

СОЗМОНИ МИЛАЛИ МУТТАҲИД
ДАР ТОҶИКИСТОН

UNITED NATIONS IN TAJIKISTAN

ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ОБЪЕДИНЁННЫХ
НАЦИЙ В ТАДЖИКИСТАНЕ



BULLETIN

UN Tajikistan



The fate of a migrant's wife

When Dilbar Shodieva's daughters confess that the word "dad" sounds strange to them her heart bleeds for them. Trying to maintain her composure and comforting them, she says: *"Let's hope to God your father will come back, and with him you'll be as safe as houses."*

After reassuring her children, Dilbar secretly sheds tears in the corner of her room; having grown up without a father herself, her daughters' words pain her.



"So far, it's been 10 years and five months since the day my husband left for work in Russia. We have not had any news of him since then. All we know is that he was in Krasnoyarsk," Dilbar says tearfully. "He has not sent us any money all this time, nor supported us in any way. I have nursed and brought up my children by myself all these years," she continues.

Dilbar has been waiting for her husband for these 10 long years. Whenever she learns that someone has returned to the village from Krasnoyarsk, she always runs to ask about her husband in the hope of hearing some news of him.

Despite all the difficulties of her life, Dilbar has worked hard for her children to get a decent education. She sewed clothes, pillows and mattresses and did not shy away from any other work which could afford her an honest living.

The days, months, years passed. Dilbar's two daughters grew up to become young women. As she married her eldest daughter off, Dilbar was still hoping that her errant husband would come to the wedding.

Dilbar's life changed radically after she learned about the "Social Mobilization of Migrants' Family Members" project implemented by UN Women in partnership with the Woman and Society Association (AWS). Within the framework of the project, Dilbar and four other women from her village have established a self-help group called *Bunafsha* where they all sew clothing and, especially, cotton-stuffed quilts and *kurpachas* (long mattresses). The revenue earned is divided equally among the members of the group. From the proceeds, Dilbar has already bought a sheep. In winter, she has more time to tend the cattle. For Dilbar, the sewing has become an additional source of revenue and her household income and family's economic status have improved.



“It appears that it is much better to work in a group. We have divided the responsibilities. The work goes faster. We communicate a lot and learn from each other,” Dilbar says. “Thanks to the group I have a more stable and higher income. Now we can take large orders and sell the goods on the market. It is good that we have set up the group,” she continues.

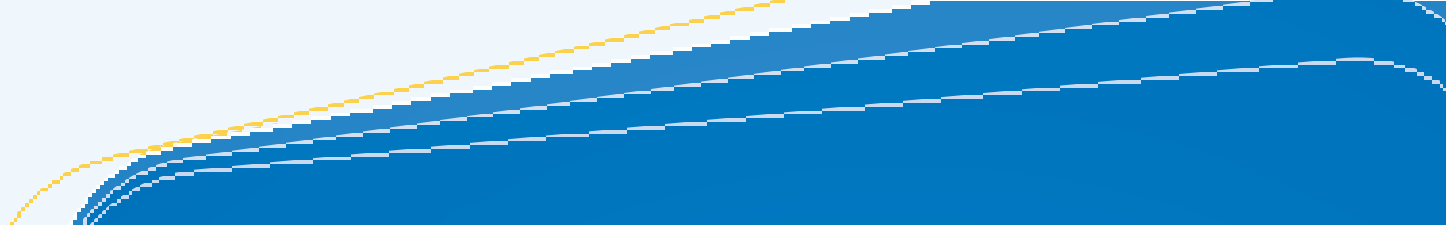
The self-help group of which Dilbar is a member has become popular among the women in Ganchi district with their expertise and excellent quality of work. That is why the sewing of cotton-stuffed quilts and *kurpachas* for orders for wedding ceremonies is entrusted only to the Bunafsha Self-Help Group (SHG). Although the work is very challenging and demanding, Dilbar and her friends are not afraid as they are working for the good of their children and themselves.

Members of Bunafsha SHG have also established a fund to assist each other. Each month they contribute a certain amount to it and money from it can be used by any member of the group in case of need.

