



# Technical Assistance Consultant's Report

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## RETA 6143: Technical Assistance for Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (Financed by the Gender and Development Cooperation Fund)

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**Asian Development Bank**

**RETA 6143**  
**PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

**REVIEW OF GENDER SITUATION IN  
COTTON SECTOR OF TAJIKISTAN**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| ADB        | Asian Development Bank   |
| CCB        | Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Government of Tajikistan for 2007-2009 |
| DF         | Dekhkan Farms  |
| DICC       | District Information-Consultative Center                                 |
| FAO        | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations                  |
| FGD        | Focus Group Discussion   |
| GDP        | Gross Domestic Product   |
| Goscomstat | State Statistics Committee under the Government of the RT                |
| HDI        | Human Development Index  |
| HDIG       | Human Development Index with Gender Aspect                               |
| M&         | Monitoring and Evaluation  |
| NGO        | Non-governmental Organization  |
| NDST       | National Development Strategy until 2015                                 |
| RT         | Republic of Tajikistan   |
| SLST       | Survey of Life Standards in Tajikistan                                   |
| UN         | United Nations   |
| UNDP       | United Nations Development Programme                                     |
| UNIFEM     | United Nations Development Fund for Women                                |
| WHO        | World Health Organization  |

### **NOTE**

In this report, \$ refers to US dollars.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(i) Tajikistan remains one of the poorest countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions. Findings of the survey of the life standards in Tajikistan (SLST) 2007 showed that compared to 2003 the poverty level in Tajikistan reduced; however, poverty is still wide spread, including extreme poverty. Poor population makes 53%. Almost fifth part of the population (17%) lives in extreme poverty. The level of poverty in rural areas is higher compared to the urban areas.

(ii) Agriculture is important component of economy development of Tajikistan and the majority of population is involved in it. At the same time agricultural sector of the republic has not reached sustainable and profitable development yet. Lately the share of agricultural production in the total volume of gross domestic product (GDP) has declined.

(iii) Cotton subsector, being one of the key sectors of agriculture of the republic, has not developed in a sustainable manner and in fact, shows dismal indicators in terms of productivity and profitability as an economic activity. Raw cotton production is exhibiting a downtrend, unlike the increasing production pattern experienced in grains, potato, melons.

(iv) Majority of employed rural women works in agriculture, particularly in cotton growing. Women, by doing the most difficult kinds of work for growing and picking cotton, contribute considerably into the raw cotton production.

(v) Despite predominance of women in agricultural work and cotton growing, women are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts especially in terms of access to land. While women actually work on the land, their rights to control and manage land are very limited. Rural women have control over less land area than their male counterparts; do not have equal access to the decision making processes in the sphere of agriculture; receive less financial gains after harvest collection; and encounter more hurdles when applying for credit. Despite performing well as managers of dekhan farms (DFs), the share of women-run DFs is 6,5 times lower when compared to male-managed DFs. Recently, there has been an increasing trend in the number of women-headed DF especially in the Project rayons.

(vi) There are notable differences between DFs that are managed by women and those run by male managers. These are:

- Less number of women leaders in collective DFs
- Less number of shareholders in women-headed DF
- Prevalence of women among shareholders in women-headed DF
- Smaller cultivable and irrigated land area on average among women-headed DF.

(vii) Main features of women—led DF are:

- Ages range from 41 till 55 years old
- Lower level of education compared to men
- Long work experience in agriculture and higher education level attained
- They are usually -
  - a. widows who most often are heads of households
  - b. those whose husbands are public servants or work in the city
  - c. those with husbands who can not work due to health problems
  - d. those whose husbands left Tajikistan in search of jobs.

(viii) The Republic of Tajikistan (RT) initiated a number of positive measures and concrete steps towards upgrading the status of women in the community, in terms of more equal rights and opportunities. To date, a legislative framework for gender equality has been appropriately designed, and institutional mechanisms for promotion of women's interests are being improved.

(ix) While certainly in the right direction, much more will be needed particularly in the implementation of these legislative measures for gender equity. Effective mechanisms for the implementation of these measures are extremely wanting. Additionally, State programs for promoting women's interests and institutional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of these measures Have yet to be enforced at the ground level.

(x) Access to land is a key factor for ensuring gender equity in rights and opportunities. The RT has started paying more attention to this issue. Specifically, the Land Code has been passed which does not in principle, discriminate women over control on the land-use rights. However, law enforcement of the land legislation in Tajikistan is carried out without due consideration of the gender factor.

(xi) Other barriers and obstacles encountered by rural women engaged in cotton are:

- Lack of financial resources and limited access to credits
- Lack of machinery and obsolete existing stock
- Limited access to regular supply of sufficient irrigation water and deterioration of existing irrigation and drainage facilities
- Rising farm debts
- Non-access to fertilizers/chemical weed-killers and pest-killers
- Poor quality seeds.

(xii) Considering needs and requirements of DF, there is a need to provide long term programs and projects with assistance from the donor community for the support and development of DF to become productive, competitive, and profitable economic ventures, specifically in:

- establishment of agro-services network providing farms with machinery and spare parts, fertilizers, seeds, weed- and pest-killers, processing equipment and other required complex of services
- provision of agricultural machinery on leasing basis
- broader access to credits based on best international practices, and support and development of microfinance and microcrediting organizations with allocation of specific projects to support women
- rehabilitation and construction of new irrigation systems, development of pump irrigation
- establishment of business centers, information and consultation centers for women, providing not only legal assistance but also in the sphere of land cultivation, use of fertilizers, marketing, etc.
- organization of constantly functioning courses, trainings, and learning programs for upgrading the capacity of men and women – farm leaders
- promotion of associations of DF and water users, creation of coalitions and self support groups among DF
- multi-stakeholder participated dialogues on measures that will pragmatically address the problem on farm debt.

(xiii) Among main directions of integration of gender approaches into the cotton sector development there is a need to focus on the following:

- Improvement of the law enforcement practice of land legislation and reforming of agriculture based on consideration of a gender factor.
- Upgrading capacity and gender awareness of the profile structures' staff and, first of all, of local hukumats, land committees, etc.
- Upgrading the level of awareness and legal culture of women and men in the sphere of land use, cotton sector development, etc.

- Designing of a gender sensitive model for monitoring and assessment of the cotton sector development based on elaboration and use of quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- Involvement of women into the processes of decision making based on compliance with a gender balance as well as obligatory inclusion of women into the composition of rayon commissions for reorganization of farms, land distribution, working groups for elaboration of regional strategies and action plans, etc.
- Upgrading competitiveness of women through the use of various forms of training specialists in the sphere of agriculture, including at the expense of presidential quarters in agrarian University, qualification upgrading systems in the sphere of new systems of financing, agro culture, etc.
- Development and broad use of feedback mechanisms of profile structures with population regarding the sphere of the cotton sector development.

(xiv) For the ADB-funded Sustainable Cotton Subsector Project, a Gender Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been proposed. This was discussed with the Project Management Unit and with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Mechanisms for implementing the said agenda have been developed. To facilitate the implementation of the Plan, a Gender Specialist will be engaged. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism for the Project will also ensure that the indicators will be disaggregated by gender, where feasible and needed.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. An analyses of the gender situation in cotton sector of Tajikistan was conducted in the frame of ADB project «Sustainable Development of Cotton Sector in Tajikistan» - RETA-6143. The Project's intended impact was the development of economic sustainability in cotton branch in the two main cotton-growing regions of Tajikistan, namely Khatlon and Sogd, particularly in the districts of Vose and Yavan districts of Khatlon and Matcho and Zafarabad districts of Sogd. Its outcome focused on efficient improvement of financial viability of cotton industry, based on the development of markets in the sector's key supply chain networks.

2. The analysis of the gender situation in cotton sector of Tajikistan was done through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods:

- First, a review of existing literature and secondary data was examined. Specifically, this involved: (i) an analyses of the legal and normative basis of agriculture reform and various gender policies of the Government as espoused in the main laws, State Programs, and normative acts in the field of agriculture and promotion of gender equality; (ii) analyses of statistic data in the field of agriculture and cotton industry, specifically those dwelling on social relationship of men and women; (iii) analyses of the previous country researches on socio-economic and gender situation, such as the *Survey on Labor Force in Tajikistan. July-August, 2004*; *Survey of Living Standards in Tajikistan, 2007*; *Monitoring of Children' and Women' Status. Multi-indicator Cluster Survey, 2005*; *Dekhkan Farms in Gender Dimension (PF «Panorama»)*;
- Second, conduct of a small-scale survey and in-depth interviews was done, specifically: (i) dialogues of gender specialist with key persons involved into the reforms in agriculture and realization of gender policy in pilot districts (Appendix 2); (ii) conduct of focus groups discussions in pilot districts and questionnaire poll survey of farms in Matcho district 34 of which are headed by men and 9 by women; (iii) and a small-scale rapid survey of 200 heads of DFs in 5 pilot districts of Sogd last October, 2008, of whom there were 32 women-heads of DF who participated in the survey.

Aiming to get more detailed information about the use of land, and social relations, interviews were conducted with 43 DF in Matcho district of whom 34 DF were headed by men and 9 by women.

3. The deliverable output for the gender assessment in the cotton sector is a Gender Action Plan. The Plan shall be implemented during the Project life term.

## II. GENERAL PROFILE OF TAJIKISTAN

### A. Socioeconomic Situation

4. Tajikistan is still one of the poorest countries in East European and Central Asian region. The results of a living standards survey that was conducted in 2007 showed the following:

- In comparison with 2003 the poverty level in Tajikistan has decreased but remains to be a major problem, with 53% of the total population considered as poor. It should be stressed however that the result is not fully comparable with level of poverty in 2003 (64%) due to differences in the seasonal periods used, methodology, and other factors.
- Nearly a fifth of population (17%) lives in extreme poverty. This constitutes a third of the poor population.
- Average income of a poor person per month is estimated as 139 somoni (\$40.5), while for the extremely poor it is 89 somoni (\$25.9) per capita per month.

- More than half a million people in Tajikistan have only one meal a day.<sup>1</sup>

5. Majority of the poor live in the rural areas. More than 75.6% of the rural population are poor, and 71.4% are extremely poor (Table 1). This means that each second household in the rural area is considered as poor.

**Table 1: Summary Evaluation of Poverty on the Results of SLST- 2007 (%)**

|                     | Population |      |         | Concentration of poor people |         |
|---------------------|------------|------|---------|------------------------------|---------|
|                     | Total      | City | Village | City                         | Village |
| % of extremely poor | 17.4       | 18.9 | 16.9    | 28.6                         | 71.4    |
| % of poor           | 53.1       | 49.3 | 54.4    | 24.4                         | 75.6    |

|                     | Households |      |         | Concentration of poor people |         |
|---------------------|------------|------|---------|------------------------------|---------|
|                     | Total      | City | Village | City                         | Village |
| % of extremely poor | 14,9       | 13,7 | 15,5    | 29,6                         | 70,4    |
| % of poor           | 47,4       | 38,9 | 50.9    | 27,2                         | 72,8    |

6. Among the regions, Sogd oblast has the highest percentage of poor population, while Dushanbe has the least concentration of poor. In Sogd, 69.4% of the total population are poor and among rural population this indicator is higher – 74.3%. About 34.4% of rural population is classified as extremely poor. This implies that 61% of extremely poor country population lives in Sogd oblast.

