

# Gender Issues And Effects Of Migration In Tajikistan

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**Abstract:** *The Republic of Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries among all the countries of Central Asia. In spite of the transition from communist to capitalist economy the country was also engaged in civil war for most of the time period. That destroyed the social, economical and political system of the country. Almost 40% of the people are living under the poverty line and its GDP is less than other states of Centre Asia. The average salary of the people throughout the country being about \$110 per month, and the minimum pension is less than \$16. Due to lack of economic opportunities in the country, out-migration in search of work abroad has been exceptionally common in Tajikistan. The migration of the householders has created problems for the wives and children's of the labour migrants. The situation has a strong impact on socio-political conditions of women. The gender gap widened in all spheres of life socio-political and economic.*

*From this overview, the study tries to highlight the problems faced by the migrant wives into the socio-economic life of the society and outlines the place of gender in the context of Tajikistan. In spite of this the proposed study will highlight the steps taken by UN and by the state government for the development of women. AT last the study also wants to find the future strategies for their empowerment.*

**Keywords:** *Gender, Migration, Remittances, Migrants, Wives, Measures*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the name of Gender the women have been discriminated throughout the world. This can be estimated by the fact that although females represent half of the world's people, women and girls make up 70 percent of the world's poor and two-thirds of the world's illiterate population.

Because of her Gender women have been subjugated by many ways as Women throughout the globe lack support for fundamental functions of a human life. They are under nourished than men, less healthy, more susceptible to physical cruelty and sexual abuse. They are much less likely than men to be literate, and still less likely to have paraprofessional or technological education. They face great hurdles, including pressure from family or spouse, sex intolerance in hiring, and sexual aggravation in the workplace without effective legal recourse.

Violence against women is Global phenomena. "No society treats its women as well as its men." That's the conclusion from the United Nations Development Programme, as written in its 1997 Human Development Report. Almost 50 years earlier, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly had adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

which specified that everyone, regardless of sex, was entitled to the same rights and freedoms. The 1997 Human Development Report, as well as every Human Development Report that followed, has highlighted that each country falls short of achieving that goal. The severity of the shortfall varies by country; Nordic countries such as Sweden, Norway and Iceland, for example, are routinely hailed as having the smallest gender gaps. In the developing world, however, women face unfairness that can be hard to fathom. One of the most discriminatory practices faced by women's in some regions of the world is "Migration of Male Members". Displacement due to various reasons as conflict, economic security often leads to shifts in gendered roles and responsibilities for both women and men – sometimes to women's benefit and sometimes to their further marginalisation. Women may suffer from the added work burden or transfer this to younger girls who have to assume more responsibilities such as caring for children, the elderly and the sick. Also, sometimes they have to live like the life of half widow. As a result of all these women suffered much by this kind of migration particularly in third world Countries.

## II. CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Central Asia is generally considered to be the forgotten world of the former Soviet Union. The region emerged from seventy five years of Soviet tutelage. Since, then all the Republics embarked on the process of radical change such as, restructuring of nation economy, implementation of new constitution and systematic rationalization of indigenous society. Among the indigenous society the category of Gender would prove to be the most problematic aspect of transition. One of the major aspects that have gained silence is the Gender nature of Post-Soviet transition. Women activities in such societies have been made invisible through patriarchal system.

If we take the case of Tajikistan among all the Republics of Central Asia, Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries and also the country was engaged Civil war (1992-1994). Indeed, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the civil war has brought the country to the edge of catastrophe. However, after signing the *General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in 1997* the country entered the peace-building process.

The breakdown of the USSR, affected establishment and development of the newly independent Tajikistan: as financial subsidies that had amounted up to 40% of the country's budget stopped, production ties were disrupted, as well as marketing outlets was lost by Tajikistan. The devastated Civil War that lasted till 1997 claimed at least 100,000 lives. These and other factors caused industrial enterprises to completely stop their operations or work only at 40-50% of their capacity. Agricultural businesses and the system of collective farming were totally destroyed, which altogether prompted to increasing unemployment and poverty among population.

Now as we got familiar with the fact that Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries as compared to other countries of Central Asia. Almost 40% of the people are living under the poverty line and its GDP is less than other states of Centre Asia. The average salary of the people throughout the country being about \$110 per month, and the minimum pension is less than \$16. Due to lack of economic opportunities in the country, out-migration in search of work abroad has been exceptionally common in Tajikistan. As migration can result from poverty, but it is not always the poorest who migrate, because of the costs and opportunities involved. While official data suggest that some 736,446 Tajik citizens, predominantly men, left the country independently in 2010 to look for work in other countries, independent experts have put this figure at more than 1 million. About 95% of the migrants went to the Russian Federation to find their work. The Tajikistan has the *Highest Ratio of Remittances to Gross Domestic product in the world*; this should successfully transfers responsibility for economic stability and growth into individual households. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Tajikistan, remittances sent by labour migrants to Tajikistan are unable to significantly reduce the level of poverty within the families of labour migrants who remain behind - only 40% of families live above the poverty line, with income of more than \$2.15 a day. The migration of the householders has created problems for the wives and children's of the labour migrants. In Tajikistan's social system

women's are traditionally responsible for family care. In the absence of the male partners women are able to assume the role of the households and are depend on the remittances send from the husbands working abroad as migrant workers. The conditions forced her to work outside but due to their illiteracy and overburdened with child rearing women also face problems in working outside.

