

# CENTRAL ASIA POLICY REVIEW



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## **CENTRAL ASIA POLICY REVIEW**

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### **MISSION**

The *Central Asia Policy Review* is an English-language on-line publication of the Tian Shan Policy Center of the American University of Central Asia dedicated to promoting dialogue and raising awareness on relevant issues in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia on human rights, good governance, sustainable development, migration and social protection.

Contributions to the *Central Asia Policy Review* are encouraged from local, regional and international experts, professors, students, as well as alumni of the American University of Central Asia and other Universities of or with a focus on Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia.

Representatives of local institutions, civil society organisations, regional and international organisations are also encouraged to contribute.

The *Central Asia Policy Review* aims at addressing issues of public interest with the aim of furthering support for the democratic development of Kyrgyzstan and neighbouring countries, as well as for enhanced compliance with human rights obligations and principles in an inclusive manner.

### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Contributors shall submit articles to the following email address: [capr@auca.kg](mailto:capr@auca.kg). An article's ideal length will be between 1,000 and 2,500 words, including a 100 word abstract. The articles should include a brief introduction to the subject at hand, an analytical section, and policy recommendations to foster dialogue and discussion. The Editor and the Editorial Committee reserve the right to decide whether to publish or edit the article in accordance with the internal publication guidelines of the Tian Shan Policy Center. By submitting the article, the author agrees to its publication and to relinquish his/her copyrights to the Tian Shan Policy Center. Unless otherwise stated in written form by the Editorial Committee, no honorarium will be paid for the contributions.

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Dear Readers,

From the beginning, the objective of the Central Asia Policy Review has been to provide a platform for students, experts, researchers, PhD candidates, activists, and writers to discuss developments in the fields of human rights, governance and the environment in Central Asia in a spirit of inclusivity and mutual respect.

The Editorial Committee believes that the CAPR achieved that, and more. We look back at the Review's two years with gratitude to our readers and contributors who have made it a success. It is thus with a heavy heart that we announce that this issue will be the CAPR's last.

This special issue deals with migration. Millions of citizens from Central Asia are on the move every year in search of employment to provide for their families. Many go to Russia for seasonal work and their remittances form an important part of their countries' national budget, and for their families' income.

The essays included in this collection are the winners of a Kyrgyzstan-wide competition organised by the Tian Shan Policy Center of the American University of Central Asia among university students on the phenomenon of migration.

This issue is opened by an essay by TSPC Visiting Research Fellow Rebecca Nixon, which discusses the participation of women in the system for allocating water resources to farmers in the Kyrgyz Republic.

The issue of migration is introduced by a short story by Abai Dzhanuzakov, which explores the life and hardships of a migrant worker. This is followed by Kyzhibek Batyrkanova, who presents her research on the reasons motivating women to seek work in foreign countries.

Kunduz Jumakadyrova details the abuse and neglect that some children of migrants suffer when left in the care of friends or relatives, while the plight of children who are left behind when parents travel to work abroad is analyzed by Aidai Beishekeeva who studies the psychological effects that the children of absentee parents suffer. Kubat Kadyrbekov concludes the issue by examining globalization and its effects in Central Asia.

Thank you again.

So long,

The Editorial Committee

By Rebecca Nixon

## Introduction

Participatory processes have become common themes in implementing development projects, including in water resource management. Traditional gender roles and access to capital, however, can limit the inclusion of women in the participation process.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, where women make up 40% of those employed in agriculture, and in Batken oblast where that figure rises to 45%, their participation in irrigation management is vital to achieve full representation and equity in the distribution of benefits of participation ([Osmonaliev et al, 2012](#), [Osmonaliev et al, 2009](#)).

Water User Associations have the potential to become the channel for this participation if they increase awareness of their organizational functions and encourage participation of farmers with limited access to capital.

## Overview of Water User Associations in the Kyrgyz Republic

The 1.02 million hectares (ha) of irrigated land in the Kyrgyz Republic were previously a part of the Soviet Union's system of irrigation that spanned from the Amu Darya River to the Syr Darya River ([ADB, 2013](#)). Since independence in 1991, however, the Kyrgyz Republic has developed its own water policies to serve the now privatized land.