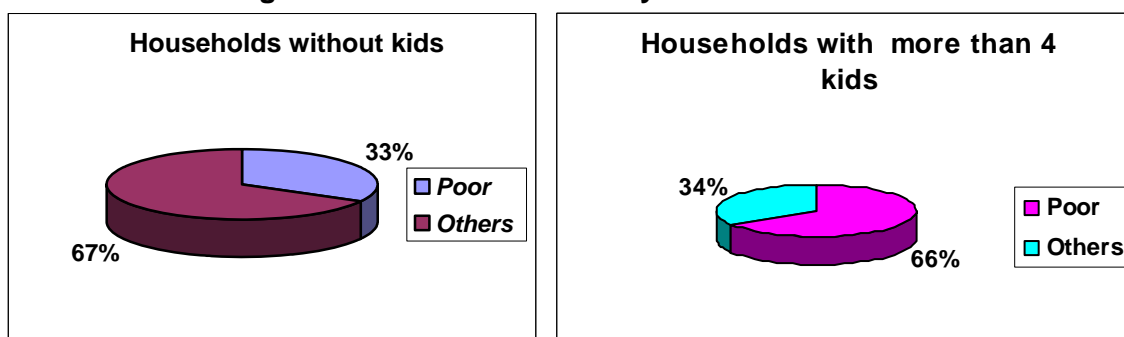
7. Key features of households who are most vulnerable to poverty and are extremely poor are as follows:

- Large number of kids,
- Headed by women,
- When the head of the family has low educational level, and
- When the head of the family has no job.

8. Women-headed families are more disadvantaged than households with the male gender as head of the family. Specifically, 23% of the extremely poor households are headed by women, as against 19% with male-headed families.

9. Figure 1 demonstrates that among households without kids, 33% are considered as poor. For households having 4 or more kids, the percentage rate of poverty is doubled.

**Figure 1: Household's Poverty in Children's Dimension**



<sup>1</sup> See: National Conference Materials «Role of Investigation of the Farms and Statistics in Monitoring of Poverty, Development of Policy and Decision-making and program Realization». July, 1, 2008. O.Ivaschenko. World Bank Project Leader. Poverty in Tajikistan. 2007.

10. The average income per person per month in 2007 was 164 somoni (\$47.8). The main source of total income is the salary (49%). The second main source of income is represented by the self-produced food – 24%, and the third comes from money transfers from abroad (17%).

11. Increasingly, more households rely on income from overseas work. In 2007, money transfers from migrant labor were more than \$1.2 billion, slightly higher than the country's budget in 2007 of \$1 billion.<sup>2</sup>

12. Average monthly income per person in a rural area is lower at 156 somoni, compared with 186 somoni for city household dwellers. Self-produced food constitutes 28%, and the salary as income source is 44%.

13. Agriculture is an important component of the development of Tajikistan's economy. According to Goscomstat data in 2005, 67.5% of population was engaged in agriculture and forest sector (including private farming).

14. In spite attempts of RT, agriculture sector did not achieve sustainability and profitability. In 1991 the agricultural sector production constituted 36.6% of gross domestic product (GDP); in 2008, this declined to 19.8%.<sup>3</sup> Despite this seemingly shift in economic sector dominance, Tajikistan is still essentially agriculture-dependent, with more than three fourths of its population relying on this sector as their major income source. However, the cost of farming far outweighs the earnings generated from this economic activity. The box below provides some of the factors for this continual deficit situation in farming activities, and what the Government will aim for to address this problem.

15. One of the keenest problems of agricultural sector is its material-technical equipment: provision by machines, seeds, fertilizers, etc. For example, the number of tractors decreased twice from 1991 to 2005. From 37,054 tractors, only 19,947 are left, and from 9,449 tractor ploughs, only 4,526 are left. During the Soviet time, it was sufficient percentage of machinery cotton picking, currently mainly its hand picking. In 2005, the country had 763 cotton-picking machines, but it has to recognize that majority of them are worn-out or out of order.<sup>4</sup>

**Abstracts of the Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2007-2009. Part 5.2.**

*Proceeding from the NDS/PRS goals and the NDS priorities, and in view of the problems that have been described in the sector encompassing food security and development of the agricultural sector, the following main medium-range tasks have been identified:*

- 1) *implementation of institutional reforms;*
- 2) *increased efficiency in the cotton sector;*
- 3) *providing for guarantees and securing land-use rights;*
- 4) *improving the condition and raising the effectiveness of the agricultural and water resource management infrastructure;*
- 5) *improvement of the conditions for the development of rural entrepreneurial activity;*
- 6) *ensuring a healthy diet.*

16. Cotton production and export are the major economic activities of the country's agriculture sector. However, this subsector has been performing way below its potentials. Production of raw

<sup>2</sup> See: Asia-plus/ №28(442)/July 9, 2008, A 7.

<sup>3</sup> Cm.: Goscomstat of the RT. Agricultural sector in RT. Dushanbe, 2008, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Cm.: Goscomstat of the RT. Tajikistan. Goscomstat of RT. Information on technical status at agricultural industry for July 1, 2008. Dushanbe, 2008.

cotton declined from 814,200 tons in 1991 to about half (419,800 tons) in 2007.<sup>5</sup> Productivity of raw cotton, in comparison with the core, potato, melon and gourds yields is shows a downtrend, with the yield for raw cotton in 2007 being half of the yield level in 1991 (16.6 centers per hectare in 2007 versus 27.6 centers per hectare in 1991).

*During the Soviet period, average cotton crop in Vose rayon constituted 39.7 centers and in some farms up to 45 centers. Now the average is 17.1 centers. So, it reduced more than twice (from the interview with Vose rayon Khukumat's Deputy Head).*

17. A major problem of the agriculture sector and the cotton subsector in particular is the rapid deterioration of the irrigation facilities. The country's irrigated area has increased up to 20 thousands hectare since 1991 and have reached 738 thousand hectares, but the level of amelioration is still one of the obstacles for effective development of cotton sector.<sup>6</sup> Due to deficit of water, 60,000 hectares of irrigated lands remained unutilized in 2008.<sup>7</sup>

*In our rayon (district) machinery irrigation is 70%. But only 40 out of 102 aggregates of pumping stations are in operation. The last one was purchased in 197 (from the interview with Khukumat deputy head of Vose rayon).*

18. Prices received by cotton farmers are much lower than the prices received by their counterparts in other cotton producing countries. The ratio of ex-gin price of fiber cotton to the cost, insurance, freight (CIF) price of cotton received by a Tajik farmer is 52% while Australian farmers receive 90–92%. Lower prices and price shares are due to distorted and imperfect arrangements in cotton processing and marketing. The most serious impediments are the inefficiencies of ginneries, weak marketing systems, and the under pricing and undervaluation of baled cotton. Although 42 privately-run ginneries are in operation in the country in 2006, the majority have low outturn averages (22–32%). Structural limitations include lack of investment in ginning technology — half of the ginneries were built over 50 years ago—and limited access to electricity during the peak ginning season. Inefficiencies of ginneries are also due to lack of competition, which is a result of the debt repayment mechanisms and restricted movement of cotton between districts. Because of their monopsony position, ginners tend to extract rents from the farms. In addition, the current cotton classification and grading standard systems are inadequate to determine true baled cotton quality, forcing down the price received by farmers for their seed cotton and/or fiber cotton.<sup>8</sup>

19. The Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Government points out that the debt accumulated in the cotton sector is a serious obstacle to further development of agricultural economy in general. Key to resolving the problem is ensuring the empowerment of the cotton farmers by enhancing their capacities to be more profitable entrepreneurs through access to productive assets and inputs and through awareness of their rights. The ADB-funded Sustainable Cotton Subsector Project aims at empowering farmers in both fronts. This study focuses in particular on women farmers engaged in cotton farming.

### **III. AN ANALYSIS OF THE STATE'S GENDER POLICY**

20. Since independence in 1991, RT had undertaken a number of positive steps toward strengthening women's role and status in society by promoting measures that ensure equal rights

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<sup>5</sup> CM.: Goscomstat of the RT. Agricultural sector in the RT. Dushanbe, 2008, p. 33

<sup>6</sup> See.: Goscomstat of the RT. Tajikistan: 15 years of state independency.. Dushanbe, 2006, p.c. 285

<sup>7</sup> From the speech of the President of the RT E. Rakhmon. See: Asia-plus/ №27(441)/July 2 , 2008, A 6.

<sup>8</sup> ADB. Report and Recommendations of the President of Director's Board. Proposed Loan and Grant of Asian Development Fund to the Republic of Tajikistan: Project: Sustainable Development of Cotton Sector, October, 2006.

and opportunities for men and women. Table 2 provides a summary of the major steps initiated by RT towards this end.

**Table 2: Main Legal Acts and Steps in Gender Equality Promotion in Tajikistan**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 1993           | Tajikistan joined to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).  |
| 1998           | National Action Plan on the Promotion of Status and Role of Women for 1998-2005.  |
| 1999           | President's Decrees «About Democratization of the Society» and «Promotion of Women in Society»  |
| 2001           | State program on "Basic directions of the state policy on ensuring of the equal rights and opportunities of men and women in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2001-2010"  |
| 2000-2005      | Adoption of a number of program character acts in the field of maternity rights, childhood and reproductive health  |
| 2001, April    | Decree «About Regulation of Girl's access to Higher Education Institutions of the Tajikistan, in accordance with the President's Quota for 2001-2005»   |
| 2003, October  | Creation of Coordination Council under the supervision of the Deputy Prime-Minister of the RT on the realization of UNIFEM project "Support of Women's Rights on Land"  |
| 2004, April    | Additional measures on the State program about "Basic directions of the state policy on ensuring of the equal rights and opportunities of men and women in RT for 2001-2010" and «Access of Rural Women to the Land». |
| 2005, March    | Law on «State Guarantees of Equality Men and Women and Equal opportunities of its Realization ».  |
| 2006, November | State Program «Education, Selection, and Placing of the Senior Cadres of the RT from the Gifted Women and Girls for 2007-2016»,   |
| 2007, January  | First National Report and Shadow Report of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on the realization of Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are introduced to the Committee of UN    |
| 2007           | "Promotion of Gender Equality" in National Strategy of Development of the Tajikistan till 2015 and Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2007-2009   |

21. Due to these legislative initiatives and the forging of a partnership between governmental and NGOs through support provided by international organizations the country has a defined framework for and a legal basis on gender equality. RT and the NGOs continue to improve the institutional mechanisms for the promotion of women's interests. A positive outcome of these measures has been the increasing number of women's representation in the political arena.

22. In the agriculture sector, access to land is a key factor in ensuring equality of men and women in rural area. In recent years the RT has accorded special attention to the problem of equal access of men and women to the resources.

23. A decree was approved in 2004 that provided the legal basis for «Access of Rural Women to the land» to State program's "Basic directions of the state policy on ensuring of the equal rights and opportunities of men and women in RT for 2001-2010." This document pointed out problems

and obstacles of women's access to the land, and introduced an action agenda for widening the economic opportunities and promotion of equal access of man and women to land.

*From the regulation of the Republic of Tajikistan «About changes and additions to the State program "Basic directions of the state policy on ensuring of the equal rights and opportunities of men and women in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2001-2010"»*

*Current status of woman in Tajikistan contains sufficient limitations, in comparison with the men's status in various spheres of socio-economic life, including opportunities in labor, property, right for the land tenure, getting land, etc*

*For the economic opportunities and provision of equal access of men and women to the property, including land, it is necessary:*

- *To empower women's awareness in economic rights;*
- *To lighten access to credits, to develop micro-credit system for women;*
- *To develop on places intermediate network for the sale of agricultural production and home-worker production;*
- *To conduct researches and regular monitoring of gender inequality in this field.*

24. The following measures were taken by RT towards ensuring gender equality in the access to farm land:

- Activity of Coordination Council under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister on the realization of United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) project «Support of Women's Rights to the Land». The Coordination Council served as the institutional mechanism for defining the gender policy in land reform. The Council also became the venue for the holding of dialogues among stakeholders on their economic rights of women to land. Part of the awareness raising campaign was the production and disseminations of information materials and analytical studies on the processes of land reform and the empowerment of women for equal access to land.
- Establishment in 2005, under the State Committee on Land Use a Monitoring Group on the realization of State program "Basic directions of the state policy on ensuring of the equal rights and opportunities of men and women in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2001-2010".
- Introduction to the Law on ««State Guarantees of Equality Men and Women and Equal opportunities of its Realization»».
- Formation of a working group on the development of statistic's reporting on agriculture including gender indicators and its introduction to the statistic reporting from January 1, 2005. Publication of Goscomstat of 2 volumes «Gender indicators in production activity of DF during 2004-2006» and «Gender indicators in production activity of DF during 2004-2007».
- Establishment of 16 Rayon Information-consultative Centers (RICC) on the basis of general agreement between Committee of Women's and Family Affairs under the RT and UNIFEM. The activity is directed to the provision of land use rights and strengthening women's informational level in the field of land reform, assistance in DF establishment by women farmers, etc. During the activity of RICC, more than 10,000 people were provided assistance to accessing land-use rights, 90% of whom were women.
- Introduction of gender approaches to the project of Land Strategy of the RT that is under the development by Agency on organization of the Land Use, Geodesy and Cartography through a joint project of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNIFEM, «Provision of food security and strengthening

the life standards, focused on gender, through the conduction of the institutional land reform in Tajikistan»

25. Gender stereotypes influence negatively on the women's interests for advancement and for overcoming of gender inequality. The change of social and cultural models of men and women's behavior is a complex task that requires long-term commitment and purposeful coordinative actions of the state and civil society. This is because the basis of these gender roles is rooted on cultural-religious norms, as well as traditions and rituals that were developed for centuries. Changing mindsets will thus be an arduous process of reforming these well-entrenched beliefs and traditions about women's and men's roles in society.

