or technical guidance from central government. Also, there is no government funding from the national budget for domestic violence that would flow to local government or civil society. The government of Tajikistan is thus not fulfilling its international obligations (MAHR 2008: 63; Avdeyeva 2010).

3.3.5 Traditional and non-governmental efforts

As said, the weakness of formal government structures has led to a more prominent role of traditional and religious institutions, especially in rural areas. Whereas in Soviet times *mahallas* were representative bodies, today they play an active role in deciding community matters and settling disputes. Also *mulloh* have

seen their role in public life revived since independence. As highly respected community members, they are present and their opinions heard during most meetings. Often, *mulloh* are members of the *mahalla*. Considering the growing importance of *nikoh* over legal marriage, the *mulloh* play a central role in settling marriage disputes. In regard to settling cases of domestic violence, representatives of the government structures support this role of traditional mechanisms, as this quote from a 2011 FGD illustrates (PDV 2011): „*First [domestic violence] cases should be settled in the area. If it is not settled, then heads of mahalla can apply to the district police*“ (Policeman from Bohktar). It is important to note that decisions made by the *mahalla* are not legally binding, but if the woman decides to go to court, the judiciary will consider its recommendations. However, *mahalla* committee members and *mulloh* often also share the prejudice against abused women, and hence, the few women go to *mulloh* for help.

Although fully dependent on external funding, local NGOs are central stakeholders in the response to domestic violence in Tajikistan. In fact, NGOs and their international funders are the main drivers of the local response. There are conflicting numbers of NGOs in Tajikistan that act as service providers for violence victims. The government puts the figure at 18 country-wide (GoT/UN 2010: 66). In 2011, the OSCE Gender Unit carried out a mapping exercise throughout the whole country and counted a total of 10 Crisis Centres, 19 Women's Resource Centres, and 20 NGOs providing free legal aid and one shelter, which is located in Sughd. The government only finances one Resource Centre in Dushanbe. Khatlon is the region with the highest coverage, with a total of 19 NGOs involved in domestic violence work. There are five NGOs that OSCE classified as Crisis Centres, nine Women Resource Centres and five Legal Aid Centres, but no shelter. Four of the NGOs are funded by PDV, seven by OSCE, two by the UK-based charity Child Rights Centre, four by the SDC-funded 'Access to Justice and Justice Reform' project and the remaining from various sources (OSCE 2011: 10). The four NGOs supported by PDV, whose work will be discussed in the next section, are the Crisis Centre run by the NGO Ghamkori in Kurganteppa, NGO Dilafruz in Kurganteppa, NGO Hamroz in Bohktar and NGO Mahbuba in Vakshs. In my study area these are the only service providers for

abused women, apart from provincial branches of national NGOs providing free legal aid in Kurganteppa.

An analysis of the structure of the NGOs' work shows that the portfolio of services on offer is blurred. Commonly, the NGOs in the domestic violence field are referred to as Crisis Centres or Women Resource Centre. Crisis Centres specifically target violence victims. Their service portfolio usually includes psychosocial counselling, medical assistance, legal aid and assisting women in dealing with the government structures, as well as being involved in coordinating a multi-stakeholder approach at local level and creating referral networks, and prevention campaigns. The Resource Centres do not concentrate on violence victims, but serve more broadly as Community Centres. Some NGOs also manage shelters, where abused women can temporarily stay (OSCE 2011: 6). Some NGOs specialise in specific services, while others cater for the full range of abused women's needs as 'one-stop-shops'. There is a trend among NGOs towards the 'one-stop-shop'-model, as a reaction to the long distances between the different locations and the lack of a well-coordinated referral system between the NGOs.⁵⁸ So rather than working complementarily, each NGO tries to juggle a range of activities. However, there are no national standards that would provide technical orientation on the type and quality of services to be provided in the various centres. Article 16 of the law on domestic violence deals specifically with the work of the Crisis Centres, but it contains only a list of possible tasks to be fulfilled (GoT 2012: 7).

There are concerns in regard to the NGOs' managerial and technical capacities (SDC 2007: 9-14). Financial sustainability is a challenge, since the service providers are not integrated into the public service system. Because there is no specific budget for domestic violence services, NGOs are totally dependent on external aid for funding.⁵⁹ At the same time, NGOs lack skills in regard to resource mobilisation through fundraising or proposal writing. They are understaffed, and the infrastructure they work in is inadequate, consisting of often dilapidated buildings with no sanitation, infrequent electricity and heating. There

⁵⁸ Field notes, June 2010

⁵⁹ Field notes, December 2008

is also a lack of rooms which means that the NGOs can hardly provide privacy and confidentiality for their clients (SDC 2008). In regard to the 'one-stop-shop'-model, the problem is that it contains the risk of overstretching the capacities of the NGOs. While the services on offer may have developed 'organically' in response to the clients' needs, the skill sets may have not kept pace. For instance, psychologists may be good counsellors, but poor facilitators of community events, and *vice versa*.⁶⁰

3.4 Re-defining the target group: domestic violence in Tajikistan

The fourth key element in the conceptual framework is re-defining the target group of domestic violence interventions. A sound knowledge of the specific domestic violence situation is required to tailor local approaches to reach the particular target group. The following sections are based largely on the hitherto unpublished surveys conducted by the PDV project in 2009 and 2011, which represents the latest statistical data on domestic violence in Khatlon and the first dataset that is comparable internationally.

3.4.1 Prevalence of physical and emotional violence

The global data provided by the 2005 WHO multi-country study show that overall levels of violence are higher in rural than in urban areas. The same is true for Tajikistan. The 1999 WHO study (2000: 17) found that the lifetime prevalence of physical domestic violence was highest for women in Khatlon (59%) followed by Sughd (48.7%) and Dushanbe (27.1%). The Pamirs were not surveyed. Ten years later, the 2009 PDV survey (PDV 2009: 129-132) confirms the WHO findings in regard to the urban-rural divide: 8.9% of women surveyed in Dushanbe said that they had ever been slapped or had something thrown at them, compared to a cumulated 33.5% in the three locations surveyed in Khatlon region.

⁶⁰ KII with PDV staff on 3 April 2012

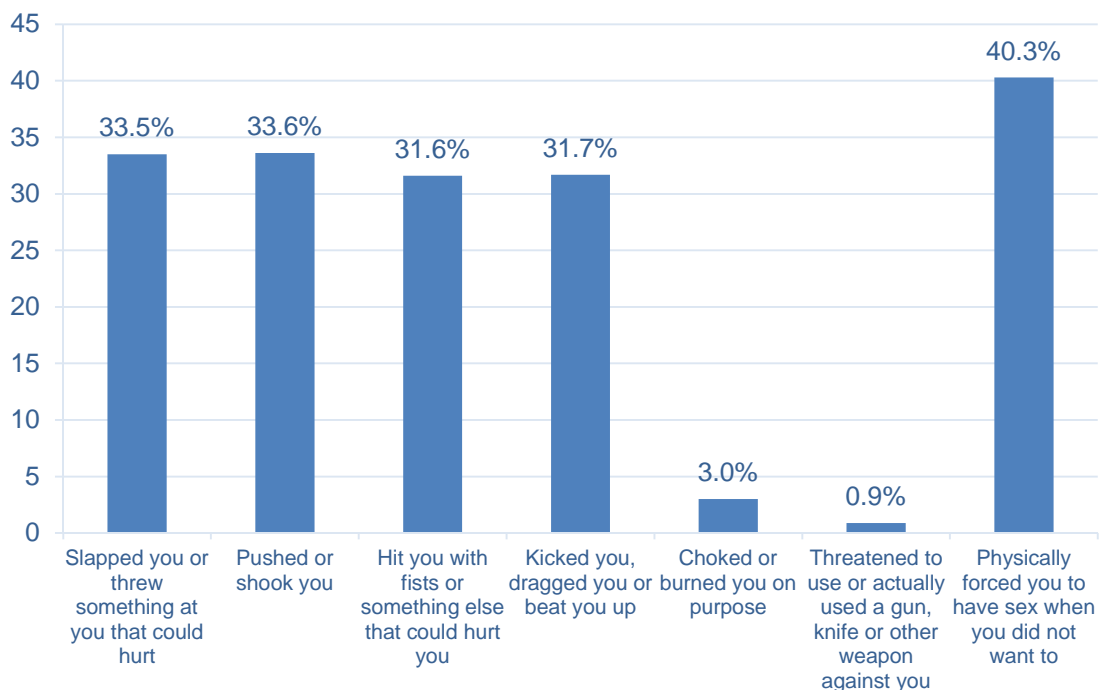
In 2009, 40.5% of women in Khatlon reported having ever experienced one or more forms of physical domestic violence, and 9.8% of women in Khatlon reported having experienced one or more forms of physical violence in the past year (PDV 2011: 38). When compared to the countries covered by the WHO multi-country study, this figure puts Khatlon region in the category of countries with medium to high prevalence rates of physical violence. When disaggregating the PDV survey data by the three locations in Khatlon, it turns out that Bohktar displays much lower rates than Vakshs and Kurganteppa. In 2009, only 8.9% of women in Bohktar reported that had ever been slapped or had something thrown at them, compared to 47.4% in Kurganteppa and 51.3% in Vakshs; this trend held true for all measurements of physical domestic violence. Kurganteppa and Vakshs thus display prevalence rates that are among the highest in the world. The discrepancy between Bohktar on the one hand and Kurganteppa and Vakshs on the other is rather surprising and calls for further investigation.

In 2009, 40.3% of women in Khatlon reported having ever experienced marital rape (see Fig. 6 overleaf). This is also among the highest rates in the world. When looking at the countries surveyed by the 2005 WHO multi-country study, Khatlon is only exceeded by rural Bangladesh and rural Ethiopia (WHO 2005: 30). The WHO multi-country study found a substantial overlap between experiences of physical and sexual violence, which is also the case in Khatlon, with 63.2% of women who reported physical violence in the past year also reporting sexual violence.

In some of the sites surveyed by the WHO, women report higher rates of sexual violence than of other acts of physical violence. WHO thus concludes that this might be because in some societies sex is regarded as man's right and a woman's marital duty, and that therefore a conceptualisation of coerced sex is lacking (WHO 2005: 41). Harris (2004: 79) has described in detail that sexual relationships in Tajikistan are functional in respect to reproduction and the fulfillment of men's sexual urges. The majority of marriages are arranged, which implies that a couple's sex life, which usually begins during the wedding night, is rarely marked by eroticism. The idea that sex women might have autonomy over their sex life appears not to exist neither with men in Khatlon. Hence, marital rape as a concept does not exist, and rape generally is not necessarily regarded as

negative by Tajik men; sometimes it will even strengthen their reputation among their peers. But while women report coerced sex, this is not conceptualised as marital rape. Rather, it is seen as the duty, which must be borne, regardless of how painful or distasteful the sexual encounters with their husbands may be.

Fig. 6: Women's lifetime prevalence of physical domestic violence in Khatlon by type, 2009



N= 450, Source: PDV 2011: 101-107

Of those women who had ever been subject to domestic violence in 2009, 61.3% in 2009 reported sustaining an injury, pointing to a high level of severity of the physical violence experienced. Cases of injury were highest in Vakshs with 84.1% of women sustaining injuries, compared to 53.6% in Kurganteppa and 31.5% in Bohktar. Hence, the experiences referred to by the female respondents are serious risks for their bodily integrity. In the FGDs conducted by SDC in Khatlon in 2005, women described the beatings by their husbands as 'very painful', citing

problems also with high blood pressure, feelings of nausea and broken bones (SDC 2005: 46).

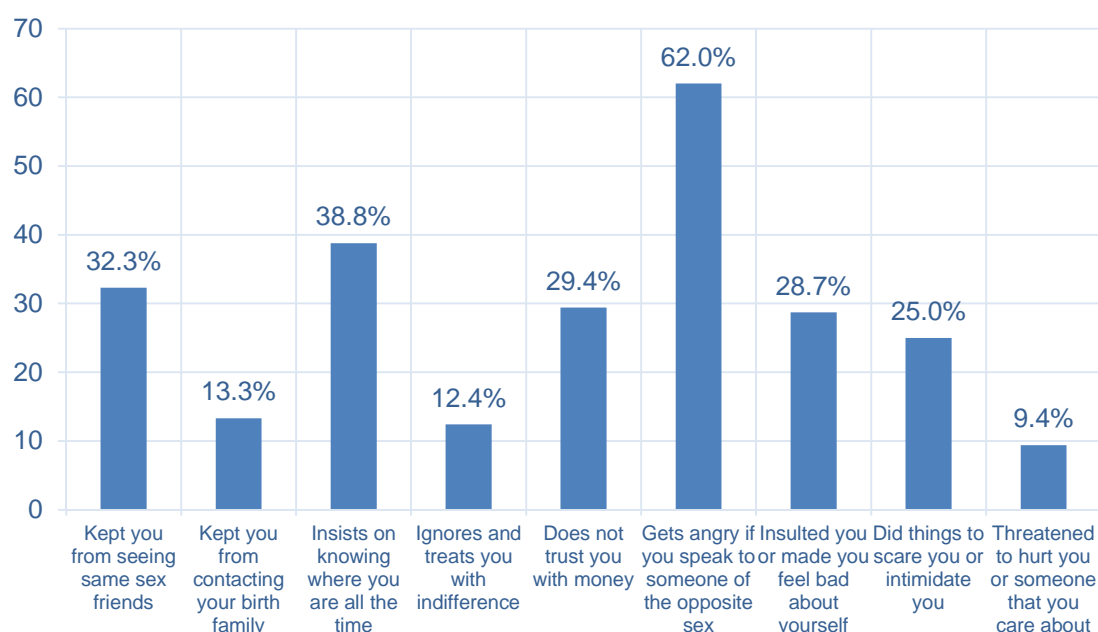
The prevalence figures cited in the previous paragraphs refer to acts of physical violence carried out by husbands. The 2009 PDV survey also asked men about their experiences of domestic violence. In line with the international data, it was found that there was virtually no physical violence committed by women against men, with a mere 1.2% reporting having ever been slapped by their wives (PDV 2009: 56). Although Harris (2006: 148) contends that young women nowadays are less likely to put up with abuse than previous generations, women only very rarely fight back. When I posed the question during field work if a woman could also beat her husband, my respondents almost laughed at the thought, because it appeared so absurd to them that a woman should ever lift her hand against her husband.⁶¹

Levels of emotional violence are also higher in Khatlon than in Dushanbe. The 1999 WHO survey (2000: 17) found rates of 64.7% in Khatlon, compared to 47.6% in Sughd and 29.9% in Dushanbe. In 2009, 58.1% of women in Khatlon reported having ever experienced one or more forms of emotional violence at the hands of their husbands, and 37.3% of all women experiencing one or more forms of emotional violence in the twelve months before the interview (PDV 2011: 38). There is a clear link between experiences of emotional and physical violence, and the 2009 survey found a very strong correlation between the two types of violence. Of the women who reported experiencing physical violence by their husbands in the past year, 95.4% reported also having experienced emotional violence. There was a strong co-variation between almost all types of physical and all types of emotional violence. For some types, there were almost no cases where physical violence occurred when emotional violence did not occur.

When disaggregating the prevalence by different types of emotional violence, it emerges that women's experiences are primarily related to men's controlling behaviours (see Fig. 7 overleaf).

⁶¹ FGD with community members on 10 April 2012

Fig. 7: Women's lifetime prevalence of emotional violence in Khatlon by type, 2009



N = 450; Source: PDV 2011: 90-100.

Two-thirds of women report that their husbands insist on knowing where they are all the time. None of the countries surveyed in the 2005 WHO multi-country study demonstrates such high rates of controlling behaviour. Only a fraction of men reported having ever experienced physical violence. However, in 2009 54.3% of men in Khatlon stated that they had ever been subjected to emotional violence, and 23.6% said that they had experienced emotional violence in the last year. When looking at the types of emotional violence that men are subjected to by the women, it appears that what men refer to is what they feel is their wives' jealousy. In 2009, 20.2% of men reported ever experiencing that their wives insist on knowing where they are all the time, 44.6% reported that their wives ever got angry when they talked to other women and 36.4% reported that their wives were often suspicious that they were unfaithful (PDV 2011: 38).

3.4.2 Characteristics of domestic violence in Khatlon

A prominent feature of domestic violence in Tajikistan is the role of mothers-in-law. The FGDs conducted during the 2011 PDV survey brought out clearly that a lot of physical violence by husbands is instigated by mothers-in-law. It is typical for mothers to ask their son's to physically discipline their wives for unsatisfactorily carried out housework or other alleged wrongdoings (Haarr 2007: 208; Harris 2006: 111). One NGO staff member referred to mothers-in-law as the 'judge in Tajik families', and female community members explained the relationship between mothers and sons as follows (PDV 2011):

„A son does not do anything without the permission of his mother. If the mother-in-law wants, the son will beat his wife. If she wants him to be nice to his wife, he will be so.“ (Woman from Dushanbe)

„Before my son-in-law's departure for Russia, his mother urged him to 'teach' his wife so that in his absence she does not talk a lot about visiting her parents' home. The mother and son called my daughter and by mother's order my son-in-law slapped my daughter in the face two times. My daughter was shocked. When they were in private my son-in-law apologised to his wife saying that he was quickly driven by his mother's words.“ (Woman from Kurganteppa)

To the detriment of a comparison, none of the surveys available measured emotional violence against women by mothers-in-law. For example, a survey in Afghanistan found that the husband was named as the main abuser by 30.6% of female respondents, followed closely by the mother-in-law with 23.7% (Global Rights 2008: 29). In Khatlon, disciplining the young women is by and large regarded the duty of senior women who have to induct the young women and teach them the 'rules of the house'. As this induction is often done in an authoritarian manner, the relationship can easily turn abusive. From the point of view of the young women such abuse is not a petty issue. For many young women in the area, their mothers-in-law have come to resemble the equivalent of bogeys (Harris 2004: 108). NGO staff members interviewed in the 2011 FGDs said that daughters-in-law often say that they would rather be beaten than to have to endure the humiliation of their mothers-in-law.

Emotional abuse by mothers-in-law can take on different forms. For example, young women are often given the feeling by their marital families that they are intruders who are stealing the beloved son, which only adds to the women's feeling of isolation after having had to move out of their birth families home. Some women also report being given less to eat than other family members (Harris 2004: 108). In the PDV survey in 2009, one *mahalla* member confirmed that some mothers-in-law also mistreated their grandchildren and as a result the daughters-in-law took their children with them when they worked on the fields. But mostly, young women complain that their mothers-in-law try to create divisions between the young wives and their husbands, sometimes even trying to provoke a break-up of their sons' marriage. Several participants in FGDs explained that if a mother-in-law does not like her *kelin*, even though she may have chosen her herself to be her son's wife, she will make the young brides life miserable (PDV 2011).

Another specificity of gender relations in Tajikistan is labour migration. In the sample of the 2009 PDV survey, the two-thirds of men in Vakshs and Bohktar had migrated for work outside of Tajikistan in the year before the interview. Women whose husbands had migrated were significantly more likely to have been subject to physical violence by their husbands (PDV 2009: 57). However, the long spells of absence by husbands reduces physical violence for the better part of the year. But the incidence of physical violence shoots up after the men return home in the early winter months and drops in March when they leave again, producing a seasonal dynamic to the prevalence. This is illustrated by the client numbers of Ghamkori Crisis Centre in Kurganteppa (GOPA 2010: 13). The women that I spoke to during my field work also confirmed that their returning husbands were not only behaving stricter with them, but that they were even more violent.⁶² It is unclear what makes men behave this way, but one explanation given was the frustration they experience when returning home; rather than returning as successful and wealthy men, they see themselves and are seen by their communities, families and wives as losers who are unable to provide for their families. The frustration might also be amplified by the contrast between living

⁶² FGDs with community members on 5 April, 9 April and 11 April 2012

conditions in Russia and at home. On the other hand, my respondents guessed, men might compensate for their inferiority in Russia by exaggerating their superiority at home.

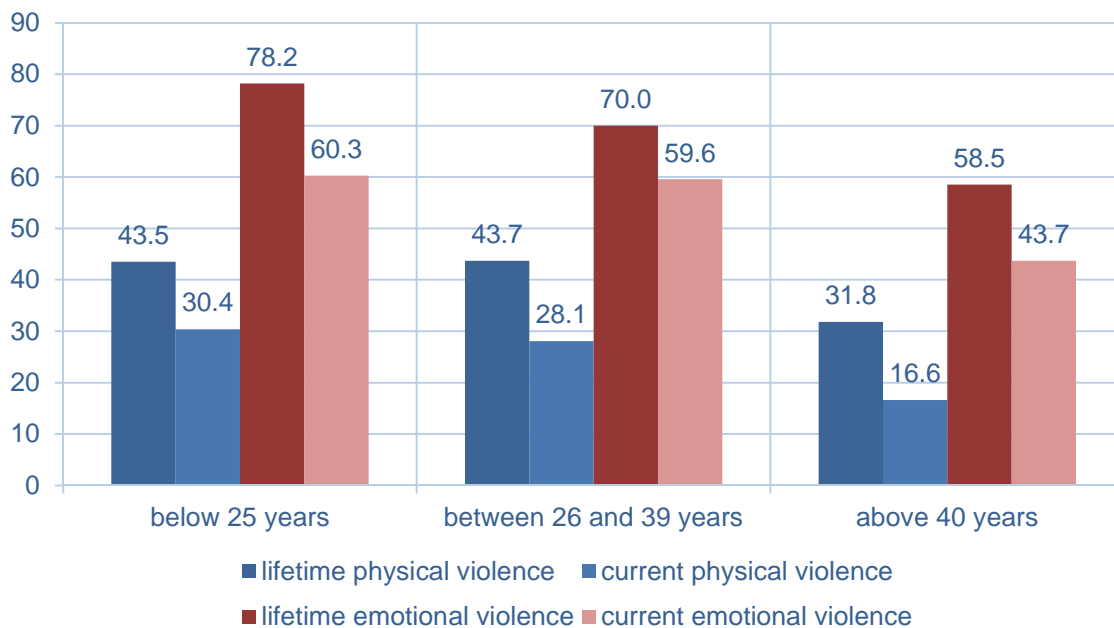
While physical violence is reduced while husbands are away, women who are left behind face emotional violence from members of their marital family. For the better part of the year, this is probably the most relevant aspect of domestic violence in young women's everyday lives. Men control women's physical and social mobility even while away, either by mobile phone or by putting a senior household member 'in charge' of their wives.⁶³ This senior person is usually the mother-in-law. Migration thus strengthens the power of the mother-in-law. The biggest bone of contention is how the remittances sent by the husbands are handled. Remittances are mostly sent by men to their parents, and it is common that the wives of the migrant men do not receive any or very little proportions of the money. In 2009, no female respondent in Kurganteppa, whose husband was a migrant, reported having received the remittances, compared to 10.3% in Vakshs and 22.9% in Bohktar (PDV 2009: 72). When a wife does receive remittances she is then pressured to hand them over to her in-laws. In the words of a local government employee: *„Parents say that they have brought up the child and they should receive money from him, they do not care about others“*. But the wives of labour migrants are also put under pressure in case the husband fails to send money at all. Sometimes the wife is even expelled from the house and sent back to her birth family, because she is an additional financial burden. The staff members of the NGOs confirmed that in the communities in which they work April and May were regarded as 'months for expelling daughters-in-law from the house'.

The 2005 WHO multi-country study found that young women are more likely to experience physical domestic violence. The 2009 PDV data supports this trend for its three sample locations in Khatlon (see Fig. 8 overleaf). Domestic violence does not disappear, but it dissipates with age. Only 16.6% of women above 40 years reported current physical violence, compared to 30.4% of women under the age of 25. One interesting finding is that the differences between the rates of the

⁶³ Field notes, April 2012

under-25 year old women and those between 26 and 39 years of age are rather negligible. A marked decrease of violence experiences takes place only from around 40 years of age.

Fig. 8: Prevalence of women's physical and emotional domestic violence by age, 2011



N = 450

The PDV survey findings also indicate that women who were younger at marriage were more likely to experience domestic violence. The majority of women had first been subjected to domestic violence between the ages of 20 to 24 years, which coincides with the age at first marriage for most women in the survey (PDV 2009: 57). According to WHO, one possible reason for the different prevalence rates by age is that women learn how to protect themselves from violence, including accepting that they need to be submissive to avoid abuse. One reason for domestic violence cited by many of my respondents was the young age of many girls at the wedding. Many respondents reiterated that if women were too

young they lacked the necessary life skills to adapt successfully to their new environment, which in turn provokes the mothers-in-law. In Khatlon, experiences of current violence go down with age as women progress through the gerontocratic power system of the extended family. From the perspective of a young woman the power system starts to work in her favour with progressing age and seniority in the household. The ambiguous power relations between mothers and sons explained earlier, in which the generational positioning of the former outweighs the masculine power of the latter, lead to a situation where older women become perpetrators of emotional domestic violence and promoters of male physical domestic violence. Hence, while young women are mainly victims, as they progress through their lifecycle they increasingly acquire power. It is interesting to note that the staff members of the NGOs confirmed that violent behavior is transgenerational in that women, when having their own *kelins*, imitate the cruel behaviours of their own mothers-in-law.

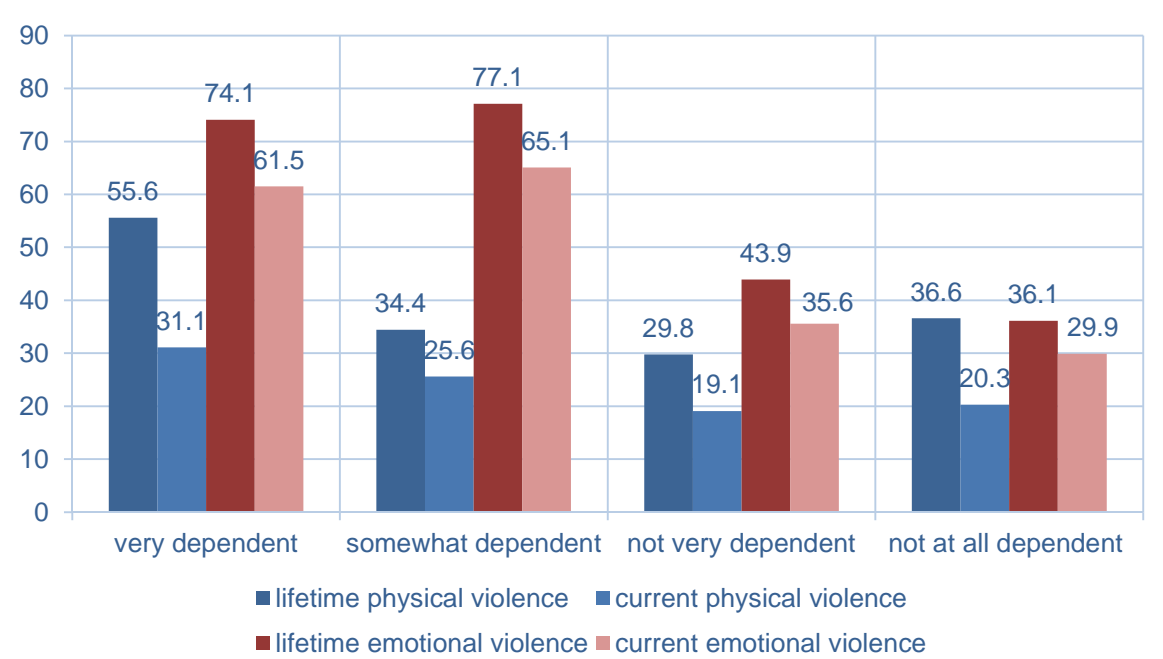
If patriarchal gender norms are an important risk factor for domestic violence - as the WHO's ecological model argues -, then it is particularly interesting to investigate in how far expressions of inequity - women's low educational status and their high economic dependency, religious marriage and polygamy - correlate positively with a higher prevalence of domestic violence.

The WHO concludes that differences in educational attainment do not statistically account for the difference between the sites (WHO 2005: 41). For Khatlon, the 2005 SDC study (Haarr 2007: 263) and the 2009 PDV survey (PDV 2009: 57) arrived at the same conclusion. However, the WHO study also showed that the protective effect of education only started to work when women reached beyond secondary school. When re-examining the dataset of the 2009 PDV survey in regard to such a threshold, it surfaced that women who had visited at least grade 10 had considerably lower rates than their less educated peers; 32.7% of women with higher levels of education reported ever experiencing physical violence (20% for past year), compared to 50.6% of women with up to secondary education (31.4% for past year). Importantly, most women in the survey with higher education levels were women above 40 years of age who had enjoyed the benefits of the Soviet education system. With increasing numbers of young women dropping out of school in their early teens, the protective effect of

education bears little meaning for most of the younger women in Khatlon. Hence, the pernicious trend in regard to girls' education is undermining this potential protective factor.

The PDV surveys used other measures to assess women's level of economic empowerment than employment, because having a job in rural Tajikistan does not necessarily lead to higher economic independence. Rather, the PDV surveys measured in how far women control the remittances sent by their migrant husbands (see Fig. 9).

Fig. 9: Women's prevalence of physical and emotional domestic violence by level of economic dependence on husband's parents, 2011



N = 450

The 2009 data shows that women who report receiving the remittances directly have lower rates of physical and emotional violence than women whose mothers-in-law or fathers-in-law receive the funds. Also, the PDV surveys measured the

level of self-reported economic dependence by women on their husbands' families. Female respondents were asked if they felt that they were 'very dependent', 'somewhat dependent', 'not very dependent' or 'not at all dependent'. When cross-tabulating the responses with self-reported prevalence rates it is very clear that economic independence from the husband's parents is a major factor reducing the likelihood of becoming victim of domestic violence. 31.1% of women who said that they were very dependent reported current physical violence (61.5% for current emotional violence) compared to 20.3% (29.9% for current emotional violence) who said that they were not dependent at all.

The kind of marriage couples lead is, perhaps unsurprisingly, an important determinant of domestic violence. In the PDV survey samples, up to 90% of women in some locations in Khatlon were married legally. However, there is a trend of increasing numbers of religious marriages that many stakeholders involved in the fight against domestic violence complained about, although, as said, this cannot be verified statistically. The 2009 survey found that legally married women were significantly less likely to have ever been subjected to physical domestic violence (15.9%) than the ones who had only married in a religious ceremony (41.6%). Legal marriage provides women with some degree of social protection, because it gives women the opportunity to take their husbands' to court over issues such as alimony and child custody. In Khatlon, marriages are usually arranged by the families of the bride and groom. In 2009, around 90% of women and men reported that their marriages had been arranged. Arranged marriages in Tajikistan are rarely characterised by mutual respect and affection. It is not difficult to see how this is fertile ground for conflicts between marital partners, especially in times of economic hardship. A large number of my respondents stated arranged marriages as a major reason for domestic violence. The question of arranged versus love marriages is also important in respect to the relationship between the young bride and her mother-in-law. Arranged marriages accord older women a choice of her *kelin* and thus give her less reason to instigate violence or be cruel. But I was told many times that in love

marriages the mothers-in-law take revenge on their disobedient sons by being cruel to their daughters-in-law⁶⁴.