This situation has a strong impact on gender relations in the Tajik society. The gender gap widened in all spheres of life socio- economic, political and cultural. Because the labour migration from Tajikistan has predominantly a "male" face and only 6% of migrants are women. The impact of migration on women is obvious. Main statistical data show the disadvantages of women compared to men, in the fields of income, employment, leadership positions, high management positions in enterprises and university education. Unemployment rates among women are high especially in the rural areas where women only do household chores and take care of their family member. The absence of economic assessment of many forms of women's occupation plains their low social status. According to the data of a survey conducted in 1998 the work of 33.3% of women of working age in our country is not rewarded economically. During the armed conflict in Tajikistan (1992-1994) many women lost male relatives, i.e. protectors and breadwinners. Others saw their husbands become refugees and labour migrants. These women were forced to take up the burden of keeping their households going. Women started searching additional sources of income since their husbands were either in armed groups or refugees, or had no opportunity to move about freely because of the ongoing armed conflict. Trading in the market became a major occupation for many women as a form of survival, regardless of their educational and professional level. Women began to do jobs that were traditionally classified as male in Tajikistan, such as growing cereals and vegetables on private plots and gardens. In many regions where men left for Russia or other countries in search of an income, new responsibilities fell on women's shoulders.

It often happens that men send remittances not to their wives but to their parents or elder relatives; as a result, a woman with several children gets only a small share of the money earned by her husband. Women's capacity to earn higher incomes is limited due to the existing gender inequality in access to land and financial resources, low salaries in traditionally "female" labour, problems with finding jobs in the formal economy sector, and low level of education among women. Access to education is hampered by traditional perceptions of the role of women in a society where they are seen mainly as future wives and mothers. Though, at the level of primary school gender gap is small, at the later stages of education especially in the senior grades of secondary schools and tertiary education it is significant. All this, along with the challenging situation in the labour market, results in women's self employment in retail businesses to secure their livelihood, as well as, in providing domestic services, production and sale of agricultural, homemade and sewing products, etc. Thus, women are entering into informal economy employment with its limited access to social protection schemes and good salaries.

### III. ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

The most important challenge faced by the women of migrant household is their economic security. Because these women are depend on the outside remittances of their husbands. But the remittances they receive are small and inconsistent and are not enough to cover basic household. Also it is common for remittances that they are not to be in the control of the wife but instead sent to the husband's parents, leaving her income to the discretion of her in-laws. Now to overcome the difficulty of economic insecurity these women want to be employed in various sectors, but it is difficult for migrant wives to be formally employed for a number of reasons and they, therefore, remain entirely dependent on their husbands to provide for the family. As women may lack the education or training necessary to secure employment that pays a living wage. They face the additional barrier of gender discrimination in Tajikistan, and are typically confined to gender-specific jobs that pay lower wages those male dominated spheres. Women, therefore, have a difficult time finding employment in the formal sector and when they are successful in obtaining jobs, but they are often employed on paid low wages that are not sufficient to support their families.

### IV. SOCIO-ETHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON WOMEN

Apart from the economical problems the migration of men also create other problems as it put an ambiguous ethical and psychological effect on women left alone in households. Women feel less protected from the absence of their males. It had been proven in surveys that the feeling of insecurity and anxiety is more dominant among migrants' wives living in urban areas. However, the women lived in rural areas are more secured by traditional mechanisms as joint family system. The psychological stress and anxiety are also linked with increased nationalistic movements in migrant receiving countries, mainly Russia, as in contemporary period when the west put restrictions on it. There is considerable evidence of the increasing number of deaths among the women of migrant households. As in the year 2012, 93 deaths were estimated among female migrants from Tajikistan. This is a considerable number in respect to relatively small population of 8 million in the country.

### V. LEGAL CHALLENGES

The Legal rights which have been given to the women in Tajikistan have not been implemented sometimes and there exists a tension between them. Another problem related to the legal rights is that women in rural areas have difficulty in accessing justice compared to their urban counterparts. Thus, the problems related to assessing of justice include a lack of state justice institutions in rural areas, gender Stereotypes, absence of intellectuals observe laws related to women, corruption , and difficulties in enforcing court decisions, particularly if the decision involves husbands working abroad.

In spite of these barriers there are also other social barriers which prevent women from pursuing her cases in court when cases involve family and other "private" matters and there is great pressure placed on women to keep these issues out of courts, which are viewed as public spaces. There are also a number of informal justice mechanisms utilized by the majority of the population. These mechanisms include mahallas and jamoats, which are informal justice mechanisms made up of local respected elders.