26. Survey results and the activity of the State Committee of Land Use<sup>9</sup> on monitoring of realization of the part of State program on access of rural women to land show that introduction of gender approaches to the reorganization of agricultural industries and interventions showcasing appropriate institutional mechanisms are able to address gender equality problems.

27. An effective support is demonstrated by RICC on the basis of Committee of women's and family affairs. In the 16 rayons that these centers worked on, an awareness-raising campaign was conducted among women farmers on their rights on land reform, and other legal issues. The centers also introduced gender approaches to equal access to land. In these rayons where the centers operated, the staff and officials of local governments and other governmental organizations are more gender sensitive, understand the gender problems, and pay more attention to the problems of equal access by women to land. Broadening the activity of such centers can become good basis for the advancement of women's potential both as DF heads and in DF activity.<sup>10</sup>

28. Land laws of the RT in general do not discriminate women. In practice however, law enforcement action does not consider gender factor, and legislature does not contain effective mechanisms on the realization of women's right in the field of land tenure. These problems arise despite the fact that the Regulations of reorganization and reformation of agricultural organizations, as approved by Decree of the President of the RT from June 30, 2006, № 1775. Article 23 says that, women-bread winner and single mothers have the right for property owning and getting land during the agricultural organization's reorganization.

***Law on «State Guarantees of Equality for Men and Women and Equal Opportunities of their Implementation»***

*Article 12. State bodies, local government bodies and heads of organizations, and other property forms, are responsible for the provision of equal access, of men and women, to economic resources of the society, including movable and immovable property, to the land, to the financial actives, credits, and also guarantee free entrepreneurship activity, and any one, that is not restricted by law acts.*

29. A key lacuna in the gender-related legislations of women on land use is the unclear definition of the terms "women-family bread-winner" and "single mother." As these are not well-defined, implementations of these measures become problematic at the field level.

30. To address this problem, the following measures are proposed in Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2007-2009 toward the «Implementation of land use and guarantees and rights»:

- Make amendments to the legislation by simplifying procedures and developing measures that ensure transparency in the procedures for the registration and strengthening of land-use rights

<sup>9</sup> Currently: Agency on organization of the land-use, geodesy and cartography under the RT.

<sup>10</sup> See.: PF «Panorama». Dekhkan farms in Gender Dimension. Dushanbe, 2005.

- Devise and establish a uniformed mechanism for the registration of land-use rights
- Complete the total reorganization of farms and the subsequent restructuring
- Perform soil studies and land assessment and prepare proposals for a uniformed land tax rate
- Perform regular monitoring of compliance with equal land-use rights and related guarantees
- Conduct public information and educational campaigns to promote equal access to resources and equal economic rights
- Prepare proposals to ensure the use of agricultural land for agricultural purposes, establishing sanctions for its improper use
- Assist in the establishment of voluntary associations for the management of land recourses and the protection of farmers' land-use rights.<sup>11</sup>

#### IV. REVIEW OF GENDER SITUATION IN COTTON SECTOR OF TAJIKISTAN

##### A. General Profile of Project Rayons

31. Of the four Project district (or rayon) areas in Khatlon and Soghd, Voseiski and Yavanski districts are the largest with regard to the number of population (Table 3). The majority of population of Voseiski, Matchinski and Yavanski rayon lives in the countryside. Zafarabadski rayon has not only less population but also less share of rural population (44%). In all four rayons, there are less equal number of men and women.

**Table 3: Information About the Number of Population of Pilot Rayons**

| Rayon        | Number of Population<br>(thousands of people) | Share of rural<br>population<br>(%) | Share of<br>men<br>(%) | Share of<br>women<br>(%) |
|--------------|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Zafarabadski | 57.3  | 44.0                                | 50.3                   | 49.7                     |
| Matchinskii  | 97.6  | 83.2                                | 50.6                   | 49.4                     |
| Voseiski     | 173.4   | 87.1                                | 49.7                   | 50.3                     |
| Yavanski     | 167.5   | 82.9                                | 50.5                   | 49.5                     |

32. All rayons, with the exception of Yavanski rayon, are mainly agriculture-dependent. The major processing enterprises are engaged in upstream or downstream activities relating to cotton supply chain. A joint venture for tractor assembling is found in Matchinski rayon. There are also a number of industrial enterprises like electrochemical plant, joint steel frame work plant, etc.

33. With the exception of Matchinski rayon, the cultivated area has been on the uptrend for the other three Project areas between 1991 and 2003 (Table 4). In 2007, sowing areas in Matchinski and Zafarabadski rayons increased while in Yavanski and Voseiski rayons these decreased. Despite the fact that in recent years the share of sowing areas for cotton growing in Project rayons have decreased, cotton growing remains as the main use of agriculture land. The cotton growing areas in Matchinski rayon in 2007 was 58% of the total cultivated areas in the rayon; in Zafarabadski rayon, it was 57.3%, while in Yavanski and Voseiski rayons, the share was less than half at 44.6% and 31.1%, respectively.

**Table 4: Sowing Areas of Agricultural Crops in Pilot Rayons  
(for all farm categories, and area in hectares [ha])<sup>12</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> См.: Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2007-2009, Part 6, Activity Matrix.

<sup>12</sup> Under the data of the State Statistics Committee of the RT. Additionally see: the State Statistics Committee of the RT. Tajikistan: 15 years of the state independence. Dushanbe, 2006, p. 286-287.

|  | 1991                | 2003         | 2007                |
|--|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <b>YAVANSKI RAYON</b>                        |                     |              |                     |
| Total sowing area                            | 28372               | 33753        | 33073               |
| Including grains as well as grains and beans | 3827                | 13535        | 11987               |
| Technical crops                              | 16666               | 16912        | 15495               |
| <b>Including cotton</b>                      | <b>16452/ 58%</b>   | <b>16210</b> | <b>14760/ 44,6%</b> |
| <b>VOSEISKI RAYON</b>                        |                     |              |                     |
| Total sowing area                            | 26831               | 34550        | 33845               |
| Including grains as well as grains and beans | 8561                | 20326        | 17857               |
| Technical crops                              | 13256               | 11979        | 11246               |
| <b>Including cotton</b>                      | <b>12142/ 45,3%</b> | <b>11332</b> | <b>10540/ 31,1%</b> |
| <b>ZAFARABADSKI RAYON</b>                    |                     |              |                     |
| Total sowing area                            | 25609               | 26202        | 28040               |
| Including grains as well as grains and beans | 3286                | 7470         | 6976                |
| Technical crops                              | 16343               | 16037        | 16377               |
| <b>Including cotton</b>                      | <b>16343/ 63,8%</b> | <b>16037</b> | <b>16071/ 57,3%</b> |
| <b>MATCHINSKI RAYON</b>                      |                     |              |                     |
| Total sowing area                            | 27250               | 24647        | 25846               |
| Including grains as well as grains and beans | 3818                | 5005         | 2764                |
| Technical crops                              | 17227               | 15164        | 16529               |
| <b>Including cotton</b>                      | <b>17227/ 63,2%</b> | <b>15164</b> | <b>14992/ 58,0%</b> |

34. Results of the small-scale survey conducted among DF managers of Sugd region in October 2008 confirmed the decreasing trend of cotton cultivated area (Table 5). For instance in one DF, its cultivated area for cotton in 2007 was 63 ha; for 2009, the planned cotton land was 41 ha.

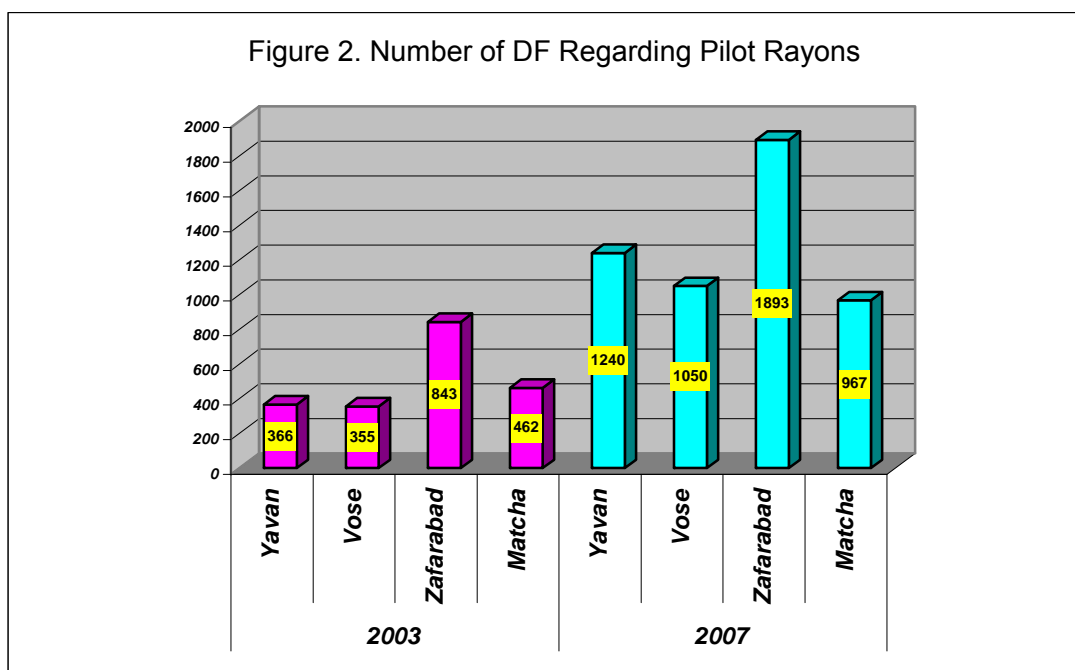
**Table 5: Average Size of Cultivated Land for the Different Agricultural Crops in One Dekhan Farm in Profile of Gender of Managers of Dekhan Farms (ha)**

| Crop           | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|----------------|------|------|------|
| <b>Cotton</b>  |      |      |      |
| Managers-men   | 59,3 | 54,7 | 35,8 |
| Managers-women | 85,1 | 68,3 | 75,2 |
| <b>Wheat</b>   |      |      |      |
| Managers-men   | 18,2 | 15,4 | 14,2 |
| Managers-women | 19,3 | 19,7 | 27,1 |

35. In terms of household plots, the highest plot size per villager is in Zafaabadski rayon (1. 25 ha), and the lowest is in Voseiski rayon (0.16 ha). In Matchinski rayon this indicator makes – 0.36 ha, and in Yavanski rayon – 0.19 ha.<sup>13</sup>

36. Reorganization of agricultural enterprises and establishment of DF are priority directions of the Government's land reform program. The number of registered DF has increased in the four Project rayons, with the highest number being recorded in Zafaraba, and the lowest increase in number being in Matchinski rayon (Figure 2).

<sup>13</sup> Calculated based on the State Statistics Committee data of RT for 2007.