The 2011 survey questionnaire included a question on polygamy to assess in how far this type of marriage constituted a determining factor for domestic violence. The findings of the 2011 PDV survey show that there is a significant difference in the risk of women in polygamous and monogamous relationships. Of the female respondents reporting that they were living in polygamy 67.9% reported ever experiencing physical domestic violence, compared to 39.1% in monogamous marriages. One reason for the higher prevalence levels among polygamous relationships lies in the fact that mutual respect and affection is even less pronounced than in arranged monogamous marriages, with polygamous marriages being much more motivated by economic considerations. But polygamy is also an indication of women's high level of economic dependence. NGO staff and advocates working in Khatlon were clear that it is especially poor women who agree to polygamous marriages, often out of sheer desperation in their search for social protection and a minimum level of dignity accorded to them by society. As polygamy is officially prohibited by Tajik law, polygamous marriages are usually coupled with religious weddings only. Polygamy presents an important source of conflict in the family. Many participants of the FGDs reported that there was a lot of jealousy, especially among the wives of a polygamous husband, but also between wives and sisters-in-law. This may not be a surprise, and already Meakin reported at the beginning of the 20th century that there was constant fighting between the various wives of polygamous men (1903: 139). However, polygamy may actually elevate older women or younger women who are married to older men to higher positions with the family's power structure (PDV 2011):

„If a woman's husband is the eldest in the family, then the woman takes advantage of her husband's position. She interferes with the life of the brother-in-law and his wife. The reason for such behaviour is connected to her desire to put her benefits in the first place.“ (Woman from Kurganteppa)

⁶⁴ Field notes, April 2012

If one assumes that a preference for arranged religious marriages and polygamy is an indication of a conservative traditionalist to fundamentalist view of gender, as I explained in the previous chapter, it is possible to conclude that more liberal-minded families, who stick to monogamous legal marriage and provide their children with a greater choice in regard to their spouse, experience lower levels of domestic violence.

During the Soviet era, gender equality was a norm imposed through Marxist ideology, and consequently, there exists no scientific data on the prevalence of domestic violence during this period. Anecdotal accounts are the only source of information on domestic violence in Tajikistan's Soviet era (Sharipova 2008: 77; Akiner 1997: 280). However, all of the Tajik gender experts, as well as the ordinary people that I spoke to share the observation that there has been an increase in domestic violence⁶⁵; a position that is also shared by the few authors that have published on the topic. This hypothesis is underpinned with plausible arguments and reference is made to various risk factors for violence that have gained prominence since independence, like poverty and the neo-patriarchal trend. But there is no quantitative benchmark to enable a statistical comparison. In fact, the prominence of a grown prevalence of domestic violence since independence in the discussions was so striking that I suspected it to be an integral part of the self-image and self-assurance of international and local practitioners in Tajikistan, rather than a fact.

However, a comparison of lifetime and current levels of victimisation reported by women of different ages in the PDV surveys can be used to reconstruct pre-independence levels of domestic violence. The disaggregation of the prevalence by age indicates that young women have higher levels of current violence than older women. However, in regard to the lifetime prevalence the expected age pattern would be the opposite, with older women having higher rates, because they have lived a longer time, in which they could potentially have experienced violence. Should young women report higher lifetime prevalence rates than older women, this would consequently mean that the younger women have experienced more violence in a much shorter time span, which would imply that

⁶⁵ Field notes, April 2012

there was less violence in the past when the older generation was young. It turns out that women who have not experienced married life in the Soviet Union, who are on average below 40 today, have considerably higher rates of lifetime violence (43.5% ever physical and 78.2% ever emotional for those under 25), than those 40 and above (31.8% ever physical and 58.5% ever emotional). Consequently, prevalence levels are likely to have risen over the last two decades since independence, which may be explained by the neo-patriarchal backlash.

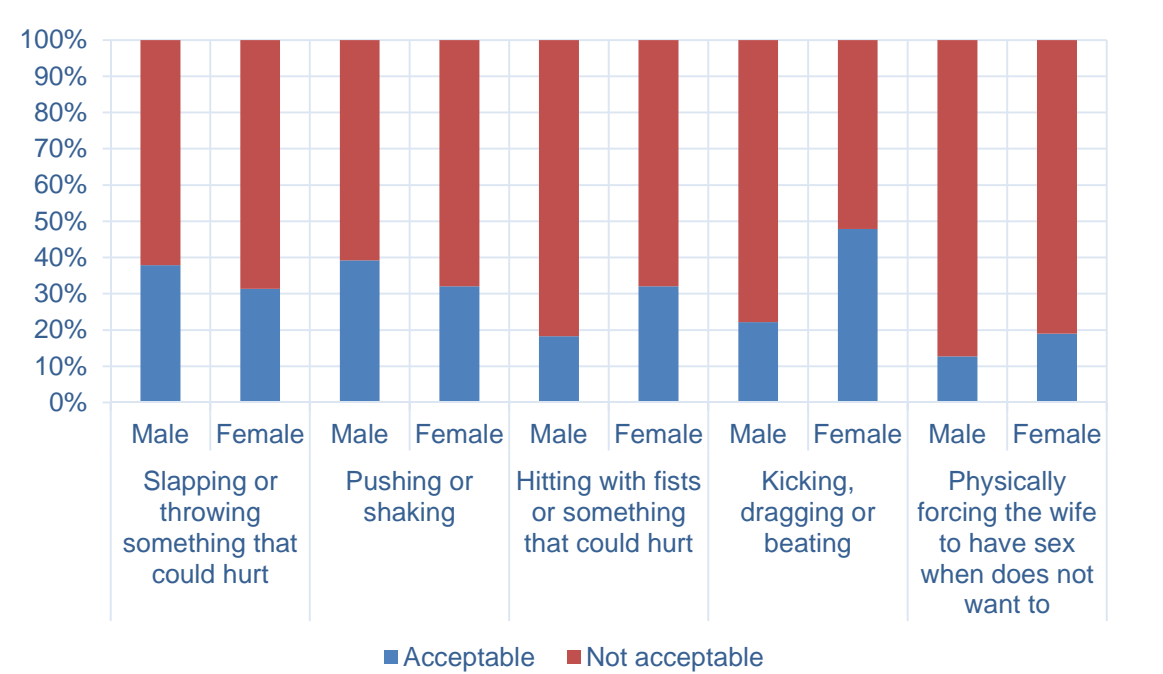
3.4.3 Acceptability of domestic violence

In line with the public discourse about gender in Tajikistan, there is also an ongoing controversy about the role of 'Tajik culture' and Islam in promoting domestic violence. On the one hand, all publications on domestic violence in Tajikistan argue that the incidence of domestic violence has gone up due to the revival of traditional culture, because Islamic values promote gender inequality and domestic violence (Sharipova and Fàbiàn 2010, Sharipova 2008, Kasymova 2008, Haarr 2007). The statistical data presented earlier appear to underpin this view, and the Tajik gender activists that I spoke to unanimously confirmed this assessment. On the other hand, the Tajik government's 2010 MDG progress report (GoT/UN 2010: 66) lists the *"deformation of the foundations of spiritual life, declining cultural standards and moral and ethical norms in society"* and the *"reassessment of moral values, both in society and the family"* among the main causes of gender-based violence in Tajikistan. The decay of traditional values is responsible for the increase of domestic violence. This view resonates with a sentiment that religious leaders that I met expressed in that domestic violence had no place in 'true Islam' and that the problem was in fact that many people had not adopted the principles of Muslim family life. Interestingly, qualitative findings from the 1999 survey by WHO show that respondents were ambivalent in that they singled out tradition as the most important factor promoting domestic violence, but also mentioned the disintegration of the family and cultural change as influencing factors (WHO 2000: 25). It is not the aim of this study to judge on the correctness of either position, but rather to show that gender relations and

domestic violence are contested issues in Tajik society and that prevention interventions need to be cognisant of the fact that they take place in a polarised setting.

The 2009 PDV survey asked women and men in Khatlon if they thought various forms of physical and emotional violence were ‘very acceptable’, ‘somewhat acceptable’, ‘not very acceptable’ or ‘not acceptable at all’ in Tajik culture. The responses were collapsed into acceptable and not acceptable (see Fig. 10). The abovementioned controversy around Tajik culture and its potential role in promoting or preventing domestic violence makes it difficult to interpret the responses, however, because it is unclear whether the respondents individually approve or reject the cultural norms. However, the data does provide an estimate as to whether respondents feel that the overall societal climate is accepting towards domestic violence.

Fig. 10: Perceived acceptability of forms of physical domestic violence in Tajik culture, Khatlon, in%

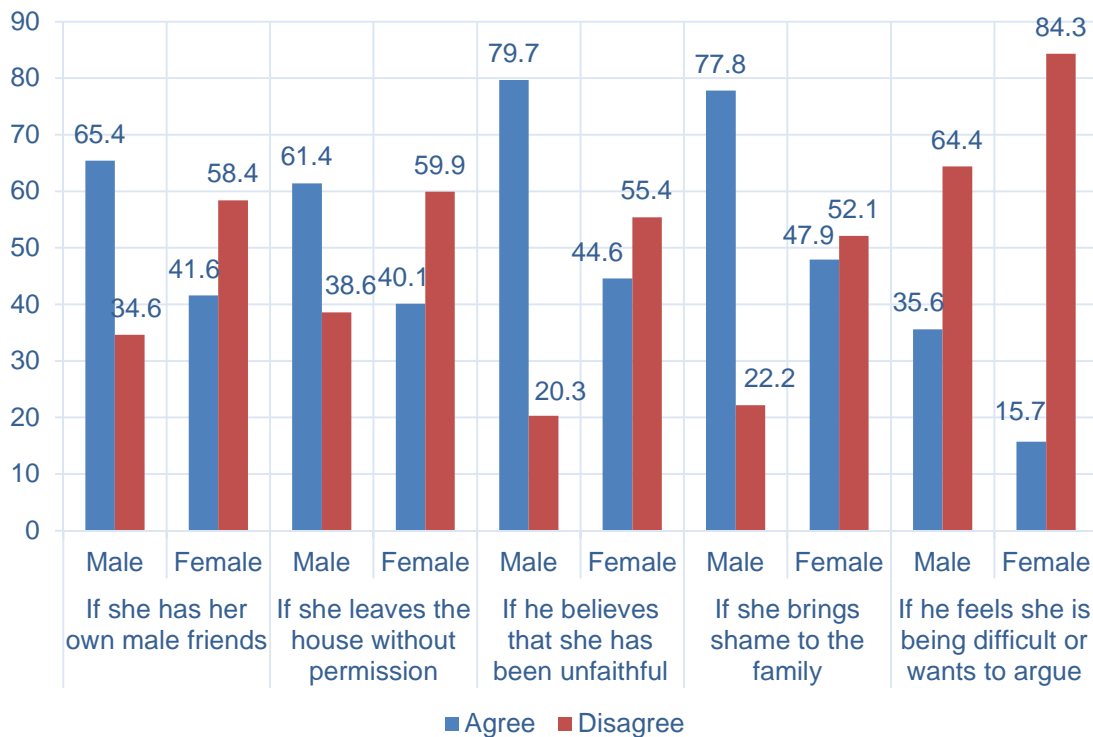


N = men: 450, women: 450; Source: PDV 2011: 32-35.

Responses differed greatly for different types of violence. In regard to physical violence, 39.3% of men and 32.1% of women said that pushing or shaking the wife was acceptable, and 37.9% of men and 31.3% of women said that slapping or throwing something was acceptable. Types of emotional violence related to male controlling behaviour, such as insisting on knowing where the women is all the time and getting angry if the wife talks to another man, stand out as particularly acceptable. Intimidation and threats were regarded as much less acceptable, but still between one-fifth and one-third of respondents said that it was acceptable according to Tajik culture. This said, there are some forms of violence that are clearly unacceptable, such as public humiliation of the wife, prohibiting social interactions with same sex friends and the birth family, as well as emotional coldness. But a sizeable proportion of women and men in Khatlon feel that in Tajik culture physical and emotional violence are acceptable conflict resolution strategies within marriage. The fact that social norms condone or promote domestic violence thus clearly constitutes a risk factor to be tackled through prevention interventions.

When probing deeper into the acceptability of domestic violence according to Tajik culture in Khatlon, it turned out that the majority of people thought that men should not beat their wives 'without good reason'. The interesting question is then what constitutes a 'good enough' reason to provide legitimation for domestic violence. The 2009 PDV survey asked interviewees what they felt were culturally acceptable circumstances for a man to discipline his wife physically. Women and men were read the following statement: 'Under which circumstances, if any, is it culturally acceptable for a husband to strike his wife/long-term partner hard, to the point where she bruises or something is broken (broken skin, broken bones, bleeding eyes or ears, lips, etc.)?' Then, a number of circumstances that present transgressions from patriarchal gender norms prevalent in Tajik society were provided, including 'if she has her own male friends', 'if she leaves the house without permission' or 'if she brings shame to the family' (see Fig. 11 overleaf).

Fig. 11: Culturally acceptable circumstances for severe physical domestic violence, Khatlon, in%



N = men: 450, women: 450; Source: PDV 2011: 30

The majority of men in Khatlon believed that according to Tajik culture it was acceptable for husbands to strike their wives severely in four out of ten circumstances. All of these were related to issues of male control and family honour, with an overwhelming 78.8% of men agreeing that it was acceptable to beat their wives to the point of injury if she brings shame to the family. 79.7% said according to Tajik culture husbands were justified in beating their wives if they believed that she had been unfaithful. Fewer women than men confirmed that these circumstances were culturally acceptable. Nonetheless, nearly half of female respondents agreed that bringing shame on the family presented a valid reason, and still around 40% agreed that leaving the house without permission and having own male friends were justifiable circumstances.

Protecting the family honour therefore appears to constitute a core norm, and it goes a long way in explaining the prominence of men's controlling behavior demonstrated in the prevalence data and the high approval rates for female behavior that challenges male control as justifiable circumstances for domestic violence. As explained before, women's physical mobility and her social contacts are controlled and limited, and threats or actions of domestic violence are employed to deter her from any misdemeanor that might tarnish the family honour. However, what exactly constitutes a threat to or an attack on the family honour is difficult to determine, and women are faced with the problem that their behavior is always subject to the scrutiny of the husband and his family. The problem is that it is already enough for the husband or the community at large to merely suspect infidelity for a woman to be seen as breaking the norm. Suspicion is enough to spark gossip and mockery. Therefore, to avoid any suspicion, women have to adhere to coded behaviours, like veiling, asking their husbands for permission to leave the house, and so on. Husbands and their families also take precautions in order not to come under suspicion. For example, unmarried girls in one conservative village were not allowed to have mobile phones. They would be given phones after the wedding, but would only be allowed to use them to speak to their husbands and close relatives.⁶⁶

With this in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that abused women in Khatlon are usually blamed for the violence they experience - in accordance with the Tajik saying that 'nobody beats an obedient wife'. Many younger women I talked to felt that it was very unfair to put all the blame on them and that they were totally obedient and still being beaten. But the majority of respondents stated that it was the women who provoked their husbands into becoming violent, which confirms the available survey findings. Hence, men perpetrate violence legitimately by carrying out the prescribed forms of controlling behaviour and by disciplining the women; it is regarded a male responsibility to ensure the family honour is not tainted. Domestic violence demonstrates to the extended family and community that a man has his 'house in order'. Many respondents during field work

⁶⁶ FGD with young women on 8 April 2012

confirmed that men gain respect from their peers if it is known that he beats his wife, as such behavior is seen as 'manly':

"People will say the man is doing a good job. And men are often proud of beating their wives. Here in Tajikistan men say if you don't beat your wife you are not a real man." (Woman from Vakshs)⁶⁷

Witnessing domestic violence against ones' mother as a child is an integral part of a system that teaches such behaviour. In 2009 children were present in 48.3% of the reported cases of domestic violence in Khatlon (PDV 2009: 57). Disciplining women is also actively taught to boys from a young age. Boys in their teens revealed that it was their responsibility to discipline their sisters if they did not clean the house properly or wear a dress with short sleeves (SDC 2005: 21). Domestic violence thus serves the function of an 'educational device'.

It is important to note that men are pressured by all segments of society to prove that they are 'real men'. Even if men privately tend towards more egalitarian principles, they need to use patriarchal 'gender masks' in public. 'Gender masks' are especially important in light of men's difficulties to provide for their families. The economic pressure makes it increasingly difficult for men to live up to society's expectations. Performing domestic violence is a 'gender mask' that covers up men's failure to meet society's expectations. Harris (2006: 72) contends that men's reputation as men depends on women's willingness to grant them this position:

„Masculinity is dependent on feminine agreement to display the visible maintenance of submissive virginity/chastity that is the most important feminine characteristic in this cultural system and the complement of male control. A female who refuses to conform can destroy her menfolk's masculinity.“

However, it is becoming increasingly difficult for women to convincingly perform the role of the obedient wife because of their increased integration into the informal economy and their increasing contribution to the family income. Women's increased agency implies breaking dominant gender norms, and hence

⁶⁷ FGD with community members on 11 April 2012

women run the risk of facing violence by husbands or other family members who want to 'put them in their rightful place', thus using domestic violence as a so-called 'policing mechanism'. Applying 'gender masks' effectively is thus a vital female skill not only to safeguard ones' social standing, but also as a protective mechanism against domestic violence.

3.4.4 Women's support-seeking behaviour

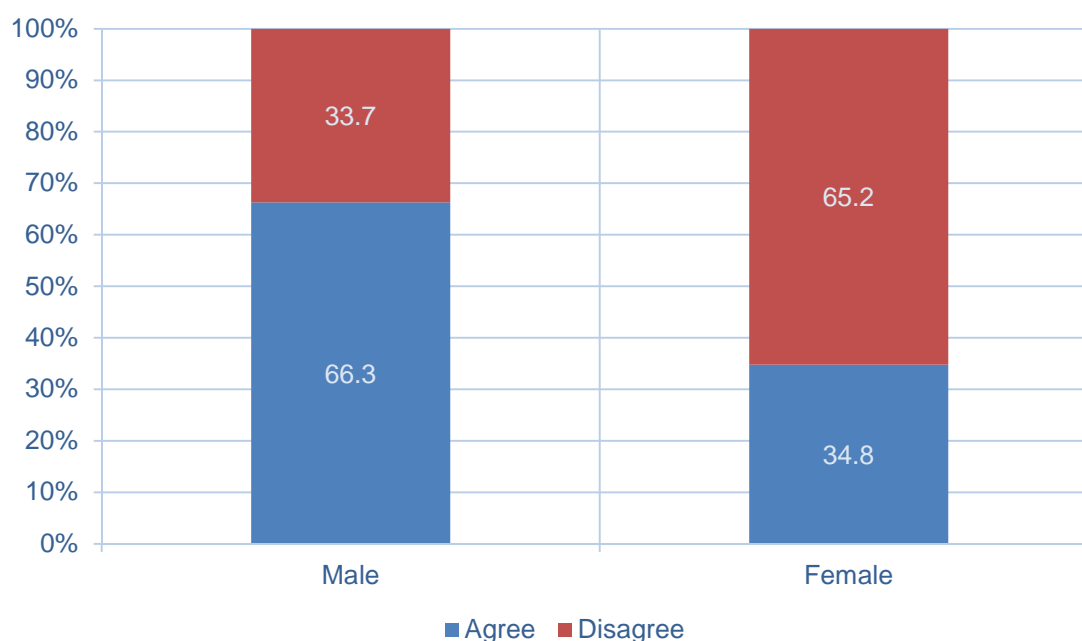
The high level of acceptability hinders abused women who want to seek support from doing so. Most women do not tell anyone about domestic violence perpetrated against them. The 2005 SDC survey's findings show that a majority of women (58.5%) in Khatlon who had experienced physical violence at the hands of their husbands in the twelve months before the interview reported not telling anyone about the violence (SDC 2005: 51). Norms that suggest abused women bear the violence and practice patience in the name of being a good wife pose a formidable barrier to women speaking out (Haarr 2008: 196). To bear the violence and practice patience is considered the appropriate female reaction. Women from Dushanbe participating in the FGDs conducted by the 2011 PDV survey confirmed that abused women should not report the violence they experience. The following statements from FGDs conducted by the 2005 SDC survey illustrate what is considered to be appropriate behaviour for abused women (2005: 53): *„She must be patient in her life, in spite of all difficulties, she has to be patient.“* (Woman, 18 to 39 years); *„If she is a good wife, she will sit at home and will not tell anyone. She will say that nothing happened and everything is OK.“* (Woman, 40 to 60 years).

Women in Khatlon who do find the courage to speak out about the violence they endure mostly communicate about their situation only within their families (SDC 2005: 51). Of the 41.5% of women in Khatlon who in 2005 reported telling someone about the abuse, an overwhelming 83.7% told their family, 32.7% told their friends, but only 8.2% told a medical doctor, 4.1% reported to the police, 4% told a lawyer or court, 2% told a religious leader, 2% told someone at the local women's committee and 4% told someone at the local Crisis Centre or NGO. Cognisant of the stigma attached to domestic violence, the Crisis Centre in

Kurganteppa is therefore deliberately located close to the local market so that women can visit the centre under the pretext of shopping for groceries. In sum, only a fraction of abused women actually seek support outside their immediate family. Considering the high prevalence rates in Khatlon, the unmet need for assistance is dramatic.

There is a great deal of scepticism towards external intervention, which is illustrated by the findings from the 2009 PDV survey (see Fig. 12). The data reveals that two-thirds (66.3%) of men in Khatlon agreed that severe physical discipline by a husband against his wife, under the condition that the violence does not pose a risk to the woman's life, is a family affair and not something that should involve someone outside the family.

Fig. 12: 'The thing about even severe physical discipline of a wife by her husband, assuming that it does not pose a risk to her life, is that it is a family affair, not something that should involve someone outside the family', 2009, in %



N = men: 450, women: 450; Source: PDV 2011: 24.

Women agree to the statement to a far lesser extent, but still one-third (34.8%) agree. These findings reflect a widely shared belief in Tajik society that outsiders should not interfere in other family matters. A popular Tajik saying goes 'don't take litter from the house'.⁶⁸ Congruently, the findings of the 2009 PDV survey demonstrate that 70.3% of men in Khatlon agreed that reporting domestic violence brings shame to the family.

Divorce is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, it damages the husband's reputation, as well as that of his whole family. Women are then blamed on the failure of the marriage, resulting in stigma and discrimination. Divorce is the ultimate shame for a family, because it represents a breach of agreement between the marital partner's families. Harris (2004: 148) refers to divorce as a 'social death'. The rhetoric supporting remarriage is one of economic safety. But in reality men cannot provide adequately for their several wives and remarriage is a strategy to avoid ridicule. Secondly, the high degree of economic dependence of women on their marital families poses an additional barrier for women's access to support. Abused women are also scared that reporting violence poses the risk of losing one's home and children (SDC 2005: 53). The analysis of the prevalence rate for Khatlon by socio-demographic variables found that women who were married only according to traditional Islamic law were at a higher risk of becoming victim of domestic violence. Women who are legally married stand better chances of successfully pursuing legal means against their violent husbands, securing alimony and custody for their children. Indeed, women who are not legally married have no chance of fighting for their property and parental rights in a court at all. This puts abused women in a dilemma: if they obtain divorce they face 'social death' and poverty, but if they refrain from reporting they remain in abusive relationships.

Thus, participants of the FGDs carried out by the 2011 PDV survey and the women I spoke to during field work clearly confirmed that there is a fear of abused women that if they report the violence to official structures this may result in divorce. The lingering threat of divorce is a strong factor hampering victims' access to support services. Many men believe that telling a doctor about the

⁶⁸ Field notes, December 2008

violence is a strategy of women to start the process of obtaining a divorce. However, women also keep quiet about the causes of their injury, because they may not want to pursue further legal channels. One doctor reported that pregnant women sought treatment because they wanted to be sure that their baby was okay, but not for treatment of their own injuries.

To examine the support abused women might expect from their birth families, the 2009 PDV survey asked the female respondents, in how far they thought they could rely on assistance by their birth family in case of a serious problem. In Kurganteppa only 15.9% of women said always and 34.6% said sometimes, with higher levels in Vakshs (31.3% always, 35.7% sometimes) and Bohktar (32.3% always, 42.1% sometimes) (PDV 2009: 32). Support rendered to the women by their birth families is rather weak. A daughter who causes trouble for her in-laws is often regarded an embarrassment to her parents, and interfering in the daughter's marital family is considered inappropriate. In support of this argument, the 2009 PDV survey found that those women who reported strong links to their birth families, measured as frequent contact and close proximity, were less likely to report incidents of domestic violence (PDV 2009: 59). This underlines that women want to avoid bringing shame upon their birth families, and the power of the gender norms muting abused women. If at all, representatives of birth families will support mediation efforts, but abused women can count little on their birth families for refuge (Haarr 2007: 249).

4. Local approaches in practice: the PDV project

Using the PDV project in Khatlon region in Tajikistan as a case study, this chapter looks at local prevention approaches in practice. It seeks to answer the second and third research questions investigated in this study: how did the production and implementation of local approaches function? In how far were these approaches effective?

In doing so, the study will examine if and how the context factors under the four key elements that were identified in the previous chapter were taken up by the PDV project. This includes the neo-patriarchal backlash in the public discourse around gender norms and the increased role for Islamic values and Islamist tendencies; the general poverty situation and its implications for women's agency in terms of economic opportunities and social safety; the informal character of local governance structures and institutional weaknesses of public services for victims of domestic violence; and the high prevalence and acceptability of domestic violence in Khatlon as well as specific features, like the influence of labour migration and the role of mothers-in-law.

The chapter first introduces the project's management set-up and discusses how it responded to the need for local solutions (section 4.1). This includes sections on the project's institutional set-up and how the actors involved in PDV arranged a division of roles that fostered the creation of local approaches.

Then, the project's strategic concept, its 'Intervention Model', and the specific activities supported and carried out by PDV are examined in view of the project's responses to the context factors at the level of project design and methodologies (section 4.2).

Finally, the chapter includes an assessment of the effectiveness of PDV in regard to achieving its objectives (section 4.3). The 2011 survey checked if PDV reached its objectives of by measuring a set of indicators. By drawing on this data, the hypotheses underlying the project's theory of change can be assessed and evidence of the contribution of the local approaches implemented by PDV and its NGO partners produced.

4.1 Project management

The Government of Switzerland through its agency SDC started supporting the fight against domestic violence in Tajikistan in 1999, when it co-funded the WHO pilot study on domestic violence. In 2000, SDC then approved the project 'Project against Violence Against Women' (ProVAW), which was the predecessor intervention to the case study project PDV. SDC was thus spearheading an explicit post-Soviet response to domestic violence in Tajikistan. SDC maintained 'access to justice' and 'promoting the rule of law and human rights' as thematic areas in its cooperation with Central Asian countries and has been involved with the issue of domestic violence ever since (SDC 2007b). In the period 2007-2011 Swiss development cooperation in this thematic area consisted of the Alternative Justice and Justice Reform (AJJR) and the Network of Legal Aid Centres (NetLAC) projects implemented by the Swiss NGO Helvetas, the Juvenile Justice Alternative (JJAP) project implemented by UNICEF, and ProVAW, which became PDV in 2008.

An external review of SDC's Rule of Law portfolio in 2011 recommended that SDC should not integrate access to justice as a cross-cutting issue in its strategy, but keep specific and visible projects. The review remarked that the relevance of PDV in general is unquestionable in light of the international discussions on gender equality and the plight of Tajik women. However, in regard to its leverage it was critical: *"As tragic as it is, whether [domestic violence] is the most pressing for the country remains open to questions."* (SDC 2011: 29). In its current regional strategy for the period 2012-2015, SDC maintains its focus on promoting access to justice. Despite the questioning of the relevance of domestic violence, the SDC portfolio continues to compose of PDV, AJJR, NetLAC and JJAP, which are complemented by the human rights dialogue implemented by the Swiss Foreign Ministry (SDC 2011b). In early 2012, PDV was extended for another three-year period.

4.1.1 Management set-up

Since its inception in 2000, ProVaW underwent several changes of management. The international NGO CARE International acted as the initial implementer for the

first 30 months of the project, before US-based NGO Winrock International took over responsibility in 2003. In 2004, the responsibility for ProVaW was then handed over to the Social Development Group (SDG), a Tajik NGO. However, SDG was formed with the support of SDC and Winrock with the aim to manage ProVAW. While this move was directed at creating the institutional prerequisites for sustainability and preparing for a hand-over of the project in an attempt to localise the intervention organisationally, the fact that a new organisation was formed reflects the lack of capable local NGOs, as well as the lack of trust in the local organisations existing in Tajikistan at the time.⁶⁹

In 2007, ProVAW was externally reviewed, and the evaluation report pointed out severe conflicts within SDG's management as well as between SDG and SDC, including indications of fraud, which endangered the project. SDG was in fact run by one person who acted as director (SDC 2007: 19-25). As an organisation SDG had no constituency or membership and lacked credibility within the Tajik NGO scene. Importantly, SDG had a conflict of interest in the sense that it implemented activities directly, while at the same time disbursing grants to other local NGOs as implementing partners, thereby claiming a lead role. In sum, the hand-over strategy failed. In regard to the formation of local approaches, the strategy described above must be seen critically. While the attempt to hand over the project to a local organisation to strengthen the prospects of sustainability is commendable, the strategy failed to take into account the structural conditions in regard to local power relations. As explained in the previous chapter, many Tajik NGOs are not genuine in their mission, but serve primarily as income for its leadership. Hence, there is heavy competition among local NGOs for donor funding.

SDC did then not renew its contract with SDG, but decided to identify an international implementing agency through a tender procedure. This marked a shift in SDC country office's strategy, focussing on managerial stability to be produced through an international organisation instead of promoting sustainability by means of a hand over to a local organisation. In September 2008, it was announced that a consortium under the lead of the German consulting firm GOPA

⁶⁹ Field notes, December 2008

Consultants had been awarded the mandate as the new implementing agency for the next phase of the project, whose title had been changed from ProVAW to PDV. GOPA's mandate represented Phase VII of the project, which started on December 1, 2008 and lasted until November 30, 2011. This is the period investigated by this study.

In Phase VII, PDV was managed by a Project Management Unit (PMU) located in two offices in the capital city Dushanbe and in Kurganteppa, the provincial capital of Khatlon. The PMU consisted of four technical officers, a Team Leader and three Programme Coordinators for different areas. One Programme Coordinator was in charge of activities in Khatlon and thus based in Kurganteppa. In addition, an administrator and accountant were employed, as were several support staff, such as drivers and an office clerk. All team members were Tajik professionals with a background in social services, for instance as trained teachers, and experience in working with NGOs. Some of the staff members had worked for SDG in the previous phase and thus represented a certain degree of continuity, despite the change of management. The high proportion of local staff was a conscious choice in the project's personnel concept, based on the rationale that local staff members would have a better understanding of and with the local partners and target group, including the required language skills. In fact, without local staff, supporting the creation of local solutions would have been very difficult for GOPA. The local team members in Tajikistan were supported by a Project Manager - the post that I held between December 2008 and March 2011 - and a Finance Manager. The role of this backstopping team was to liaise with the PMU to ensure strategic direction, as well as reliable client liaison for SDC and efficient financial management. The backstopping team was located at GOPA's headquarters in Bad Homburg, Germany. The teams in Dushanbe and Bad Homburg fostered an intensive communication with weekly phone calls and frequent email-correspondence. In addition, the Project Manager visited Tajikistan once per year in the summer and the Team Leader came to GOPA's headquarters in the winter towards the end of each project year. The team was assisted by international short-term experts.

The volume of the project budget for Phase VII was CHF2.3m (around EUR1.5 million), which is a moderate sum for a project of this size and scope.

The support rendered by PDV to the response to domestic violence can be divided into three modes of support (not to be confused with the project's three components to be outlined later). Firstly, PDV provides technical assistance for the capacity development of local NGOs involved in the prevention of domestic violence. As will be shown later, this relates to a broad spectrum of tasks that the NGOs fulfil, such as creating local multi-stakeholder networks, providing services to victims and raising awareness, and takes place at different levels, from the individual skills of staff members to the NGOs' organisational processes and their incorporation into the broader institutional frameworks. The assistance is provided through the PMU's Programme Coordinators, who coach the staff of local NGOs, organise trainings by local and international experts and study trips abroad, provide advice on improving the processes of the NGOs' service delivery and help in the development and dissemination of guidelines, manuals and sensitisation materials.