Within the framework of the “Social Mobilization of Migrants' Family Members” project in Ganchi district, vulnerable women left without any support in life are able to find a worthy occupation which earns them income and gives them the opportunity to communicate and share ideas with each other and work in a team. Yodgorova Rahbar, the head of the Department of Women and Family Affairs, a local executive body, noted that this project has changed the lives of many migrants' families for the better and helped to provide work for a large number of rural women:



“We are delighted that the project is helping the families of migrant workers to find a decent job. At first glance, the creation of self-help groups seems a small thing, but for our villages to provide employment opportunities is a huge help in improving the welfare of many families,” she explains.



Dilbar's story attracted the attention of the program's partner - the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - and spurred it on to search for her husband in Krasnoyarsk. At the request of UN Women and with the active assistance of the IOM, Dilbar's husband was found. But it turns out that he has another family in the Russian Federation. Dilbar has not asked him to pay the child support alimony owed for her younger daughter who is now 16 years old. Deep in her heart she hopes that one day her husband will come back after all and that her grandchildren, at least, will see their grandfather...

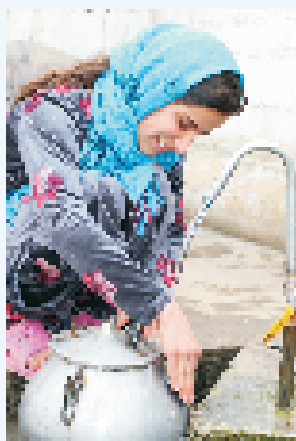
Within the last 16 months, Dilbar's life has changed for the better. The group members have become well-known in the Jamoat (municipality) where the majority of the population uses the *kurpachas* that Dilbar and her colleagues produce. Her second daughter has also married and now Dilbar is joyful about the future of her children.

In December last year Dilbar and her team members attended a workshop on setting up a credit union. They are now keen to have the additional opportunity of saving funds and are currently in the process of registering the credit union under the aegis of the SHG.

UNHCR's Work in Tajikistan – in Pursuit of Human Rights for all Refugees

Last year, the UNHCR was able to commemorate the 20th anniversary of its presence in Tajikistan. Initially, the UN's refugee agency was invited by the Government to assist Tajik refugees in neighbouring countries and internally displaced people during the civil war. As a result of the civil war in the early 1990s, approximately 600,000 people were internally displaced while about 60,000 Tajiks fled to Afghanistan. During this early period, the UNHCR's main task was related to the return of Tajik refugees and their reintegration, and also the reconstruction of houses and the infrastructure was supported. Over 51,000 people returned to Tajikistan with the help of the UNHCR.

At present, the focus of the UNHCR's work has shifted from Tajik returnees to Afghan refugees in Tajikistan fleeing from the enduring political instability. There are currently around 3,300 refugees and 2,000 asylum-seekers, mainly from Afghanistan, but in smaller numbers also from



Kyrgyzstan, Iran and Iraq living in Tajikistan. In recent years, Tajikistan has received an average of 15 Afghan families per month, over 90% of which are ethnic Tajiks. This trend is expected to continue due to the gradual withdrawal of ISAF troops from Afghanistan. The UNHCR has supported the Inter-Ministerial Working Group chaired by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOI) in preparing a contingency plan for a potential refugee influx.

Moreover, a Refugee Status Determination (RSD) seminar was organized for the members of the inter-ministerial national RSD Commission and the staff of the Passport Registration Service of the MOI in July 2013, where they learnt about the international standards and protection principles enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention. To enhance the capacity of the Tajik judiciary and to promote the rule of law in Tajikistan, the UNHCR compiled a comprehensive analysis of the civil proceedings of refugees and asylum-seekers in Tajik courts and held a high-level round-table to present the findings in December 2013. In regards to the registration process, the UNHCR donated software and computers to the MOI to modernize refugee registration and the database and also rehabilitated and refurbished premises of the Department on Citizenship and Work with Refugees (under the MOI). These initiatives aim at enhancing the protection and processing of vulnerable refugees.