These policies include the [2002 Water Law](#) that defines WUAs as non-commercial entities responsible for the operation and maintenance of the country's irrigation system, including the allocation, scheduling, and delivery of water.

At the beginning of the irrigation season, WUAs make a contract with the

*RayVodKhoz* (District Water Management Department) for the amount of water needed in their service area and the WUA distributes the water to individual farmers throughout the season. While staff positions vary by area, WUAs in the Kyrgyz Republic are led by an elected council, and each WUA has an audit commission and a dispute resolution commission.

Staff include a director, accountants and hydro technicians. WUAs also employ a number of seasonal *mirabs* who are responsible for the distribution of water and collection of payments in a specific area of the WUA during the irrigation season.

## Participation in Water Resource Management

Despite the increased emphasis on community participation in development and water resource management, it is important to recognize that participation does not guarantee inclusion of all demographics in a community.

[Agarwal \(1997\)](#) and [Cornwall \(2003\)](#) argue that women can be disempowered within participatory processes as a result of exclusions from entry rules, social norms, and gendered division of labor. Further, [Sultana \(2009\)](#) argues that participation in water resource management is impacted by the complexity of gender and class relations as well as the uncertainty and heterogeneity of water resources.

Consequently, the participatory processes that take place within WUAs cannot be assumed to represent all demographics within a community. Indeed, social groups based on class, gender, access to capital, age, and ethnicity can influence the likelihood of participation in

community associations and development.

## Overview of Research Area and Methodology

Batken is the southernmost *oblast* in Kyrgyzstan, sharing borders with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It consists of three regions: Kadamjai, Batken, and Leilek. 68% of the employed population of the *oblast* works in agriculture ([Osmonaliev et al, 2009](#)). As of 2010, there were 32 registered WUAs in Batken serving 82% of the 57,000 ha of irrigated land in the *oblast* ([ADB, 2013](#)). Average farm size in this region of the country is 1.7 ha ([ADB, 2013](#)).

This research was conducted during the spring and summer of 2016 in five WUA service areas spread across the *oblast*. Using purposive sampling, semi structured interviews were conducted with 50 female farmers. Basic demographic and household information was collected, and questions about irrigation management, community meetings, decision making in families and communities, cost of water, water availability, and conflicts regarding irrigation were asked. Interviews were conducted in Kyrgyz with the help of a research assistant and translated into English.

Overall, the average age of the respondent is 46 years old and the average amount of land owned by the respondents is 0.91 ha. All the respondents have completed high school and 34% of them have education beyond high school. Nine officials and village leaders (3 WUA Directors, 1 *RayVodKhoz* Director, 1 Village Leader, 2 Accountants, 1 City Quarter Leader, and 1 Hydro technician) were also interviewed in a semi-structured format.

## Results

### *Knowledge of and Participation in WUAs*

While the Water Law was passed by Kyrgyz Parliament 14 years ago, the

awareness of WUAs as a community organization was low among the respondents. Of the 50 farmers that were interviewed, 10% identified as participators in the WUA. The remaining respondents did not recognize the term WUA, although 30% claim to have participated in general meetings where water issues were discussed and WUA staff may have been present.

When asked who managed the provision of water in their community, most respondents did not mention the WUA. Instead they attributed it to individuals such as their *mirab*, or entities such as the *Aiyl Okmotu* (village government) or *RayVodKhoz*.

### *Women's Participation in WUA*

*Participators:* As stated above, 10% of the women interviewed identified as participators in the WUA and this group exhibited access to more capital than the other groups. The average age of this group was 8 years older than non-participators in WUAs, granting them more social capital in a culture that places a high value on age.

Most of these women also had a relational connection to the WUA through a family members' employment or through their own position in village leadership, which further increases social capital. Finally, they owned 0.7 more hectares of land, representing natural capital and potential for financial capital if the land contributes to the family income.