Secondly, PDV provides financial assistance to local NGOs in the form of grants. In Phase VII grant making amounted to an overall sum of approximately 800.000 CHF (around 665.000 EUR in total or around 4.000 EUR per NGO per month), which was equivalent to 35% of the project's total budget. It is important to acknowledge that the running costs, including rent, office supplies, and transport and staff salaries, including a percentage for social insurance tax, are eligible costs covered by the grants. Hence, the recipients of the grants are financially fully dependent on the project and over fifty people, and their extended families, depend on the project as their main source of income. The choice of the funding modality is crucial for the NGOs, as will be explained in the next sub-section, but the relatively high proportion of the overall budget underlines the importance that PDV accorded to the local partners.

Thirdly, PDV implements a behaviour change communication (BCC) campaign, which consists of the two pillars mass media and community outreach. The media work, including sponsoring TV spots, radio shows and newspaper articles, producing billboards and disseminating brochures, is done by the PMU itself with the help of a sub-contracted Tajik advertising company. The community outreach activities are done through and by the local NGOs.

4.1.2 Local NGOs as implementing partners

Apart from the project's mass media campaign, all project activities are implemented by local NGOs, who thus serve as intermediaries between the project and the population. International experts were brought to the country to very limited extent and only to work with the partners on technical issues. Also, the PMU, as well as GOPA's office in Germany played a background role. The NGOs acted as the 'flag bearers' of the project. As the external review of ProVAW noted,

"it is here that local expertise is developed. It is here that the female victims receive practical protection. It is here where useful interventions in the communities are developed" (SDC 2007: 2).

In Khatlon, PDV cooperates with four local NGOs: Ghamkori, Mahbuba, Hamroz and Dilafruz. The cooperation dates back several years, and it was the explicit request of SDC to maintain the partnerships in Phase VII from 2008 onwards.⁷⁰ Ghamkori was founded locally in 1996 and has since emerged as one of the biggest and well-known NGOs in Tajikistan, implementing projects for a broad array of donors. The Crisis Centre in Kurganteppa is one of Ghamkori's projects. The Crisis Centre functions as PDV's partner. Mahbuba is located in premises in Vakshs town. It was founded locally in 2001 and became a project partner in 2005. Hamroz and Dilafruz, in contrast, were founded by the ProVAW-project under CARE management and officially registered in 2002 and 2001 respectively.

The fact that NGO partners were founded by the project can be explained with the lack of non-governmental stakeholders for international agencies to collaborate with. NGOs only emerged as a relevant group of stakeholders in Tajikistan after the end of the civil war and as a by-product of international humanitarian assistance; NGOs themselves were an international export. Rather, than exploring the existing institutional structures and the possibilities for cooperation, the project opted for transplanting the idea of NGOs to the Tajik context. This may have to do with the mode of support typically used by international NGOs, who work in partnership with civil society and rarely with

⁷⁰ Notes on meeting with SDC, December 2008

government bodies. Another explanation is the context of attempts to promote democratisation in Tajikistan by supporting the development of civil society. As shown, the government structure and public sector are highly corrupt and dysfunctional. So rather than investing in and strengthening such structures NGOs provide an alternative lever for promoting change.⁷¹ The inception of the project in 1999 took place during a time, when a stronger involvement of civil society was a popular strategy that replaced the *realpolitik* tactics of supporting governments employed during the cold war (Nye 1990). But even today, the majority of donor-funded programmes by-passes government and cooperates with NGOs instead (Bliss/Neumann 2014: 387). Since institutional strengthening does not take place in this scenario, the benefits of circumventing potentially corrupt and dysfunctional institutions are traded against long-term sustainability and improved governance and public administration functioning.

It is important to emphasise that working through local NGOs was a conceptual choice from the onset that followed a clear rationale⁷². Firstly, the institutional set-up of ProVAW, and later PDV, acknowledged that successful community engagement regarding an issue as controversial as domestic violence requires a high level of expertise in navigating such a volatile environment. It is assumed that local NGOs know and understand local discourses regarding gender and violence and the power relations between community stakeholders and are able to work effectively in such a setting. This know-how and competence are the pre-requisites for devising approaches that are framed in a way that they can gain traction with the local population. Secondly, credibility among the population was an important pre-condition for working in communities on domestic violence. It was important to avoid giving the local population the impression of the project being owned and controlled by external forces imposing Western concepts. However, credibility with the population must also be earned by the NGOs. Thirdly, supporting local NGOs and enhancing their capacities was a means of supporting a sustainable contribution to the response to domestic violence in

⁷¹ Notes on meeting with SDC, April 2009

⁷² Notes on meeting with SDC, December 2008

Khatlon. In sum, the institutional set-up clearly illustrates that PDV strived to consider the key element of building partnerships with local stakeholders.

Working with and through NGOs is also a reflection of PDV's efforts to acknowledge structural conditions, in this case the informal 'rules of the game' of local governance in Tajikistan. The context analysis showed that formal local government suffers from weak institutional capacities and that the space is filled by informal players, including *mahalla* and religious leaders. The vacuum is also used by self-proclaimed fundamentalist groups that seek to widen their influence on Tajik society. It is against this background that the project's choice of NGOs as implementing also needs to be viewed. In terms of providing social services, NGOs are a relative novelty in Tajikistan, since in Soviet times social services were state-run only. However, in the face of humanitarian crisis this was not a challenge to local power structures. The question if NGOs could be effective advocates of social change in light of the struggle for influence, however, was not part of strategic considerations. Whether the NGOs succeed in navigating the contested space of domestic violence prevention and garnering the confidence of the population in the project areas is a major factor influencing success.

A critical aspect in terms of making a sustainable contribution to the response to domestic violence by means of capacity building of local NGOs is their financial dependency on international funding. This is a structural problem that results from the lack of government expenditure for the social sector. This poses a real challenge for PDV and its NGO partners. Ghamkori has a diversified revenue base, with funding from the EU, UN-agencies, among others; its Crisis Centre, however, is financed fully by PDV. Mahbuba has also worked for various donors, but currently SDC is the only funder of the organisation and all its staff are dedicated to working for PDV. Dilafruz has always been a project partner only of PDV. Hamroz has implemented activities on behalf of other donors, including the French NGO ACTED, but the bulk of funding comes from PDV. Sustainability is thus a major concern. SDC's Project Document (ProDoc) for Phase VII, which is the main reference document for its implementing agencies, noted that PDV needed to address this issue (SDC 2008: 3). In previous phases, the NGOs were assisted in developing income generating activities, such as selling handicrafts to enhance their revenues. However, this, at best, helped individual staff members

to complement their incomes, but not the organisations as a whole. Also, ideas were developed for the NGOs to start charging fees for the counselling, but these were never put in practice as to avoid establishing an additional barrier for abused women to access the services.⁷³ In Phase VII GOPA tackled the problem through building the capacities of the partners to diversify their revenue streams by developing and submitting competitive project proposals to other donors (SDC 2008: 14). In order to do this, the management changed the formal process for the NGOs to receive their funding by introducing a call for proposals, changing the mode of cooperation to a demand-driven process and supporting a mentality of self-reliance among the partners (GOPA 2009: 19). This process was not successful, since by the end of Phase VII all NGOs still relied primarily on PDV grants and proposal writing skills were still weak.⁷⁴

For the analysis below, it is important to keep the power asymmetry between project management and implementing partners in mind. Shaping local approaches requires translating between the global legal norms and discourse and local situations. In doing so, value systems may clash and attitudes among stakeholders within projects - for instance, between the funding agency, international organisations and local partners - may diverge. Such controversies are likely to take place when discussing the shape and content of strategies and approaches. On the one hand, the financial dependency is a risk to local partners' equal say in such strategic processes; if views collide, their views can easily be overpowered. On the other hand, the personal economic dependency of around fifty NGO staff members on the PDV grants may undermine the partners' capacities to voice contradicting views.

4.1.3 Negotiating programme design

It is important to note that GOPA was the fifth implementing agency for the project, and it took over a fully-fledged project design, including a decade-long history of implementing various activities. PDV inherited a mix of 'programme transplants' as well as attempts to create local approaches. On the one hand,

⁷³ Notes of meeting with SDC, April 2009

⁷⁴ Field notes, April 2012.

ProVAW was shaped by transplants of 'international models' of victim support services promoted by consultants working for the project. The Crisis Centre run by its partner NGO Ghamkori was the starting point for ProVAW. It was the first of its kind in Tajikistan, established to meet the reproductive health needs of women in Khatlon in the wake of the collapsed health system after independence and civil war. It took on the shape of European/US-style services, with counselling for female victims and a space for abused women to retreat and exchange. On the other hand, the partners were encouraged to search for local solutions to domestic violence in their areas.⁷⁵ ProVAW started off with a strong orientation on supporting victim support services, but then grew to encompass a broad range of activities, combining curative and preventive activities by supporting both victims support services as well as awareness raising. Hence, over time, the project grew 'organically' in scope and complexity, adding different components. This was an expression of the will to find a 'Tajik answer' to the problem of domestic violence. ProVAW carried out pioneer work, introducing and experimenting with a range of innovations to the project areas. The project has always been, and continues to be, the major domestic violence prevention intervention in Khatlon. Therefore, the project found it difficult to restrict its approach to a limited set of interventions, since there were no other actors that would take over other parts in a complementary fashion.⁷⁶ In consequence, by Phase VII the project lacked strategic coherence. Yet, SDC determined that the project in Phase VII should maintain its multidimensional approach (SDC 2007: 26). Consequently, the ProDoc for Phase VII states that the approach to be employed should remain holistic in that it supports both preventative action and curative services and works across sectors with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders at different levels of intervention.

The abovementioned continuity notwithstanding, SDC contributed to a modified outlook by changing the project's name from ProVAW to PDV, thereby signalling a new 'era' of the project. This firstly implied a focus on the problem of domestic violence. While in essence the project had already concentrated on this category,

⁷⁵ Field notes, December 2008.

⁷⁶ Notes on workshop with NGOs, June 2010

the formalisation by the donor served to hedge in work in other areas of gender-based violence, such as human trafficking or child marriages. But most importantly, the title emphasised that the project was a prevention intervention. The change of title thus secondly meant a shift away from its rather strong curative orientation. However, these foci were not reflected in the overall goal originally put forward by SDC for Phase VII of the project: *“The overall goal ... is to reduce both the level of violence and the impact of violence on the lives of women and their families”* (SDC 2008: 10). The acceptability of domestic violence was not included in this formulation, and the explicit mentioning of mitigating the impact of violence points towards victim support services, rather than primary prevention. Therefore, in its project proposal, GOPA suggested to SDC to alter the goal to better reflect the preventative character of the project (GOPA 2008: 57). SDC agreed that GOPA come up with a revised logframe containing reformulated objectives.

The final formulation of the objectives for Phase VII contained a separation of the project's long-term vision from its goal (see Annex 1). While the long-term vision related to the prevalence rate (*“The level of domestic violence is reduced”*), the overall goal concentrated on a reduction of its acceptability (*“The acceptability of domestic violence is reduced”*) (GOPA 2010: 7). The distinction between prevalence rates and acceptability levels was important in order to clarify towards SDC what achievements could be expected within the framework of the three-year phase. SDC agreed on a focus on the acceptability, citing the short lifespan of the phase, which was too short to anticipate a significant reduction in the prevalence of violence (SDC 2008: 18). The indicators to measure the goal of reduced acceptability therefore refer to the end of Phase VII in November 2011, while the reduction of the prevalence rate should be assessed at the end of a potential Phase VIII at the end of 2014. That said, even a reduction of the acceptability in a three-year period was rather ambitious. The focus on the acceptability of domestic violence now provided PDV with a clear strategic focus on altering the norms around domestic violence.

SDC also demanded that the implementing agency should *“provide strategic leadership ... in order to leverage greater impact”* (SDC 2009: 5) and that modifications to the approaches should be made to yield better results (SDC

2008: 8). As the Project Manager, I expressed my eagerness to promote the local solutions that the NGOs had come up with in previous years, however, while also critically analysing their relative contribution to the attainment of project objectives, which was well-received by SDC.⁷⁷ Consequently, the project embarked on a process of careful change management for improving the project's interventions for better results, essentially checking all interventions' utility. The change management consisted of two intertwined processes. On the one hand, a revision of the project's intervention logic to be expressed in an improved logframe and a diagramme was facilitated. The revision of the logframe and the development an explicit Intervention Model were the starting point, with both products to be developed simultaneously. The model had the purpose of providing the project and all involved stakeholders with a common conceptual framework and reference document, especially in light of the new focus on domestic violence and prevention (GOPA 2010: 6). It should serve to clarify the intended results and underlying assumptions on how these results should be achieved, which was seen as a precondition for further strategic discussions in and communication about the project. It should also form the basis for the logframe and hence for steering, monitoring and reporting. On the other hand, concrete strategies for the different project components were developed. Both processes took place in the first year of the phase, while the project activities continued.

Despite the modified outlook provided by SDC, a fundamental re-design was not regarded as useful by the project management, because the project had established a good level of maturity and a host of experiences to build on. Nevertheless, some activities were indeed cancelled, while for the majority conceptual improvements were developed. For the assessment of PDV's effectiveness later on it is important to remember that despite some changes, the intervention on the whole has remained the same for many years, at least since 2005. The situation in 2011 is therefore a cumulated effect of the project's efforts in the previous phases.

⁷⁷ Notes of meeting with PMU, April 2009

Spheres of influence within the project

The change management process was coordinated by me as the Project Manager and the Team Leader in Dushanbe. For specific inputs to technical areas the project hired international experts. Managing for local solutions requires shaping and facilitating strategic dialogue between stakeholders, and it was thus crucial that management involved the local partner NGOs through a series of consultations and workshops, both in regard to the Intervention Model and to the different component strategies; in fact, the overhaul was a joint collaborative process, in which the views of the NGO partners played a crucial role, as will emerge throughout the analysis in the following sections. In this vein, it was important that the conceptual overhaul was done as a step-by-step process, rather than a radical turn-around, in order not to antagonise partners and provide enough time for them to develop ownership of the process (GOPA 2009).

However, streamlining the interventions in a participatory fashion was a challenging process. Firstly, it appeared that the partners had difficulties in attaching meaning to the new and stronger focus on prevention. There was a mixing-up in the discussion of different dimensions of change, such as reducing the incidence of violence, mitigating the negative consequences and decreasing the tolerance of violence. The discussions revealed an implicit assumption that the project would make a difference anyhow and a lack of formulation of the hypotheses on how this would happen. Clearly, the NGOs did not have much experience with strategic planning and project design. Their expertise lay at the level of concrete everyday methodologies of service provision.⁷⁸

Secondly, and most importantly, it became evident that the local partners were keen not to disrupt the status quo too much.⁷⁹ Their reluctance to engage in changing the project set-up is understandable when on the one hand acknowledging the importance of the project for the NGO staff members' incomes. On the other hand, the partners had a very high level of ownership for their work of the last ten years.

⁷⁸ Email-correspondence with PMU, May 2010

⁷⁹ Notes from workshop with NGOs, April 2009

An interesting discussion took place in regard to the project's support for the victim support services. From a strategic point of view, the relative contribution of component 2 to the goal of reducing the acceptability of violence was envisaged to be modest by the project management. In this vein, the baseline report recommended that the strategy be reviewed (PDV 2009: xvi):

“Given the complexity of causal determinants ... it may be advantageous to consider support the Project Vision through a stronger focus on attitudinal change over a direct response to violence. It is recommended that the Client consider the relative merits of various Project components, and reallocate funds accordingly.”

The focus on victim support services can be classified as a ‘programme transplant’. Taking into account the high-prevalence situation in Khatlon and the relatively large proportion of PDV's budget allocated to the running of the Crisis Centres, the decision to maintain the service component is questionable. But despite the strong efficacy arguments, project management respected the partners' wish for maintaining the funding for the Crisis Centres. The centres were the starting point for ProVAW and its partners. The identity and skills of the partner organisations were so closely connected to the mission of providing support to female violence victims that in the end the service component was maintained. Also, their jobs as counsellors and community mobilisers represented the main and often only source of income for the NGO staff and their extended families so that abolishing the project's support for the Crisis Centres could have jeopardised their livelihoods. However, maintaining the funding for the Crisis Centres was not a charitable act. Rather more, it was clear that the vested interests of the partners needed to be respected to safeguard the stability of the partnerships on which the success of the project rested. Hence, the local partners occupied a rather powerful position. Acknowledging this was, in effect, part of managing for local solutions.

In addition, the partners were reluctant towards the change management process, because over the years they had developed their own approaches,

which they referred to as their 'Tajik solutions'.⁸⁰ That said the contours of this 'Tajik approach' had not been documented systematically. The NGO partners were somewhat suspicious that the attempt to streamline the work supported within PDV represented a tactic to cancel their local approaches in favour for 'transplants'. Negative experiences with international experts had been made in previous phases, and it was clearly said that many of the models *"do not work for us in Tajikistan"*. An example frequently mentioned were guidelines for the Crisis Centres to provide to women that stipulated they should always have handy 'safety kits', to be able to leave their violent husbands ad-hoc. Such safety kits should include items like identity cards and cash, which the women that the guidelines were aimed at normally did not possess. It was central to the success of the change management process that project management would strike a balance between the donor's demand for strategic coherence and the need and wish of the NGOs for respect for local solutions. To counter the partners' anxiety of local approaches being abolished, the explanatory notes to the Intervention Model stated that

"the dynamics of domestic violence differ in each community. ... In consequence, the prevention strategies need to be tailored to these specific situations. While there is no clear-cut system that can serve as a 'blueprint' for preventing domestic violence, the PDV Intervention Model draws together the most relevant aspects" (GOPA 2010: 24).

Importantly, the development of the Intervention Model was not concerned much with the details of how the NGOs delivered their services (the 'theory of action'), but rather the general building blocks of the work to be supported by PDV to effect change. As will be shown later, the partners were assisted in strengthening their work. However, the creation of locally-suitable approaches did not follow a fixed formula prescribed by the PMU, but was supportive of diverse concepts. The document on the PDV Intervention Model merely quotes UNFPA's 'good practice'-principles, such as recognising the local context, promoting the involvement of the community and local stakeholders and building on religious and traditional institutions (ibid.). As a result, the NGOs were given considerable

⁸⁰ Notes from workshop with NGOs, April 2009

freedom in tailoring their work to the specific situations in the communities that they work. The Intervention Model, as expressed in the logframe, presented the official 'policy' of the project – its 'public transcript' -, while it allowed various approaches to flourish in practice. The analysis in the next section will demonstrate how these approaches worked in practice. It is important to note that the local approaches did not represent 'hidden transcripts' in the sense that they were a strategy to undermine or resist official project policy. Rather, the production and implementation of local solutions was the explicit and agreed upon task of the local partners within the project's division of roles. The project management was in charge of policy coherence and strategic orientation and the NGOs provided the services at the community level.

4.2 Project concept and activities

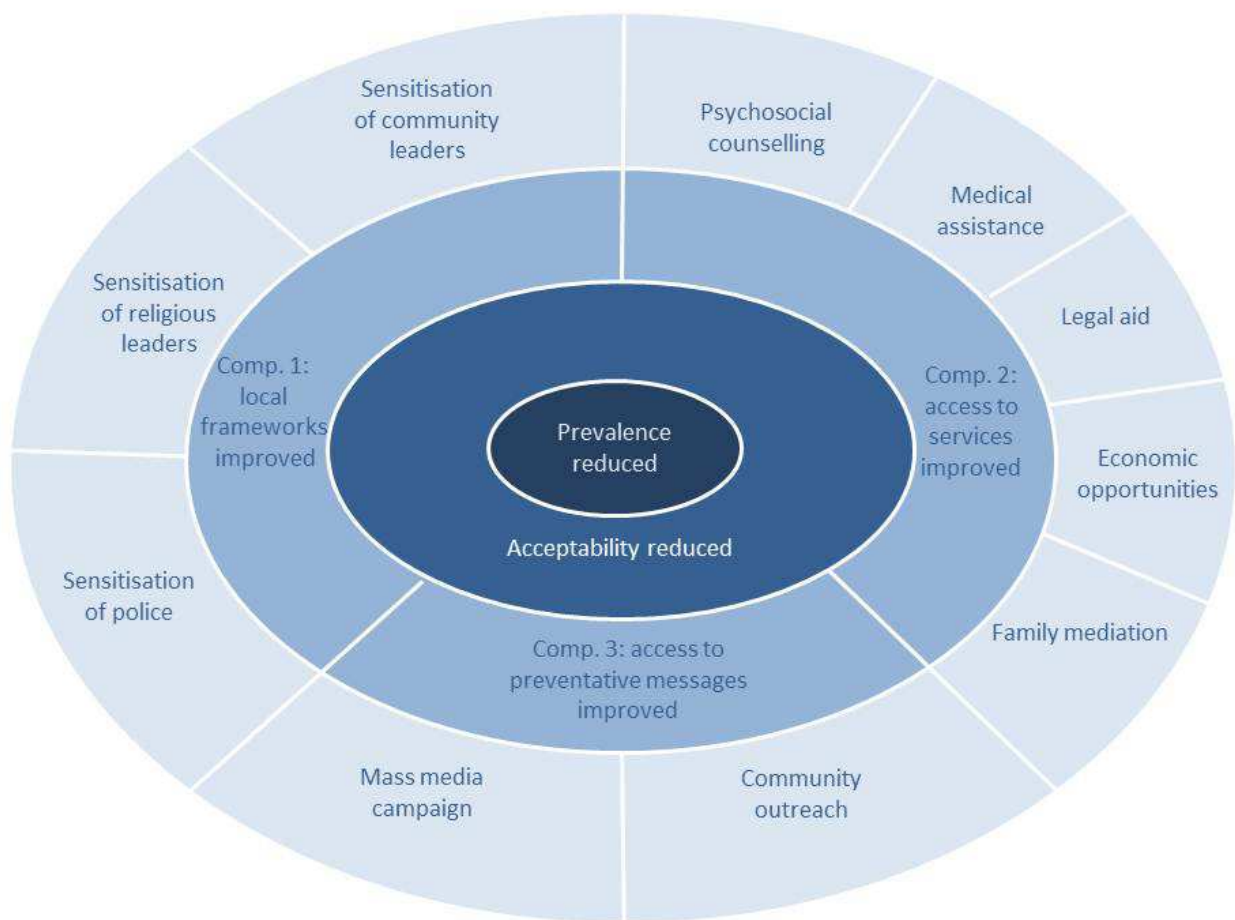
4.2.1 PDV Intervention Model / Theory of Change

In this sub-section the Intervention Model - or 'theory of change' - that the project design is based on will be explained. A theory of change describes the intended changes that a project seeks to effect and the hypotheses regarding how these changes shall be brought about. In the following, the theory of change applies to Phase VII of the project, which was implemented from December 2008 to November 2011. The following sections will analyse how local adaptation was fostered and done at the level of the project concept and concrete methodologies.

It is important to note that the Intervention Model represents the project's work at the local level, even though PDV is also active at the national policy level. Since the inception of ProVAW, the project operated in Khatlon, this choice being derived from the findings of the 1999 WHO pilot study that showed the highest prevalence of domestic violence in the south of Tajikistan. But also, after the civil war of the 1990s, the international humanitarian efforts were concentrated in Khatlon. The project focuses on the town of Kurganteppa, on 27 villages in the district of Bohktar and on 14 villages in Vakhsh. This amounts to half the villages in Bohktar and to around one-third of villages in Vakhsh.

The PDV Intervention Model is depicted in the diagramme on the next page (see Fig. 13 overleaf). The core of the ellipse represents the intended long-term impact or vision of the project, which refers to the reduced prevalence of domestic violence in PDV's project areas. The intermediate change that is required for this to happen is a reduced acceptability of domestic violence in the project areas, which represents the goal and intended medium-term impact of Phase VII. The first hypothesis on which the project design rests is thus that a reduced acceptability of domestic violence will lead to a reduction in the prevalence rate. As shown in the study's methodology chapter, there is ample evidence that high acceptability levels increase the risk of domestic violence.

Fig. 13: PDV Intervention Model



Source: GOPA 2010: 21, with own modifications

Through this strategic focus, PDV puts the social and cultural dimensions of violence at the centre of its intended results. Within the WHO classification of prevention interventions PDV thus fits in the group of prevention approaches that seek to change social norms. This is a correct reaction to the domestic violence situation in Khatlon, which is characterised as a high-prevalence area; it is not only specific at-risk populations that are perpetrators and victims of domestic violence, but large segments of society. Also, the analysis of the 2009 PDV survey data showed that the high prevalence is coupled with a high degree of tolerance, which provides for a major risk factor at societal level, in contrast to other settings where individual level factors, for instance such as substance abuse, are the main driver of domestic violence. While a change in attitude does not automatically lead to a change in behavior, the underlying assumption is that less tolerance of violence in society at large - expressed in women's and men's rejection of social norms that permit or promote violence - will create a climate that is so unfavourable of violence that it will have an impact on people's behaviour.

The next ring is divided into three parts, one each for the three project components. The assumption on which the project design is based is that the three components together will have a positive effect on the reduction of the acceptability of domestic violence. The three components are a mix of interventions that tackle different risk factors for violence outlined in the WHO's ecological model for violence prevention and represent a blend of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

Component objective 1 runs: "The policy and institutional framework and environment for the fight against domestic violence at the ... local level in the project areas are improved." The underlying rationale is that effective political and institutional framework conditions are the precondition for any kind of formal public response to domestic violence. After lengthy discussions with SDC, it was agreed that the component on the policy and legal framework should be broadened to include advocacy at the local level in the project areas.⁸¹ Previously the project had focused all its attention on lobbying for a law on domestic violence

⁸¹ Notes on meeting with SDC, April 2009

at national level. SDC generally acknowledged that the strength of the project lay outside the area of legal reform (SDC 2008: 9), yet its representatives time and again raised that the project should focus more on lobbying for a law on domestic violence to be passed. The PDV team argued that the project was best utilised when working at the grassroots level with local government and community stakeholders and that the role of PDV should be to develop a model for a local response to domestic violence and to feed the lessons learnt generated back to the policy level. This was also in recognition of the localised nature of governance in Tajikistan and the vertical disconnect between the central and local government, as outlined in the context chapter. Eventually SDC agreed to this position, especially after the Swiss Foreign Ministry selected Tajikistan to be one of the partner countries to take part in its human rights dialogue at state level. One of the central issues identified for the dialogue was women's rights and especially the law on domestic violence. Hence, the Swiss government decided on a complementary intervention to PDV's efforts at national level, which allowed the project a stronger focus on the local level. While the project continued to contribute to policy dialogue at national level, which is also represented in the logframe, the Intervention Model's visualisation is limited to the local level.

The context analysis in the previous chapter showed that institutional capacities and legal mechanisms in Khatlon are poor and require enhancement. Because of the weak vertical linkages between central and local government, with virtually no funding and strategic oversight provided from the centre, PDV recognises the importance of local and informal governance structures. The project design thus takes into account the role of local key stakeholders, most notably *mahalla* members, local government representatives and religious leaders. As respected members of their communities, they are opinion leaders and have a strong influence on the shaping of social norms. Moreover, they play a major role in the settlement of family disputes and providing of informal sanctions. The component is thus related to society level risk factor of social norms supportive of violence, as well as to the community level risk factor of weak sanctions against perpetrators.

The objective of component 2 is formulated as follows: "The access to quality psychosocial, medical and legal services for victims of domestic violence in the

project areas is improved.” The context analysis demonstrated that there is a lack of victim support services in Khatlon, since the legal and health systems do not respond adequately to cases of domestic violence. The underlying hypotheses are that the availability of services for abused women reduces the acceptability of domestic violence, because firstly their existence in itself provides a sign that violence is not positively sanctioned, secondly victim support services fulfill a linkage function, as they provide an entry point for women to the legal system, and thirdly services help to empower women to protect themselves better from abusive situations. Throughout the strategic planning process for Phase VII, however, there was a discussion within PDV’s management whether component 2 should not be abandoned, as explained earlier. The potency of services to alter social norms in the greater population is limited, because in a high-prevalence setting like Tajikistan only a certain degree of coverage can be achieved.

Component 3 deals with the acceptability of domestic violence directly. The component objective is: “The access to quality preventive communication on domestic violence for the population in the project areas is improved.” The component consists of a behaviour change communication (BCC) campaign that consists of two pillars, namely mass media using TV, radio and newspapers, and community outreach activities conducted by the NGO partners. The hypothesis is that exposure to well-crafted messages against domestic violence will help to reduce the acceptability of domestic violence. The context analysis pointed to the fact that there is a growing influence of self-proclaimed Salafist teaching in Khatlon that requires counteraction. The component is related to the societal level risk factor of social norms supportive of violence.

Finally, the outer ring of ellipse then depicts the activities supported and undertaken by PDV and its NGO partners to achieve the three component objectives. It is here that the local approaches are largely developed and implemented by the NGOs themselves. Whether the approaches chosen and implemented by PDV to this end adequately considered the local setting and proved to be effective is the subject of the next sections.

4.2.2 Enlisting local stakeholders (component 1)

The advocacy activities in Khatlon under component 1 were geared towards garnering the support of local key stakeholders for the response to domestic violence. The support of religious leaders, local politicians and *mahalla* members were the main issue tackled for creating an environment supportive of the response to domestic violence. The idea was that these stakeholders integrate topics around domestic violence in their everyday work. This can be, for instance, that *mulloh* talk about the negative effects of violence during a Friday prayer or community meetings. Activities supported by PDV and its partners to this end included a range of sensitisation sessions for key stakeholders, as well as community meetings (so-called 'round table discussions').

Prior to Phase VII, the project's PMU had organised sensitisation sessions with local policemen and *mulloh* directly. It often hired Tajik professors to conduct these sessions. At first these sessions continued in Phase VII, and in 2010 and 2011 a total of 55 policemen and 50 *mulloh* participated. Participants included the officers appointed to the special domestic violence unit in Kurganteppa (GOPA 2012: 10). However, as part of the change management process, management felt that it would be useful to scrutinise this approach and give the local NGOs a stronger role. Placing the NGOs at the front of advocacy efforts was regarded as a precondition for promoting the ownership of local key stakeholders and a means of recognising the key element of building partnerships for effective local approaches. The decision was readily accepted by the NGOs. It was based on the reasoning that the NGOs would be better placed to bring local stakeholders on board, since they know the specific local circumstances they operate in, including the local power networks and the contentious issues in the communities. Also, the NGOs would be able to involve *mahalla* members and other opinion leaders in the communities. The change in strategy acknowledged the fact that the NGOs in many cases had already fostered close relationships.⁸² As will be shown when analysing the victim support services, the collaboration between the NGOs and the *mahallas*, *mulloh* and police was mostly triggered by cases of domestic violence in the community, whereby either stakeholder would

⁸² Notes of meeting with PMU, April 2009

contact and involve the others to assist in settling the dispute, as will explained in the next sub-section. The situation analysis done by the project therefore concluded that the stakeholders had been doing a lot of networking that, from the point of the NGOs, already served the purpose of forming strategic alliances for a response to domestic violence without actually being aware of it (PDV 2010: 4).

Forming alliances around common issues

As part of the project's conceptual overhaul, PDV in 2010 hired two international experts to support the process of developing a local advocacy strategy together with the partners. This strategy should provide a coherent framework for enlisting local key stakeholders in the response to domestic violence, widen the scope of activities from the sensitisation sessions only, and provide NGO partners with orientation for working with local stakeholders. A three-day workshop was conducted with the NGO partners, which served to elicit their views and ideas on the framework of the strategy, i.e. which messages should be transport by which means to whom. The international experts helped to facilitate the process, but the choice of messages was that of the NGOs.

As a first step, two issues were identified that all stakeholders at community level could possibly rally around. These were that there was no safe environment for women (issue one) and that girls had limited access to education (issue two), the latter highlighting the link between the lack of education and risk of victimisation for young women. Then advocacy goals were formulated to provide concrete outputs. For issue one, the advocacy goals were that *mulloh* would speak about the misuse of *taloq* at Friday prayers and religious wedding ceremonies and *mahalla* members would raise the issue of registered marriages and residence during community meetings. On issue two it was determined that *mulloh* and local government representatives should talk about the legal obligation of girls to complete secondary schools in their interactions with the public, such as community meetings (ibid: 7).