But in 2013 there were also setbacks in the protection of refugees in Tajikistan. Contrary to the norm of *non-refoulement*, a total of 27 persons of concern to the UNHCR were deported from Tajikistan to Afghanistan, their country of origin. The UNHCR advocated to the Government to stop this practice, but national security interests continued to prevail over international protection principles throughout 2013. It has become increasingly difficult for the UNHCR to fulfill its role entrusted to it by the UN Refugee Convention of 1951, signed also by the Government of Tajikistan.

A new year has started with a new government and the UNHCR and refugees have high hopes that tolerance and common understanding will prevail.

UNICEF Juvenile Justice Project

One of UNICEF's foci in Tajikistan is the reform of the juvenile justice system as part of the bigger justice reform agenda. UNICEF, together with its partners, supports the Government of Tajikistan in the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Juvenile Justice that covers the period from 2010 to 2015, as well as in the implementation of other relevant international obligations regarding children's rights in the justice system, to ensure that children in contact with the law are treated more in compliance with international norms and standards. This project is mainly funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) (2010 till 2014) and has three main directions:

1. National policy ensures that the juvenile justice system in Tajikistan is in greater compliance with international standards and norms;
2. Programs preventing juvenile offending and re-offending are adopted and implemented by relevant bodies;
3. Juvenile justice alternative practices exist in 15 districts, and Courts, the Prosecution, Police and Child Rights Units reduce the use of deprivation of liberty for children in conflict with the law by referring children to these alternative practices.

A very new and innovative initiative by UNICEF under this project is the establishment of special child-friendly investigation rooms and courtrooms in Tajikistan. Given the limited number of judges in the



country and the relatively low numbers of cases involving children, as an interim step, it was agreed with the Council of Justice to have such rooms within district courts of general jurisdiction, where judges who are assigned to hear family cases are responsible for all cases related to children as well. These new installations consist of one big courtroom where the cage where offenders sit during trial has been removed; and a smaller waiting area which also serves as an investigation room. The investigation room is equipped with Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV). Because interrogations are recorded and accompanied by a psychologist, multiple interrogations of the child, which in themselves can be traumatizing and can lead to double victimization, can be prevented. During trial, the child can remain in the investigation room without having to face the offender, thanks to the audio system and CCTV installed. The judge can pose a question, the psychologist can hear it over headphones and pose the question to the child, the child's answer can be heard in the courtroom via a microphone and the scene can be observed via CCTV. So far, UNICEF has helped establish child-friendly investigation rooms and courtrooms in

Dushanbe and Khujand, and a child-friendly courtroom in Qurganteppa. In Dushanbe, the other three district courts also have access to these child-friendly facilities, if they have a case involving children.



UNICEF, together with the NGO Child Rights Center (CRC), conducts training on international standards, on what 'the best interest of the child' means and on how to communicate and work with children for staff of closed institutions for children. Vocational courses for the children in the juvenile colony have been started as part of an agreement between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labour, and certificates are issued to the participants upon graduation from these courses. This enhances the children's future chances of finding meaningful employment upon their release.



After research carried out under the auspices of the Ombudsman's Office in 2012 revealed cases of torture of children in the juvenile justice system, especially during arrest, UNICEF and the NGO CRC, in support of the Government started to provide psychological and legal support for child victims of torture. However, the main focus of UNICEF and the Government is to prevent children from entering the formal justice system as far as possible. To divert them from the formal justice system and to have alternatives to incarceration for first-time offenders committing crimes of minor and medium severity, UNICEF has been supporting the Government to establish community-based services that offer psychosocial and legal support to children in conflict with the law and at risk of offending. These services are offered at Centers for Additional Education under the Ministry of Education and Science, where referred children spend their day-time or after-school hours and receive specialized support from social workers who develop individual plans for them. They have access to after-school activities and vocational training, such as carpentry, drawing, Russian and English lessons or sewing. The goal of these centers is to keep children out of the formal justice system, to prevent young people offending or re-offending by keeping them busy, providing social work support for rehabilitation, and giving young people a chance to understand their responsibility for their acts. Social workers also involve children's families, communities and schools, thus creating a positive environment for the children when they graduate from the program. A big part of this work involves the capacity-building of police officers, prosecutors, specially assigned judges and staff of child rights' units to learn about these community-based services, and to refer children there.