*Non-participators:* The 90% of the interviewees who did not identify as participators in the WUA activities were, in general, younger and owned less land than the participators. They had a variety of reasons for their non-participation.

For some, their husbands or male relatives attend the meetings and therefore feel no need to participate themselves. Others, although interested in attending, have not done so because



they were unaware of when and where the meetings were held.

## Recommendations

### *Increase access to and distribution of information throughout WUA service areas*

According to Article 4 of the [2002 Water Law](#), the activities of the WUA include “guaranteeing free access to information for WUA members about its activity.” In order to promote full participation of women, especially those with low access to capital, it is essential to raise public awareness of WUA as the key actor in the irrigation system.

For example, of the three WUA directors interviewed, only one newly elected WUA director had recently published an article in the newspaper, recorded television broadcasts, and was planning home visits in order to increase awareness. Such media tools and outreach can increase the visibility of staff and improve knowledge of WUA functions.

### *Utilize the General Assembly to include a diverse group of water users in the participatory process*

Article 13 of the [2002 Water Law](#) describes the functions of the General Assembly, which include “defining main directions of activity of the WUA...the election and removal of the Council members...approving the annual budget of the WUA...and approving the work plan and watering schedule.”

These meetings are intended to be places where decisions are made that are

important to irrigation management in the community. Yet field research indicates that female farmers with more capital are more likely to participate in these meetings than women with less capital. In order to address this disparity, WUA staff can use the General Assembly to promote participation of a more diverse group of farmers.

This is needed to ensure a more complete representation of the WUA service area as those with less capital such as land and finances may have unique needs and significant input on issues such as leadership positions and budget decisions. This diversity in participation will advance the objective stated in Article 4 of the [2002 Water Law](#) that the WUA will “ensure full participation of all members of WUA in establishment and operation” by ensuring that all users, regardless of their gender or access to capital, have a voice in irrigation management

Rebecca Nixon is a graduate student at Iowa State University studying Community and Regional Planning and Sustainable Agriculture. She was a TSPC Visiting Research Fellow from February 2016-July 2016. Elita Bakirova, a senior at AUCA, worked as the research assistant for the project.

The baking summer sun had already gone down, but it was still stuffy in the village. At dusk, Kochkor village looked larger than usual. The lights lit up in the houses and mud huts meant that evening had come: families gather together at the fireside; housewives are busy in the kitchen; husbands wash after work, then review the day, and; children's laughter seems softer.

Not everyone could come home peacefully and rest that July evening. A lonely man was walking along the dusty country road dragging an old cart. His shirt and pants were dirty with dust and his arms were sunburned to the elbows. Beaten down by the day of work, he slowly dragged the cart. He was a tall, swarthy, gaunt man of about 40 years old, but because of sweat on his dark forehead, he looked older. He was breathing heavily, and he seemed to be filled with worry and despair. He was tortured inside. Suddenly, he threw the cart aside and sat on the roadside covering his face with the hands.

This man was Joldosh Sultanov, a local porter. He grew up in Kochkor and lived there for most of his life. After finishing school, he moved to Bishkek and worked as a welder. There he met his wife Aisha. She was a sewing shop worker, who also came to the capital from the Naryn region to earn money. Together, they rented a small hut in the suburbs of Bishkek, and soon a daughter was born to them. Joldosh worked as much as he could, but the master of the welders' team delayed salary payments so often that Aisha had to sew at home to feed the family.

Three years later, a second daughter was born and they were running into debt. Rent, food, clothing and utilities were all expensive, especially in an economic crisis. Aisha endured all these hardships with dignity but at night she often wept

and grumbled at her life. A lot of tears were shed during those long nights, and discussions of moving away arose. They realized that life in the city was beyond their means, and they considered moving in with Joldosh's or Aisha's family. Everything was decided when Joldosh's mother called. She said that his father was at death's door and he should leave immediately for Kochkor. In a week his father passed away and Joldosh became the eldest in the family. Together with Aisha, they brought their modest belongings to Kochkor and started their life in his mother's house.