In the course of 2011, the NGO partners carried out an impressive list of activities in line with the new strategy: they organised meetings between the *imom khatibs*, *mahalla* and population in 38 villages in Vakshs and Bohktar where the religious

persons would talk about the importance of registering marriages and abusing *taloq*; conducted meetings with 18 *mulloh* to convince them to talk about the misuse of *taloq* during Friday prayers and *nikoh* ceremonies; supported ten representatives of *hukumats* and *jamoats* to talk about the importance of residence and marriage registration during community meetings; conducted meetings of local government officials, *mahalla* and *mulloh* together in 38 villages to discuss the necessity of girls' education (GOPA 2012: 10). Without being explicitly mentioned in the advocacy strategy, the NGOs also worked with the police. They conducted meetings with the chiefs of eight police departments to convince them to insist to their staff that cases of domestic violence are met with timely responses and organised that twelve policemen talked about the sanctions for domestic violence at *mahalla* meetings. This kind of collaboration, piloted by PDV in Khatlon, has been taken up in the law on domestic violence, which stipulates in Article 6 (GoT 2012: 6) that the police should “*take measures on [the] prevention of family violence by regular joint work with the workers of the centers*” while Article 16 (ibid.: 7) on the Crisis Centres' roles states that they should “*cooperate with other bodies on [the] prevention of family violence*”. All of the meetings listed above served the purpose of building alliances between the different stakeholders and strengthen their networks through working together on a common cause. Bringing them together also served to streamline the messages that senior figures would disseminate to the communities so that messages were clear and not ambivalent.

The community meetings were usually choreographed in a way matching the custom of hospitality in Tajik communities, with seating arranged on the floor and sumptuous arrangements of tea, fruits, nuts and sweets (see Pic. 2 overleaf). A curtain separating women and men was a typical feature. Sometimes women also ‘participated’ in the session from inside the house on whose compound the meeting was held. Meetings would start and end with prayers. The leading figures present, for example a *mulloh* or police representative, would each be given a slot to speak and the NGO representatives would then facilitate discussions. Sometimes the NGO would bring along print materials or show a video clip to stimulate the discussion. The meetings were a mixture between a traditional Tajik

meeting of elders and a project-style workshop, with some people present uncomfortable by being prompted to give their opinion.

Pic. 2: Community meeting with local stakeholders in Bohktar, April 2012



Source: A. Erich

Due to their history as social service providers, the NGO partners found it challenging to adopt a stronger role as advocates, which surfaced in the insecurities and weaknesses they displayed in facilitating community meetings. The technical assistance provided to the NGOs therefore also aimed at building their capacities in this respect. The 2007 evaluation report included a capacity assessment of the partner NGOs, and in regard to Hamroz the authors praised its potentials (SDC 2007: 13). The PDV Programme Coordinator for Khatlon also

very clearly identified Hamroz as the best of the three partner NGOs conducting community outreach when asked for an impromptu assessment. In her view, Hamroz had the best leadership and most experienced staff, they were the most respected and credible of the partners in the communities they work in.⁸³ Hamroz also has the best relationship with local government, because some of the staff members are themselves former local government employees. This is in contrast to Mahbuba and Dilafruz who suffer from relatively poor management and weak technical capacities.

Partnerships and trade-offs

The advocacy strategy does not tackle domestic violence directly. Rather, its focus is on risk factors for violence. Technically speaking, this is in line with a primary prevention approach, since the underlying factors that promote violence need to be removed instead of only tackling the symptoms. Choosing women's lack of social protection on the one hand and girls' decreasing levels of education is in fact a good reflection of the structure of the domestic violence situation in Tajikistan, as shown in the context chapter earlier, since legal marriages and women's secondary education protect women from victimisation.

The choice of advocacy issues represents an approach that frames domestic violence in a way that is palatable to the stakeholders that need to represent the response against it. Official Islam in Tajikistan recognises civil marriage and family law. At the same time, the abuse of religious marriage and the principles of *taloq* are a threat to the authority of religious leaders, who promote marriage as a safe haven for women. Consequently, there was a convergence between the objectives of the project, religious leaders representing official Islam and local government. A similar situation was the case in regard to the second issue chosen, since girls' education is also an aim that all stakeholders could settle on. Banning girls from schools was regarded as un-Islamic by traditionalist Tajiks, including religious leaders representing official Islam, and by government representatives. Of course, the Soviet legacy of universal education promotes

⁸³ KII with PDV staff on 4 and 11 April 2012

this view. Consequently, in line with good practice in violence prevention, the advocacy strategy harnessed existing values. An explicit reference to the universality of human rights in contrast would have added another layer to the public discourse. Also, it would have clearly had the notion of an externally driven input. The two issues identified in the advocacy strategy presented a common denominator that was agreeable to all stakeholders involved.

Had the project focused on other issues and positioned itself in an antagonistic fashion towards the local decision-makers, it would have been likely that they would have been barred from entering the communities. The NGOs confirmed that there was a massive rift in society in regard to the 'correct' interpretation of Islam and that this was making their work very difficult. NGOs had been denied access to some villages on the grounds that they would 'spoil' the girls and that they were 'foreign spies'.⁸⁴ However, in some instances the *hukumat* had specifically asked the NGOs to work in such communities, because the local government representatives had at some point been hindered from entering villages. By settling on the two advocacy issues, the NGOs managed to establish themselves as credible players at the community-level.

The NGOs also tried to mitigate potential resistance with the help of the religious leaders at district level (*imom-khatibs*). Over the years, the NGOs and the religious leaders had established close working relationships. The NGOs referred to them as 'our *mulloh*'. They held regular meetings and discussed cases and strategies. Some had received theological training abroad and espoused relatively egalitarian views on gender and Islam.⁸⁵ I was able to speak to them myself several times and can confirm this assessment.⁸⁶ However, their traditionalist views on gender and gender equality were patriarchal, with women being clearly expected to be submissive and obedient to their husbands and in charge of the home. As will be explained in the next sub-section, based on an interpretation of sura 4:34, the religious leaders took the stance that men do have the responsibility of 'educating' their wives and that this entailed disciplining them. However, disciplining should not be carried out by means of physical violence.

⁸⁴ FGDs with NGO staff on 7 April 2012

⁸⁵ FGDs with NGO staff on 5 and 7 April 2012

⁸⁶ FGD with religious leaders on 6 April 2012

The fact that the *imom khatibs* were present during the community meeting made a big impression on the population, which is a lesson from other programmes in Muslim countries, for instance in Bangladesh (UNFPA 2006b). Especially the *imom khatib* of Bohktar was somewhat of a local celebrity, who attracted virtually thousands of believers during his prayers. It is correct to assume that the partnership with him elevated the reputation of Hamroz in the communities. It is important to note that the *imom-khatibs* are part of the system of official Islam in Tajikistan. Working with them, as well as with local government and the police meant that the NGOs took sides in the public discourse. The project and its allied stakeholders took a clear stance against fundamentalist trends in Tajik society by openly opposing the trend towards religious marriages and by advocating for girls' education. The controversial environment posed a risk for the project's success in reducing the acceptability of domestic violence. Even if the local stakeholders that the project cooperated with support the response to domestic violence, they are only one section of the discourse that seeks to influence the values and norms in regard to gender relations. The assumption on which the contribution on of component 1 to the attainment of the project goal rested was that the partners would be able to succeed in dominating the public discourse.

4.2.3 Strengthening victim support services (component 2)

As explained in the context chapter, there are few services for abused women as well as barriers hampering women's access to medical, legal and economic support. Under component 2, the project therefore provides grants to the NGOs as well as technical assistance through the PMU's Programme Coordinator in the Kurganteppa office, in order to improve the quality of and women's access to victim support services.

Strictly speaking, this component only deals with Ghamkori Crisis Centre. However, with the service portfolio of the NGOs being blurred, as explained in the context chapter, actually all partners in Khatlon support individual victims and their families. In a mapping exercise done by OSCE (2011), all partner NGOs in Khatlon are classified as Crisis Centres, even though their services differ from one another. Ghamkori maintains a spacious premise with various rooms for

counselling sessions and employs qualified psychologists and lawyers. Until 2009 Ghamkori financed a gynaecologist to be stationed at the centre once a week through an EU-funded health project. The mainstay of Ghamkori's work is service delivery in the centre. For Dilafruz, Hamroz and Mahbuba the situation is the opposite, with a focus on community outreach. Each NGO employs a team of social workers that conduct educational sessions with groups of different people at village level, as will be explained in regard to component 3 later. Also, the NGOs coordinate round tables of local stakeholders under component 1. However, the NGOs also identify cases of domestic violence, which they refer to Ghamkori. But over time more and more women started approaching the NGOs for help in their offices, turning them into *de facto* Crisis Centres. Therefore, they also started providing counselling and turned into 'one-stop-shops'. The PDV project reacted to this situation by providing the fees for a lawyer to provide free legal aid to the NGOs' clients on different days of the week.

In regard to enhancing women's access, PDV supported the marketing of the services by the four partner organisations in Khatlon. It sponsored marketing materials, such as flyers and posters, for the NGOs to advertise their services more effectively. Also, the NGOs could use the advocacy and BCC events to market their services, the assumption being that components 1 and 3 would make the existence of victim support services better known and more acceptable and thus help in achieving component objective 2.

Another means of promoting access to the Crisis Centres was strengthening case referral by establishing local stakeholder networks. Rather than relying on the police or the health system to act as an effective entry point for victim support alone, the project supported the NGOs to work together with the police, *mulloh*, *mahalla* members and local government representatives in finding specific solutions for cases.⁸⁷ Such a pragmatic approach recognises the dysfunctionality and institutional weaknesses of the local public services that was explained in the context chapter: the formal institutions lack capacity and legal channels may not provide the best possible outcomes for violence victims. Thus, informal

⁸⁷ FGDs with NGO staff on 5 and 7 April 2012

agreements and alternative solutions between stakeholders are sought, as the following quote from a 2011 FGD illustrates:

„We should note one thing: when there is conflict in a neighbourhood in foreign countries, people immediately inform the law enforcement agencies. It is not the case here“ (NGO staff member)

For example, when the *mahalla* is called upon by families for help and felt overwhelmed, it would ask the NGOs to assist in counselling the victims and help look for individual solutions. Or the police would ask the NGOs to take over handling a case after the judicial procedure had been done. On the other hand, when the NGOs would be called to mediate a marital conflict and would ask the local *mulloh* to join, especially in cases where the couple was only married religiously, and in severe cases the NGOs would involve the police. This kind of multi-stakeholder network as a referral system has been taken up in the law on domestic violence that stipulates that the service providers have a responsibility of informing the police (GoT 2012: 7), while the police must refer victims to health services or Crisis Centres (ibid.: 5). The NGOs take over an important coordinating function in these multi-stakeholder networks, communicating and facilitating between the various actors, thereby being able to monitor cases and garner stakeholders' support. In terms of women's access to support services, such stakeholder collaboration would also lead to more referrals to the Crisis Centres.

In regard to improved quality, the project's technical assistance comprises of coaching the NGO staff, as well of training organised by PDV. The 2007 external evaluation pointed out a lack of professional training among the staff of the NGOs. Especially a lack of counselling skills was singled out, meaning that the counselling often consisted of preaching to the clients rather than active listening and searching for ways of stimulating personal empowerment with the clients (SDC 2007: 13). Haarr (2008) also criticised the NGO staff for their lack of skills. Consequently, in 2009 alone the project provided eight training workshops, ranging from counselling skills, methods of collegial supervision, and leadership, amongst others (GOPA 2009: 15). A training needs assessment was carried out to specify what exact skills future training should concentrate on, recommending

that a focus be put on management issues, such as proposal writing and fundraising. In 2011, an external review done by SDC then concluded a training fatigue in the project (SDC 2011: 11).

The project also sponsored a group of staff members to go on a study tour to Kentucky in the United States in 2007 (under ProVAW) and to Germany in 2011 (under PDV, Phase VII), where the Tajik practitioners could learn from their counterparts how the response to domestic violence functioned in these countries. In both instances, the potential knowledge transfer was limited because of the greatly differing contexts, but the participants still felt that they had been inspired by the exposure to new ideas (GOPA 2012: Annex 3). However, from 2010 onwards, the project reduced its training offers and concentrated more on management skills; also the programme of the study tour to Germany was geared towards models of financially sustainable social services. Furthermore, the project concentrated on on-going coaching of the partners, especially in regard to their role as advocates and campaigners, through the PMU's Programme Coordinator.

Client responsive service provision

For this study the question is of interest, if and how the victim support services provided by the NGO partners of PDV appropriated their services to the local situation in Khatlon. Merry (2006) showed that despite claims being made by programmes that they are 'culturally sensitive', most interventions imitate American or European models in a process she calls 'transnational programme transplant'. Indeed, in the Soviet era, centres for abused women did not exist, but women could obtain services through mainstream social services. In the aftermath of independence, during the civil war in Tajikistan, the 'shelter movement' took off in other post-Soviet countries, popularising the concept of a women's shelter, which in Russia was coined 'Crisis Centre'. Ghamkori was the first Crisis Centre in Tajikistan. During the Soviet period, victims of domestic violence could sometimes count on the support from local party organs and could obtain support from the police and in hospitals; although the extent to which victims actually accessed services and whether they were declared as domestic

violence is questionable. In any case, the idea of Crisis Centres was indeed new in Khatlon.

Today, the operational details of the services provided in the centres, however, are highly contextualised. As a starting point, it is useful to outline the services provided by the local partners in some detail. The partners' service portfolio is not systematised, and there are no national guidelines or quality standards that provide orientation.⁸⁸ Services can be broadly divided into five categories, as reflected in the outer ring of the Intervention Model: psychosocial counselling, medical aid (only in the case of Ghamkori), legal aid, advice on economic empowerment, and assistance in settling conflicts with marital partners and the family. However, the actual service provided depends on the specific needs of each client. As this quote illustrates, it is the aim of the NGOs to be responsive to their clients' needs:

"It is necessary to consider and understand thoroughly what a woman wants. It is necessary to understand her will, whether she wants to accept this torture and continue living with her husband in future or [if] she wants divorce." (NGO staff member)

A major distinction is whether the clients have already been divorced (*taloq*). This is an important determinant of the structural conditions the clients find themselves in. The NGOs deal mostly with female clients who are still in violent marriages. In such instances the severity of the violence is a determining factor for the action taken by the NGO. There are many cases where abused women come to the centre with the wish to simply share their stories with someone and receive some advice and counselling on how to improve marital life. In case of injury, the NGOs and the Crises Centre, however, are not equipped to provide emergency medical care to the victims.⁸⁹ Many times women come to the centres with untreated injuries, including broken bones, and the staff must motivate the women to visit a doctor. But cases of severe or even life-threatening violence put the NGOs in a dilemma. The staff can provide psychosocial counselling, but are unable to provide further protection from the perpetrator: after receiving counseling, women

⁸⁸ KII with international agencies, April 2012

⁸⁹ Field notes, December 2008, April 2009 and June 2010

are sent back home. If the women have sought the service without permission from or against the will of their husbands it is not unusual for them to be punished, sometimes with even more severe violence. Ghamkori Crisis Centre has developed a concept, based on an American model for a so-called 'security plan' for women. Women who are under threat by their husbands are told to keep a list of essential items, like personal identification and other documents, for themselves and their children ready so that the next time they are abused they can quickly take their things and leave to the centre. Nevertheless, coming to the centre is only a temporary solution.

One major issue that is therefore being discussed among stakeholders is the need for women's shelters. Some of the staff members of the NGOs took clients to their private homes to stay overnight. The law on domestic violence has now taken up the issue (GoT 2012: 7) in that it allows Crisis Centres to "*provide shelter for [the] temporary stay of the family member that may suffer or already suffered from family violence*", albeit without specifying that these will be funded from public budgets. The PDV project, however, has avoided supporting women's shelters, because it was felt that the project would be unable to guarantee the victims' safety.⁹⁰ There would be a high likelihood that men would break into the shelters to fetch their wives, only to punish them more; or even kill them. The possibility of running a secret safe house is unlikely in the closely-knit communities of Khatlon, and security personnel could easily be bribed to side with the husbands. As long as perpetrators are not effectively incarcerated and kept away from their victims, this situation will not change. The new law on domestic violence includes provisions for protection orders (ibid.: 10-12), but it remains to be seen how effectively this measure will be enforced. Also, in Tajik society living alone is not considered an option for women, and social norms dictate that women must live in a family context, either with their marital or their natal family. Running shelters would have meant that the NGOs had to risk their credibility with the communities that they work for. Further, PDV also refrained from supporting the construction or establishment of shelters for programmatic reasons. Due to the shift towards prevention that characterised the project's

⁹⁰ Notes from meetings with PMU, Dec 2008, April 2009, June 2010

seventh phase, considerations about the utility of component 2 were crucial. Considering the fact that Khatlon is a high prevalence area, advocacy and behavior change activities were prioritised in spending decisions, thereby seeking to rectify the curative bias of the project to some extent.

Reconciliation and family conferences

Theoretically, apart from shelters, the only other option for separating the victim from the perpetrator is separation and divorce. However, the NGOs have a clear position in that they prioritise the integrity of the family unit over the wish of the individual women to be separated from their violent husbands. In my interactions with the staff of the NGOs it was made crystal clear that protecting the family unit is at the core of the response and that divorce is not considered a positive option:

„By intervening in family issues we do not have an aim to break up a family. Through advising and mutual consent we resolve a family problem.“

(NGO staff member)⁹¹

Of course, there are also cases in which women come to the partners expressing the wish to divorce. But it is only in cases where women were at risk of being killed that NGOs feel that divorce should be considered. Usually the staff will try and calm the women down and discourage them from taking quick decisions. They typically ask the women to take their time to think about the consequences and help her to find solutions to her problems. There is a fine line, however, between calming down the women and talking them out of their divorce plans.

Firstly, the emphasis on keeping families intact is a reaction to the structural conditions in Tajikistan. Most importantly, in the eyes of the NGOs, their response needs to be pragmatic, because it is often unrealistic to take a positive stance on separation and divorce. The weak legal framework and law enforcement mechanisms do not permit an effective response based on the police and judicature. Also, in most instances the women would be plunged into extreme poverty once the social safety net of the family is no longer there for them. The

⁹¹ FGD with NGO staff on 5 April 2012

context analysis showed that women especially have suffered a loss of job opportunities, incomes and as a result social security and agency to care for their own livelihoods. It is important to note that women who state that they are economically dependent on their husbands' parents have a higher likelihood of experiencing domestic violence. Also, the stigma of divorce looms large in rural Tajikistan and would mean 'social death' (Harris 2004) for the women. Thus, the majority of women does not want or is unable to enforce divorce and seeks the assistance of the NGOs in mediating the conflict, rather than in taking legal action. Secondly, the NGOs' preference for reconciliation is also a tactical choice. Would it be known that they support divorce, they would also immediately lose their constituency and allies.

Next to the preference for reconciliation, the NGOs also recognise the specificity that many persons within the extended family are involved in perpetrating domestic violence. The work of the NGO partners goes beyond supporting the individual victim. Ghamkori's client database shows that annually around half of all cases handled are spouses, mainly women, around a fifth are mothers-in-law and the rest other family members (GOPA 2012: 14). In response to their client structure, the NGOs have also included in their service portfolio so-called 'family conferences'. The approach has been taken up in the law on domestic violence under the label of 'educational conversations' (GoT 2012: 9). Article 20 stipulates that

"Educational conversations ... are conducted ... in order to reveal causes and conditions of family violence, [explain] social and legal consequences of the violence and [convince] of law-abiding behavior."

One can say that thereby the NGOs provide a social work intervention that helps extended families in Khatlon to cope with conflicts. This can be regarded as an attempt of the NGOs to re-define the target group of victim support services, from abused women and couples only, to a broader concept of involving family members, depending on the specific intra-household dynamic in which the abuse takes place. Mostly, husband and wife are at the centre of the conflict, but various in-laws may also play a part. In fact, the law states that the 'educational conversations' can take place in the homes of the families *"to have basic*

overview of the family in order to identify causes and conditions contributing to the family violence” (ibid.).

The aim of the family conferences is to mediate between conflict parties and to support reconciliation. Divorce and separation are not options discussed, but rather how husband and wife can peacefully live together. If reconciliation is impossible, creative solutions are sought. For example, one outcome of a conference was to settle on a *de facto* separation, but not divorce. The following quote provides such an example (PDV 2011):

„A woman came to our centre who first faced violence from [the] husband at his house, and after divorcing she faced violence at her father's house, because she had a stepmother. I talked to the father and the stepfather and we had to solve this situation jointly. After several meetings with her husband she returned to her husband's house, where she was allocated a piece of land. She has constructed a house and continues living there separately“. (NGO staff member)

However, when probing into the family conference approach it becomes clear that the NGOs lack a clear concept of what these conferences and their outcomes should look like. Usually the conference will be facilitated by a *mahalla* member or even a *mulloh*, who is accompanied by a NGO staff member. Sometimes a policeman will also join. The visitors will listen to the accounts of all conflict parties and then enter into discussions about what should constitute appropriate behavior within marriage. Since most of the women and men whose cases are handled in the conferences are married religiously, the *mulloh* play a crucial part in the conference. Their understanding of the legitimacy of domestic violence according to Islamic teaching is therefore crucial. For *mulloh* in Khatlon physical violence is not a legitimate course of conflict resolution: “[The] *Quran* encourages men to treat their wives in a good way and violence is not acceptable in the family.” (Mulloh from Bohktar)⁹² They explained sura 4:34 as follows:

⁹² FGD with *mulloh* on 6 April 2012

“When a problem occurs in the family the man should first talk to his wife about that problem. And when the woman doesn’t listen to the man, he may beat her. But the beating shouldn’t be severe, one should not break her leg or arm or something else. It should be a light slap with a light thing that will give the woman the message that her behavior was not acceptable. If this does not help then the man should not talk to his wife and not sleep with her in one bed for a couple of nights. In case this also doesn’t work, then the man should call the religious leader to intervene.”
(Mulloh from Bohktar)

Despite a general rejection of violence as a conflict resolution method, the *mulloh* made it very clear that they supported the view that a good Muslim husband has the responsibility to educate and discipline his wife. It is just that this responsibility should not be carried out using violence. As explained, this is in line with the dominant thinking in the Muslim world that violence is permissible within certain parameters, as long as the violence is done in a spirit of reconciliation.

Even though Article 20 of the law states that the *“person with whom [the] educational conversation is held receives warning on necessity to stop violent actions”*, the PDV team confirmed that more often than not the conferences consist of the women being scolded for their bad behavior. Also, in most cases the wife’s birth family will not attend and the victim will be facing a quasi-tribunal made up of the husband’s family. In effect, the so-called family conference can easily turn out to be an ‘educational’ activity for the wife, rather than a forum for women’s empowerment. Gender relations are debated as a source of conflict, but it is often in the sense that women are blamed for transgressing from norms. The interpretation of sura 4:34 cited above clearly puts the blame for violence on the women. Men can also be scolded for their behaviour, however, it is then often in the sense that he should have resorted to dialogue rather than violence in ‘educating’ the wife.

The patriarchal order of gender relations is not pulled into question and hegemonial masculinities are not confronted. Rather, an ideal image of orderly gender relations is promoted, in which men act as ‘benevolent dictators’ and women as ‘good wives’. Daughters-in-law should be taught the corresponding

behaviour by their mothers-in-law. In FGDs, a community leader made the following statement that illustrates this approach:

“Mothers in the families should prepare girls for life. They need to teach them cooking, washing, cleaning and attitude. Girls should be tolerant and be able to bear the difficulties”

In effect, this approach aims at reducing physical violence, but it does not tackle patriarchal gender relations and forms of emotional violence, such as male controlling behavior. There is an attempt to change norms that promote violence as a conflict resolution technique, since violence is regarded as ‘un-Islamic’, but norms that promote unequal gender relations in a broader sense are not challenged. However, this approach undermines efforts of promoting gender equality, since it suggests women’s submissive behaviour as an individual prevention strategy.

Similar to the choice of messages in the advocacy component, adopting the abovementioned interpretation of sura 4:34 is a discursive strategy that enables partnerships between the various stakeholders involved in responding to domestic violence cases, since they can all agree on the basic message of promoting patriarchal order in the family and discrediting physical violence. Using sura 4:34 enables localising the response to domestic violence while at the same time furthering the goal of the internationally funded PDV project of preventing domestic violence. By cooperating with the *mullo* and fostering the aforementioned rhetoric, the NGOs adopt a conservative traditionalist position, rather than a feminist liberal stance. The staff members confirmed that this is because they seek to work in conformity with the traditions in the communities they serve:

“Our work is structured in a way that it thoroughly takes into account local traditions and customs so that it does not undermine these traditions. We consider and plan our work so that it does not cause another problem.”

Legal support for divorcees

A large number of women also come to the NGOs after *taloq* by their husbands. As said, religious-only marriages are on the increase in Khatlon, as is the misuse of *taloq* by men. *Taloq* via SMS from Russia is a stark example of this practice. But men also *taloq* their wives without consent from the *mulloh*, on the ground of various reasons such as alleged disobedience. Separation and divorce constitute a major risk to women's livelihoods, as they are stigmatised in their communities and families and lack means of income generation and social protection outside the family. In addition, divorced women suffer from self-stigmatisation due the internalisation of the view that the blame for the break-up of the marriage lies with the wife. For such clients, the NGOs and Crisis Centres are the only institutions that provide any kind of support.

In these cases, counsellors will welcome clients, talk through the individual woman's situation and then decide on what kind of strategy to apply. Some women simply require somebody to talk to so that they can share their difficult situation with someone.⁹³ But in many cases, the NGOs face the near impossible task of searching for options that provide women - and often their children – with shelter and the prospect of a livelihood. The NGOs provide free legal consultations and assistance in claiming alimony and property in front of a court. Also, the NGOs help women in cases where ex-husbands have been ordered to pay alimony and hand over property but are failing to act accordingly. In such cases, the NGOs will inform the police to follow-up. This is not possible in cases where women were married by Islam only. But even women who had their marriages registered face difficulties due to bureaucracy and stigma, and without the help of the NGOs it is unlikely that the women would stand the slightest chance to win their cases.

Even if women win their cases, they usually remain single and require their own source of income. Many women married early, left school and are consequently uneducated and without a profession. This is especially true for young women. One avenue out of this dilemma is to re-marry. The NGOs seek to empower their

⁹³ FGD with NGO staff on 3 April 2012

divorced clients economically, regardless of whether they remarry or not. Here, the NGOs take on a traditionalist view that women should be allowed to work to complement the family income, something that fundamentalists reject. The NGOs do not themselves provide any kind of training or financial services, but they help women in looking for jobs and refer them to other institutions that offer micro-credit or vocational training. Here, a service inventory was developed by PDV to promote the networking of the PDV project partners with other service providers. The Crisis Centres in Khatlon are thus more than psychosocial counselling services; as the name indicates, they take care of a range of crises.

4.2.4 Increasing exposure to preventative messages (component 3)

Component 3 consisted of a BCC campaign composed of two pillars, mass media and community outreach. The campaign had been started by the project in previous project phases, albeit without a comprehensive concept (GOPA 2009b: 8). The campaign mixed various messages at the same time, its target audience was unclear, as was the choice of communication channels used. One of the aspects of the conceptual overhaul under GOPA's management was therefore to develop a strategy that would guide the BCC activities in Phase VII. The activities were streamlined in regard to the messages to be delivered and the materials to be used.

Recognising communication structures

The design of the revised campaign was evidence-informed since it was based on the findings of baseline survey carried out by PDV in April 2009. A number of questions were purposely included in the questionnaire in respect to the formation of opinions of the respondents, such as access to different forms of media and most influential sources of information.

Virtually all male and female respondents reported having access to television, at least half having access to radio and fewer reporting access to newspapers. This held true for all survey sites in Khatlon, including the rural districts (PDV 2009: 73). From a conceptual point of view, the high access to these forms of media

was important to note, because it is prudent to assume that in rural areas of poor countries the communications infrastructure is weak. In the case of PDV, however, the baseline survey provided evidence that television and newspapers would provide a useful channel and the BCC strategy thus explicitly included a mass media pillar. The high literacy levels of the population were a further argument underpinning this decision. However, it should be mentioned that in 2010 and 2011 Tajikistan experienced an electricity crisis, which meant frequent power cuts in rural areas and in consequence lesser access to media.

Respondents were further asked about what or whom they deemed to be the most influential source of information for them. The findings reflect the importance of extended families for shaping opinions in rural Tajikistan. In the town of Kurganteppa 80.5% of men and 56.7% of women said that television was the most influential source of information. But in the rural areas of Bohktar and Vakshs, despite it being accessible, television was rated much lower. In contrast, men mentioned parents as most influential (34.3% in Bohktar and 45.3% in Vakshs), followed by religious authorities (15.9% and 16.5% respectively). Of the women in Vakshs and Bohktar, a third said that the spouse was most influential, and generally the role of the family in shaping women's opinions is much higher than for men (ibid.: 75).

Hence, an effective campaign would have to work with a mix of communication channels, including community outreach to reach women and men in places where mass media was inaccessible. This had been the strategy of ProVAW previously and would be continued in Phase VII. Consequently, in Kurganteppa town the BCC campaign would reach the population only by mass media, whereas in Vakshs and Bohktar media was complemented by community-based action.

Determining the target audience

These findings were taken up by a team of two international consultants hired by PDV in July 2009 to assist in the development of the new BCC strategy. They embarked on a process of consultations with the PDV team, its project partners and a Tajik advertising company. The output of this process was a

communications brief outlining the campaign's target audience, its messages, a timeline and design guidelines for the consistent production of materials.

Regarding the target audience, it became evident that the BCC campaign in previous phases had targeted both perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. Victims were addressed in as far as the services of the NGOs and Crisis Centres were advertised and messages about women's rights delivered. However, the new strategy proposed to focus on perpetrators only, leaving the services aspect to be supported under component 2. The primary target audience identified was married men aged 20 to 40 years. Mothers-in-law were chosen as a secondary target audience due to their role in committing emotional violence against their *kelins* - especially in the absence of the young women's husbands due to labour migration -, but also because they play such an enormous role in shaping the opinions and actions of their sons. Targeting mothers-in-law was a novelty in the project derived from also from the evidence provided by the 2009 baseline survey.

The new strategy also pointed out that there was a difference between advocacy and BCC activities, with the latter seeking to inform and change the behaviour of perpetrators and the former influencing those who shape opinions. In this sense, the local advocacy activities under component 1 are indirect BCC activities so-to-speak, in as far as they promote the involvement of gate keepers and opinion leaders in the response to domestic violence. Advocacy and BCC activities have to be aligned, but they can employ different strategies, as done by the PDV project.

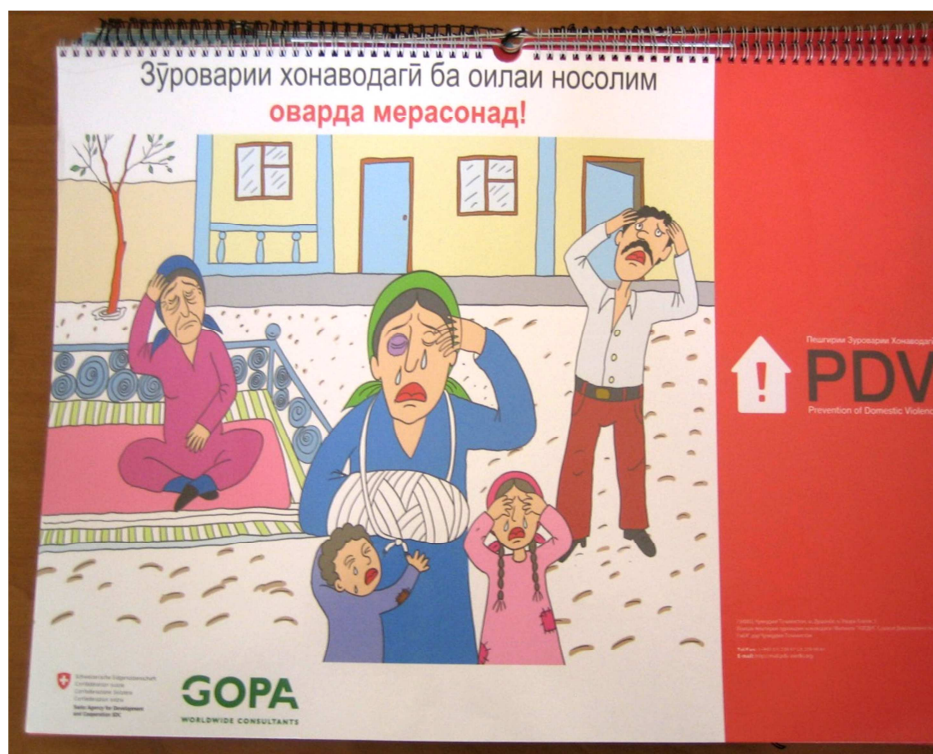
Instrumentalist messaging

The project applied care in designing the campaign in a way that suited the specific context in Tajikistan. This applied to the messages chosen, as well as the visualisation of the campaign materials.