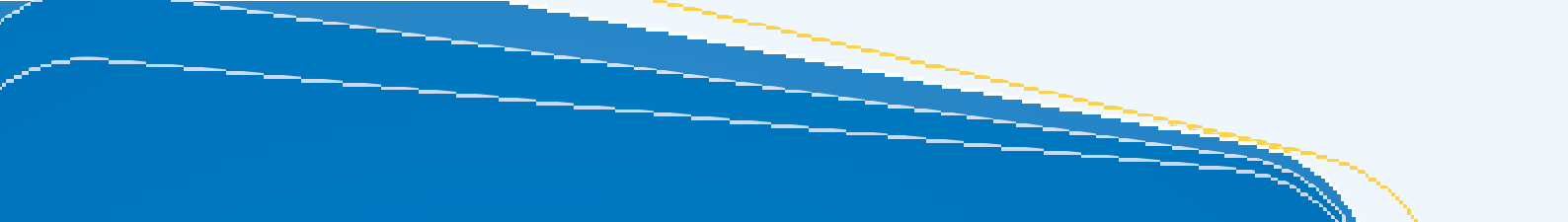
One of the successes of the training support has been the inclusion of a course on child rights and juvenile justice in the curriculum of the Police Academy. Work is ongoing to have similar systematic programs for prosecutors and judges. UNICEF has been investing in a team of national trainers to support this process.



A lot has been achieved in the reform process of the juvenile justice system in Tajikistan, but still many things remain to be done. UNICEF is continuing its support to the Government of Tajikistan to reach the goals of the National Plan of Action for Juvenile Justice System Reform (2010-2015), as well as including this topic in Tajikistan's next Justice Reform Agenda.

Author: Laura Gees

Contributors: SiymaBarkinKuzmin and NargisKarimova,
UNICEF Child Protection Section



Children are our future and should not remain on the sidelines!

Assessment of children's rights in the hospitals of Tajikistan

WHO Country Office in the Republic of Tajikistan
Pirova Z, Boboeva H, Alimamedova T

WHO Country Office in the Republic of Tajikistan
UN House - 2, "VEFA" Center, 6th floor
Bokhtar Street 37/1, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Tel: +992 48 701 14 71-79, 83
Fax: +992 48 701 14 84
Mob: + 992 907 78 01 19

Nothing matters more to families than the health, welfare and success of their children. Improving the health and welfare of mothers and their children is the best way to a healthier nation.

The best way to achieve a healthier and fairer society for the future is to improve the health of children and to respect the rights of children in general and their right to the best health care services in particular.

Children's rights must be respected universally. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 24) defines children's right to health as "a universal law applicable to not only timely and appropriate prevention, health promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care, but also to growth and development for the realization of their full potential and living in conditions that allow them to achieve the highest attainable standard of health, through programs that focus on the determinants of health". It is important to recognize not only children's right to health and the achievement of their full potential, but also the interdependence of this right with the realization of other rights.

The WHO Country Office in Tajikistan conducted an assessment of children's rights in the Republic of Tajikistan, in particular, in 10 pilot central district hospitals in Khatlon Oblast within the framework of a project on improving the quality of hospital care for children which was introduced with the support of the Russian Federation. This work is part of a broader initiative by WHO-EURO on the fullest realization of children's rights in health care settings.

The assessment included the use of tools for different stakeholder groups, namely: a) hospital managers; b) health care workers; c) children aged 6-11; d) children aged 12-18; e) parents; and f) other family members of the child.

The assessment of children's rights in hospital was measured against seven standards, in particular: the extent to which all children have the highest possible quality of care; the extent to which the provision of medical services follows the principles of equality and non-discrimination; the extent to which health services are provided in a safe, clean and appropriate environment for all children; an evaluation of the rights of all children to be protected against all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, rough, careless or negligent treatment, all forms of abuse, including sexual violence.

We all want the best for our children. We should all wish only the best for each child in need of hospital care. Children are our future and should not remain on the sidelines!



Address of the UN in Tajikistan:
Ainy street - 39, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Tel: (+992-44) 6005600
Website: www.untj.net
E-mail: registry@un.org