## B. Profile of Women in the Cotton Sector of Tajikistan

37. The numerous gender policies have little impact on changing the social relationships between men and women. Legal equality, while important, does not easily translate to equality between men and women at the ground level. Practical activity is characterized by controversy between the declared state gender policy and real processes in the sphere of social relationships between men and women». <sup>14</sup> The complex interaction of social, economic and cultural factors influence gender imbalance particularly with respect to actual exercise of basic rights (for labor, education, access to the means of production, and property).

38. Despite a number of measures undertaken by RT for the resolution of the problems of rural women, their situation remains complex. The main factors affecting provision of the rights for rural women are the following:

- Lack of developed infrastructure in rural areas,
- Predominance of gender stereotypes.
- Low level of education.
- Lack of awareness and lack of knowledge about their rights, land reform, procedures for the establishment of DF, etc.

39. Aftermaths of the civil strife and transformation of the community first of all affected rural infrastructure. Since 1991 through 2005, the number of preschool educational institutions in urban areas has reduced by 1.5 times, whereas in rural areas, the decrease was as much as threefold. <sup>15</sup>

40. Around 86% of employed rural women work in agriculture, and more than 53% of them are occupied with their own personal households. Opportunities for women and girls to participate in public, educational and economic activities are highly limited as women are relegated the tasks of household chores and rearing of kids and taking care of the elderly. <sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Poverty Reduction strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2007-2009. Section 6.1.

<sup>15</sup> See. State Statistics Committee of the RT. Tajikistan: 15 years of State independence. Dushanbe, 2006, p. 45.

<sup>16</sup> See: Analytical report on the Survey of the Labor Force in Tajikistan. July-August 2004.- Dushanbe, State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2005, p.146, 156.

41. The level of education of rural women considerably affects the nature and degree of their economic participation as well as potentials for promotion in the sphere of employment (Table 6). There is a considerable gap in terms of level of educational attainment achieved between rural men and rural women as well as between urban and rural women. Only 6.2% of employed rural women attained primary education, while 1.2% have no education. Only 3% of employed rural women obtained higher education.

**Table 6: Employed Population by Gender and by Level of Education (%)<sup>17</sup>**

| Target Groups  | Higher     | Incomplete Higher | Secondary Vocational | Initial Professional | Secondary (Complete General) | Basic General | Initial General | No Initial General | Total      |
|----------------|------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| <b>City</b>    |            |                   |                      |                      |                              |               |                 |                    |            |
| Men            | 29,0       | 2,9               | 9,1                  | 12,8                 | 38,2                         | 7,1           | 0,7             | 0,2                | 100        |
| Women          | 20,9       | 0,5               | 16,9                 | 3,5                  | 44,7                         | 9,7           | 3,3             | 0,5                | 100        |
| <b>Village</b> |            |                   |                      |                      |                              |               |                 |                    |            |
| Men            | 10,6       | 1,4               | 8,3                  | 11,2                 | 48,5                         | 15,7          | 3,8             | 0,5                | 100        |
| <b>Women</b>   | <b>3,0</b> | <b>0,4</b>        | <b>5,1</b>           | <b>1,3</b>           | <b>59,2</b>                  | <b>23,6</b>   | <b>6,2</b>      | <b>1,2</b>         | <b>100</b> |

42. The number of women engaged in cotton sector is larger than the number of men. The proportion of women relative to men that is involved in cotton sector is increasing as external labor migration of men continues to rise due to acute lack of jobs in Tajikistan. The small-scale survey results showed that majority of respondents (89%) noted that the number of men who left for work outside the country is larger in 2008 than in the previous year.

43. Excerpts from farmer-respondent interviews conducted in parallel with the small-scale survey confirmed that the bulk of the work in cotton growing is done by women.

*«More women work in the cotton fields. Women do the most difficult work. They are harvest collectors, they thin out and do many other things. Men plough the field, irrigate it and also work as time keepers and brigadiers». (from IDI No. 3, Vose)*

*«Of course, more women than men work in the cotton fields. To be honest, more men are involved more in sowing, and the rest of the work is done by women. They do such kinds of work like cleaning from grass, weeding, almost 90% of women are involved in harvest collection. Main leading positions are in men's hands». (from IDI No. 2, Zafarabad)*

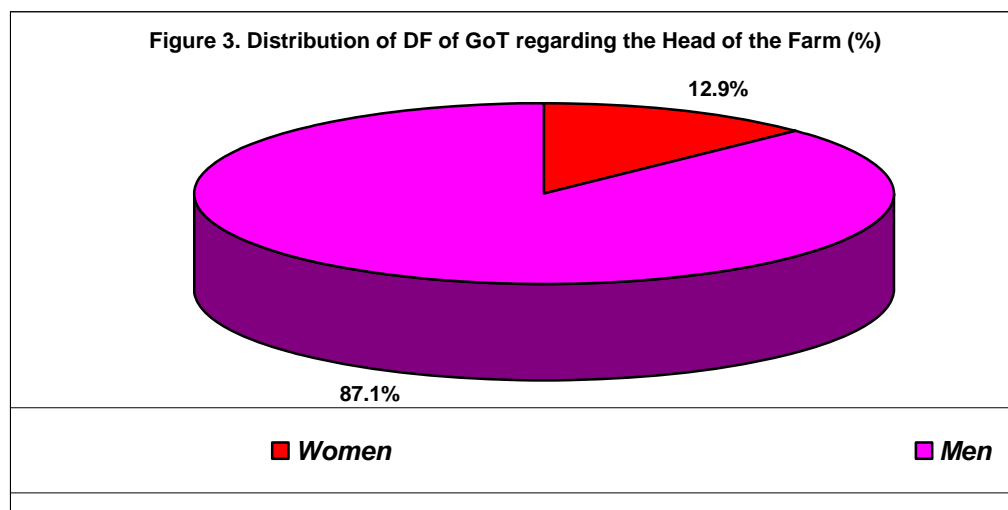
44. Despite the predominance of women in agricultural works and in cotton growing, a gender imbalance manifests itself with respect to access to the land. Less women have rights for the control over the land that they till. Women compared to men on average have less amount of cultivable land, and do not have equal access to the processes of decision making in farming, access to credit, and the distribution of financial gains from the harvest received.

45. There are other manifestations of gender inequality. The share of women to total number of DF leaders was 6.5 times lower when compared to men DF leaders. For example, in Matchinski rayon out of 43 surveyed DF only in two farms there was 1 woman in each besides women - leaders among the management personnel. There is also less proportion of women DF shareholders than men. Among these shareholders, less shareholder men work on the cotton fields.

<sup>17</sup> Analytical report on the Survey of the Labor Force in Tajikistan. July-August 2004.- Dushanbe, State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2005, p.141-142.

## 1. Share of Women Among DF Leaders

46. Under the data of the Goscomstat in 2007 the number of DF in the Republic increased was 26,500 farms. Of this total, the men-headed DF consisted of 23, 100, while the women-headed was only 3,400 farms. Men-headed DF made 87.1%, and women-headed 12.9%, or roughly 9.1% (Figure 3).<sup>18</sup>



47. On a regional basis, the largest number of women-headed DF are in Khatlon province – 19.1%. This is followed by In Sogd province at 7.4%, and in RRS – 9.5%. In GBAO, all DF are headed by men.

48. A similar picture is observed in the Project rayons regarding the distribution of DF leaders based on gender (Table 7). Men make the majority.

**Table 7: DF in Project Rayons by Gender of DF Managers<sup>19</sup>**

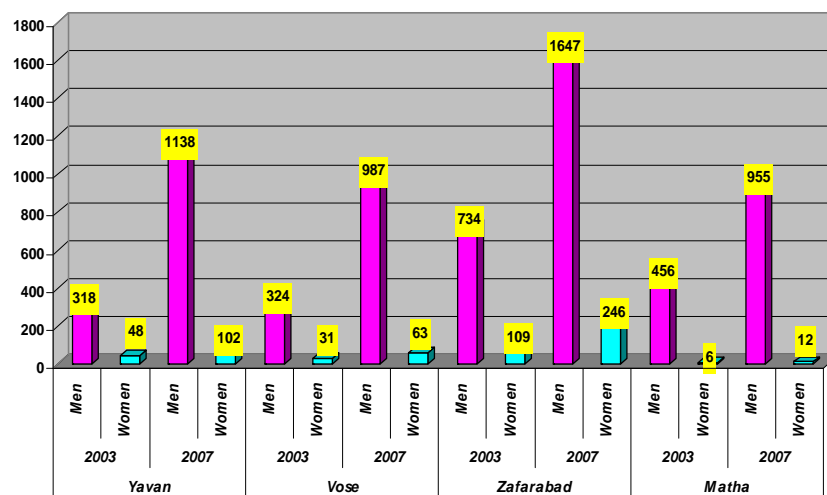
| Rayon        | Years | Total | Including head of the farm |      |       |      |
|--------------|-------|-------|----------------------------|------|-------|------|
|              |       |       | Men                        |      | Women |      |
|              |       |       | Units                      | %    | Units | %    |
| Yavanski     | 2003  | 366   | 318                        | 86.9 | 48    | 13.1 |
|              | 2007  | 1240  | 1138                       | 91.8 | 102   | 8.2  |
| Voseiski     | 2003  | 355   | 324                        | 91.3 | 31    | 8.7  |
|              | 2007  | 1050  | 987                        | 94.0 | 63    | 6.0  |
| Zafarabadski | 2003  | 843   | 734                        | 87.1 | 109   | 12.9 |
|              | 2007  | 1893  | 1647                       | 87.1 | 246   | 12.9 |
| Matchinskii  | 2003  | 462   | 456                        | 98.7 | 6     | 1.3  |
|              | 2007  | 967   | 955                        | 98.8 | 12    | 1.2  |

49. Lately, the number of women-headed DF has increased in all rayons without exception. At the same time, the number of women-headed DF lately has decreased in Yavanski and Voseiski rayons draws attention.

<sup>18</sup> See: Goscomstat. Gender indicators in production activity of DFs during 2004-2007. Dushanbe, 2008, p.57.

<sup>19</sup> Under the data of the Goscomstat..

**Figure 6. A number of DF in pilot rayons regarding the head of the farm (units)**



50. As of January 1, 2008 under the data of the State Agency for Land Management, Mapping and Geodesy, the total number of DF reached 32,631.

51. Data of rayon committees on the number of women-headed DF differ from the data of the State Statistics Committee, which obviously is connected to the fact that in rayon land committees the record is done based on received certificates, while in the Goscomstat – based on single registrar and obtained codes. Thus, for example, under the data of the rayon land committee in Matchinski rayon in 2008 the number of women-led DF makes the level of 24 persons.

*At present 24 women are heads of dehkan farms in our rayon. Of these 5 are leaders of collective farms, they have more than 50 ha of lands, 17 are family dehkan farms, they also have 20 ha of land. 2 dehkan farms are individual with 5-10 ha of land. (from IDI No. 3, Matchinski rayon)*

## 2. Features of Women-Headed DF

52. Key features of DF headed by women are the following:

- There are less number of women who are managers of collective DF.
- Average DF size of women-headed farms is less compared to their male counterparts. While with family and individual men-headed DF average size of the arable land (irrigated + rain fed) makes 5.8 ha, farms run by women average at 4.1 ha.<sup>20</sup> In Matchinski rayon for example, while the male-headed DFs have an average land size of more than 38 ha and the women-headed DF had larger farm sizes by as much as 15 ha, the male headed DFs have 2.8 times more of irrigated lands compared to women-headed DF.
- The number of shareholders in DF that are managed by women is also much smaller. In a survey done in 2005, it was noted that 71% of DF that had 10 or less

<sup>20</sup> See PF «Panorama». Gender dimension of dehkan farms. Dushanbe, 2005.

number of shareholders had a female as manager. In contrast, 70% of DF with more than 20 shareholders were run by male managers.<sup>21</sup>

- Women-headed DF have more women shareholders.