Prior to Phase VII, the BCC activities were characterised by incongruent delivery of messages. The international consultants introduced the principle of sending only one message at a time through all available communication channels.

Before, NGOs would stage community theatre shows with several plays on different aspects of domestic violence all in one session. The rationale for this focus is that repetition is essential for messages to stick in people's minds. The new BCC strategy therefore stipulated that the project would disseminate three messages only for a period of six months each, using all of the available communications channels. After six months all activities would be geared towards the next message using the corresponding materials, and so on (GOPA 2009b: 14). The important instruction was to 'be faithful to your message'. The assistance given to the NGOs under component 3 was geared towards ensuring adherence to this principle in all their activities, both mass media and community outreach.

Pic. 3: Flipchart with the message 'Domestic violence leads to unhealthy families'



Source: A. Erich

The three messages to be delivered over the course of the project phase were developed together with the NGO partners who settled on the following: ‘domestic violence is a crime’, ‘domestic violence damages your children’s future’, and ‘domestic violence leads to unhealthy families’. In fact, the messages were suggested and selected by the NGOs. Hence, the campaign employed an instrumentalist line of argumentation by pointing out to the target audience that violating women’s rights has a negative impact on things that are important to them, like their children and their health (see Pic. 3 on previous page). The choice of messages was based also on the baseline survey findings that brought out that a majority of respondents regarded these two aspects their priorities in life, which held for the campaign’s intended primary and secondary audience (PDV 2009: 25).

Pic. 4: Billboard with the message ‘Domestic violence is a crime’, April 2010



Source: courtesy of GOPA

The first message is not fully coherent with this logic, however, since it focuses on the legal aspect, but the imaging in relation to the message shows a mother and child with the father being taken away in a police car. Indirectly, this evokes a message of a fatherless family, which is against the norm of decent family life (see Pic. 4 on previous page).

The project thus refrained from using a human rights-rhetoric. In this way, domestic violence is portrayed not as a gendered phenomenon, but as a broader problem of 'violence in the family'. Also, women are not explicitly portrayed as victims, but all family members suffer. This kind of messaging avoids stigmatisation of men – even in the first message on 'domestic violence is a crime' the facial expression of the man in the police car reflects disbelief and the man can also be seen as the victim. While this may be disturbing at first, in terms of leveraging behavior change of violent men, the messaging has the potential to be influential. The messaging draws at the point that men themselves do not benefit from spousal abuse and counters urban myth that violence is manly, because it undermines the male virtue of being a good family man. In this sense it points out inconsistencies in the dominant male gender identities. Also, shifting the focus from men to the whole family is an appreciation of the fact that in extended families, such as common in Tajikistan, the responsibility for halting violence should lie with all family members, including mothers-in-law.

When translating the fact that domestic violence is a human rights violation into the Tajik context, the BCC campaign employed a strategy of circumventing direct issues around gender equality and the male responsibility for domestic violence. Since the messages are used by the NGOs for community outreach activities, questions regarding the ownership of the campaign by the NGO staff and their ability to transport the messages in an authentic way, as well as the right balance between resonating with local communities and provoking critical thinking come up. PDV and its partners decided against a feminist rhetoric, as well as against explicit human rights-messages. Importantly, the consultants hired by PDV to

assist the creation of the campaign and the PMU let the partners take the decision, which messages would be promoted.⁹⁴

Creating a brand

Next to the inconsistencies in regard to the messages, the campaign previously also lacked clarity in regard to its sender. Sometimes SDC was placed as the sender, then again SDG – the previous implementing agency – and at other times the local project partners. The communications strategy therefore recommended creating a ‘brand’ that would always serve as the sender, rather than the donor or the implementing agency.

Together with the PDV team and project partners a brand name was brainstormed. Tajik words, such as *obodi*, broadly translating into ‘welfare’, were thought about, but finally one settled on the acronym ‘PDV’. Although representing an English acronym and using Latin letters, it was chosen because it is easy to pronounce in Tajik and because it was associated with a ‘level of seriousness’, as the partners put it (ibid: 8-10). Thereby, the partners wanted to associate themselves with the international community and lend legitimacy to their work. However, for the PMU, this choice of branding was counterintuitive and a local word in Cyrillic letters was what was expected. There was the worry that such branding would give the project a ‘foreign’ image, associated with Western ideals of gender and family relations.⁹⁵ Clearly, using PDV as a brand meant that the project and its actors assumed a clear position in the public discourse around gender and Islam. Notwithstanding, in this matter the project management trusted the partners’ judgement that using this brand would strengthen and not weaken the project’s standing among community stakeholders.

The advertising company then came up with a variety of possible brand logos, which were discussed by the PDV team and the partner NGOs. The partners first settled on a logo consisting of a house made up of pink hearts, because it

⁹⁴ Notes from debriefing meeting with consultants, August 2009

⁹⁵ Email-correspondence between PMU and author, July 2009

signified a loving home and also represented the care that clients could expect when attending the NGOs' services. However, after some discussion it was agreed that that logo did not sufficiently represent the notion of preventing domestic violence. Finally, it was agreed to use a logo resembling a Stop-traffic sign (see Pic. 5). However, the actual representation emphasises the acronym and not the symbol. Also, the project was not consequent and still used the logos of SDC and GOPA, even if these were much smaller than the brand logo.

Pic. 5: The PDV brand logo



Source: courtesy of GOPA

In addition, the revised BCC strategy builds on a technique of including an 'endorser' in the communication materials. This endorser is a *mulloh*, who is depicted on the BCC materials delivering the key message (see Pic. 6 overleaf). Thereby, the PDV-brand and the campaign messages are linked to the authority of religious leadership, giving the campaign extra weight. Considering the grown importance of religion in the public discourse this unofficial 'endorsement' was essential to disperse the notion that the fight against domestic violence was an attempt to corrupt Tajik values and undermine Islam. The messages chosen were therefore instrumentalist, but they were delivered with a normative notion.

Pic. 6: Mulloh endorses messages against domestic violence



Source: courtesy of GOPA

On a positive note, the consultants pointed out in their report that the materials used previously had a consistent look and feel. But being a brand would now strengthen the recognition by and relationship with the campaigns target audience. Materials thus adopted the designs and styles previously used. Most especially, the same artist was hired to produce cartoons, which are the centrepiece of the materials. The same figures and styles are used for comic booklets and animated short films. The project produced a range of communication materials, some to be used in the mass media and others during community activities. These included, amongst others, billboards placed on prominent spots, animated cartoons to be shown on television, comic booklets for distribution, as well as flipcharts to be used by NGO staff during community meetings.

Campaign outputs

Between December 2010 and November 2011 the project organised the broadcasting of six animated films on national and local television in Khatlon. 440 spots were broadcasted. I was told by Tajik acquaintances unrelated to the project that the cartoons were very well-known and popular throughout the country. PDV also contracted a radio journalist to produce weekly programmes on Tajik state radio, as well as journalists to publish articles on a weekly basis in three Tajik newspapers (GOPA 2012: 16-17). In 2010, the project launched an award for the best newspaper article on domestic violence, which was expanded in 2011 to cover the best media product, which helped to stimulate journalists to take up the issue in their coverage. PDV also installed large billboards, one placed on the road between Dushanbe and Kurganteppa and the other in the busy Dushanbe market of Korvon. PDV also used the media for special features. For example, stakeholder round table discussions in Khatlon were filmed and aired on a local television station.

The community activities were implemented by the project partners in Khatlon. NGOs Mahbuba and Dilafruz share the work in Vakshs, while NGO Hamroz covers communities in Bohktar. The NGOs also organised mobile theatre shows performed by local theatre groups in the villages. These shows are theatrical performances that do not require a stage or much equipment, but can be held in a village square. The partners coordinate the shows that the project's PMU pays for. In 2011, a total of 33 shows were performed in 30 villages in Vakshs and Bohktar, gathering a total of approximately 1500 spectators (GOPA 2012: 16). Similar numbers were reached in the previous years. Also, the NGOs also held special events every year to commemorate International Women's Day in March, International Family Day in May and contributed to the annual worldwide campaign '16 days without violence' in November. Such events usually consisted of speeches by dignitaries and some edutainment and gathered between 30 and 100 people per event (ibid.).

All of the NGOs have formed groups of people of same age brackets and gender in all of the villages that they work in. There are groups for older and younger men, older and younger women and for pre-marriage aged girls. Each group has

between 10-30 people. Through this system the NGOs managed in 2011 to reach 960 people (GOPA 2012: 15), 1520 people in 2010 (GOPA 2010: 15), and 1440 people in 2009 (GOPA 2009: 13). The NGOs employ social workers that are put in charge of one type of group. Each group meets once a week to discuss issues around domestic violence for around two hours. The meetings take place in the home of one group member and are facilitated by the social workers. The sessions are conducted using flipcharts that were introduced as a means of ensuring the messages delivered (GOPA 2009b: 14). A set of flipcharts was produced for each message. They consist of large cardboard sheets with a comic on the front and bullet points on the message for the narrator on the back.

By separating the community members by age and gender, it is possible to tackle specific issues and needs of these sub-populations. The PDV surveys found that young girls and economically dependent women of absent labour migrants are particularly at-risk, while mothers-in-law play an important role in instigating physical violence and perpetration emotional violence against their daughters-in-law. While specific issues come up in the discussions quite naturally, the NGOs do not have an explicit approach for each of these groups.

4.3 Project results

4.3.1 Outcome 1: supportive local environment

Component objective 1 was that the policy and institutional framework and environment for the fight against domestic violence at the national and local level in the project areas are improved. At the national policy level, PDV successfully supported the efforts of local NGOs and international organisations for the adoption of a law on domestic violence by the Tajik government. However, as explained, the enforcement and implementation at the local level are the prime challenge for an effective response to domestic violence, which is why the project concentrated its efforts in the project areas in Khatlon. The formulation of the objective points to the two aspects, namely the enhancement of local institutional frameworks and the creation of a supportive environment.

The establishment of multi-stakeholder networks that was explained in the previous sections are an output of PDV's activities, both as part of the advocacy strategy and the creation of referral systems. The 2011 FGDs demonstrated that the NGO partners felt that the community-based advocacy work was the best innovation of the PDV project in a long time, because it had finally brought together opinion leaders in a systematic way.⁹⁶ The study confirms that the project was effective in enhancing the local institutional frameworks for the response to domestic violence, however, in recognition of the fact that these are informal frameworks in which actors move. It will be interesting to observe in the next few years, whether the implementation of the national law on domestic violence formalises these multi-stakeholder networks forums. The various stakeholders are all mentioned as actors in the law, however, 'round tables' or comparable formats are not mentioned (GoT 2012).

The hypothesis behind component one was that the NGO partners would sensitise local key stakeholders on the importance of responding to domestic violence so that they would integrate the topic of domestic violence in their work. It was decided that the stakeholders would rally around the importance of civil marriage and of girls' secondary education. The project's logframe contained a respective indicator ("At the local level, key stakeholders ... in the project areas integrate the fight against domestic violence in their work"). The incorporation into their routine tasks would then signal their support to the response against domestic violence and be taken to be representative of a supportive environment, as formulated in the component objective. For various reasons, it was not possible for the project to monitor what *mullo* preached about and if the police made more arrests.⁹⁷ But *mahalla* members reported that they discussed issues of family conflicts and of domestic violence in almost every of their meetings⁹⁸ and policemen in the FGDs reported that in recent years the issue had become a regular feature of their work.

In order to gauge the extent to which key stakeholders support the response to domestic violence, the project's logframe contained the following proxy indicator:

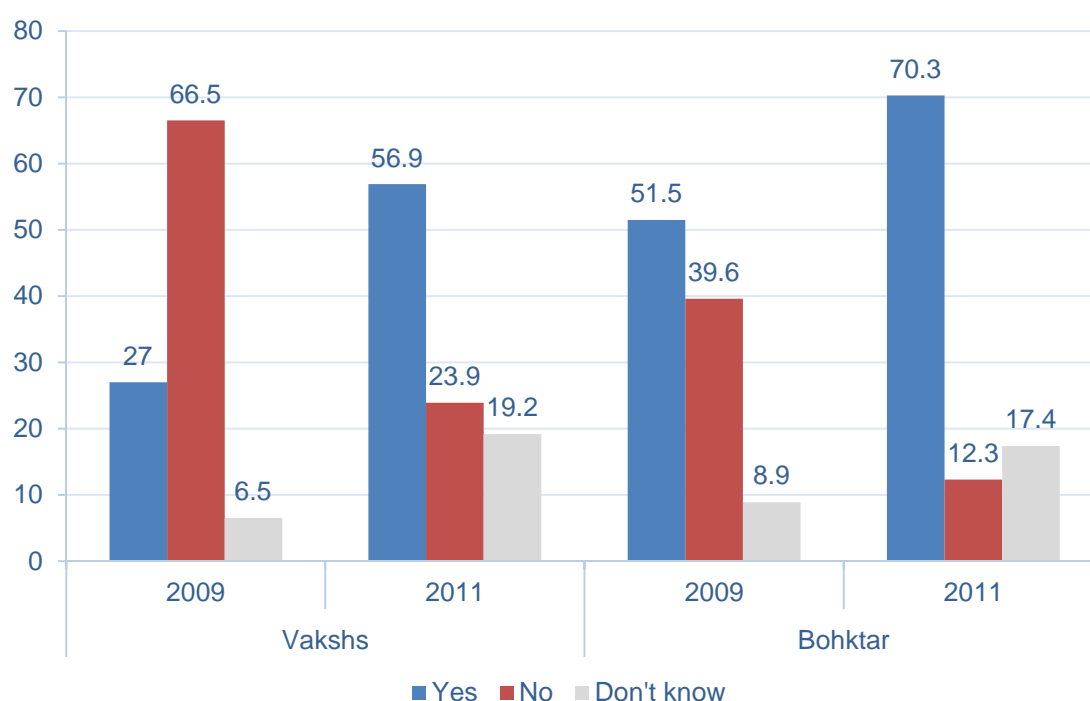
⁹⁶ FGD with NGO staff on 5 and 7 April 2012

⁹⁷ Email-correspondence PMU and authour, October 2009

⁹⁸ FGD with *malhalla* members on 6 April 2012

“Women and men in the project areas confirm that the majority of local key stakeholders (local politicians, religious leaders, policemen) support the fight against domestic violence.” This indicator was chosen, because in order to have any meaningful preventative effect, stakeholder involvement needs to be felt by the population. In the surveys, different questions were posed in relation to the stakeholders. The 2011 end-of-phase appraisal asked women the following question: ‘When you need help or have a serious problem with your husband/long-term partner, and you need outside assistance, are there any officials or organisations that you feel that you can rely on to help you solve this problem?’ A comparison of the 2009 and 2011 findings shows that perceptions of the stakeholders’ role have improved, with a dramatic turn-around in Vakshs (see Fig. 14).

Fig. 14: ‘When you need help or have a serious problem with your husband/long-term partner, and you need outside assistance, are there any officials or organisations that you feel that you could rely on to help you solve this problem?’ (in %), women only, 2009 and 2011



N = 2009: 300, 2011: 300, Source: PDV 2011: xvi

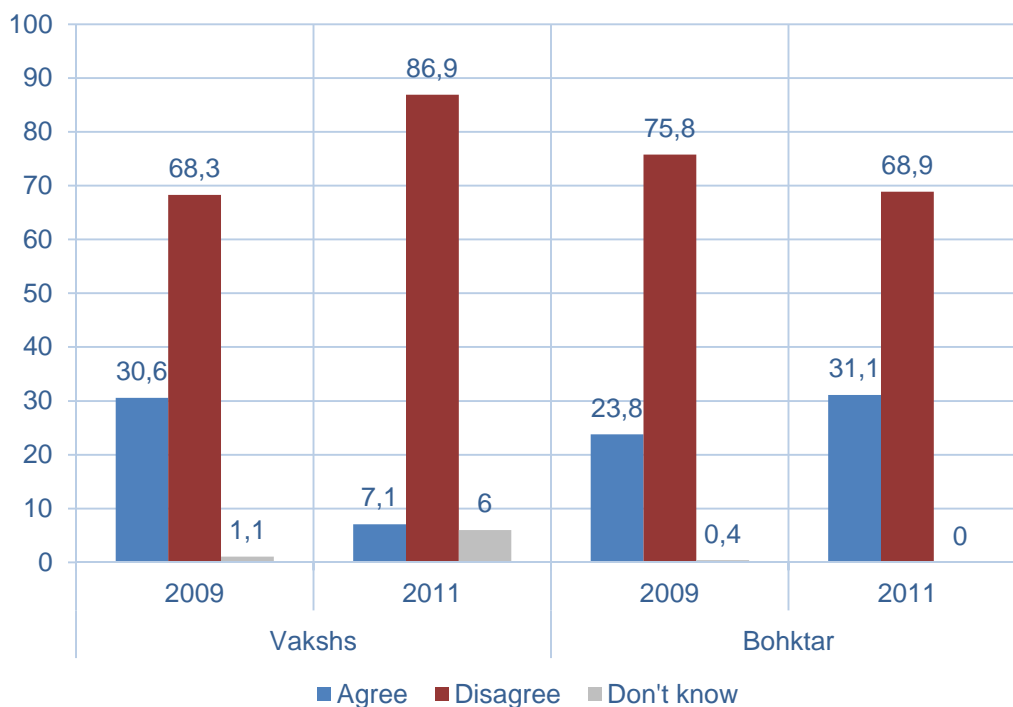
It is important to note the different stakeholders the respondents were referring to. Of the respondents who said that they could rely on outside organisations for help, in Bohktar 97.1% referred to *mahalla* and NGOs and 39.1% to public institutions, compared to 65.1% and 41.6% respectively in Vakshs (multiple answers were possible). In Kurganteppa, the situation was the opposite, with 76.5% of women referring in their positive assessment to public institutions and 35.3% to NGOs and *malhallas*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, in the rural areas, non-state actors play a more important role in settling disputes and providing services than in the town. Also, the NGOs were more present in the communities in the rural districts (PDV 2011: 57).

In regard to confidence in the police to assist solving cases of domestic violence the PDV surveys asked respondents to agree or reject the following statement: 'Even if a woman is severely physically disciplined by her husband, there is little use in reporting it to the police, because the police would side with the husband'. Male and female respondents in Bokhtar expressed higher confidence in the police than in Vakshs. Especially men have high levels of respect for the police (see Fig. 15 overleaf). However, women in Vakshs have less confidence in the police. It seems that especially in Vakshs the PDV project has contributed to strengthening confidence in the role of the police in solving cases of domestic violence, although women often still lack trust in the police. However, the project's contribution should not be over-estimated and FGD participants reiterated many cases in which women were stopped from filing complaints or blamed for the violence they experienced.

Female respondents were also asked, in how far they felt they could rely on religious leaders for assistance. In 2011, only around 3.5% said that they could always rely on them, roughly 15% said 'sometimes', a quarter 'rarely' and about half of all respondents cited that they could 'never' rely on them. No change was registered between 2009 and 2011 (PDV 2011: 57). Hence, women's confidence in religious leaders at the end Phase VII is still low. In the FGDs conducted, the opinion was even expressed many times that religious leaders appeared to be more conservative in their stance on domestic violence than they used to be. Participants in the FGDs expressed concern that *mulloh* did not use their influence during Friday prayers. It appears that the *imom khatibs* that the NGOs

work with work against domestic violence, but that the population nevertheless lacks trust in the religious leaders. The trend in rural areas towards a more conservative and patriarchal reading of Islam pits the *imom khatibs* against more radical local *mulloh*.

Fig. 15: ‘Even if a woman is severely physically disciplined by her husband, there is little use in reporting it to the police, because the police would side with the husband’ (in %), men, 2009 and 2011



N = 2009: 300, 2011: 300, Source: PDV 2011: 61

Overall, the 2011 PDV survey report (PDV 2011: 22) concludes that there are

“encouraging signs that, in cases where opinion leaders might have been tolerant of domestic violence earlier, their views had quickly changed when they worked with local NGOs and others involved in responding to domestic violence.”

The project has succeeded in promoting a supportive environment for the response to domestic violence. It has positioned NGOs and *mahalla* as trustworthy advocates against domestic violence. Considering the neo-patriarchal social climate in Khatlon, this is an achievement that can be attributed to the project, as the only factor supporting assistance for abused women in the project locations. Together with the respect accorded to the police, a contribution to promoting a climate stymying domestic violence is thus possible, although the lack of support by religious leaders in the villages might undermine such a positive effect.

4.3.2 Outcome 2: enhanced access to quality services

The objective of component 2 was formulated in the project's logframe as follows: "The access to quality psychosocial, medical and legal services for victims of domestic violence in the project areas is improved." The results thus need to be measured in terms of both access to and quality of service provision.

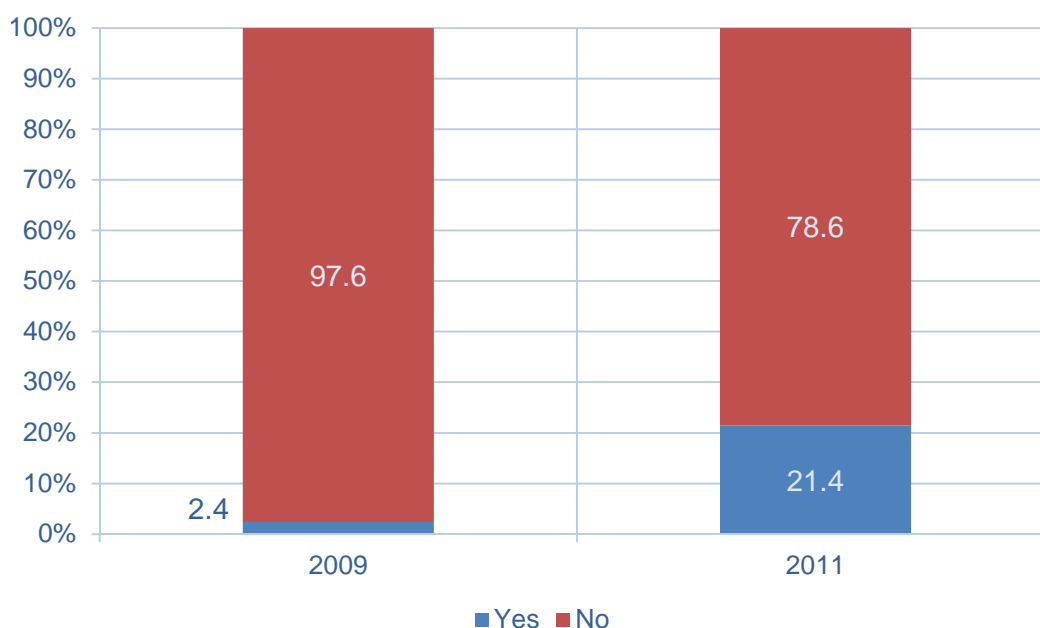
In terms of access, the project fulfilled the first indicator ("The number of clients served by the partner Crisis Centres per month remain at a high average number."). Ghamkori's client database shows that between December 2010 and November 2011 it served a total of 1321 clients (1260 women, 61 men), who received a total of 4421 consultations (747 legal aid, 1113 psychosocial counselling, 664 medical aid and 1717 'information' counselling), which is the equivalent to 3.3 consultations per client on average (GOPA 2012: 12). This was a slight increase in total clients, as well as the number of follow-up consultations from the year before (GOPA 2009: 13). The other NGOs did not keep such a database.

The next indicator to be assessed in regard to increased access was: "The number of women in the project areas who have experienced domestic violence who have accessed medical, psychosocial or legal services from a project partner service provider has increased by 50% from 2.4% to 3.6%". The end-of-phase appraisal found a ten-fold increase in domestic violence victims accessing services from a project service provider (see Fig. 16 overleaf). The figure stood at 21.4% in 2011, up from 2.4% in 2009. When computed for all female respondents

interviewed in the survey, the figure stood at 7.3% in 2011, up from 0.3% in 2009. The increased demand was confirmed in the FGDs, as the following quote from a staff member illustrates: *“the more we work the more it [the demand] increases, because the more people learn about our activity the more they apply to us”*.

The project had thus achieved its objective in terms of enhancing access. Needless to say, this still leaves a huge unmet demand. As the client numbers of Ghamkori remained high throughout the project phase as per its client database, the increase in clients must be attributed to the clients served by the other three NGOs and improvements in the combined ability of stakeholders to enhance access, including through enhanced referral networks.

Fig. 16: Access to support services (in %), 2009 and 2011



N = 2009: 450, 2011: 450, Source: PDV 2011: xvii

The indicator related to improved quality was: “The partners [Crisis Centres] apply quality standards for the provision of psychosocial, medical and legal services.” Even though there are no country-wide quality standards for victim support services, PDV developed a quality checklist for the Crisis Centres that was used for monitoring the quality. The checklist contained aspects like the availability of equipment and infrastructure, for example if the rooms catered for confidentiality, which the project worked on to improve. More importantly, however, is an assessment of the quality of outcomes of the services provided. The project’s logframe does not include an indicator in this respect.

Haarr (2007) and the Minnesota Advocates (2008) criticised the Tajik response to domestic violence for its inability to deliver formal justice. However, when looking at the monitoring data of Ghamkori, it shows that the vast majority of cases handled by its advocate ended successfully. In 2009, 64 of 70 cases ended successfully (GOPA 2009: 11), in 2010 95 out of 122 (GOPA 2010: 13) and in 2011 208 out of 293 cases (GOPA 2012: 12).

However, not all clients of the Crisis Centres seek legal answers to their circumstances. As said, there is a broad range of needs and the service providers strive to be responsive to their clients’ needs. Client satisfaction is therefore an important measurement of quality. The 2011 PDV survey found that in all three sites women’s approval for the role of officials and organisations increased between 2009 and 2011, four-fold in Kurganteppa, two-fold in Vakshs and by 20% in Bohktar. The women who responded positively to the question if they thought they could rely on officials or organisations were further asked how effective they thought these services were. 25.1% said very effective and 59.5% somewhat effective, demonstrating an overwhelming satisfaction with the support provided. When asked if any of the organisations were NGOs, 71.3% agreed, reflecting appreciation for the work of the NGOs. The data obscures what type of support is appreciated mostly by the clients, but it appears that the NGOs know well how to respond to the needs of their clients.

Finally, the first question needs to be discussed whether the services actually empower clients to protect themselves from further violence or deter perpetrators from future violence, as suggested by the ‘sanctions and sanctuary’-paradigm

(Counts et al 1992). The PDV surveys did not provide any statistical information on whether domestic violence incidence actually decreased as a result of the NGOs interventions. However, in the 2011 FGDs women in Khatlon reported that the clients of Crisis Centres had been empowered in as far as they had developed individual mechanisms to protect themselves as a result of the psychosocial support they had received:

„Having learnt about her rights, a woman opposes her husband's violence saying that he has no right to beat her. And such behaviour makes men think over.“ (Woman in Kurganteppa)

Also, women reported that their husbands feared the intervention by the Crisis Centre in as far as women might learn how to use the legal system in their favour:

„Men used to say that we should not go [to the centres], as if we would be taught how to take our husbands to court, and would learn how to punish men.“ (Woman in Kurganteppa)

It also remains unclear if the family conferences have a preventative effect or if this approach does not in effect force women back to their perpetrators, placing them at even greater risk. However, acquiescing to submissive femininities might lead to fewer incidents of violence, however, without empowering women, but by reinforcing patriarchal structures. More research is required to gauge the preventative effect of the victim support services.

4.3.3 Outcome 3: increased exposure to preventative messages

The results hypothesis behind the component was that a better structured and targeted campaign would lead to improved exposure to preventative messages. The component objective was: “The access to quality preventive communication on domestic violence for the population in the project areas is improved.” The formulation again points to the two dimensions quality and access.

Because of the haphazard way the BCC activities were carried out in previous phases, PDV decided that quality of the campaign had to be enhanced and therefore underwent the strategic process outlined earlier. The quality would be improved by the PMU and the NGOs following the strategy and its instructions in

their mass media and community outreach activities. The fact that the campaign was developed using key elements for creating local approaches can be regarded as a quality feature.

As shown in the previous section, the campaign was implemented as planned, producing a range of outputs, like screening of films, dissemination of posters, staging of theatre shows, and so on. Whether the PDV project had achieved its third objective in regard to improving access was measured in the end-of-phase appraisal by assessing the actual exposure of women and men to preventative messages through these outputs produced by the mass media and community outreach activities. The respective indicator in the logframe is split accordingly, and its first part runs: '50% of women and men in the project areas state that they have been exposed to at least 3 messages on domestic violence through the media in the past 12 months'. The end-of-phase appraisal found that in 2011 44.1% of men and 44.4% of women reported seeing three or more messages in the media. A comparison with the 2009 data reveals that there has been no marked change in exposure. Here, the project missed its set target, but the coverage of the campaign is actually quite remarkable. It is possible that the electricity crisis has reduced the coverage.

The second part of the indicator runs: '75% of women and men in the project areas state that they have been exposed to at least 1 message on domestic violence through an NGO/CBO activity in the past 12 months'. The figures for 2011 are 78.1% for men and 65% for women. Here, an increase from 2009 was registered, with 54.5% of men and 57.7% of women reporting being exposed to one or more messages by an NGO/CBO activity at the beginning of the campaign. Here, the project has achieved its target.

4.3.4 Impact: reduced acceptability of domestic violence

In 2007, SDC commissioned a team of consultants to conduct an external review of the project. However, the report focused on the capacities of the project partners and management issues and, in terms of results, the report merely stated that the material reviewed and interviews held *"permit a good guess that the project has helped to raise awareness ... Clearly the issue ... has entered the*

public discourse” (SDC 2007: 26). In the report of a 2011-review of SDC’s work in the Rule of Law sector in Tajikistan, it is said that “*over the past ten years, the project has had a marked influence in raising awareness ... in the selected region of Southern Tajikistan.*” (SDC 2011: 6). This is also verified by the validation of the outcome of the populations’ enhanced access to preventative messages through the project’s BCC campaign in the previous section. However, the aforementioned reviews do not include an assessment of PDV’s contribution to the intended reduction of the acceptability of domestic violence (impact 1).

It is possible to argue that the outcomes of the three project components serve as proxies, since they each point to an increased climate of intolerance towards domestic violence. Firstly, local key stakeholders have successfully been enlisted in the response to domestic violence, both in terms of raising awareness among the population and playing an active role in case management. Considering the importance the respective actors play in shaping norms around family life and gender relations, it is plausible to assume that their visible engagement with the response to domestic violence has contributed to a reduced tolerance. In the FGDs conducted within the 2011 PDV survey, respondents frequently reiterated that there had been a marked change in how domestic violence was viewed in the communities, due to the clear stance of community leaders (PDV 2011: 22). Also, women’s confidence in the role of NGOs and public officials in supporting violence victims has improved, with the exception of religious leaders. While the *imom khatibs* of official Islam in Tajikistan have successfully been integrated in the response, this seems not to be the case for local *mulloh*. These often self-proclaimed fundamentalist preachers are a major obstacle to attitudinal change. This aside, the project managed to establish multi-stakeholder networks and alliances for the response to domestic violence. Whether these local alliances succeeded in gaining the upper hand in the ongoing public controversy about gender, violence and Islam is an open question.