### VI. LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

As the labour migration in Tajikistan began to increase during the year 1993-1994 in order to address the problems the Government of Tajikistan started developing its labour migration policy in the beginning of 2000. According to these policies the measures were taken which include to monitoring the flow of labour migration from Tajikistan. Improving state relations with migrant receiving countries and encourage the flow of unemployed workers rather than employed workers.

### VII. ADDRESSING THE DISCRIMINATION BY UNITED NATIONS

Thus achieving Gender Equality is a goal has been accepted by governments, regional and international organizations. Any new developmental structure must prioritize Gender empowerment primarily because of persistent injustice faced by women around the world with women disproportionately representing among the poorest and most marginalized. It is enshrined in international agreements and commitments. The creation of a body of international human rights law is one of the United Nations' great achievements. The United Nations has helped negotiate more than 70 human rights treaties and declarations—many focused on the rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, minorities and indigenous peoples. Together, these treaties and declarations have helped create a 'culture of human rights' throughout the world, providing a powerful tool to protect and promote all rights.

The most important Declarations towards gender empowerment include the UN convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW). Pursuant to its commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Government of Tajikistan must guarantee equality to all its citizens, not only de jure but also de facto.

The others include Beijing Declaration also in UN Security council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889. The greatest step taken by United Nations is in the form of Millennium Development Goal. The greatest gathering of the heads of states in September 2000 adopted the decoration of Millennium Development Goal. The declaration was signed by 189 countries then was translated into a road map by setting out goals to be reached by 2015. The goals set out for development and poverty eradication were known as

Millennium Development Goals. The eight goals represent commitments to reduce poverty and hunger, to take ill health, gender inequality, lack of education, lack of access to clean water, and environmental degradation.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

- ✓ On the basis of gender discrimination women in much of the world lacks support for fundamental functions of a human life. They are less well nourished than men, less healthy, more vulnerable to physical violence and sexual abuse. They are much less likely than men to be literate, and still less likely to have paraprofessional or technical education. They face great obstacles, including intimidation from family or spouse, sex discrimination in hiring, and sexual harassment in the workplace—all, frequency, without effective legal recourse. This discrimination is a global phenomenon.
- ✓ Central Asia is generally considered to be forgotten region of the world. After emerging from the soviet tutelage the countries embarked on the process of radical change. During the process the category of Gender prove to be most problematic aspect of transition.
- ✓ The transition is specific in Tajikistan because in spite of having transition from socialism to capitalist economy. The country was also involved in the civil war. Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries among all the countries of Central Asia and also the country was engaged Civil war. Due to lack of economic opportunities in the country, out-migration in search of work abroad has been exceptionally common in Tajikistan. As mostly the migration can result from poverty. The situation has a strong impact on gender. The gender gap widens in all spheres.
- ✓ The UN has undertaken a number of positive measures and steps to strengthen women's role and status in the society, in promoting equal rights and opportunities for men and women. In spite of these measures Gender stereotypes still negatively affect women's advancement and efforts to overcome gender inequality.
- ✓ Thus to move forward or to bring positive change we should invest in proactive strategic actions. As covering the best of development and human rights approach, institutional change, getting beyond the order.

### IX. SUGGESTIONS

In order to move way forward and have a positive change there will require us thoroughly to interrogate this question of how change happens. The following points show where we should invest in proactive strategic actions.

- ✓ The government should first address the root cause of the problem that is it should create or develop the economic opportunities for the people, through creating new types of economic activities that will help in tackling the cause.
- ✓ Cooperate with Governments of Tajik-migrant receiving countries in taking the measures to prevent polygamous marriages across borders

- ✓ Set up a department for the reporting of complaints about discrimination of women and management of related statistics within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as foreseen in the State Programme on Equal Rights and Opportunities.
- ✓ Strengthen exchange of data between crisis centres and government bodies. Gather data on the types of abuses faced by girls under age 18.
- ✓ Promote and support nationwide research on women's status, including domestic violence, trafficking, suicides, marriage practices, and access to housing.
- ✓ Develop a comprehensive database on migration, including by adding a module in the forthcoming national census.
- ✓ Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Committee for Women and Family Affairs with enhanced political authority and sufficient human and financial resources at national and local levels
- ✓ Expand the mandate of the Ombudsperson's office to include the promotion of women's rights and elimination of violence against women
- ✓ Establish judicial chambers on family matters, with the mandate to examine issues such as divorce, property and child alimony in light of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- ✓ Encourage the media to play an active role in promoting women's rights and avoid reporting that would perpetuate gender stereotypes and prejudice.
- ✓ Promote the value of girls' education among parents, teachers, and girls themselves, including by funding special programmes in areas with low schooling rates for girls, increasing scholarships for girls to attend higher education.
- ✓ Nothing will happen without institutional change: Related to these tensions with power described above, a significant number of gender and development and women's rights proponents' have turned their focus to organizational and institutional change issues

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