**Mekhri.** *Our farm was established in 2006. The territory of the farm is 150 ha for 80 shareholders. Gradually everybody quit and I stayed alone with 29 ha and 21 shareholders. The number of laborers is 21, including 9 men and 12 women. (from FGD No. 1, Zafarabadski rayon)*

**Dilafruz.** *Dehkan farm «Buzurg» was established in 2002. The territory of the farm is 11 ha. We grow cotton on 7 ha, other crops – on 4 ha. I have 6 laborers, including 2 men and 6 women. (from FGD No. 1, Zafarabadski rayon)*

**Sharofat.** *We have been working since the year 2000, for 8 years. There are 8 women and 3 men in our DF, 11 persons total. (from FGD No. 3, Voseiski rayon)*

**Rukia.** *Our DF has been working for 7 years already. 23 persons work in our farm, including 19 women and 4 men. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

53. Demographic characteristics of female managers are:

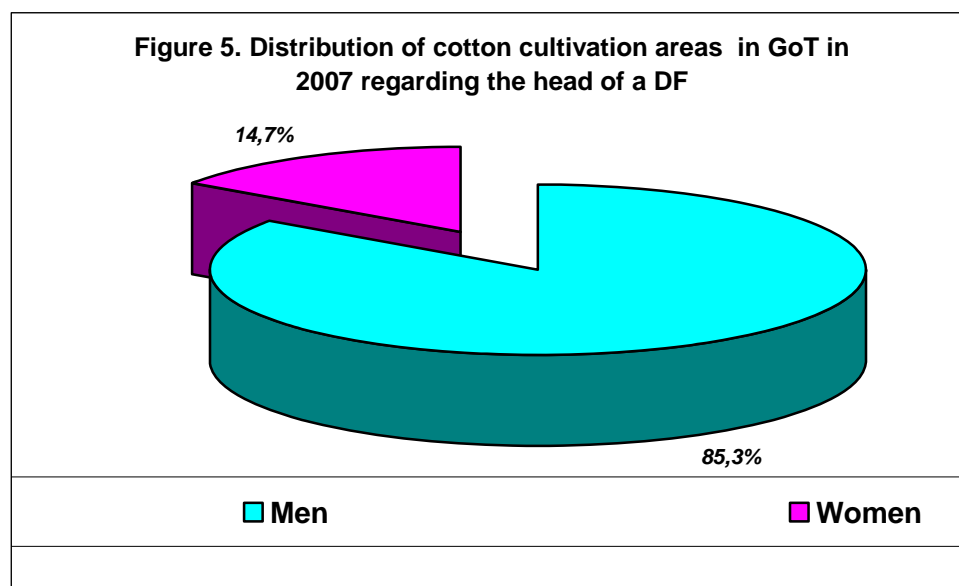
- The average age ranged from 41 to 55.
- They have lower level of education attained compared to their male counterparts. .
- They have a long track record in farming and have obtained higher level of education than rural women in general.
- As for their family status, they are often:
  - widows who are more often heads of households
  - women with husbands working in public service or are working in the city
  - women with disabled husbands
  - women whose husbands are labor migrants. .

### 3. Amount of Cotton Sowing Areas in Women-Headed DF

54. Cotton-growing DFs in Tajikistan are generally run by male managers. In a survey done in 2006, it was observed that only 14.7% of the total cotton area is managed by females (Figure 5).

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<sup>21</sup> See: PF «Panorama», Report based on the finding of the survey. Bozrikova T., Bazidova Z., Abdurafova G. Dehkan farms through gender dimension. Dushanbe. 2005. The survey was conducted in 12 rayons of three regions of the republic: Sogd, Khatlon provinces and rayons of Republican Subordination. Total 288 leaders of DF were interviewed. 28 in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of rayon committees on land management, commercial banks, agro-services, microcredit organizations and family members of women – leaders.



55. The same pattern is reflected in the Project rayons (Table 8). Less than 10% of the total cotton growing area is managed by females. The lowest proportion of female-run farm land is in Matchinski (at 0.7% of total cotton area in the rayon) and Yavanski (2.7%).

**Table 8: Total Cotton Sowing Area in DF in Project Rayons by Gender of Managers (2007)<sup>22</sup>**

| Rayon        | Total hectares | Including the head of the farm |      |       |     |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------------------|------|-------|-----|
|              |                | Men                            |      | Women |     |
|              |                | Ha                             | %    | ha    | %   |
| Yavanski     | 10,942         | 10,652                         | 97.3 | 290   | 2.7 |
| Voseiski     | 7,227          | 6,786                          | 93.9 | 441   | 6.1 |
| Zafarabadski | 13,850         | 13,046                         | 94.2 | 804   | 5.8 |
| Matchinski   | 14,887         | 14,789                         | 99.3 | 98    | 0.7 |

56. Women-headed DFs in the Project areas manage on the average lower farm size of cultivable land when compared to their male counterparts (Table 9). The average cotton DF size was lowest in Yavanski and Zafarabadski at 2.8 ha and 3.3 ha, respectively.

**Table 9: Average Total Sown Area per 1 DF and by Gender of Manager, 2007<sup>23</sup>**

| Rayon        | Total sowing area |               |                 | Including cotton |               |                 |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
|              | Total             | Headed by Men | Headed by Women | Total            | Headed by Men | Headed by Women |
| Yavanski     | 16,5              | 17,5          | 5,5             | 8,8              | 9,4           | 2,8             |
| Voseiski     | 16,9              | 17,1          | 14,9            | 6,9              | 6,9           | 7,0             |
| Zafarabadski | 11,9              | 12,9          | 5,0             | 7,3              | 7,9           | 3,3             |
| Matchinskii  | 23,9              | 24,0          | 11,6            | 15,4             | 15,5          | 8,2             |

#### 4. Contribution of Women Headed DF into Cotton Production

<sup>22</sup> Under the data Goscomstat.

<sup>23</sup> Under the data of the State Statistics Committee of the RT.

57. Cotton is the major crop grown in the Project rayons. Women perform the most difficult tasks in cotton production as expressed by the women farmers:

*We discuss among ourselves and decide what to sow. Cotton brings profits; it is not for nothing that people call it «white gold». It brings good profits, though requires much work, but we RT used to it already. I myself pick up cotton since my childhood, at that time, though, it was a collective farm. And now everything we collect is ours. We can sell a harvest and make profit; very soon businessmen will start coming to buy cotton. (from FGD No. 3, Voseiski rayon)*

*Mainly women grow cotton in the rayon. More than 4, 5 thousand men left the republic to become labor migrants. (from interview with deputy Chairman of khukumat of Voseiski rayon)*

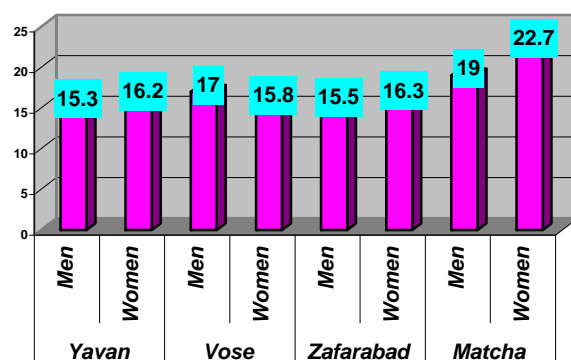
58. On the average, female farmers work harder and achieve better harvest results (Figure 6). The observation was verified in the interviews:

*As a rule, women work better, it is not for nothing that they say «a woman, life, land». These words are closely interrelated with each other because one can not do without the other. By this I in no way want to say that men work badly, there are such men – DF leaders who over fulfill the plan, have a good harvest, receive good profit. Women, however, have more love for the land, are more responsible and in general they do everything honestly. (from IDI No. 5, Yavanski rayon)*

*Five collective DF are headed by women. Annually, they show very good results. Collective DF «Ozoda» has 70 ha of arable lands and annually they plant and grow cotton on the territory of 60 ha. It has very good production results. Annually, it receives more than 25 centers from each hectare. DF «Ikhtier» has more than 30 ha of arable lands. It grows cotton on the territory of 25 hectares and has exemplary indicators, receives 25 centers from each hectare. (from IDI No. 3, Matchinski rayon)*

***Rukia.** I was receiving 35 centers per ha last year. It is a high harvest, total annual profit made almost US\$10,000. I believe I can assess the work of my DF as satisfactory; all members of the farm worked well and received good money. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

**Figure 6. Average harvest capacity of raw cotton in 2007 regarding the sex of the DF leader in two pilot rayons (center per 1 ha)**



59. While women farmers work harder and achieve better productivity results, the general trend in the country's cotton growing areas is the declining cotton production and yield. From a high of 21-23 centers per hectare in 2004, the yields of both male and female operated DF had declined to about 16 centers per hectare in 2007 (Table 10). Only in Matchinski was the yield slightly above 23 centers per hectare.

**Table 10: Harvest Capacity of Raw Cotton in DF by Gender of DF Manager, 2007 (center per ha)**

| Rayon        | 2004 |       | 2005 |       | 2006 |       | 2007 |       |
|--------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
|              | Men  | Women | Men  | Women | Men  | Women | Men  | Women |
| Yavanski     | 18,4 | 21,0  | 15,3 | 15,9  | 16,0 | 17,0  | 15,3 | 16,2  |
| Voseiski     | 24,1 | 23,2  | 13,6 | 15,6  | 11,4 | 14,5  | 17,0 | 15,8  |
| Zafarabadski | 17,6 | 18,4  | 17,9 | 18,2  | 17,2 | 15,6  | 15,5 | 16,3  |
| Matchinskii  | 20,3 | 21,4  | 19,6 | 21,0  | 20,3 | 22,9  | 19,0 | 22,7  |

## 5. Main Problems and Needs of Women Involved in Cotton Growing Sector

60. Regardless of the gender of the DF manager, all cotton farms in the Project rayons and the country in general encounter major problems in cotton production. The key problems that have been identified in the surveys are the following:

- Lack of financial resources and limited access to credits.
- Lack of machinery and obsolete existing stock
- Deficit of water and other melioration and irrigation problems.
- Future debts of farms
- Problem of provision with fertilizers/weed-killers/pest-killers
- Deficit of seeds and their poor quality.

## 6. DF Financial Sources

61. Results of the survey showed significant changes in the correspondence of DF financial sources in 2008 as against 2007 (Table 11). In 2007, the sources of credit funds were firstly from investors (or ginner/traders who provide forward production contracts for cotton), the second through self-finance, and the third from the banks. In 2008, there was less reliance on investors;

investors' financial sources dropped significantly from 61% to 35%. Majority relied on banks (as RT pumped in funds and accorded subsidized credit through banks for cotton production); the second and third funding sources were self-finance and investors, respectively.<sup>24</sup> Interestingly, some farmers supported their cotton production with financing from microfinance institutions.

**Table 11: Financial Sources of DF in Project Rayons, 2008**

|              | Self-financing | Banks       | Investors   | Microfinance | Other      |
|--------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Matcha       | 52.9           | 35.3        | 17.6        | 3.9          | 11.8       |
| Zafarabad    | 50.0           | 33.3        | 22.2        | 8.3          | -          |
| Kanibadam    | 37.8           | 55.6        | 48.9        | 2.2          | 15.6       |
| Spitamen     | 48.6           | 28.6        | 77.1        | 5.7          | 8.6        |
| Asht         | 18.2           | 75.8        | 12.1        | 3.0          | -          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>42.5</b>    | <b>45.0</b> | <b>35.0</b> | <b>4.5</b>   | <b>8.0</b> |

62. A desegregations of the funding sources by gender of the DF manager revealed differences in funding sources (Table 12). Among the male-managed DFs, the pattern of funding sources was: 1. bank funds, 2.self-finance, and 3.investors. Among the female-run DFs, the funding sources were: 1. self-financing, 2. investors, and 3. banks. Although there has been a significant reduction in the reliance on investors for funds from both male and female managers, more than half of those who accessed investor funds were still female-run DFs.