Secondly, the increased knowledge of women and their enhanced access to NGO services point to an improvement in their support-seeking behaviour. This can be interpreted as a sign that barriers to access have diminished. Although the overall situation in Khatlon is characterised by a neo-patriarchal backlash, this finding can be interpreted as an aspect of women’s growing ‘culture of complaint’

towards their husbands (Hegland 2008). Another important contribution of the NGO services to the reduced tolerance is the family conferences. The fact that key opinion leaders and community decision-makers are involved in the conferences signals that violent behaviour is not well-received. The conferences also promote monitoring of cases by stakeholders, thus demonstrating to perpetrators that they are being watched. Finally, family conferences can serve as an informal sanction for the perpetrators - even if a rather mild one – by making known to the community that there are problems in the home, thereby tarnishing the men's reputation. Considering the high importance the population places on maintaining family honour and their overwhelming skepticism towards external intervention, this is an informal sanction not to be underestimated. However, as said, whether the conferences indeed help to reduce violence requires more analytical work.

Thirdly, the BCC campaign of PDV represented a massive exposure of the population to messages promoting intolerance to domestic violence, both in mass media and through community action. Respondents who had been exposed to the BCC campaign were significantly more likely to state that acceptability of domestic violence had lessened in the last years in comparison to those not exposed. This was especially pronounced in regard to exposure to messages through community action compared to media (PDV 2011: 36). In the FGDs, NGO staff members reiterated many times the great impact they saw from the BCC campaign, most especially from the community outreach activities. Staging mobile theatre shows with messages on domestic violence was perceived as a particularly powerful method. A frequent expression was that 'hearing is not like seeing'. The *mahalla* members, as well as women from Khatlon strongly reiterated this aspect. The campaign therefore supported the creation of a climate unfavourable for domestic violence. Also, the BCC campaign appears to have had a positive effect on women's support-seeking behavior, pointing to the reciprocity of the project's components. The 2011 survey report (ibid.: 45) notes that the difference between respondents exposed and not exposed to BCC messages was *“especially dramatic for seeking services with NGOs”*, where those directly exposed were ten times more likely as those not exposed to seek treatment via an NGO (47.9% versus 4.4%).

The PDV project also attempted to measure the perceived change in acceptability directly. As explained in the methodology chapter, the surveys do not contain a reliable measurement for assessing the project's success indicator at the impact 1 level. That said, the 2009 baseline survey and the 2011 end-of-phase appraisal both included questions on the perceived cultural acceptability of different forms of physical and emotional violence and of justifiable circumstances for domestic violence that can be used to gauge whether the project contributed to a climate of non-tolerance towards domestic violence.

As shown in the context chapter earlier, in 2009, at the beginning of Phase VII, the cultural acceptability was perceived to be high. A comparison with the responses of the 2011 midline survey shows that men perceive the cultural acceptability of domestic violence to have decreased for all forms of physical violence (*ibid.*: 34-36). For example, in 2011 32.1% of male respondents agreed that 'disciplining the wife by slapping or throwing something at her' was culturally acceptable compared to 37.9% in 2009. Agreement also reduced from 12.7% to 4.9% for 'physically forcing the wife to have sex with him when she does not want to'. The same trend emerged for all forms of emotional violence with 'a husband does not trust his wife with money' decreasing strongest (from 41.6% to 14.9%), which might point to women's grown role in contributing to family income. In the view of male respondents, the acceptability of justifiable circumstances that represent transgressions from patriarchal gender norms has gone down, although only a relatively small reduction was visible (*ibid.*: 30); 'if she brings shame to the family' was regarded as a culturally acceptable reason for severe physical domestic violence by 77.8% in 2009 compared to 74.4% in 2011. Finally, in 2011 fewer men (51%) agreed that physical violence of a wife by her husband was a family affair that should not involve someone outside the family compared to 2009 (66.3%) (*ibid.*: 24). Comparing men who were exposed to preventative messages disseminated by PDV were more likely to perceive a decrease in the cultural acceptability than those not exposed. However, the trend was ambivalent for women. Some variables point to women finding that the cultural acceptability has grown, such as bringing shame to the family as a legitimate reason for severe male discipline, which grew from 47.9% in 2009 to 78.8% in 2011. While men found that forms of physical violence had become less culturally acceptable,

women registered almost no change between 2009 and 2011; for example, the perceived acceptability of 'slapping or throwing something at her' only slightly increased from 31.4% to 32.1% and similar responses emerged for all other forms of physical violence. That said, there is covariation between women exposed to preventative messages and their views of the cultural acceptability with those exposed more likely to feel that the acceptability has reduced (ibid.: 34-35).

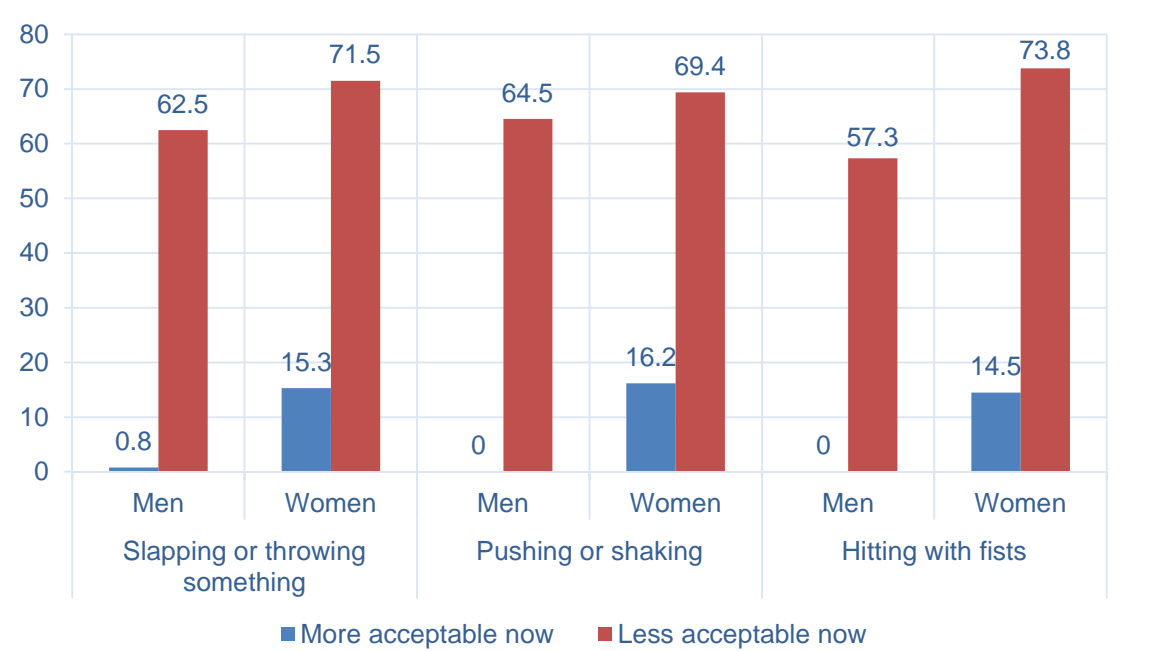
These mixed findings are difficult to interpret. On the one hand, it appears that the project has been successful in shifting men's perceptions of the cultural acceptability of domestic violence towards a higher degree of non-tolerance. Since men, as the main perpetrators of domestic violence in Khatlon, were the primary target audience for the project's BCC campaign, this points to an effective design and implementation of PDV. Yet it is notable that men find that the cultural acceptability of physical violence has decreased, but not to the same extent that the acceptability of transgressions from patriarchal gender norms has. This can be interpreted as confirmation of the effectiveness of the discursive strategy chosen by the local stakeholders involved in PDV that condemned physical violence as 'un-Islamic', but left the male hegemony unscathed.

On the other hand, the fact that women appear to feel that the cultural acceptability has not decreased is worrisome. In this regard, the survey report (ibid.) recommends that the project should review its BCC messages and activities in regard to its efficacy for women. It is possible that the ambivalent findings for female respondents are due to their twin role: victims in their role as wives and daughters-in-law and perpetrators and instigators in their role as mothers-in-law. In a lifetime, women are likely to adopt all of these roles and, hence, their connection to domestic violence is more multi-faceted than that of men. Even though the BCC campaign set out to treat mothers-in-law as a secondary audience, the analysis demonstrated that it is unclear how the messages conveyed by PDV through mass media and community outreach relate to their role. The transgenerational transmission of domestic violence as a legitimate practice in extended families through women has not been explicitly tackled by the project. However, this interpretation cannot be verified by means of the available data, since the survey only asked women about their experiences of

victimisation. The endline survey planned for 2016 provides an opportunity to explore this interpretation.

The interpretation of the findings is further complicated by the responses to the ‘recall’-questions. Respondents were asked to state whether they felt that various forms of physical domestic violence had become more or less acceptable in their communities over the past years. An analysis of the 2011 data demonstrates that both women and men in Khatlon feel that the overall acceptability has been reduced in the past two years, the timeframe of Phase VII, pointing to a success of PDV (see Fig. 17).

Fig. 17: Perceived changes in the acceptability of selected forms of physical domestic violence over the past two years (in %), 2011



N = men: 450, women: 450, Source: PDV 2011: 34-36

The 'recall'-questions in the 2009 survey were posed with reference to the past decade. While PDV Phase VII in many ways was a continuation of the work done before, conscious efforts were made to streamline the strategy and improve the approaches in regard to their coherence and attune them to the specific local context. A comparison of the responses in the 2011 and 2009 surveys enables eliciting a pointer as to whether the activities in Phase VII were more effective in regard to reducing the acceptability than those in previous phases and, hence, if the efforts of enhancing the strategic outlook and local approaches were useful. In regard to husbands disciplining their wives by 'hitting her with fists' in 2011 71.5% of women and 62.5% of men stated that they felt it had become less acceptable over the past two years, compared to 12.9% of women and 29% of men who said it had become less acceptable in reference to the period before 2009. The same pattern was detected for all other forms of physical violence. The two-year period is of course a very short timespan in regard to effecting a change in social norms, and therefore the data should be read with caution and as indication of a possible trend to be verified at a later point in time. Also, this finding contradicts the negative findings for women's views on the cultural acceptability outlined earlier.

The project's Intervention Model was built on the overall assumption that the combined attainment of the three components objectives would lead to the goal of a reduced acceptability of domestic violence in the project locations. However, considering the complex interplay of the different factors addressed by the components and the methodological constraints faced by the PDV surveys - especially the fact that an RCT was not possible -, it is difficult to gauge the relative contribution of the different interventions to the achievement of the goal. However, the lesson learnt from the above analysis in regard to the conception of prevention interventions is that a comprehensive and interlinked approach is needed combining advocacy, service provision and BCC. These three pillars are interdependent and creating synergies between them possesses the potential to effect change at the level of changing social norms.

Since PDV is the only prevention intervention in Khatlon, it appears prudent that the positive effects observed on the acceptability can be linked to the project. The context analysis in this study showed that the framework conditions - including a

neo-patriarchal backlash supported by Islamic fundamentalism - are unfavourable for an effective public response to domestic violence. The new law against domestic violence might change this in terms of a more robust legal framework, but the enforcement of the law is also fraught with problems so that a positive dynamic stemming from the law is unlikely in the near future. Against this background of this adversary environment, the success of PDV in promoting a climate of non-tolerance and reducing the acceptability of domestic violence appears remarkable.

5. Conclusions

The use of locally adapted approaches is considered good practice in violence prevention programming. Successful prevention is contingent upon its ability to appreciate, understand and valorise the cultural boundedness of domestic violence. In other words, prevention must be situated within *“the local context of meaning [and] remade in the vernacular”* (Merry 2006: 1). This is often in contrast to the reality on the ground, where interventions are similar across diverse settings and ‘programme transplants’ dominate that inadequately reflect socio-economic and cultural conditions and the views of local actors. There is, however, a lack of evaluative evidence and programmatic guidance on the design and implementation of locally adapted approaches, as well as little theoretical grounding that could provide practitioners with orientation so as to move from ‘programme transplants’ to ‘local approaches’. By analysing domestic violence prevention in the southern Khatlon region of Tajikistan, the study aimed at expanding the existing scholarship and providing practitioners - in Tajikistan and beyond - with a concrete framework for designing local approaches. The study used the PDV project as a specific case, thereby seeking to unearth and examine the experiences accumulated in the project.

Key elements for local prevention approaches in Tajikistan

Building on the work of Merry (2006) and a review of case studies from around the world, the study employed a conceptual framework based on four ‘key elements’ that must be considered in the design and implementation of local violence prevention approaches: framing, acknowledging structural conditions, building partnerships, and re-defining the target groups. The four elements do not follow a specific order. They represent interdependent and iterative aspects to be considered in project design and implementation. Putting the four key elements into practice in projects is a central task for practitioners in violence prevention that entails navigating the complexities and cultural contingencies of domestic violence.

This requires an in-depth understanding of the specific context, in which interventions take place and analyses in regard to the proposed four key elements as a precursory step to project design. Such analyses complement the risk factor analyses called for by the WHO ecological model (Krug et al 2002). These alone are not sufficient, because they do not provide enough hands-on information to guide project design; the risk factors assist in understanding the entry points for preventative action at the level of national action plans, but they are not instructive in terms of concrete project design options. Instead, a context analysis is needed to identify the aspects that interventions must be cognisant of, including current public discourses, cultural determinants and socio-economic conditions. Building effective partnerships requires a stakeholder analysis that helps to build an understanding of the relevant actors and their organisational capacities, as well as the local political economy. Finally, statistical data that also includes information on attitudes towards domestic violence is required in order to define the target group of projects. It enables the identification of audiences for campaigns and clients for victim support services.

The analysis in Chapter 3 of this study answered the first research question: What are the context-specific factors in regard to the key elements that must be considered when creating local approaches for domestic violence prevention in Tajikistan? The study demonstrated that prevention in Khatlon region in Tajikistan needs to take into consideration the current public discourse on Tajik identity, gender and Islam. Gender norms and the acceptability of domestic violence are shaped by different interpretations of Islam. While the majority appear to hold moderately conservative views on gender relations, there is a neo-patriarchal backlash in Tajik society and an increased fundamentalist influence. Actors in the response to domestic violence consciously and unconsciously position themselves in the controversy around appropriate male and female behavior.

Prevention in Khatlon also needs to consider socio-economic conditions. Although increased integration into the informal economy provides women with some opportunities, overall female victims' of domestic violence possess little agency in terms of economic autonomy, social security and personal self-realisation.

When entering into partnerships with local stakeholders, programmes should be aware of the weak capacities of public institutions and the informality of local governance structures. NGOs and traditional institutions, like *mahalla*, take over many state functions, including conflict resolution and social service delivery. However, in southern Tajikistan they compete with fundamentalist groups for influence. International agencies and local NGOs try to compensate for the fact that there is virtually no public response to domestic violence.

Lastly, project design needs to consider that Khatlon is a high prevalence region and thus requires a universal primary prevention strategy. It is especially young women with low education levels in polygamous marriages that are most at-risk. Economic dependence on the husband's parents is another risk factor. Mothers-in-law play an important part in perpetrating emotional violence, especially during the long spells of men's absence due to labour migration, and instigating physical violence by their sons. Acceptability is high, and domestic violence is perceived to constitute a culturally acceptable conflict resolution mechanism by a large proportion of the population; for example, 78.8% of men agreed that it was acceptable to beat their wives to the point of injury if she brings shame to the family. However, there is a controversy around the role of 'Tajik culture' in promoting or preventing domestic violence, depending on whether the revival of traditional and Islamic values is regarded a factor that promotes hegemonial masculinities or whether family life according to Islamic principles strengthens family peace.

Turning key elements into action

The second research objective asked: which local approaches did the PDV project employ and how were they produced and put into practice? Firstly, Chapter 4 showed that PDV seeks to manage for local solutions. The project is coordinated by a management unit in partnership with local NGOs as main implementing partners. The NGOs act as intermediaries between the project management and the population and the 'face' of the project. SDC who funds and the German consulting firm that coordinates the project both consciously played a background role. In Phase VII, the period of interest in this study, change

management efforts were made to streamline the PDV's overall strategy and enhance its implementation. The guiding principle was to strengthen local approaches through a participatory process, the product being the 'PDV Intervention Model'. Importantly, the model provides a conceptual reference frame for all stakeholders involved in PDV and it outlines the project's major building blocks. However, the actual design and implementation was left largely to the NGO partners, which led to a *"polytheism' of scattered practices"* (Mosse 2005: 7) surviving below the model. Secondly, in terms of project design, the analysis demonstrated that there was a strong wish by the local NGO partners to come up with 'Tajik solutions'. Congruently, the project incorporated various aspects in a creative process of constant experimentation.

Tab. 4: Overview of PDV's project design responses to context factors

Key elements	Context factors	Project design responses
Framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public discourse about Tajik identity, gender and Islam Neo-patriarchal backlash and fundamentalist influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instrumentalist messaging in advocacy and BCC campaign Victim support services aim at reconciliation and 'family peace' through moderate interpretation of sura 4:34
Acknowledging structural conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty and low women's agency Migration Institutional weakness of public institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victim support services aim at reconciliation and 'family peace' Case management through multi-stakeholder networks ('round tables')
Building partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal local governance structures No public response to domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGOs as 'face of the project' Multi-stakeholder alliance with government, police and religious and community leaders
Re-defining the target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High prevalence region Role of extended family members, esp. mothers-in-law Age, educational, marital status and economic status as risk factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal primary prevention approach Targeting of men as primary audience of campaign Family mediation services

The study found that the partners in PDV undertake efforts in all project components to react to the abovementioned context factors through project design responses. The table above provides an overview (see Tab. 4 on previous page).

Framing was an essential aspect in designing project activities in all three components. The context analysis in this study showed that the issue of domestic violence in Khatlon is located within a larger public discourse about gender, Islam and Tajik identity, and the project recognised the fact that it was located squarely in this controversial space. In designing its advocacy and its BCC components, a conscious choice was made to couple the messaging and activities to this discourse. Importantly, the messages were selected by the local NGOs themselves, who chose to completely refrain from using an explicit human rights-oriented rhetoric that might be identified as feminist and foreign. This was a tactical choice, in order to frame domestic violence prevention as a relevant, credible and palatable topic for the key stakeholders and the target population.

For the advocacy strategy, the issues of a safe environment for women and girls' education were selected, which also represent important risk factors for domestic violence. However, domestic violence was not explicitly mentioned. All stakeholders collaborating with the project could settle on these issues, since the importance of civil marriage and girls' education were both shared values of government representatives, traditional and religious leaders and the NGOs. The messages also represent a specific positioning in the discourse against fundamentalist tendencies that undermine state laws in favour of *sharia* and seek to ban girls from school.

For the BCC campaign, the NGO partners selected three messages: 'domestic violence damages your children's future', 'domestic violence is a crime', and 'domestic violence leads to unhealthy families'. Here, an instrumentalist perspective was chosen that focussed on the negative effects of domestic violence, rather than on the fact that it is a human rights violation. Also, the messages located domestic violence in the broader context of violence in the family, thereby avoiding any notion of criticising men's behaviour. The campaign's design used a cartoon figure of a *mulloh* as the sender and endorser of the

messages, thereby linking the messages to the authority of religious leadership. By framing their campaigns in this way, the NGOs position themselves within the public discourse on gender and Islam by supporting moderate traditionalist views. They and their local partners form coalitions against fundamentalist groups.

The victim support services offered by the partner NGOs were also framed to match the specific setting in as far as the individual counselling and family conferences clearly focussed on reconciliation and 'family peace' instead of legal action and separation of husband and wife. The approach reflects a priority of the family unit over the welfare and empowerment of individual women. The discursive centrepiece of the family conferences is an interpretation of sura 4:34 whereby men have the responsibility to educate their wives, but should not do this through physical violence, but through dialogue. The NGOs need to be credible partners also in the eyes of the local key stakeholders, the population and their clients. Promoting Islamic family life 'ethnicises' the response to domestic violence, which is the basis for collaborating with religious and traditional leaders. At the same time, the NGOs condemn physical violence and thus base their actions on state law in order to be credible partners for local government. The NGOs therefore oscillate between the needs of their different allies, and framing is part of the tactics employed by the NGOs.

The importance accorded to family peace and reconciliation in the provision of victim support services is also a reaction and pragmatic choice of the local NGOs to the difficult socio-economic conditions of their female clients. Since the end of the Soviet era, Tajik women have overall seen a decrease in their economic opportunities, incomes and possibilities of securing their own livelihoods. Also, with the demise of the state social security system, the family provides the only source of social safety. The victim support services offered by PDV's NGO partners recognise this situation and are pragmatic in light of abused women's limited options. Women in Khatlon are highly economically dependent and insufficiently protected legally, and therefore the benefits of pursuing legal means and separation are offset by high social and economic risks.

A very practical consideration of the structural conditions in project implementation can be seen in the design of the project's BCC campaign. The

fact that mass media was used as a communication channel in rural areas was based on the baseline survey finding that the population in the project areas had high levels of access to television. But mass media was complemented by direct community outreach activities, which was deduced from the finding that family members and peers have the highest influence on the shaping of opinions in Khatlon.

A further layer of partnership within the project is created through the close everyday cooperation of the NGOs with local key stakeholders. The NGOs work with local government representatives and the police, but also with traditional and religious leaders in order to disseminate advocacy and behaviour change messages and to foster networks for managing cases of domestic violence victims. Hence, the project built on existing informal governance structures, recognised the local 'rules of the game' and involved the main opinion leaders at community level. Merry (2006: 136) defines framing as "*an interpretative package surrounding a core idea*". However, the study shows that framing entails more than just the presentation of ideas. Associating a project with stakeholders and positioning it within a public discourse is a central aspect of framing.

Working with local NGOs was also useful considering the structural conditions for the response to domestic violence in Tajikistan, in as far as the context analysis demonstrated that the legal system, as well as the health system that often provide important entry points for the response to domestic violence are dysfunctional and incapacitated. NGOs provide for the only place where abused women can obtain support. While a national policy and legal framework is in place, local enforcement and implementation by public institutions, including the police and local government, are lacking. At the same time, local governance structures in Khatlon are characterised by informality and an important role for traditional stakeholders. PDV therefore seeks to promote local networks through 'round table'-meetings that brings together all relevant stakeholders in an inclusive and joint effort. The networks serve as referral systems for domestic violence victims, offering a range of entry points for accessing support.

The project also recognised the fact that Khatlon is a high prevalence region with high levels of acceptability of domestic violence and thus chose a universal

primary prevention approach that tackled the attitudes of the whole population. The prevalence data also enabled targeting, and PDV's BCC campaign targeted male perpetrators as primary audience. Because of the involvement of other family members in perpetrating and tolerating violence, the scope of community-outreach activities was broadened to address family members in their various roles. In the victim support services, the dynamics of domestic violence in extended families was acknowledged by offering couple counselling and family conferences.

Promising practices and room for improvement

Thirdly, the study assessed the effectiveness of the local approaches that were developed and implemented by the PDV project. The project succeeded in enlisting key stakeholders more strongly in the fight against domestic violence through its advocacy activities, such as community meetings and 'round table'-discussions. This increased the population's confidence in the role that local institutions play in solving cases and rendering support to victims. Such a multi-stakeholder approach serves to form broad-based coalitions for domestic violence prevention. This appears to be a promising practice. But in doing so it is essential to be cognisant of the specific political economy and local governance structures, as well as to frame approaches around consensual issues that all relevant stakeholders can rally around.

The project also met its target of enhancing women's access to support services. There was a ten-fold increase in domestic violence victims accessing services from a project service provider from 2009 to 2011; albeit this still leaves a huge unmet demand. Also, the quality of service delivery was assessed to be positive in as far as the majority of clients expressed a high level of satisfaction with the approaches used. The NGOs were remarkably successful in helping divorced women claiming their rights in court, such as alimony. But it is unclear if the counselling and family conferences contributed to empowerment and reduced violence or if women are actually pushed back to the perpetrators. There are some indications that the services do have a preventative effect, because potential perpetrators know that there are systems in place in support of the

victims. However, the available data does not permit an estimate of how effective this approach is in reducing recidivism of violent men. Even though the family conference-approach appears to serve the needs of the clients, before classifying it as a promising practice further analytical work in regard to its preventative effect is required.

The projects' BCC campaign led to a strong exposure of the target population to preventative messages. In 2011, almost half of all men and women in the three project locations in Khatlon reported seeing three or more messages on domestic violence in the media, and more than three-quarters of men and two-thirds of women stated exposure to at least one message through a community activity. The campaign is also a promising practice, especially its tailor-made combination of mass media and community outreach and its use of instrumentalist messaging. It appears that the campaign resonated positively with the local population and successfully counteracted the fundamentalist influence in Khatlon.

Overall, the study found that the project components contributed to a climate of non-tolerance towards domestic violence. The 2011 survey found that the population perceived various forms of domestic violence, especially physical violence, to have become less acceptable between 2009 and 2011. Especially for men, the perceived cultural acceptability had reduced, in particular for those men who had been exposed to preventative messages by the PDV project. However, the effect on women was more ambivalent. This success can be accorded to the creation and use of local approaches and was achieved despite the neo-patriarchal backlash in rural Khatlon. The study therefore provides evaluative evidence that the local approaches used by PDV that were built around the four key elements contributed to a reduction in the cultural acceptability of domestic violence, which in turn is a precondition for reduced prevalence. Whether the Intervention Model will also have a positive effect on the prevalence should be assessed through future research.

The adoption of the law on domestic violence in late 2012 presents an opportunity for Tajik stakeholders and their international partners to upgrade and upscale the response to domestic violence. On the one hand, there are important lessons to be learnt from PDV. On the other hand, there is still room for

improvement. Firstly, the statistical data provided additional information that could have been used to optimise targeting and tailor specific activities. Young and uneducated women in arranged polygamous marriages are most at-risk of becoming victims of domestic violence. The project also not reacted to the important role of labour migration in determining the dynamics of domestic violence. Two-thirds of men in the 2009 survey's sample had migrated for work outside of Tajikistan, and women whose husbands had migrated were significantly more likely to have been subject to physical violence. However, the long spells of absence by husbands reduces physical violence for the better part of the year, producing a seasonal pattern with violence shooting up when men return in early winter. Women who are left behind then face emotional violence from members of their marital family, especially from mothers-in-law. Most of the time, this is probably the most relevant aspect of domestic violence in young women's everyday lives. The data also demonstrates that the level of women's economic empowerment is associated with experiences of domestic violence. Women who reported receiving remittances directly have lower rates of physical and emotional violence, than women whose parents-in-law received the funds. The ambivalent views of women regarding the cultural acceptability of domestic violence might be due to an insufficient consideration of women's dual role as victims and perpetrators/instigators of domestic violence. Here, the project could borrow from experiences with engaging mothers-in-law as change agents in order to strengthen its community outreach activities. For example, a project in Uzbekistan employed a peer-to-peer education method for mothers-in-law (GIZ 2012). But it would also be worth exploring how male labour migrants could be targeted better.

Secondly, despite the restricted coverage of the victim support services, their limited leverage for altering norms and attitudes at the level of the region's population and relatively high costs, PDV decided to maintain component 2 and continue funding the Crisis Centres of its NGO partners, effectively supporting a secondary and tertiary prevention intervention. The identity and skills of the partner organisations are closely connected to the mission of providing support to female violence victims and their staff members' jobs as counsellors and community mobilisers represent their main and often only source of income. The

interests of the partners needed to be respected to safeguard the stability of the partnerships on which the success of the project rested. Hence, the local partners occupied a rather powerful position. However, in respect to efficacy considerations, the question asked at the beginning of Phase VII about the relative contribution of project components *vis-à-vis* the goal of reducing the acceptability of domestic violence is still valid. Also, in the mid-term sustainability of this component will not be achieved, because the Crisis Centres are financially dependent on external donors and are unlikely to receive public funding from the Tajik government.

Thirdly, NGOs recognise the fact that domestic violence in Tajikistan is part of a larger concept of 'family violence' and include the approach of 'family conferences' to mediate conflicts into their service portfolio. However, a much stronger focus could still be laid on working with male perpetrators as clients of counseling services. At the moment individual counselling almost exclusively looks at empowering women, but not enough at men and the need for them to control their aggression, withstand peer pressure and overcome hegemonial masculinities. Here, PDV could learn from innovative interventions in other countries that engage men (Hoang et al 2013; Berg et al 2013; Barker 2005).

Contradictions and trade-offs

The starting point of this study was Merry's question (2006: 1): *"Do people in local communities reframe human rights ideas to fit into their system of cultural meanings? Do they resist ideas that seem unfamiliar?"* The promising practices identified and the positive outcome of the project in regard to a reduced cultural acceptability of domestic violence notwithstanding, the study also showed that a central mechanism applied in appropriating the international domestic violence discourse and approaches to suit the setting in Khatlon was to circumvent the issue of gender equality.

In fact, it is a recurring pattern in all project components that the project seeks to free women from physical violence, but not necessarily from patriarchy. This finding resonates with Snadji's (2005: 306) analysis of local approaches in Kazakhstan that *"avoid a direct confrontation with the present patriarchal*

structure of Kazakh culture". The messages chosen for both the advocacy strategy, as well as for the BCC campaign refrained from addressing issues to do with universal human rights, avoided criticism of men and made no explicit reference to gender relations. The provision of victim support services also prioritised the family unit over the individual women's safety. Individual counselling and family conferences tackled physical violence as problematic, while patriarchal gender relations were left largely untouched. For instance, it is regarded acceptable that women should not leave the house without permission, but in case they transgress from this rule they should nevertheless not be beaten by their husbands or other family members.

There are two framing mechanisms at play that support this approach: the project partner NGOs separate patriarchal gender norms from social norms that promote violence as a conflict resolution method. Physical violence is regarded as largely unacceptable, because it is permissible only within restricted parameters. According to predominant Muslim teaching by the officially recognised religious leaders in Khatlon and their interpretation of sura 4:34 of the Quran, husbands must discipline and educate their wives. However, this should not be done through physical violence, but rather through words. Physical violence is therefore portrayed as 'un-Islamic'. Moreover, while framing domestic violence in a broader sense as 'family violence' is a tactic to gain credibility and support in the local community, it also disguises the gendered and patriarchal nature of domestic violence (Johnson 2007: 48). Accepting that transgressions from gender norms on the side of women is supposedly the root of violence shifts the blame to the victims and at the same time protects the husband's reputation, as well as the family honour.

The local approaches promoted by PDV thus challenge the global normative framework. Merry (2006: 221) argued that if locally appropriated approaches want to remain within the international human rights system, they must emphasise individualism, autonomy, choice and equality. Haarr (2007: 267) concludes that *"the challenge facing international organisation and local nongovernmental organisations in Tajikistan is to confront cultural norms ... and women's rights"*. The local practice, however, supported an approach that focused only on one

aspect - bodily integrity -, but not the promotion of gender equality in a broader sense.

This perspective also questions the usefulness of the definition and operationalisation of domestic violence put forward by WHO. The hazardousness of forms of physical violence resonates with the NGOs in Khatlon, whereas forms of emotional violence, especially male controlling behaviours, are much more acceptable. Emotional violence represents global normative concepts tied to gender equality that appear not to be shared by the local actors in Khatlon. Rather, as the study's context analysis demonstrated in rural Tajikistan domestic violence is a mechanism to maintain 'orderly' gender relations, and the project's partner NGOs act within this discursive space.