**Table 12: DF Financial Sources in 2007 and 2008 in the Profile of DF Manager's Gender (%)**

| Sources        | 2007 |       | 2008 |       |
|----------------|------|-------|------|-------|
|                | Men  | Women | Men  | Women |
| Self-financing | 40.2 | 55.6  | 39.2 | 62.1  |
| Banks          | 20.1 | 11.1  | 46.8 | 34.5  |
| Investors      | 58.6 | 74.1  | 31.6 | 55.2  |
| Microfinance   | 6.5  | 3.7   | 4.7  | 3.4   |
| Other          | 13.0 | 7.4   | 8.8  | 3.4   |

63. During the FGD, there was unanimous sentiment among those interviewed that lack of access to production credit severely impacts the DF's capacity to cultivate cotton. The year 2008 was particularly a challenge as there were fewer funds from investors, while banks were reluctant to provide credit for cotton production, and prices for inputs were constantly rising, particularly for fertilizers, fuel and lubricant, renting of machinery, etc. The problem of lack of funds is exacerbated by the untimely provision of the essential inputs from the investor-creditors resulting to delays in ploughing, sowing and other kinds of work.

**Sharofat.** *We have to rent a tractor in order to plough land, and the prices are very high now. Both fuel and lubricant materials are very expensive, and a tractor driver charges 5 Somonis per 0.1 ha of land. They charge 25 Somonis for a cultivator per 1 ha plus 10 liters of fuel. It costs pretty sum in order to collect a harvest. (from FGD No. 3, Voseiski rayon)*

64. A substantial part of farms try to do without credit as they find the terms and conditions set by investors and the banks quite exorbitant.

<sup>24</sup> Survey of 200 managers DF in Sugd region, October 2008

*Important problem is the lack of means, i.e. money. It is impossible to receive a credit from the bank, last year I wanted to take a credit, but it is so bureaucratic and the interest rates are so high, just terrible! On top of that you should bribe the officials for all documents to be processed. I made calculations that if I take a 5,000 Somoni credit, I will have to spend 2,000 Somonis from this sum for processing and other expenses, it is not profitable. And I refused to do that. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

65. Women DF leaders, compared to men, use less of commercial banks' services. Women say that in order to receive a credit the whole package of documents must be submitted to the bank, which is cumbersome, time consuming, and expensive to do. The biggest hurdle is the collateral that is required prior to receiving a credit. No credit is given without collateral. Jewelry and immovable property can serve as collateral. In practice women have nothing to use as collateral, because most often the owner of the immovable property, including the house, where she lives with children, is her father-in-law, a husband or elder son. Even if she has jewelry, it can not serve as collateral as the size of the collateral is much higher.

66. In Voseiski rayon, the problem of a limited access to credits was mentioned less often. Obviously, it relates to the fact that this rayon was included into the number of pilot rayons for privileged crediting and credits became more accessible for women. In majority of cases, DF use a credit for acquisition of fertilizers, seeds and renting or acquisition of machinery.

*In 2007, we took a credit of three thousand dollars at 1% of interest rate from Amonat Bank. We reimbursed it on time and our income made two more thousands. The credit was used for purchasing fertilizers, fuel, renting of machinery. (from FGD No. 3, Voseiski rayon)*

*Last year our rayon became a pilot rayon for privileged crediting. As a result out of 10,540 ha, used for cotton growing, 3,325 ha are funded via Agroinvestbank and Amonatbank, and the rest are self-funded. (from the interview with Deputy Head of khukumat of Voseiski rayon)*

## **7. Lack of Provision of Machinery and Obsolete Current Stock**

67. The problem of technical equipment is one of the most problematic for DF. The majority of farms have no machinery at all. DF, headed by young leaders experience most acute problems related to the lack of machinery

*One can not do anything without machinery. I have a tractor, a cultivator, which is why cotton harvest capacity makes 35 centers. My neighbors have none. Should they have machinery, then everything will be done on time and harvest capacity will be higher. (from the interview with the DF leader, Yavanski rayon)*

68. Based on available information, women-headed DF experience more problems with machinery than their male counterparts. The findings of the questionnaires applied in Matchinski rayon show that among men-headed DF, 59% of men-headed DF has machinery and only 33% of the women-headed DF.

69. Findings of the survey also showed that most often DF received old machinery from collective farms and state farms, which have reached their life term and are therefore are largely unusable or are very expensive to operate. Expenses for repair and maintenance are quite

exorbitant which disadvantage the female managers more than the males due to their very limited access to finances.

**Djumagul.** *It is a very old technical base. Our machinery is more than 25 years old. Something breaks every day. And spare parts are very expensive. (from FGD No. 1, Zafarabadski rayon)*

70. Considering the issue of providing machinery for DF, many respondents paid attention to poor work of agro services or the lack of them. Women recollected that these services worked in a very well organized way 20 years before, and spoke about the need to restore activity of Machinery and Tractor Stations (MTS).

*«Agroleasing» enterprise was specially established in our rayon. It has not been working until now. Problems remain in place (from the interview with a deputy chairman of the khukumat).*

## **8. Lack of Water and Other Melioration and Irrigation Problems**

71. In all pilot rayons, lack of water was considered as one of the most complex and difficult problem to resolve. Of the four Project rayons, Zafarabadski is most pressed for regular supply of irrigation water. Due to the lack of water vast areas are unattended and are simply abandoned.

**Makhbuba.** *We have one major problem – lack of water and irregular supply. We will be able to increase harvest capacity, if this problem is solved.*

**Djumagul.** *Seeds were provided to us. However, due to the problems with water, we could not do anything. It happened so that we sowed seed on the 14 of April and water was given only on May 15. As a result, everything burned, practically nothing survived. (from FGD No. 1, Zafarabadski rayon)*

72. Farm leaders highlight the deterioration of land quality due to poor state of irrigation systems. The drainage systems are especially dilapidated in Yavanski rayon. As a result of collectors being full, underground waters go up which leads to salination of soil.

**Rukia.** *Part of deviation wells are not functioning and land processes water badly. I believe that everything will become still more complex.*

**Gulinor.** *In my view, now in our rayon we have one more problem for DF, these are underground waters; hollows appear in the middle of the fields and they are filled with water. All soil around falls down, the depth of such hollows in some places makes around 0,5 meters. We showed them to other specialists too, however so far they have undertaken no measure to address these problems. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

## **9. Future Debts of Farms**

73. For cotton growing farms one of the growing concerns is the problem of farm debts, which was inherited as a result of the reorganization of farms. Farm debt continues to rise for every forward contract arrangements of the reorganized farms with the investors. Women managers of these reorganized DFs cannot understand why their farms had been indebted. Lately, many DF, after receiving additional information about their rights and better understanding of the situation,

started referring to courts. At the same time, situation with debts requires resolution of the problem on the state level.

*We ourselves have not seen our produced product, as we are in debts. We bring our cotton to ginneries and then we see nothing. Our product is taken away to pay for our debts. We are given only seeds and that is it. Our interest rates increase every year.*

*I think that they must sell the property of former collective farms and state farms, so as to pay off debts and not to burden us with somebody else's debts. I do not even know where they came from. It is a pity that lawyers from nongovernmental organizations did not train us about our rights two years before. I could have changed a lot. (from FGD No. 1, Zafarabad)*

*They say my farm has debts. It is US\$1,500 per ha. I signed no papers during reorganization, which is why I am not going to pay anything. (from FGD No. 3, Yavanski rayon)*

*I would like to request on behalf of all dehkans not to pass the debt to us as we have nothing to do with them. We took no credits. Those who took debts should be dealt with. I earnestly ask to relieve us from somebody else's debts.*

*I am supposedly indebted by as much as 7 thousand dollars. I earnestly ask to relieve us from somebody else's debts. We will never be able to manage our work properly. Debts constantly go up. (from FGD No. 2, Matchinskii rayon)*

#### **10. Problem of Provision with Fertilizers/Weed-killers/Pest-killers**

74. The majority of farm leaders also stress the problem of lack of access to fertilizers, weedicides, and pesticides. Due to the fact that DFs are continually cultivated by applying the same cropping pattern, the land will need to be replenished with soil nutrients, and/or a different cropping pattern should be used. These basic farming procedures have not been practiced because of the Government's desire to meet their planned cotton production.

**Khalima.** *The main thing is not to let the land become helpless. If one and the same crop is grown on the land, it loses strength, i. e., may not give a high harvest. Soil should be nourished, for this instead of simple water it should be watered with a mixture of water and carbamide, urea and others, this will restore fertility of the land.*

**Gulinor.** *Without adding saltpeter and other mineral fertilizers it is impossible to receive a good harvest, and the prices for them are very high, they should be a bit low. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

75. The main reason of the problem with fertilizers as well as weed-killers and pest-killers is the lack of funds for their procurement. Some women drew attention to the lack of technical skills on the proper application of fertilizers.

**Khalima.** *I am not very glad about my work and there are reasons for that. Our harvest was not very good..... Due to the fact that weed-killers and pest-killers are so expensive, we could not treat the land properly. Various pests destroyed part of the harvest, which is why I could not receive a good harvest. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

76. The majority of farms purchase fertilizers as well as weed-killers and pest-killers from private dealers, which sometimes creates additional problems. For example, in Zafarabadski and Matchinski rayons, the problem is the need for customs clearance of this product.

### 11. Deficit of Seeds and their Poor Quality

77. Among other problems women identified was access to quality seeds. Many said that should the quality of seeds be good, the harvest capacity will also increase.

*First of all, there is a need to design a program of providing quality seeds as well as weed-killers and pest-killers for the farms, this is the main thing, as a good harvest depends on access to these inputs. High quality seeds must be produced in each rayon for its farms. When seeds are brought from other regions, they already lose their quality during transportation. It happens that dehkans painstakingly prepare the field, plough, irrigate, and the seeds are of the poor quality, that is why they can not receive a good harvest, because of poor seeds, and limited access to weed-killers and pest-killers. As a result, all their work becomes a waste of time (from the interview with the deputy head of agricultural department).*

**Gulraftor.** *Before, in the times of the Soviet Union, various institutes would work and conduct various experiments. The majority of experimental fields would be located in our rayon, scientists from scientific and research institutes would advise cotton growers what sorts of cotton should be grown for good harvests. Now everything is forRTten. There is a need to restore cooperation between institutes and cotton growers. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

78. Survey of the DF managers in Sugd region showed that majority of DF (71%) use seeds of its own production or seeds produced by another DF (Table 13). The DFs that are managed by the women leaders have less access to high quality seeds in comparison with the men. Only 39% of DFs with female managers could purchase quality seeds in 2008. Interestingly, there were less per cent among women-led DFs that relied on used seeds for the next production cycle than the male managed DFs.

**Table 13: Type of Seeds Used/Accessed by Gender of DF Manager, 2008**

| Managers of DF | used seeds of own production or production of the other DF in 2008 | Could purchase high quality seeds in 2008 |
|----------------|--|---|
| Men            | 73.7   | 50.3                                      |
| Women          | 53.6   | 39.3                                      |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>70.9</b>  | <b>48.7</b>                               |

79. Less than half of the total number of respondents in the small-scale survey that was conducted in 2008 (49%) purchased high quality seeds in 2008. The major reasons that were cited for not purchasing high quality seeds were nominated the following ones:

- Absence of money - 50,9%
- Did not find, nowhere to buy – 25,9%
- Had seed resources – 12%
- Others – 11,1%

80. All the farmer-respondents expressed high interest in purchasing high quality seeds as it will directly influence the yield. The majority of respondents are ready to pay more for 1 kg of high quality seeds. Around 80% are ready to pay for \$4 per 1 kg of seeds in case it will increase crop up

to 25-30%. Around 77% are ready to pay \$5.5 per 1kg in case of the increase of crop up to 40-45%.

## 12. Satisfaction by the Cotton Industry Activity

81. The small-scale survey also noted that about 80% of the farmer-respondents were interested in farmer ownership of a seed processing and cotton ginning business. More than 86% of these farmers recognize the need to improve the quality of ginning services, and ensure access to quality seeds through a seed delinting/processing venture. Willingness for the establishment of such an enterprise that is farmer-owned was verified when majority of the respondents claimed that (i) they are willing to provide seed capital share to the proposed enterprise, and (ii) are ready to pay for additional transportation of cotton to gins that use modern technologies and provide increase of fiber and improve fiber quality. The farmer-respondents note that a seed processing cum ginning venture would enhance competition among gins, and more importantly ensure more access to quality seeds.