There are trade-offs between making approaches palatable to local stakeholders and adhering to international human rights principles. To leverage change, messages must pose a challenge to mainstream thinking. This is the paradox that effective framing has to master. However, it is also possible to choose a provocative approach that might produce resistance in the short-run, but lead to long-term change. On the other hand, a resonant approach, which is not radical, is also possible. This study shows that an approach that fails to challenge patriarchal gender relations directly can indeed have a positive effect in regard to domestic violence prevention; with the restriction that the acceptability of physical violence was reduced to the detriment of furthering gender equality more broadly.

The circumnavigation of gender equality follows a strategic rationale. Considering the current controversy around gender and Islam and the need for NGOs to secure credibility among their constituencies, it is questionable that the Khatlon setting would have allowed for a more explicit approach in regard to addressing women's rights and gender relations. Addressing patriarchy directly would likely be considered an attack on 'true Tajik culture' and the project could have suffered from being regarded 'anti-Islamic'. Hence, circumnavigating gender issues was also a tactical choice in the framing process through which the NGOs responded to the neo-patriarchal backlash in their areas of operation. Importantly, the aforementioned moderate interpretation of sura 4:34 represented a middle ground that actors could settle on; it localised violence prevention by detaching it

from gender inequality, while at the same time furthering the goal of preventing physical violence. It is a constructive means of dealing with the tensions around 'Tajik culture'. Snadji (2005: 306) argued that by not reporting cases to the formal structures, strategies outside the state system help to conceal the domestic violence epidemic. 'Underground approaches' of local organisations represent alternative solutions, but these also manifest antagonism and hamper dialogue between stakeholders. The PDV case study in contrast shows how various stakeholders, including state representatives, religious leaders and internationally funded grassroots organisations, can join in a collaborative effort by rallying around a shared view on adequate 'Tajik responses' to domestic violence.

Finally, it is interesting how the various actors in the PDV project handled the contradictions and trade-offs. SDC, as a bilateral donor organisation, subscribes to the principle of gender mainstreaming, and PDV was conceived through a gender equality-lense. The reduction of the acceptability of transgressions from patriarchal norms as justifiable circumstances for domestic violence was written into the project goal formulation. Preventing domestic violence as a contribution to and through the promotion of gender equality is thus the 'public transcript' to be followed by stakeholders in PDV. Yet, as shown, partners appear to have diverging ideas and interests in this regard. However, PDV provided space for local actors to 'ethnicise' the discourse about and the response to domestic violence. Project management provided overall strategic orientation and gave project partners maximum leeway in designing the methods and approaches. The production of local approaches was not a hidden agenda, but represented a conscious division of roles and responsibilities, and the NGOs acted within their agreed upon sphere of influence. Mosse (2005: 231) argues that such *"disjuncture between policy and practice is not ... an unfortunate gap."* Rather, it is the result of inevitable negotiation and compromise.

Whether the resulting contradictions and tensions are tolerable must be answered by stakeholders of development initiatives themselves. In the case of PDV, the funding agency and project management accepted an effective locally adapted approach for domestic violence prevention at the expense of promoting a broader gender equality agenda. The local stakeholders' approaches straddled the fine line between conforming to donor expectations and upholding their local

integrity, thereby using the space purposely provided for them to create successful 'Tajik approaches'.

6. References

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Annex 1: PDV Logframe

Status: 21.12.2010

Results	Indicators
A. Overall Goal: The level of domestic violence in Tajikistan is reduced.	Indicator A.1: The proportion of women in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) experiencing <i>physical</i> domestic violence in the past 12 months has been reduced by one-quarter from its current rate (8.5% to 6.4%) by 30 November 2014.
	Indicator A.2: The proportion of people in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) experiencing <i>emotional</i> domestic violence in the past 12 months has been reduced by one-fifth from its current rate (36.3% to 29% for women and from 20% to 16% for men) by 30 November 2014.
B. Project Goal: The acceptability of domestic violence is reduced.	Indicator B.1: The proportion of women in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) who believe that a husband has the right to use unacceptable physical violence (as internationally defined by WHO) against his wife is reduced by 30 November 2011 (acceptance of the use of physical violence "if she has her own male friends (non-family members) reduced by 20% from 38.1% to 30.4%; if "she leaves the house without permission" reduced by 20% from 38% to 30.4%).
	Indicator B.2: The proportion of men in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) who believe that a husband has the right to use unacceptable physical violence (as internationally defined by WHO) against his wife is reduced by 30 November 2011 (acceptance of the use of physical violence "if she has her own male friends (non-family members) reduced by 20% from 67.5% to 54%; if "she leaves the house without permission" reduced by 20% from 59.7% to 47.8%).
C.1 Objective 1: The policy and institutional framework and environment for the fight against domestic violence at the national and local level in the project areas are improved.	Indicator C.1.1: At the national level, government institutions and/or international agencies implement joint strategies and activities for the fight domestic violence.
	Indicator C.1.2: At the local level, local key stakeholders (local politicians, religious leaders, policemen) in the project areas integrate the fight against domestic violence into their work.
	Indicator C.1.3: Women and men in the project areas confirm that the majority of local key stakeholders (local politicians, religious leaders, policemen) support the fight against domestic violence.
C.2 Objective 2: The access to quality psychosocial, medical and legal services for victims of domestic violence in the project areas is improved.	Indicator C.2.1: The partner CCs and medical group (MG) apply quality standards for the provision of psychosocial, medical and legal services.
	Indicator C.2.2: The number of clients served by the partner CCs per month remain at a high average number.

Results	Indicators
	Indicator C.2.3: The number of women in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) who have experienced domestic violence who have accessed medical, psychosocial or legal services from a project partner service provider has increased by 50% from 3.2% to 4.8% by 30 November 2011.
	Indicator C.2.4: The proportion of women in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) having experienced domestic violence who have accessed medical, psychosocial or legal services has increased by 20% from 55% to 66% by 30 November 2011.
C.3 Objective 3: The access to quality preventive communication on domestic violence for the population in the project areas is improved.	Indicator C.3.1: The BCC activities supported and implemented by the project are conducted using the PDV communication strategy.
	Indicator C.3.2: 50% of men and women in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) state that they have been exposed to at least 3 messages on domestic violence through the media in the past 12 months by 30 November 2011.
	Indicator C.3.3: 75% of women and men in the project areas (Dushanbe and Khatlon) state that they have been exposed to at least 1 message on domestic violence through an NGO/CBO activity in the past 12 months by 30 November 2011.

Annex 2: Material on PDV surveys 2009 and 2011

A. Questionnaire for 2009 baseline survey

Screening Criteria [tick each]
Currently Married or in a Long-Term Relationship (12+ months and current): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aged 18-49: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Same Sex Interview: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Questionnaire Number: Qno

VERSION 19 – FINAL - 17/4/09

Quantitative Questionnaire Prevention of Domestic Violence in Khatlon Region and Dushanbe in Tajikistan

Prepared by SIAPAC in association with the PDV Project

1) Interview Status (tick only one): IntStatus Fully Completed _____ - 1 Partially Completed _____ - 2
2) Total number of visits: Visits
3) Substitution Status: Substitution Status Sampled Person/Household _____ - 1 Replacement Person/Household _____ - 2
4) Enumerator Self Check (field), print first name: Enumerator Self Check 1 = yes, 2 = no
5) Supervisor Check (field), print surname: FSCheck 1 = yes, 2 = no
6) Field Manager Check (field), print surname: FMCheck 1 = yes, 2 = no
7) Project Manager Check (field), print surname: PMCheck 1 = yes, 2 = no
8) # of <i>unexpected</i> missing values resolved: UnexpectResolved
9) # of <i>unexpected</i> missing values UN resolved: UnexpectUnresolved
Field Manager Check (office), print surname: FMCheck Office 1 = yes, 2 = no
Other Check (field/office), print surname: OtherCheck 1 = yes, 2 = no
Questionnaire Entry Completed: DateQuestEntry [Day/Month - 4 digit code]
Questionnaire Validation Completed: DateQuestValid [Day/Month - 4 digit code]
Data Manager Final Check: Date DataMan Final check [Day/Month - 4 digit code]

10) Enumerator Name: Q10

- ☐ - 1 Bahrom Fayzullov
☐ - 2 Parvina Asadova
☐ - 3 Shahlo Rahimova
☐ - 4 Nasim Mirzoev
☐ - 5 Shamsiya Mirzoeva
☐ - 6 Tursun Madaliev
☐ - 7 Gulsara Abdujabborova
☐ - 8 Boymurod Murodov
☐ - 9 Karomatkhon Hojjeva
☐ - 10 Mehriniso Shoymova

- ☐ - 11 Salim Ergashev
☐ - 12 Salim Rahimov
☐ - 13 Lola Jalilova
☐ - 14 Shodi Hakimov
☐ - 15 Majnun Yakhshibekov
☐ - 16 Rukhshona Shoinova
☐ - 17 Mirahmad Rajabov
☐ - 18 Saidvali Karaev
☐ - 19 Bahriniso Alimova
☐ - 20 Salomat Odinaeva

11) Supervisor Name:

- ☐ - 1 Jamilya Zakirova
☐ - 2 Khayriniso Siyarova
☐ - 3 Kurbongul Zubaydova

- ☐ - 4 Malohat Usmonova
☐ - 5 Hoji Abdullo Ashurov

Q11

12) Field Manager Name:

- ☐ - 1 Robin Weeks ☐ - 2 Muhiddin Tojiev

Q12

13) Sex of Interviewee: [NOTE: SAME SEX INTERVIEWS ONLY] Q13

- ☐ - 1 male ☐ - 2 female

14) Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ TOTAL Time (min) _____

Q14

15) Date of Interview [Day, Month, as a single 4 digit code] _____ Q15

Household Listing Consent

Good day. My name is _____. I am with Avedis, a consultancy firm responsible for implementation of a gender support project here in Tajikistan. We are conducting a survey on gender issues for _____. We are carrying out the survey in four locations in Tajikistan, three in Khatlon Region and also the city of Dushanbe. To randomly choose the person to be interviewed, I need to ask you a few questions about the [men/women] living in this home.

Can we begin? ☐ - 1 yes ☐ - 2 no

[Ask how many males/females [depending on your sex] live in the household, are currently at home/will be home this same day, and who are married or have a long-term partner, and who are aged 18-49. Write the ages down in the following table:]

Question	Males	Females
How many men / women currently live in this homestead aged 18-49, at home, and married/long-term partner? [Enum: Same sex listing only]	18-49	18-49
spendent 1: Of these, who is the oldest person in this age range? [age]	Male Resp 1 Age	Female Resp 1 Age
spendent 2: Who is the next oldest? [age]	Male Resp 2 Age	Female Resp 2 Age
spendent 3: Who is the next oldest? [age]	Male Resp 3 Age	Female Resp 3 Age
spendent 4: Who is the next oldest? [age]	Male Resp 4 Age	Female Resp 4 Age
spendent 5: Who is the next oldest? [age]	Male Resp 5 Age	Female Resp 5 Age
TOTAL NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD SAME AGE AND SEX AS YOURSELF	Total # Male Resp	Total # Female Resp

If there is more than one household member your same sex and aged 18-49 in the household, as per this above table, you select the respondent for interview based on the following table. If there is only one eligible household member, move to respondent consent.

# of eligible respondents	Last 2 digits of questionnaire number																			
	00-04	05-09	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95-99
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
3	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1
4	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Once the first household has been enumerated and the one interview completed, the next household is selected by moving in the same direction as first established by the device (in the case of households) or in the direction turned for the first interview (in the case of flats). Starting with the next household, which is numbered as 1, the enumerator should move to the 5th household. That household is selected for listing and interview, using the same process as above.

Respondent Consent

INTRODUCTION

Good day. My name is _____, and I'm part of a team conducting research on how people in Tajikistan respond or avoid responding to problems and resolve potential conflict. We are interviewing men and women like yourself on a number of these issues at home, especially around discipline, that are associated with a good quality of life.

I assure you that everything you tell me in this interview will be kept **completely anonymous** and **confidential**. I do not need to know your full name or personal details for this survey and there will not be any way for anyone to link your answers back to you.

It is entirely up to you whether you want to take part in this survey. Please note that you have the right to refuse to answer any question or to change your mind at any point, and stop the interview. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, just let me know and we can skip it. However, because your answers are very important to us I ask that, if you do agree to be part of this survey, you be completely honest and sincere with me and answer all the questions. The interview will take about a half hour.

16) May we proceed? ____ - 1 Yes ____ - 2 No
Q16

[If refused, mark 'no' and replace using strategy discussed during training. Be sure to mark the replacement respondent as a replacement(2) in Q3 on page 1.]

[All interviewees should be aged 18-49 and must be the same sex as the interviewer. ALL eligible persons MUST BE the same sex as you, in the right age group and be in a married/long-term relationship in order to be interviewed one-by-one. Long-term relationship refers to a current partner who has been a partner for at least one year]

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
101	What is your age? [Enum: All respondents must be between 18-49]	_____ years		
102	What is your marital status? [Enum: If married 'legally' as well as 'traditionally/religious', tick 'legally'.]	married - legally married - religious living together (unmarried) in long-term relationship	1 2 3	102a 102a 103
102 a	[If married, either type] Was this marriage arranged by your and/ or your spouse's parents?	yes no	1 2	
102 b	[If married, either type] At what age did you get married? [If married more than once, age at first marriage]	_____ years		
102 c	[If married, either type] Do you currently live in the same household with your husband's family [female]/does your wife live in the same household with your family [male]?	yes no	1 2	103 102ci
102 ci	[If married and NOT currently living with the husband's family] Have you ever lived in the same household as your husband's family [female]/has your wife ever lived in the same household as your family [male]?	yes no	1 2	
103	What is your highest level of education?	primary (Grades 1-4) lower Secondary (Grades 5-9) secondary (Grades 10-11) vocational religious uncompleted Tertiary tertiary no education	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	
104	Who is the head of the household you live in?	male [male head/other senior male decision-maker present at least 6 months over the past 12] female [female mentioned as head, or stated male head absent over 6 months over the past 12, and no alternative male head at least 6 months over the past 12]	1 2	
105 M W	[For female respondents only who are married] Is the household you live in headed by your mother-in-law or your father-in-law, or neither?	neither mother-in-law father-in-law	1 2 3	
106	How many people in total 'belong to' this household? By 'belong to', I mean the number of people (all ages) who identify this household as their main home, and who have lived here at least three months over the past twelve?	_____		
106 a W	[For female respondents only] How many children are you caring for that live in this household?	_____ [Enum: 0 is a valid value]		[If 0, male or blank, skip to mod 2]
106 b W	[For female respondents only] Are you caring for any children who are not your biological children?	yes no	1 2	106bi mod 2
106 bi	[If yes to 106b] Have any of these children, who are not your biological children, lost one or both of their parents?	yes no	1 2	

MODULE 2: ECONOMIC ISSUES, MEDIA ACCESS, LIFE VIEWS

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Cod es	GO TO
201	Of the adults aged 18 and older in this household, how many have been employed. This includes formal or informal employment, full time or part time, that lasted at least six months in total over the past twelve.	_____ [if do not know, enter 99]		[If 1 or more, go to 201a]
201a	[If 1 or more persons have been employed over the past year] Of these, how many currently still have a job/are able to return to the job(s) soon?	_____ [if do not know, enter 99]		
202 M	[If married, either type] Over the past year, have you <i>[male]</i> /has your husband <i>[female]</i> migrated for work to another location inside Tajikistan or away from here to another country outside Tajikistan? [Enum: Refers to MALE migrants only] [Circle one or both 'yes' responses as appropriate]	yes - outside Tajikistan yes - inside Tajikistan no	1 2 3	W202a M202b W202a M202b 203
202a MW L	[If female and married (either type) respondent, and living in the household with husband's parent(s)] Over the past year, when money has been remitted by the husband working away, who has the money been directed to? [Enum: If directed to more than one person, who was it most commonly directed to. If directed equally, the 'tie breaker' is who received the most funds]	mother-in-law father-in-law wife herself child other not applicable (no remittances)	1 2 3 4 5 6	202b 202b 202b 202b 202b 203
202b M	[If married, either type] How many times, over the past year, have you <i>[male]</i> /has your husband <i>[female]</i> remitted funds or in-kind transfers to this home? [Enum: Refers to MALE migrants only]	_____ [if not certain, get estimate] [if do not know, enter 99]		
203	[Excluding the migrant just discussed] Has any household member/any other household member living away from this household regularly contributed cash income in cash remittances, food or other resources to this household? By regular, I mean at least 4 times over the past 12.	yes no	1 2	
204	Do you have access to any of the following on a regular basis (daily or weekly):			
204a	Television	yes no	1 2	
204b	Radio	yes no	1 2	
204c	newspapers and/or magazines	yes no	1 2	
205	If you had to prioritise the two most important things in your life, what would the first one be?	do not know/cannot say my spouse my children my birth family (children, adults) my spouse's family (children, adults) career/job good health my happiness financial security my religion my country other _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 ##	206 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a 205a
205a	What would the second most important thing in your life be? [Enum: Ensure that it is not a duplication of the first one]	nothing to add my spouse my children my birth family (children, adults) my spouse's family (children, adults) career/job	1 2 3 4 5 6	

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
		good health my happiness financial security my religion my country other ____	7 8 9 10 11 ##	
206	Of all the sources of information, ideas, interactions, etc., what would you say is the most influential in terms of the opinions you have formed? It could be media, it could be family or friends, it could be officials, it could be religious authorities, etc.	do not know/cannot say spouse parents spouse's parents children friends & colleagues religious authorities local authorities television radio newspapers/magazines other ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 ##	mod 3 206a 206a 206a 206a 206a 206a 206a 206a 206a 206a
206a	Of all the sources of information, ideas, interactions, etc., what would you say is the second most influential in terms of the opinions you have formed? It could be media, it could be family or friends, it could be religious authorities, etc. [Enum: Ensure that it is not a duplication of the first one]	nothing to add spouse parents spouse's parents children friends & colleagues religious authorities local authorities television radio newspapers/magazines other ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 ##	

MODULE 3: SOCIAL NORMS, STATUS AND ATTITUDES

In this module only Q301 is for Male and Female respondents. Q302 – Q310 and Q314 are for Female respondents ONLY and Q311 - Q313 are for Female respondents who are Married and who are living with their husband's parents ONLY.

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
301	How long have you lived in this community/ neighbourhood?	____ years [Enum: if < 1 year, indicate '1'] [88 = all my life] [99 = do not know]		
302 W	[For female respondents only] Do any adult members of your birth family live in this same neighbourhood/community?	yes no	1 2	
303 W	[For female respondents only] How often do you see or speak with a member of your birth family? Would you say once a week, once a month, 1-4 times a year, or less frequently?	daily once a week once a month 1-4 times a year less frequently	1 2 3 4 5	
304 W	[For female respondents only] When you need help or have a serious problem where you need outside assistance, can you rely on members of your birth family for support? Can you rely on them 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'?	always sometimes rarely never do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
305 W	[For female respondents only] How well would you say that neighbours know each other in this area? Would you say that they know each other 'very well', 'somewhat well', 'not very well', or 'not at all well'?	very well somewhat well not very well not at all well do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
306 W	[For female respondents only] When you need help or have a serious problem and you need outside assistance, can you usually rely on women such as yourself in this neighbourhood for support? Can you rely on them 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'?	always sometimes rarely never do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
307 W	[For female respondents only] When you need help or have a serious problem with your husband/long-term partner, and you need outside assistance, are there any officials or organisations that you feel that you could rely on to help you solve this problem?	yes no do not know/not certain	1 2 3	307a 308 308
307a	[If yes to 307] Would you regard the services of these officials or organisations as 'very effective', 'somewhat effective', 'not very effective', or 'not at all effective', or do you not know?	very effective somewhat effective not very effective not at all effective do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
308 W	[For female respondents only] When you need help or have a serious problem with your husband/long-term partner, and you need outside assistance, can you usually rely on local religious leaders? Can you rely on them 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'?	always sometimes rarely never do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
309 W	[For female respondents only] If someone in your neighbourhood/community wished to undertake a community project, what proportion of the households in this area would be willing to contribute money or labour? Would it be 'all/almost all', 'most', 'some', 'not many', or 'none/almost none'?	all/almost all most some not many none/almost none do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5 6	
310 W	[For female respondents only] If someone in a household in this neighbourhood suddenly fell ill, what proportion of the households in this area would be willing to offer help? Would it be 'all/almost all', 'most', 'some', 'not many', or 'none/almost none'?	all/almost all most some not many none/almost none do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5 6	
311 MW L	[For female and married respondents who are living with their husband's parent(s) only] When you need help or have a serious <i>economic</i> problem, can you usually rely on your husband's parent(s) to help you solve the problem? Can you rely on them 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'.	always sometimes rarely never do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
312 MW L	[For female and married respondents who are living with their husband's parent(s) only] When you need help because you are feeling <i>emotionally</i> distressed about something in the family aside from your husband's parent(s), can you usually go to your husband's parent(s) to help you solve the problem? Can you rely on them 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'.	always sometimes rarely never do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
313 MW L	[For female and married respondents who are living with their husband's parent(s) only] To what extent do you consider yourself 'economically dependent' on your husband's parent(s)? By this, we mean that you do not have sufficient funds for your needs and your children's needs without the support (cash and in-kind, including housing) from your husband's parent(s). This can be from any source of income to the parent(s), even money from your husband. Are you 'very dependent', 'somewhat dependent', 'not very dependent', 'not at all dependent'.	very dependent somewhat dependent not very dependent not at all dependent do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
314 W	[For female respondents only] Overall, if you had to rate the 'sense of community' in this area, that is, how much people feel that they share a common history, and have a common bond, and identify with each other, would you rate it as very strong, somewhat strong, not very strong, or not at all strong?	very strong somewhat strong not very strong not at all strong do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	

MODULE 4: NORMS AROUND DISCIPLINE

[Ask both men and women]

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
401	The thing about even severe physical discipline of a wife by her husband, assuming it does not pose a risk to her life, is that it is a family affair, NOT something that should involve someone outside the family	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
402	We have been socialised since a young age to accept that, in marriage, the husband must use physical discipline against his wife, it is part of our culture	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
403	A woman who reports what she considers violence on her by her husband brings shame on the family	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
404	Even if a woman is severely physically disciplined by her husband, there is little use in reporting it to the police, because the police would side with the husband	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
405	How common is the situation that wives are generally economically dependent on their husband's families, and this gives the families control over them? Is it very common, somewhat common, not very common, or not at all common?	very common somewhat common not very common not at all common do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	

MODULE 5: ACCEPTABLE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR DISCIPLINE

[Ask both men and women] Under what circumstances, if any, is it **culturally acceptable** for a **husband** to strike his wife/long-term partner **hard**, to the point where she bruises or something is broken (broken skin, bones, bleeding eyes or ears, lips, etc.)? Please tell us whether you 'strongly agree', 'agree' or 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that he can do this, or whether you do not know/are uncertain.

Q	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	DK
501	if he believes that she has been unfaithful	1	2	3	4	5
502	if she cannot have a baby	1	2	3	4	5
503	if she refuses his sexual advances, without what he considers a valid reason	1	2	3	4	5
504	if he feels that she misuses money	1	2	3	4	5
505	if she has her own male friends (non-family members)	1	2	3	4	5
506	if she cannot cook well	1	2	3	4	5
507	if she leaves the house without permission	1	2	3	4	5
508	if he feels that she is neglecting the children	1	2	3	4	5
509	if he feels that she is being argumentative or difficult	1	2	3	4	5
510	if she brings shame to the family	1	2	3	4	5

Under what circumstances, if any, is it **culturally acceptable** for a **husband's mother** or **father** to strike the husband's wife/long-term partner **hard**, to the point where she bruises or something breaks? Please tell us whether you 'strongly agree', 'agree' or 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that s/he can do this, or whether you do not know/are uncertain.

Q	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	DK
511	if the mother/father/both believe(s) that she has been unfaithful	1	2	3	4	5
512	if she cannot have a baby	1	2	3	4	5
513	if she refuses the husband's sexual advances, without what he considers a valid reason	1	2	3	4	5
514	if the mother/father/both feel(s) that she misuses money	1	2	3	4	5
515	if she has her own male friends (non-family members)	1	2	3	4	5
516	if the mother/father/both feel(s) that she cannot cook well	1	2	3	4	5
517	if she leaves the house without anyone's permission	1	2	3	4	5
518	if the mother/father/both feel(s) that she is neglecting the children	1	2	3	4	5
519	if the mother/father/both feel(s) that she is being argumentative/difficult	1	2	3	4	5
520	if the mother/father/both feel(s) that she brings shame to the family	1	2	3	4	5

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes
521	Under what circumstances, if any, is it culturally acceptable for a wife to fight back if she is being physically beaten? [Tick only one]	anytime never when she feels that she may be killed when she feels that she may be injured when she feels that a child may be hurt when she feels that it is unfair when she is being forced to do something against her will other	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ##
522	Under what circumstances, if any, is it culturally acceptable for a wife to yell at, berate, or otherwise verbally discipline her husband? [Tick only one]	anytime she feels it necessary never when she feels that he is seriously mis-behaving when she feels that he is seriously unfair to a child when she feels that she has been treated unfairly when he has been unfaithful other	1 2 3 4 5 6 ##
523	A husband who is physically disciplined by his wife would be too ashamed to seek any kind of outside assistance to make it stop	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
524	In our culture, the husband's mother is just doing her job if she physically disciplines her son's wife when she feels it is necessary	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
525	In our culture, boys and girls learn at a young age that brothers should physically discipline their sisters when they feel it is necessary	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
In this next sub-section, we would like you to consider whether certain actions are acceptable or unacceptable in Tajik culture. For the following, we want to know how acceptable it is for a husband to do any of the following, using the scale 'very acceptable', 'somewhat acceptable', 'not very acceptable', or 'not at all acceptable'.			
526	a husband keeps his wife from seeing same-sex friends	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
527	a husband keeps his wife from contacting her birth family	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
528	a husband insists on knowing where his wife is all the time	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5

529	a husband ignores his wife and treats her with indifference	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
530	a husband does not trust his wife with money	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
531	a husband gets angry if his wife speaks to another man	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes
532	a husband is suspicious that his wife is unfaithful	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
533	a husband insults his wife or makes her feel bad about herself	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
534	a husband belittles or humiliates his wife in front of other people	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
535	a husband does things to scare or intimidate his wife on purpose (by the way he looks at her, by yelling at her, by smashing things, etc.)	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
536	a husband threatens to hurt his wife or someone she cares about	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
537	a husband disciplines his wife by slapping her or throwing something at her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
538	a husband disciplines his wife by pushing or shaking her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
539	a husband disciplines his wife by hitting her with fists or with something else that hurts	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
540	a husband disciplines his wife by kicking, dragging, or beating her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
541	a husband disciplines his wife by choking or burning her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
542	a husband threatens to use, or actually uses, a gun, knife or other weapon on his wife	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5

543	a husband physically forces his wife to have sex with him when she does not want to	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes
In this next sub-section, please tell us the extent to which the situation in Tajikistan has changed in terms of the acceptability of various actions, say over the past decade. Are they 'much more acceptable now', 'somewhat more acceptable now', 'somewhat less acceptable now', or 'much less acceptable now'.			
544	A husband disciplining his wife by slapping her or throwing something at her	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
545	A husband disciplining his wife by pushing or shaking her	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
546	A husband disciplining his wife by hitting her with fists or with something else that hurts	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
547	A husband disciplining his wife by kicking, dragging, or beating her	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
548	A husband choking or burning his wife	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
549	A husband threatening to use, or actually using, a gun, knife or other weapon on his wife	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5
550	A husband physically forcing his wife to have sex with him when she does not want to	much more acceptable now somewhat more acceptable now somewhat less acceptable now much less acceptable now do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5

MODULE 6: EXPOSURE TO DISCIPLINE

[Ask both men and women] When two people become a couple, they usually share both good and bad times. I would now like to ask you some questions about your current relationship and how your spouse/partner treats you. The first question refers to 'ever' having been exposed to discipline, and can refer to any partner. The second and third question, for each topic, refers to exposure to discipline by your *current partner* in the past year, and in the past three months. If you have been exposed to discipline by anyone else in the past year or the past three months, do NOT report that here.

Q	Statement	Ever [any partner]		Past Year [if ever] [current partner only]		Past 3 Months [if in past year] [current partner only]	
601	kept you from seeing same-sex friends	yes no	1 Q601 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q601 PY 2	yes no	1 Q601 P3 2
602	kept you from contacting your birth family	yes no	1 Q602 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q602 PY 2	yes no	1 Q602 P3 2
603	insists on knowing where you are all the time	yes no	1 Q603 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q603 PY 2	yes no	1 Q603 P3 2
604	ignores you and treats you with indifference	yes no	1 Q604 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q604 PY 2	yes no	1 Q604 P3 2
605	does not trust you with money	yes no	1 Q605 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q605 PY 2	yes no	1 Q605 P3 2
606	gets angry if you speak to someone of the opposite sex	yes no	1 Q606 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q606 PY 2	yes no	1 Q606 P3 2

Q	Statement	Ever [any partner]		Past Year [if ever] [current partner only]		Past 3 Months [if in past year] [current partner only]	
607	is often suspicious that you are unfaithful	yes no	1 Q607 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q607 PY 2	yes no	1 Q607 P3 2
608	insulted you or made you feel bad about yourself	yes no	1 Q608 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q608 PY 2	yes no	1 Q608 P3 2
609	belittled or humiliated you in front of other people	yes no	1 Q609 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q609 PY 2	yes no	1 Q609 P3 2
610	did things to scare or intimidate you on purpose (by the way they looked at you, by yelling at you, by smashing things, etc.)	yes no	1 Q610 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q610 PY 2	yes no	1 Q610 P3 2
611	threatened to hurt you or someone you care about	yes no	1 Q611 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q611 PY 2	yes no	1 Q611 P3 2
612	slapped you or threw something at you that could hurt	yes no	1 Q612 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q612 PY 2	yes no	1 Q612 P3 2
613	pushed or shook you	yes no	1 Q613 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q613 PY 2	yes no	1 Q613 P3 2
614	hit you with fists or with something else that hurt you	yes no	1 Q614 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q614 PY 2	yes no	1 Q614 P3 2
615	kicked you, dragged you or beat you up	yes no	1 Q615 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q615 PY 2	yes no	1 Q615 P3 2
616	choked or burned you on purpose	yes no	1 Q616 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q616 PY 2	yes no	1 Q616 P3 2
617	threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against you	yes no	1 Q617 Ever 2	yes no	1 Q617 PY 2	yes no	1 Q617 P3 2
618	physically forced you to have sex when you did not want to	yes no na (never had sex)	1 Q618 Ever 2 3	yes no na (never had sex)	1 Q618 PY 2 3	yes no na (never had sex)	1 Q618 P3 2 3

619) [If any serious physical domestic violence (Q612 to Q618) occurred under **'EVER' (first column)** in Module 6 above] For any of these, what was the youngest age you would estimate this first occurred?

Q619

_____ - 1 < 15
_____ - 2 15-19

_____ - 3 20-24
_____ - 4 25+
_____ - 5 do not remember

MODULE 7: RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE

[ASK men and women] [ONLY for those who have been subjected to physical domestic violence (Q612 to Q618) in the past year (**second column**) in Module 6 above. If responses were NO to Q612 to Q618 go to Module 8]

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
701	Were you physically injured as a result of discipline by your spouse/long-term partner?	yes no will not answer	1 2 3	701a 702 702
701a	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a health worker for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
701b	[If yes to 701] Did any children go with you for treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer not applicable (no children)	1 2 3 4	
701c	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a traditional doctor/faith healer for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
701d	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a crisis Centre for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
701e	[If yes to 701] Did you go someplace else for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
702	Were any children present at the time that the discipline occurred?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
703	Were any adult family members present at the time that the discipline occurred?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
704	Was this discipline the result of you first trying to discipline this person?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
705	Did you physically fight back at all against this discipline?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
706	Have you ever sought prosecution in response to physical violence?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	706a 707 707
706a	[If yes to 706] Did this prosecution result in the sentencing of the perpetrator?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707	Were you <i>emotionally</i> injured as a result of discipline by your spouse/ long-term partner?	yes no will not answer	1 2 3	707a mod 8 mod 8
707a	[If yes to 707] Did you go to a social worker for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	707ai 707b 707b
707ai	[If yes to 707a] Did any children go with you for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer not applicable (no children)	1 2 3 4	
707b	[If yes to 707] Did you go to a health worker for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707c	[If yes to 707] Did you go to a traditional doctor/faith healer for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707d	[If yes to 707] Did you go to a crisis Centre for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707e	[If yes to 707] Did you go to a religious leader for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707f	[If yes to 707] Did you go to the head of the local council for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707g	[If yes to 707] Did you go to the leader of an initiative group for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707h	[If yes to 707] Did you go to the public council for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707j	[If yes to 707] Did you go to the women's council for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
707k	[If yes to 707] Did you go someplace else for counselling?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	

MODULE 8: KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS, EXPOSURE

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
801	Have you ever seen anything on television about 'domestic violence', or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	801a 802 802
801a	[If yes to 801] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
802	Have you ever heard, via radio, about 'domestic violence', or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	802a 803 803
802a	[If yes to 802] Have you heard anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
803	Have you ever seen, via newspapers or magazines, about 'domestic violence', or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	803a 804 804
803a	[If yes to 803] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
804	Have you ever seen a billboard, a poster, a pamphlet, a book or other written material (not newspaper or magazine) about domestic violence, or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	804a 805 805
804a	[If yes to 804] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
805	Have you ever heard, in person, from a public official (e.g., police, teacher, health worker, etc.), anything about domestic violence? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	805a 806 806
805a	[If yes to 805] Have you heard anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
806	Have you ever heard, in person, from a religious leader about domestic violence? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	806a 807 807
806a	[If yes to 806] Have you heard anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
807	Have you ever heard, in person, from a community group or non-governmental organisation about domestic violence? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	807a 808 808
807a	[If yes to 807] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2008)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
808	Have you ever heard about domestic violence in an education institution? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	808a 809 809
808a	[If yes to 808] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
809	Have you ever heard about domestic violence in a community grouping? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	809a 810 810
809a	[If yes to 809] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
810	Have you ever heard about domestic violence at a sporting activity? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	810a 811 811
810a	[If yes to 810] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
811	Have you ever heard about domestic violence in a cultural event? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	811a 812 812
811a	[If yes to 811] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
812	Have you ever heard about domestic violence through a community drama event? [Enum: includes GBV and VAW]	yes no not certain	1 2 3	812a 813 813
812a	[If yes to 812] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
813	Have you ever heard of any counselling or medical services available for persons who have been subject to severe physical discipline?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	813a 814 814
813a	[If yes to 813] What services are you aware of? [Tick up to three responses]	not certain [tick by itself] legal services psychosocial counselling medical care religious counselling other	1 2 3 4 5 #	mod 9 813b 813b 813b 813b 813b
813b	[If yes to 813] What do you think is the most important reason that would stop women from going for such counselling services in the case of severe physical discipline?	do not know stigma worried about shame pressure from his family fear tarnishing family/friends reputations other	1 2 3 4 5 6 #	

MODULE 9: CLOSING QUESTIONS

- 901) **MW** [Ask married women only] Does your husband have other wives as well?
 ____ - 1 yes ____ - 2 no ____ - 3 do not know Q901
- 902) Could you please **estimate** the average **monthly** household income of ALL members of your household. This includes OWN PRODUCTION for consumption, cash or trade income from sales of produce, remittances (cash or in-kind), and all other in-kind and cash income.[Enum: Get the total income of all household members with an income, get a value for in-kind income, and divide the total by the number of all household members. Show the calculation]
 ____ - 1 no reliable cash income Q902
 ____ - 2 TJS 100 - 300
 ____ - 3 TJS 301 – 500
 ____ - 4 TJS 501 – 1 000
 ____ - 5 TJS 1 001 – 2 000
 ____ - 6 > TJS 2 000
 ____ - 7 do not know/not certain/will not say
- Total TJS: _____
HH Members: _____
- 903) Does this household have:
- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------|
| 903a) Computer | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903a |
| 903b) Radio | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903b |
| 903c) Television | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903c |
| 903d) Telephone/Mobile | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903d |
| 903e) Refrigerator | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903e |
| 903f) Bicycle | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903f |
| 903g) Vehicle | ____ - 1 yes | ____ - 2 no | Q903g |

Do you have any final comments to make before we close? Any questions of your own?

End of interview. Thank the person for their cooperation. Tick level of co-operation below. Record finish time. If there are any responses that you think are unreliable, write under "comments" which questions and why you think that they are unreliable.

904) Level of co-operation

Q904

- ____ - 1 high
- ____ - 2 medium
- ____ - 3 low

PLEASE RECORD THE FINISH TIME: _____ [Enum: Please transfer finish time to Q14, page 2 and calculate total time]

B. Abbreviated questionnaire for 2011 end-of-phase appraisal

Screening Criteria [tick each]
Currently Married or in a Long-Term Relationship (12+ months and current): _____
Aged 18-49: _____
Same Sex Interview: _____

Questionnaire Number: _____

VERSION 16 – FINAL – 18/4/11

Quantitative Questionnaire

Prevention of Domestic Violence in Khatlon Region, Tajikistan

Prepared by SIAPAC in association with the PDV Project

1) Interview Status (tick only one):
Fully Completed ____ - 1
Partially Completed ____ - 2
2) Total number of visits: _____
3) Household Status:
Sampled Household ____ - 1
Replacement Household ____ - 2
4) Respondent Status:
Sampled Person ____ - 1
Replacement Person ____ - 2
5) Enumerator Self Check (field), print first name: _____
Date: _____
6) Supervisor:
6a) # of <i>unexpected</i> missing values found: _____
6b) # of <i>unexpected</i> missing values resolved: _____
6c) # of <i>unexpected</i> missing values UN resolved: _____
7) Supervisor Check (field), print surname: _____
Date: _____
Supervisor signature: _____
8) Field Manager Check (field), print surname: _____
Date: _____
9) Field Manager Check (office), print surname: _____
Date: _____
Questionnaire Entry Completed: _____
Date: _____
Questionnaire Validation Completed: _____
Date: _____
Data Manager Final Check: _____
Date: _____

10) Enumerator Name:

____ - 1 Shamsiya Mirzoeva
 ____ - 2 Tursunali Madaliev
 ____ - 3 Gulsara Abdujabarova
 ____ - 4 Boymurod Murodov
 ____ - 5 Karomatkhon Hojiev
 ____ - 6 Mehriniso Shoimova
 ____ - 7 Salim Ergashev

____ - 8 Salim Rahimov
 ____ - 9 Lola Jalilova
 ____ - 10 Rukhshona Shoinova
 ____ - 11 Mirmahmad Rajabov
 ____ - 12 Saidvali Karaev
 ____ - 13 Bahriniso Alimova
 ____ - 14 Salomat Odinaeva

11) Supervisor Name:

____ - 1 Khayriniso Siyarova
 ____ - 2 Kurbongul Zubaydova

____ - 3 Malohat Usmonova

12) Field Manager Name:

____ - 1 Robin Weeks

____ - 2 Khurshed Mayusupov

13) Sex of Interviewee: [NOTE: SAME SEX INTERVIEWS **ONLY**]

____ 1 - male

____ - 2 female

14) Start Time: _____

Finish Time: _____

TOTAL Time (min)

15) Date of Interview [Day, Month, as a single 4 digit code]

Household Listing Consent

Good day. My name is _____. I am with the PDV project, a gender support project here in Tajikistan. We are carrying out the survey in three locations in Khatlon Region. To randomly choose the person to be interviewed, I need to ask you a few questions about the [men/women] living in this home.

Can we begin? ____ - 1 yes ____ - 2 no

[Ask how many males/females [depending on your sex] live in the household, are currently at home/will be home this same day, and who are married or have a long-term partner, and who are aged 18-49. Write the ages down in the following table:]

Question	Males	Females
How many men / women currently live in this homestead aged 18-49, at home, and married/long-term partner? [Enum: Same sex listing only]	18-49	18-49
Respondent 1: Of these, who is the oldest person in this age range? [age]		
Respondent 2: Who is the next oldest? [age]		
Respondent 3: Who is the next oldest? [age]		
Respondent 4: Who is the next oldest? [age]		
Respondent 5: Who is the next oldest? [age]		
16) TOTAL NUMBER IN HOUSEHOLD THE SAME SEX AS YOURSELF		

If there is more than one household member your same sex and aged 18-49 in the household, as per this above table, you select the respondent for interview based on the following table. If there is only one eligible household member, move to respondent consent.

# of eligible respondents	Last 2 digits of questionnaire number																			
	00-04	05-09	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	95-99
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
3	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1
4	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Once the first household has been enumerated and the one interview completed, the next household is selected by moving in the same direction as first established by the device (in the case of households) or in the direction turned for the first interview (in the case of flats). Starting with the next household, which is numbered as 1, the enumerator should move to the 5th household. That household is selected for listing and interview, using the same process as above.

Respondent Consent

INTRODUCTION

Good day. My name is _____, and I'm part of a team conducting research on how people in Khatlon Region respond or avoid responding to problems and resolve potential conflict. We are interviewing men and women like yourself on a number of these issues at home, especially around discipline, that are associated with a good quality of life.

I assure you that everything you tell me in this interview will be kept **completely anonymous** and **confidential**. I do not need to know your full name or personal details for this survey and there will not be any way for anyone to link your answers back to you.

It is entirely up to you whether you want to take part in this survey. Please note that you have the right to refuse to answer any question or to change your mind at any point, and stop the interview. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, just let me know and we can skip it. However, because your answers are very important to us I ask that, if you do agree to be part of this survey, you be completely honest and sincere with me and answer all the questions. The interview will take about a half hour.

17) May we proceed? ____ - 1 Yes ____ - 2 No

[If refused, mark 'no' and replace using strategy discussed during training. Be sure to mark the replacement respondent as a replacement (2) in Q3b on page 1.]

[All interviewees should be aged 18-49 and must be the same sex as the interviewer. ALL eligible persons MUST BE the same sex as you, in the right age group and be in a married/long-term relationship in order to be interviewed one-by-one. Long-term relationship refers to a current partner who has been a partner for at least one year]

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
101	What is your age? [Enum: All respondents must be between 18-49]	_____ years		
102	What is your marital status? [Enum: If married 'legally' as well as 'traditionally/religious', tick 'legally'.]	married. - legally married - religious living together (unmarried) in long-term relationship	1 2 3	102a 102a 103
102a	[If married, either type] Was this marriage arranged by your parents and/or your spouse's parents?	yes no	1 2	
102b	[If married, either type] At what age did you get married? [If married more than once, age at first marriage]	_____ years		
102c	[If married, either type] Do you currently live in the same household with your husband's family [female]/does your wife live in the same household with your family [male]?	yes no	1 2	103 102ci
102ci	[If married and NOT currently living with the husband's family] Have you ever lived in the same household as your husband's family [female]/has your wife ever lived in the same household as your family [male]?	yes no	1 2	
103	What is your highest level of education?	primary (Grades 1-4) lower Secondary (Grades 5-9) secondary (Grades 10-11) vocational religious uncompleted Tertiary tertiary no education	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	
104	Who is the head of the household you live in?	male [male head/other senior male decision-maker present at least 6 months over the past 12] female [female mentioned as head, or stated male head absent over 6 months over the past 12, and no alternative male head at least 6 months over the past 12]	1 2	
105 M W	[For female respondents only who are married] Is the household you live in headed by your mother-in-law or your father-in-law, or neither?	neither mother-in-law father-in-law	1 2 3	
106	How many people in total 'belong to' this household? By 'belong to', I mean the number of people (all ages) who identify this household as their main home, and who have lived here at least three months over the past twelve?	_____		

MODULE 2: ECONOMIC ISSUES, MEDIA ACCESS, LIFE VIEWS

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
201	Of the adults aged 18 and older in this household, how many have been employed. This includes formal or informal employment, full time or part time, that lasted at least six months in total over the past twelve.	_____ [if do not know, enter 99]		
202	[If married, either type] Over the past year, have you <i>[male]</i> /has your husband <i>[female]</i> migrated for work to another location inside Tajikistan or away from here to another country outside Tajikistan? [Enum: Refers to MALE migrants only] [Circle one or both 'yes' responses as appropriate]	yes - outside Tajikistan yes - inside Tajikistan no	1 2 3	W202aM 202b W202aM 202b 204
202a	[If female and married (either type) respondent, and living in the household with husband's parent(s)] If any remittances have been received by the household over the past year, when money was remitted by the husband working away, who has the money been directed to? [Enum: If directed to more than one person, who was it most commonly directed to. If directed equally, the 'tie breaker' is who received the most funds]	mother-in-law father-in-law wife herself child other not applicable (no remittances)	1 2 3 4 5 6	202b 202b 202b 202b 202b 204
202b	[If married, either type] How many times, over the past year, have you <i>[male]</i> /has your husband <i>[female]</i> remitted funds or in-kind transfers to this home? [Enum: Refers to MALE migrants only]	_____ [if not certain, get estimate] [if do not know, enter 99]		
204	Do you have access to any of the following on a regular basis (daily or weekly):			
204a	television	yes no	1 2	
204b	radio	yes no	1 2	
204c	newspapers and/or magazines	yes no	1 2	

MODULE 3: ATTITUDES

[Ask women only]

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
307	When you need help or have a serious problem with your husband/long-term partner, and you need outside assistance, are there any officials or organisations that you feel that you could rely on to help you solve this problem?	yes no do not know/not certain	1 2 3	307a 308 308
307a	[If yes to 307] Would you regard the services of these officials or organisations as 'very effective', 'somewhat effective', 'not very effective', or 'not at all effective', or do you not know?	very effective somewhat effective not very effective not at all effective do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
307b	[If yes to 307] Were any of these organisations non-state actors (local NGOs, community councils)?	yes no do not know	1 2 3	
307c	[If yes to 307] Were any of these organisations from official authorities (Khukumat, Jamoat, police)?	yes no do not know	1 2 3	
308	When you need help or have a serious problem with your husband/long-term partner, and you need outside assistance, can you usually rely on local religious leaders? Can you rely on them 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', or 'never'?	always sometimes rarely never do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	

MODULE 4: NORMS AROUND DISCIPLINE

[Ask both women and men]

In this section, we would like to ask you your opinions about some issues around gender relations and Tajik SOCIAL norms. For each, we will ask you to agree or disagree with the statement, and indicate how strongly you agree or disagree. The scale is 'strongly agree', 'somewhat agree', 'somewhat disagree', or 'strongly disagree'. If you do not know, please indicate so.

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
401	The thing about even severe physical discipline of a wife by her husband, assuming it does not pose a risk to her life, is that it is a family affair, NOT something that should involve someone outside the family	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
402	We have been socialised since a young age to accept that, in marriage, the husband must use physical discipline against his wife, it is part of our culture	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
403	A woman who reports what she considers violence on her by her husband brings shame on the family	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
404	Even if a woman is severely physically disciplined by her husband, there is little use in reporting it to the police, because the police would side with the husband	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
524	In our culture, the husband's mother is just doing her job if she physically disciplines her son's wife when she feels it is necessary	strongly agree somewhat agree somewhat disagree strongly disagree do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	

MODULE 5: ACCEPTABLE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR DISCIPLINE

[Ask both women and men] Under what circumstances, if any, is it culturally acceptable for a husband to strike his wife/long-term partner **hard**, to the point where she bruises or something is broken (broken skin, bones, bleeding eyes or ears, lips, etc.)? Please tell us whether you 'strongly agree', 'agree' or 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' that he can do this, or whether you do not know/are uncertain.

Q	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	DK
501	if he believes that she has been unfaithful	1	2	3	4	5
502	if she cannot have a baby	1	2	3	4	5
503	if she refuses his sexual advances, without what he considers a valid reason	1	2	3	4	5
504	if he feels that she misuses money	1	2	3	4	5
505	if she has her own male friends (non-family members)	1	2	3	4	5
506	if she cannot cook well	1	2	3	4	5
507	if she leaves the house without permission	1	2	3	4	5
508	if he feels that she is neglecting the children	1	2	3	4	5
509	if he feels that she is being argumentative or difficult	1	2	3	4	5
510	if she brings shame to the family	1	2	3	4	5
551	if she cannot produce a boy	1	2	3	4	5

[Ask both women and men] In this next sub-section, we would like you to consider whether certain actions are acceptable or unacceptable in Tajik culture. For the following, we want to know how acceptable it is for a husband to do any of the following, using the scale 'very acceptable', 'somewhat acceptable', 'not very acceptable', or 'not at all acceptable'

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
526	a husband keeps his wife from seeing same-sex friends	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
527	a husband keeps his wife from contacting her birth family	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
528	a husband insists on knowing where his wife is all the time	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
529	a husband ignores his wife and treats her with indifference	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
530	a husband does not trust his wife with money	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
531	a husband gets angry if his wife speaks to another man	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
532	a husband is suspicious that his wife is unfaithful	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
533	a husband insults his wife or makes her feel bad about herself	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
534	a husband belittles or humiliates his wife in front of other people	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
535	a husband does things to scare or intimidate his wife on purpose (by the way he looks at her, by yelling at her, by smashing things, etc.)	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
536	a husband threatens to hurt his wife or someone she cares about	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
537	a husband disciplines his wife by slapping her or throwing something at her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
538	a husband disciplines his wife by pushing or shaking her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
539	a husband disciplines his wife by hitting her with fists or with something else that hurts	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
540	a husband disciplines his wife by kicking, dragging, or beating her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
541	a husband disciplines his wife by choking or burning her	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
542	a husband threatens to use, or actually uses, a gun, knife or other weapon on his wife	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
543	a husband physically forces his wife to have sex with him when she does not want to	very acceptable somewhat acceptable not very acceptable not at all acceptable do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
544	A husband disciplining his wife by slapping her or throwing something at her	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	
545	A husband disciplining his wife by pushing or shaking her	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	
546	A husband disciplining his wife by hitting her with fists or with something else that hurts	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	
547	A husband disciplining his wife by kicking, dragging, or beating her	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	
548	A husband choking or burning his wife	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	
549	A husband threatening to use, or actually using, a gun, knife or other weapon on his wife	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	
550	A husband physically forcing his wife to have sex with him when she does not want to	more acceptable now less acceptable now no change over the past two years do not know/not certain	1 2 3 4	

MODULE 6: EXPOSURE TO DISCIPLINE

[Ask both women and men] When two people become a couple, they usually share both good and bad times. I would now like to ask you some questions about your current relationship and how your spouse/partner treats you. The first question refers to 'ever' having been exposed to discipline, and can refer to any partner. The second question, for each topic, refers to exposure to discipline by your *current partner* in the past year.

Q	Statement	Ever [any partner]		Past Year [if ever] [current partner only]		
			Sup		Sup	
601	kept you from seeing same-sex friends	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2
602	kept you from contacting your birth family	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2
603	insists on knowing where you are all the time	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2
604	ignores you and treats you with indifference	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2
605	does not trust you with money	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2
606	gets angry if you speak to someone of the opposite sex	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2
607	is often suspicious that you are unfaithful	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2

Q	Statement	Ever [any partner]			Past Year [if ever] [current partner only]		
608	insulted you or made you feel bad about yourself	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
609	belittled or humiliated you in front of other people	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
610	did things to scare or intimidate you on purpose (by the way they looked at you, by yelling at you, by smashing things, etc.)	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
611	threatened to hurt you or someone you care about	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	

[Ask WOMEN ONLY]

Q	Statement	Ever [any partner]			Past Year [if ever] [current partner only]		
			Sup			Sup	
612	slapped you or threw something at you that could hurt	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
613	pushed or shook you	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
614	hit you with fists or with something else that hurt you	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
615	kicked you, dragged you or beat you up	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
616	choked or burned you on purpose	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
617	threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against you	yes no	1 2		yes no	1 2	
618	physically forced you to have sex when you did not want to	yes no na (never had sex)	1 2 3		yes no na (never had sex)	1 2 3	

619) [If any serious physical domestic violence (Q612 to Q618) occurred under **'EVER'** (**first column**) in Module 6 above] For any of these, what was the youngest age you would estimate this first occurred?

____ - 1 < 15
____ - 2 15-19

____ - 3 20-24
____ - 4 25+
____ - 5 do not remember

MODULE 7: RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE

[ASK Women ONLY] [ONLY for those who have been subjected to physical domestic violence (Q612 to Q618) in the past year (**second column**) in Module 6 above. If responses were NO to Q612 to Q618 go to Module 8]

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
701	Were you physically injured as a result of discipline by your spouse/long-term partner?	yes no will not answer	1 2 3	701a 706 706
701a	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a health worker for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
701c	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a traditional doctor/faith healer for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
701d	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a crisis Centre for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
701e	[If yes to 701] Did you go someplace else for possible treatment?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	
701f	[If yes to 701] Did you go to a local organisation (NGO) that deals with domestic violence?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
706	Have you ever sought prosecution in response to physical violence?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	706a mod 8 mod 8
706a	[If yes to 706] Did this prosecution result in the sentencing of the perpetrator?	yes no do not remember/not certain/will not answer	1 2 3	

MODULE 8: KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS, EXPOSURE

[Ask both women and men]

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
801	Have you ever seen anything on television about 'domestic violence', or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	801a 802 802
801a	[If yes to 801] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	801ai 802 802
801ai	[If yes to 801a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
802	Have you ever heard, via radio, about 'domestic violence', or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	802a 803 803
802a	[If yes to 802] Have you heard anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	802ai 803 803
802ai	[If yes to 802a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
803	Have you ever seen, via newspapers or magazines, about 'domestic violence', or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	803a 804 804
803a	[If yes to 803] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	803ai 804 804
803ai	[If yes to 803a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
804	Have you ever seen a billboard, a poster, a pamphlet, a book or other written material (not newspaper or magazine) about domestic violence, or perhaps other terms such as 'violence against women' or 'gender-based violence'?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	804a 805 805
804a	[If yes to 804] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	804ai 805 805
804ai	[If yes to 804a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
805	Have you ever heard, in person, from a public official (e.g., police, teacher, health worker, etc.), anything about domestic violence?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	805a 806 806

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
805a	[If yes to 805] Have you heard anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	805ai 806 806
805ai	[If yes to 805a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/ gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
806	Have you ever heard, in person, from a religious leader about domestic violence?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	806a 807 807
806a	[If yes to 806] Have you heard anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	801ai 807 807
806ai	[If yes to 806a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/ gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
807	Have you ever heard, in person, from a community group or non-governmental organisation about domestic violence?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	807a 809 809
807a	[If yes to 807] Have you seen anything in the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	
807ai	[If yes to 807a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/ gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
809	Have you ever heard about domestic violence in a community grouping?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	809a 811 811
809a	[If yes to 809] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	809ai 811 811
809ai	[If yes to 809a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/ gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
811	Have you ever heard about domestic violence in a cultural event?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	811a 812 812
811a	[If yes to 811] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	811ai 812 812
811ai	[If yes to 811a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/ gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
812	Have you ever seen/heard about domestic violence through a community theatre event?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	812a 813 813
812a	[If yes to 812] Did you engage personally in any discussions over the past year (that is, since this time in 2010)?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	812ai 813 813
812ai	[If yes to 812a] Over the past year, how many times would you estimate that you had been exposed to messages on domestic violence/violence against women/ gender-based violence?	1 2 3 4+ not certain	1 2 3 4 5	
813	Have you ever heard of any counselling or medical services available for persons who have been subject to severe physical discipline?	yes no not certain	1 2 3	813a 814 814

Q#	Questions and Enumerator Instructions	Responses	Codes	GO TO
813a	[If yes to 813] What services are you aware of? [Circle up to 3 responses]	not certain [circle by itself] legal services psychosocial counselling medical care religious counselling other _____ (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 #	mod 9 814 814 814 814 814
814	Of the types of messages on domestic violence that you have seen and/or heard over the past year (that is, since this time last year), what were the topics of these messages? [Tick up to 5 responses]	never seen or heard any messages [circle by itself] violence against women is wrong violence against children is wrong harm that violence does to women harm that violence does to children it makes your family weak domestic violence is a crime domestic violence should be reported there is help for victims of DV _____ other (specify)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 ##	

MODULE 9: CLOSING QUESTIONS

Do you have any final comments to make before we close? Any questions of your own?

End of interview. Thank the person for their cooperation. Tick level of co-operation below. Record finish time. If there are any responses that you think are unreliable, write under "comments" which questions and why you think that they are unreliable.

904) Level of co-operation

- ____ - 1 high
____ - 2 medium
____ - 3 low

PLEASE RECORD THE FINISH TIME: _____ [Enum: Please transfer finish time to Q14, page 2 and calculate total time]

C. Sample locations

Dushanbe		Kurgan-Tube		Vakshs		Bohktar	
Location (neighbourhood)	# clusters	Location (street)	# clusters	Location (village)	# clusters	Location (village)	# clusters
Badakhshon	15	Rudaki	0	Dusti	7	Yangi Farghona	0
Chekhov	9	Chekov	1	Rudaki	6	Komintern	2
Dustii Khalkho	6	Tolstoy	0	Cobetogon	2	Elti	1
		Ubaydullov	0	Loik Sherali	0	Navbahor	1
		Lohutee	1	Karamov	1	Rohi Lenin	2
		Leningradsкая	0	Lenin	0	Khursandi	1
		Pushkin (Kahnorov)	1	Ruzobod	1	Budyonniy	1
		Loginov	0	Chapaev	3	Komsomol	1
		Paramonov (Chkalov)	1	Pakhtakor	3	Guli Surkh	1
		Zebunniso	0	Safedob	1	Kosigin	1
		Makarenko	1	International	3	Dilbar	1
		2-Karl Marks	0	Sokhtumon	2	Navjuvon	0
		Norinov	1	Tojikiston	1	Telmon	1
		3-Karl Marks	0			Kizil Bayrak	1
		Substreet Karl Marks	0			Ghayrat	1
		Mirzokodirov	1			Guliston	1
		Ostrovskiy	0			Beshkappa	3
		Nizomee	1			Partsezd	1
		Sverdlov	0			Yangiyul	1
		Substreet Nizomee	1			Yakumi May	1
		Substreet Sverdlov	0			Kizilshark	1
		Bahor	2			Urtabuz	3
		R. Yusuf	1			Sabzavot	4
		B. Gafurov	0				
		Zhdanov	1				
		Dionerskaya	0				
		Komsomolskaya	0				
		F. Saidov	1	Kurgan-Tube (cont)			
		Zaynidinov (Furmanov)	0	Location (street)	# clusters		
		Mayakovskiy	0	Navoe	1		
		Dushanbinskiy	0	Osimee	0		
		Rahochi	1	Turgenov	1		
		Engels	0	1-Sovetskiy	0		
		Muvaydullov	0	2-Sovetskiy	0		
		Substreet Muvaydullov	0	Kuybishev	1		
		Mirzev (Chapaev)	1	Substreet Kuybishev	0		
		Substreet Chapaev	0	Mirzokodirova	0		
		Shkolnaya	0	Madaniyat	1		
		S. Valizoda	0	Malayev	0		
		Javonon	1	Barotov	0		
		Somoni	0	Nekrasov	1		
		Jomee	0	8-Mart	0		
		Kuganov	1	Jalilov	1		
		Peragova	0	Substreet Jalilov	0		
		Pavlov	0	J. Abdulloev	2		
		Lermontov	0	Tupic Abdulloev	0		
		Turdiyev	0	U.Khayyom	1		
		O. Kosheroy	1	Umari Kayyom	0		
		Z.Kosmodemyanskaya	0	Shoimardonov	0		
		Vahdat-barak	0	Substreet Pravda	1		
		R. Vohidov	1	Festivalnaya	0		
		Substreet Lohutee	0				

D. Sample characteristics

In order to secure the comparability of the 2009 and 2011 survey findings, a number of statistical tests were conducted across key demographic variables to establish whether there were systematic differences across the two sample populations. Thereby, a number of demographic differences were identified, as shown in the following tables:

Age, Education, Sex of Respondent

		2009		2011		
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Tests
Age						
Mean	37	35	34	32	Males F = 49.301, p=.000	
Median	38	35	32	30		
18-29	24.8	35.2	40.3	48.3	Females F = 50.470, p=.000	
30-39	31.4	28.2	31.5	25.0		
40-49	43.9	36.5	28.2	26.8		
Education						
None	0.2	3.3	0.0	1.2	Males 38.306 p=.000 sig.	
Primary (Grades 1-4)	0.5	4.6	0.1	5.8		
Lower Secondary (Grades 5-9)	4.6	27.8	7.1	31.9		
Secondary (Grades 10-11)	31.3	49.8	46.3	52.2	Females 13.397 p=.000 sig.	
Tertiary (uncompleted or completed)	27.7	5.3	3.0	2.2		
Vocational	31.9	8.1	25.7	5.7		
Religious	4.0	1.2	4.0	1.0		
Sex of Household Head						
Male	91.2	87.4	93.4	84.5	Males 5.551 p=.018 sig.	
Female	8.8	12.6	6.6	15.5	Females 1.670 p=196 insig.	

Source: PDV 2011: 16.

Respondents in 2011 tended to be younger, from male headed households, and have lower levels of education compared to those in 2009.

Marital Status

Marital Status					
	2009		2011		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Tests
Marital Status					
Legally married	92.7	82.7	93.9	90.7	Males 2.558 p=.110 insig.
Religious marriage	7.3	17.3	6.1	9.3	Females 22.319 p=.000 sig.
Age at First Marriage					
Mean	22.6	19.2	22.9	18.4	Males F=44.613 p=.000 sig.
Median	23	19	23	18	
< 18	0.4	14.0	0.0	29.5	Females F=104.899 p=.000 sig.
< 15	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	

Source: PDV 2009:16.

Mean age at first marriage was younger for females for 2011 compared to 2009, while religious marriage was slightly less common in 2011 than in 2009 for women (with no variation for men). Almost 30% of the women interviewed in 2011 were married below the age of eighteen.

Living Arrangements

Living Arrangements					
	2009		2011		
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Tests
<i>Does Married Woman Live in Same Household With Husband's Family*</i>					
Yes	74.6	56.6	89.3	68.3	Males 69.585 p=.000 sig.
No	25.4	43.4	10.7	31.7	Females 19.248 p=.000 sig.
<i>If Yes, Household Live In Headed by Mother-in-law or Father-in-law</i>					
Mother-in-Law	91.2	87.4	93.4	84.5	
Father-in-Law	8.8	12.6	6.6	15.5	
<i>If Not Currently Living in Same Household With Husband's Family, Ever Did So</i>					
Yes	95.8	88.3	89.2	93.4	
No	4.2	11.7	10.8	6.6	

For male respondents, the question was 'does your wife live in the same household with your parent(s)'. na = not applicable, question not asked.

Source: PDV 2011: 17.

The differences across 2009 and 2011 are specifically due to age differences, as younger women tended to be more likely to currently be living with their husband's family.

Employment Status

	2009		2011	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Median	3	2	3	2
Proportion of HHs With No One in Employment	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.4

Source: PDV 2011: 17.

There was no difference between the two populations across the two years.

Migration and Employment

	2009	2011	Tests
<i>Male Migrated for Employment</i>			
Yes	46.4	55.3	Males, 30.981 p=.000, sig.
No	52.6	44.7	Females 69.820 p=.000, sig.

Source: PDV 2011: 17.

Male migration rates were somewhat higher for 2011 compared to 2009. For those women living with their in-laws with an out-migrant husband, in most cases remittances were directed to the father-in-law (50%) and secondly the mother-in-law (24.7%) in 2009, with the latter changing slightly in 2011 to include more funds directly to the wife herself (22%, from 11.4% in 2009).

The demographic differences between the 2009 and 2011 samples were checked against key variables in the other modules in the questionnaire. In no situations did the variables explain more than 10% of the variation, meaning that as confounding variables none played a significant role in affecting findings for variables presented herein (PDV 2011: 18).