## 13. Farmer's Relation to the Cotton Buyers

82. The farmer-respondents are amenable to expanding market access for their cotton produce. The following were cited as market options; the percentages reflect the approval rating of the farmer-respondents:

- Sell through Internet – 85,3%
- Sell through the auction – 92,9%
- Sell through mobile phone– 85,5%. It is interesting to note that more than 91% of the DF managers who were interviewed had mobile phones.
- Would like to receive marketing information through the mobile phone – 88,4%

83. At the present, Tajik farmers have narrow range of buyers. Only 32% of farmers said that they can have more than 5 buyers in case if they were freely allowed to sell their produce (Table 14).

**Table 14: If you have free cotton in 2008 then approximately how many buyers will buy your cotton?**

| <b>Number of buyers</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>Manager-men</b> | <b>Manager-women</b> |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1                       | 18.7         | 13.5               | 50.0                 |
| 2                       | 13.6         | 14.7               | 7.1                  |
| 3                       | 15.2         | 17.1               | 3.6                  |
| 4                       | 10.6         | 11.2               | 7.1                  |
| 5                       | 10.1         | 10.6               | 7.1                  |
| more than 5             | 31.8         | 32.9               | 25.0                 |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b>       | <b>100.0</b>         |

## 14. Seed Cleaning Facilities and Other Services

84. As discussed above, the farmer-respondents are interested in the establishment of new seed cleaning and cotton processing joint stock companies that will have modern equipment and use of modern technology. About 87% of respondents would like to be stockholders in seed cleaning and cotton processing facility. However, only 38.5% of them have the capital to buy shares of this facility and become active shareholders.

85. When asked by gender, women farmers showed a slightly higher interest (89.7%) than their male counterparts (86.7%) in terms of becoming shareholders of such an enterprise. While majority

of the respondents have limited capital funds, more women (39%) than men (35%) expressed interest in buying shares as stockholders to the proposed seed cleaning facility. Many of women noticed that they need to be informed in time and the main thing is that the selling of shares should be done after cotton sale is finished.

86. Table 15 lists the other extension services that farmers would like to have access to. In general, female-managed DFs show stronger desire to have more exposure to technical services, demonstrate that more than 64% of farmers would like to receive services on plowing, around half of respondents would like to receive services on fertilizer treatment, cultivation, planting and transport services,

**Table 15. Would you like gin to provide following technical services? “Yes” (%)**

| <b>Services</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>Manager-men</b> | <b>Manager-women</b> |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Ploughing       | 64.3         | 64.3               | 64.3                 |
| Planting        | 46.2         | 45.6               | 50.0                 |
| Cultivation     | 41.7         | 39.8               | 53.6                 |
| Fertilizing     | 49.2         | 47.4               | 60.7                 |
| Transport       | 49.2         | 46.8               | 64.3                 |
| Other           | 47.2         | 43.3               | 71.4                 |

#### **15. Women Awareness Raising**

87. Discussions with women-DF leaders, interviews with the staff of khukumats and committees for women’s affairs show the need for both women and men to upgrade information and knowledge levels in the sphere of land rights and agricultural technologies.

***Anor.** There is a need in conducting more workshops, meetings with experts, to upgrade the level of knowledge of dehkans. Many DF leaders do not have adequate knowledge; many of them have never worked on land before; they need to be explained how to use land. (from FGD No. 3, Voseiski rayon)*

***Gulinor.** Some leaders are not aware of their rights, let alone common dehkans. Dehkans come for field works in the morning and work in the field till the sunset. During the day they talk to the dehkans who are like them, where can they receive information from? More meetings and workshops with specialists should be more often conducted for them*

***Khalima.** I need information; I would like to upgrade the level of my knowledge in the sphere of agriculture. It would be nice to organize qualification upgrading courses; many people even do not know which mineral fertilizers should be used in which cases. It is known to everybody that if concentration of fertilizers or weed-killers or pest-killers is exceeded, one can say good-bye to the harvest. (from FGD No. 4, Yavanski rayon)*

88. Review of the situation showed that lately in pilot rayons more attention is paid to upgrading the level of awareness and knowledge among DF leaders and accountants. Thus, for example, in Voseiski rayon last year, based on vocational school, special courses were organized.

89. At the same time the need is felt in upgrading the awareness about land rights among rural women and especially women – DF leaders. Management skills improvement is also vital for women managers, which should take into account that these leaders have varying levels of educational attainment and work experience.

**Risolatmo.** *I also would like to emphasize the lack of information or the lack of knowledge. I am sure that neither among men, nor among women – leaders we have some good knowledge of accounting. We have no knowledge because until today we have never dealt with something similar. We did not have to deal with such kinds of issues. I want to suggest that courses are organized where we could receive at least some kind of education, some kind of knowledge. We know nothing about clerical work. We do not know for sure what kind of expenses we have, how we are going to cover them. We have no knowledge. (from FGD No. 2, Matchinskii rayon)*

90. It is also equally important to develop the direction for upgrading legal culture of rural women so as to ensure and create equal opportunities for access to land for women.

*The point is that women, of course, seem to know their rights, they listen to all speeches of the President.... They say there that women can be leaders of dehqan farms, have such and such rights. However, all this is in general. This also has a different side.... Of course, many women today would like to have a separate farm, receive their share and work... But they all are afraid. They are afraid of the farm debt, afraid that if they separate, they will be indebted and will never be able to pay off. Men also frighten them by debts, by being indebted, by inability to pay debts off, etc. That is why in this case they lack knowledge about their rights, so as they could protect themselves. (from FGD No. 1, Zafarabadski rayon)*

### **C. Main Directions for Promotion of Women's Interests in the Cotton Sector**

91. Gender analysis in the context of cotton sector development highlighted the main factors and obstacles that are hampering the attainment of gender equality particularly in terms of access to land. The analysis also enabled the identification of the key priorities for the promotion of their interests in the cotton sector. The lack of knowledge about gender problems in general as well as about the newly adopted legislative acts and doable measure that promote gender equity became one of the obstacles that impeded the staff of local authorities, and rayon land committees from adopting new approaches to resolving the issues of unequal access to the resources for men and women. A constraining factor for the provision of equal access for women and men to land is the low level of awareness and knowledge among women and men in the sphere of land users' rights, modern technologies for working on landv become more productive, and cotton sector development through integrated and efficient supply ,chain networks.

*From the Report of Economic and Social Council for 1997, UNO, 1997.*

*Under the UNO definition, gender approach includes in itself a «...process of assessment of any planned arrangement from the point of view of its impact on women and men, including legislations, strategies and programs in all spheres and at all levels.*

*Real strategy is to (put in center stage the) interests and experiences of women, as well as men, as indispensable criterion for elaboration of a general concept, during implementation, and when monitoring and assessing general directions of activity and programs in all political, economic and public spheres, so that women and men could benefit equally, and inequality would never take root».*

92. Analysis of the findings of the survey of 2008 as well as of 2005 showed that for more effective development of DF and cotton sector as a whole there is a need to pay attention to activation of elaboration and realization of long term programs and projects with the assistance of various donors for the support and development of DF, aimed at the following:

- establishment of the network of agro services providing farms with machinery and spare parts, fertilizers, seeds, weed-killers and pest-killers, processing equipment and other required complex of services
- provision of agricultural machinery on leasing basis
- broader access to credits based on privileged crediting, support and development of micro finance and micro crediting organizations with allocation of specific projects to support women
- establishment of seed cleaning and cotton processing joint stock companies owned by farmers
- rehabilitation and construction of new irrigation systems, development of pump irrigation
- establishment of business centers, information and consultation centers for women, providing not only legal assistance but also in the sphere of land cultivation, use of fertilizers, marketing, etc.
- organization of constantly functioning courses, trainings, and learning programs for upgrading the capacity of men and women – farm leaders
- activation of activity of associations of DF and water users, creation of coalitions and self support groups among DF
- discussions with all parties concerned and undertaking specific measures regarding the issue of future debts of DF

93. The main challenge to the process of promotion of women's interests and introduction of new mechanisms for the protection of women's rights are existing gender stereotypes and prejudices about the distribution of gender roles of women and men in the community, about the skills and capability of women to lead, to apply new technologies, etc.

94. In our view, among main directions of integration of gender approaches into the cotton growing sector development, there is a need to focus on the following:

- Improvement of the law enforcement practice of land legislation and reforming of agriculture based on consideration of a gender factor.
- Upgrading capacity and gender awareness of the profile structures' staff and, first of all, of local khukumats, land committees, etc.
- Upgrading the level of awareness and legal culture of women and men in the sphere of land use, cotton sector development, etc.
- Designing of a gender sensitive model for monitoring and assessment of the cotton sector development based on elaboration and use of quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- Involvement of women into the processes of decision making based on compliance with a gender balance as well as obligatory inclusion of women into the composition of rayon commissions for reorganization of farms, land distribution, working groups for elaboration of regional strategies and action plans, etc.
- Upgrading competitiveness of women through the use of various forms of training specialists in the sphere of agriculture, including at the expense of presidential quarters in agrarian University, qualification upgrading systems in the sphere of new systems of financing, agroculture, etc.
- Development and broad use of feedback mechanisms of profile structures with population regarding the sphere of the cotton sector development

95. As institutional mechanisms of integration of gender approaches into the cotton growing development and development of a social partnership among state structures, civil society and donors, one can test establishment of regional Coordination councils for reforming of agriculture. It is expedient to use the experience of establishment of a Coordination council under the

Government of the RT led by the deputy prime minister of the RT for the implementation of the UNIFEM project called «Support of women's rights for land».

96. Key partners for promotion of gender approaches in the cotton sector development are local khukumats, committees for women's affairs, rayon agricultural departments, statistics departments, land committees, associations of DF and water users, NGOs, self support groups and others.

## **V. RECOMMENDED AGENDA FOR ACTION**

97. Tajikistan remains one of the poorest countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions. Findings of the 2007 SLST showed that compared to 2003 the poverty level in Tajikistan reduced; however, poverty is still wide spread, including extreme poverty. Poor population makes 53%. Almost fifth part of the population (17%) lives in extreme poverty. The level of poverty in rural areas is higher compared to the urban areas.

98. Agriculture is important component of economy development of Tajikistan and the majority of population is involved in it. At the same time agricultural sector of the republic has not reached sustainable and profitable development yet. Lately the share of agricultural production in the total volume of GDP has declined.

99. Cotton subsector, being one of the key sectors of agriculture of the republic, has not developed in a sustainable manner and in fact, shows dismal indicators in terms of productivity and profitability as an economic activity. Raw cotton production is exhibiting a downtrend, unlike the increasing production pattern experienced in grains, potato, melons.

100. Majority of employed rural women works in agriculture, particularly in cotton growing. Women, by doing the most difficult kinds of work for growing and picking cotton, contribute considerably into the raw cotton production.

101. Despite predominance of women in agricultural work and cotton growing, women are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts especially in terms of access to land. While women actually work on the land, their rights to control and manage land are very limited. Rural women have control over less land area than their male counterparts; do not have equal access to the decision making processes in the sphere of agriculture; receive less financial gains after harvest collection; and encounter more hurdles when applying for credit. Despite performing well as managers of DFs, the share of women-run DFs is 6.5 times lower when compared to male-managed DFs. Recently, there has been an increasing trend in the number of women-headed DF especially in the Project rayons.

102. The RT initiated a number of positive measures and concrete steps towards upgrading the status of women in the community, in terms of more equal rights and opportunities. To date, a legislative framework for gender equality has been appropriately designed, and institutional mechanisms for promotion of women's interests are being improved. While certainly in the right direction, much more will be needed particularly in the implementation of these legislative measures for gender equity. Effective mechanisms for the implementation of these measures are extremely wanting. Additionally, State programs for promoting women's interests and institutional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of these measures Have yet to be enforced at the ground level.

103. Considering needs and requirements of the DF there is a need to provide long term programs and projects with assistance from the donor community for the support and development of DF to become productive, competitive, and profitable economic ventures, specifically in:

- establishment of agro services network providing farms with machinery and spare parts, fertilizers, seeds, weed- and pest-killers, processing equipment and other required complex of services
- provision of agricultural machinery on leasing basis
- broader access to credits based on best international practices, and support and development of micro finance and micro crediting organizations with allocation of specific projects to support women
- rehabilitation and construction of new irrigation systems, development of pump irrigation
- establishment of business centers, information and consultation centers for women, providing not only legal assistance but also in the sphere of land cultivation, use of fertilizers, marketing, etc.
- organization of constantly functioning courses, trainings, and learning programs for upgrading the capacity of men and women – farm leaders
- promotion of associations of DF and water users, creation of coalitions and self support groups among DF
- multi-stakeholder participated dialogues on measures that will pragmatically address the problem on farm debt.

104. Among main directions of integration of gender approaches into the cotton sector development there is a need to focus on the following:

- Improvement of the law enforcement practice of land legislation and reforming of agriculture based on consideration of a gender factor.
- Upgrading capacity and gender awareness of the profile structures` staff and, first of all, of local khukumats, land committees, etc.
- Upgrading the level of awareness and legal culture of women and men in the sphere of land use, cotton sector development, etc.
- Designing of a gender sensitive model for monitoring and assessment of the cotton sector development based on elaboration and use of quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- Involvement of women into the processes of decision making based on compliance with a gender balance as well as obligatory inclusion of women into the composition of rayon commissions for reorganization of farms, land distribution, working groups for elaboration of regional strategies and action plans, etc.
- Upgrading competitiveness of women through the use of various forms of training specialists in the sphere of agriculture, including at the expense of presidential quarters in agrarian University, qualification upgrading systems in the sphere of new systems of financing, agro culture, etc.
- Development and broad use of feedback mechanisms of profile structures with population regarding the sphere of the cotton sector development.

105. For the ADB-funded Sustainable Cotton Subsector Project, a Gender Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been proposed. This was discussed with the Project Management Unit and with ADB. Mechanisms for implementing the said agenda have been developed. To facilitate the implementation of the Plan, a Gender Specialist will be engaged. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the Project will also ensure that the indicators will be disaggregated by gender, where feasible and needed.

## GENDER ACTION PLAN

Gender Action Plan (GAP) was developed with the end-view of alleviating gender inequality in accessing quality seeds, credits, and market infrastructure in the project pilot districts - Maachot and Zafarabad in Sogd oblast, Vose and Yavan in Khatlon oblast.

Each year cotton sector is marked by an increase of women employed on cotton fields as more able bodied Tajik rural men seek jobs in Russia and other more developed countries. Despite women's increasing involvement in agriculture and cotton production, access to productive assets like land, credit, inputs, and markets is still gender-biased in favor of their male counterparts. Women have limited control over the land that they till; and find it difficult to avail of essential inputs, machinery, and credit.

Gender inequality is manifested in various forms. On the average, cultivable and irrigated land that women manage is less; have less voice in the decision-making process in agricultural sector; are disadvantaged in terms of share to the financial benefits from the yield; and despite women leaders performing well in terms of managing DFs, are less in number than their male managers, i.e., 6.5 times less women than men. The share of women-DF heads in pilot districts in 2007 consisted in: Zafarabad – 12.9%, Yavan-8.2%, Vose-8.2% and Matcho – 1.2 %. As a rule, the DFs headed by women have not only less number of shareholders, and most shareholders will be women.

For this Project, special attention is accorded toward promoting in a proactive way gender equity in rights and opportunities. Special attention is accorded to increasing the awareness of women of their legal rights; their access to the outputs and outcomes of the project; and their active involvement in the decision-making process whether at the land that they cultivate or in particular the Project's implementation.

Indicators for the achievement of these goals/actions will be included in the Project's monitoring and evaluation system. Periodic reports (each 6 months) would be introduced by the Independent Commission and incorporated to M&E reports. Key partners of the GAP realization would be the local hukumats, Committees of women's affairs, rayon's land committees and departments of agriculture, NGOs and international organizations, heads of DF.

| №                            | Measures/actions   | Indicators                              | Executors and partners   | Timing |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|--------|
| <b>I.</b><br><i>Output 1</i> | <b>Component 1: Seed Quality Improvement</b><br>Central, regional, and border plant quarantine laboratory inspection posts installed and operational |   | Ministry of agriculture of the RT                                |        |
| 1                            | Increased women-farmer's awareness about quarantine guidelines and information on pests and diseases and prevention measures.                        | 20% of women among participants         | PIU, Association of DF, NGOs < MoA                               | 2009   |
| <i>Output 2:</i>             | <i>Selected companies on acid delinting, seed cleaning in Sogd and Khatlon.</i>  |   |  |        |
| 1                            | Inclusion to tender documents on criteria of company's selection – the membership of women-farmers among shareholders not less than 10%              | Not less than 10% of women stakeholders | Ministry of agriculture of the RT, tender commission, PIU        | 2009   |
| 2                            | Awareness raising among women-farmers about company, its activities,/services provided, and involvement in seed quality propagation                  | 15-20% of women among participants      | Selected companies, Local hukumats, PIU, Association of DF, NGOs | 2009   |

| <b>№</b>        | <b>Measures/actions</b>   | <b>Indicators</b>   | <b>Executors and partners</b>  | <b>Timing</b>            |
|-----------------|---|---|--|--------------------------|
| <b>II.</b>      | <b>Component: Innovative financing</b>  |   |  |                          |
| 1               | Increased access of women-farmers to micro credits  | 15-20% of women-debtors   | Financial institutes-stakeholders  | 2009.2010                |
| 2               | Increased women farmer participation on trainings and seminars on microfinance use of funds   | 20% of women among participants   | PIU, Financial institutes, Local hukumats, Committee of women's affairs, Association of DF, NGOs |                          |
| <b>III.</b>     | <b>Component: Market development</b>  |   |  |                          |
| <i>Output 1</i> | <i>Introduction of the universal cotton grading standards (UCGS)</i>  |   |  |                          |
| 1.              | Participation of women farmers in seminars and training on the implementation of universal cotton grading standards   | 30% of women among participants   | PIU  | 2009                     |
| <b>IV.</b>      | <b>Component: Management of the Project</b>   |   |  |                          |
| 1.              | Conduct of training and seminars on gender-related policies and implementation of these at the Project level  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 80% of PIU staff as participants of seminars</li> <li>- 20% of Local hakims and local government employees in Project areas</li> </ul> | PIU, gender expert   | November-December 2008   |
| 2.              | Develop and implement gender disaggregated indicators to the M&E system   | Existence of gender indicators  | PIU, gender expert   | September-December 2008  |
| 3.              | Ensure separate sections on M&E reports relating to gender development.   | Chapters in the reports   | PIU  | The whole project period |
| 4.              | Conduction of round tables, public hearings in districts and on national level devoted to the discussion of monitoring results and definition of further steps in the development of cotton sector. | At least once a year  | PIU, local hukumats, NGOs and international organizations (on agreement)                         | Twice a year             |

#### **ABBREVIATIONS**

|     |                               |
|-----|-------------------------------|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank        |
| PGD | Plan on gender development    |
| PIU | Project implementation unit   |
| DF  | Dekhkan Farms                 |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |

**LIST OF MEETINGS DURING THE PREPARATION OF REVIEW OF GENDER SITUATION  
IN COTTON SECTOR OF TAJIKISTAN**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Name</b>            | <b>Position/Organization</b>  |
|------------|------------------------|---|
| 1.         | Mukhammadieva Bakhtia  | Deputy Head, Goscomstat of the RT, Head of the Working Group of Gender Statistics   |
| 2.         | Nabiev Vakhob          | Deputy Head of Sogd oblast  |
| 3.         | Habirov Mahmujon       | Deputy Chief, Agency of land-use, geodesy and cartography under the Government of the RT  |
| 4.         | Nozaninov Nusratullo   | Deputy Chief, Agency of land-use, geodesy and cartography under the Government of the RT  |
| 5.         | Shakirova Marifat      | Deputy Head of the Department, Committee of Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the RT   |
| 6.         | Mirzoeva Viloyat       | Manager, Project of UNIFEM and FAO «Provision of Food Security and Improvement of Living Standards via Conduction of Institutional Land Reforms in Tajikistan, Focusing on Gender»,         |
| 7.         | Nazarova Khosiyat      | Lawyer, Information-consultative Center, Committee of Women and Family Affairs under the Government of the RT   |
| 8.         | Nabieva Shahrison      | Director, PO «Zanoni Dekhot»  |
| 9.         | Gaffor-zade Hurinisso  | Director, PO «Oshti Milli»  |
| 10.        | Rakhimova Bikhoyal     | Advisor, Project of UNIFEM and FAO «Provision of Food Security and Improvement of Living Standards via Conduction of Institutional Land Reforms in Tajikistan, Focusing on Gender», Khujand |
| 11.        | Sultanova Manzura      | Director, PO «Saodat», Khujand  |
| 12.        | Nurmamadov Ramazan     | Head, International Humanitarian Public Organization «Jovid», Chkalovsk   |
| 13.        | Dilafroz Mavlyanova    | Center of International research and cooperation (CECI-Tajikistan), Khujand   |
|            | <b>Zafarabad rayon</b> |   |
| 14.        | Usmanova Makhbuba      | Deputy head, Khukumat of Zafarabad rayon  |
| 15.        | Toirova Nurinisso      | Head, Khukumat Department on Women's affairs  |
| 16.        | Turdiev Zakhid         | Lawyer, RICC  |
| 17.        | Mukhitdinov Nuritdin   | Assistant of the head of Khukumat   |
| 18.        | Mamurova Zilola        | Deputy head , Zafarabad jamoat  |
| 19.        | Abdullaeva Makhbuba    | Head of DF  |
| 20.        | Turdieva Jumagul       | Head of DF  |
| 21.        | Hamraeva Gulreza       | Housekeeper   |
|            | <b>Matcha rayon</b>    |   |
| 22.        | Azizov Muzafar         | Head of Khukumats Apparatus   |
| 23.        | Mirvaisov Sufi         | Deputy head , Jamoat Buston   |
| 24.        | Niezova Nargiz         | Head, Khukumat Department on Women's affairs  |
| 25.        | Mirzoeva Rajamo        | Head of DF  |
| 26.        | Nazirov Safo           | Head of DF  |
| 27.        | Hodiev Narzibek        | Head of DF  |
| 28.        | Hofizova Sadoratmo     | Head of DF  |

| No. | Name                 | Position/Organization                        |
|-----|----------------------|--|
|     | <b>Vose rayon</b>    |  |
| 29. | Fakerov              | Deputy head Khukumat                         |
| 30. | Abdulhamidov Sharif  | Head, Khukumat Department                    |
| 31. | Rizoeva Nigina       | Head, Khukumat Department                    |
| 32. | Safarova Hafiza      | Head, Khukumat Department on Women's affairs |
| 33. | Sitamov K.           | Lawyer, RICC                                 |
| 34. | Kodirov Abdujabor    | Deputy head, Administration of Agriculture   |
| 35. | Mirzoeva Sharofat    | Head of DF                                   |
| 36. | Nazirova Gulmo       | Head of DF                                   |
| 37. | Abrorova Holmo       | Head of DF                                   |
|     | <b>Yavan rayon</b>   |  |
| 38. | Usupov Jahonbek      | Deputy head of DF                            |
| 39. | Kholmurodova Gulniso | Head, Khukumat Department on Women's affairs |
| 40. | Habibulloev Murodali | Lawyer, RICC                                 |
| 41. | Kurbonova Safarmo    | Farmer, land disputer                        |
| 42. | Yatimova Sadbarg     | Head of DF                                   |
| 43. | Ummatova Hidoyat     | Head of DF                                   |
| 44. | Rahimova Rukia       | Head of DF                                   |
| 45. | YatimovaSadbarg      | Head of DF                                   |

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