There were no jobs in the village, so they bred some livestock and worked a vegetable garden to support the family. Time and time again, Joldosh disappeared from home and returned drunk. His wife and mother worried about him. He simply wanted to escape from poverty, daily labor and an endless struggle for survival. He aimlessly wandered about the town, went to the river, watched the sunset and breathed in the mountain air. He caught himself thinking that he did not want to go back home. He felt ashamed since he was the head of the family, but he deeply loved Aisha, as always.

Soon he fell in with the wrong guys with whom he drank and fought regularly. No one could tell what the outcome of Joldosh's despair would be until his third child - a son - was born. Joldosh immediately came to life. He quit his bad habits and worked relentlessly. He plowed fields, worked as a builder and later he worked as a porter in the local market. He carried metal, wood and various construction waste on his cart.

Today, he was returning home after a hard day. Having earned peanuts for the whole day of work, he paid his debt in the local store and then he did not know what to say to his wife. He sank deep



into his thoughts. His wife and the three children who relied on him were waiting for him at home. Grief and silent despair overwhelmed him. A sudden blow of wind brought him to life. He marched home.

It was an unusual day. On this day his mother visited a doctor and she was given a final diagnosis - a breast tumor. She needed immediate and expensive treatment in Bishkek. She did not say anything to her children until the last possible moment. She did not want to burden her children with her concerns. But this day when Joldosh came home, she explained everything to him and Aisha.

After evening tea when the children went to bed, Joldosh and Aisha were left alone. They both were silent. Everything was obvious without words. "What would we do now? Where can we get money?" Aisha said. "How can I know!?" Joldosh shouted as he turned to the window. Aisha patiently waited out her husband's gush of anger. In a minute she quietly said "What about a loan?" To which Joldosh replied "A loan? What will we pawn? This old house? How will we pay it off?" Aisha asked him for his ideas. "I'm not sure," Joldosh answered, "But a friend of mine goes to Moscow to earn money. There are Kyrgyz people there. They will help me. It is hard work but I can earn good money."

Aisha kept silent. They had talked about Moscow before and she expected this decision. But her heart beat anxiously. It was all because of a large family which lived near them. Their father went to Russia seven years ago and was never heard from again. They tried to find him, and wrote to various services all in vain. The abandoned wife often visited Aisha to cry on her shoulder. She suspected that he had another family there and decided to stay there. Why did he never write or call to his family? There was no answer to these questions. Disaster came upon that family because of poverty and the desire to earn money. For this reason

Aisha did not want to let her husband go. She wanted to yell, to lock him up at home and to hold him back, but Joldosh was a typical Kyrgyz man and he held strong on his decision. After months of preparation, Joldosh and five other men from the village set out for Moscow.

Moscow made Joldosh uncomfortable. The five of them settled down in a one room flat. For the first time in his life, Joldosh saw skyscrapers, giant buildings and traffic jams. He felt as if it was hard to breathe because of the speed of life. It was hard for him to adjust.

The crew boss loaded them with work as soon as they arrived. Joldosh and his friends worked ten hours a day at construction yards. They pummeled their knees and elbows, some of them caught chronic illnesses. Each day the men worked in the dust and mud, thinking only about how to earn more money to send them to their families.

As the weeks and months passed, Joldosh got used to his new life. Every month he sent fifteen thousand rubles to his family, the rest he spent on food and accommodation. Some of his friends found partner wives and moved in with them, but Joldosh was faithful to his Aisha and always thought kindly of her. He was always impatient to finish work quickly and to call her, just to hear her voice. Calls were expensive; they talked for five minutes at most and only about the most important things.

One day when they got their wages he was drinking with his friends. It was November, and powdery snow was falling. They were in a summer house in a park area. Vodka and a simple snack - it was the way they celebrated the end of the work week. Suddenly, a police vehicle appeared. The police car approached the summer house with flashing lights and plenty of noise. Two men in thick police jackets stepped out of the car. One was tall and pale. Apparently, he was the senior of the two. The other was shorter,

with darker skin with a machine gun tilted forward. The tall one entered the summer house with quick steps and said with bass voice "So, friends please prepare your documents. You know that it's a park area, you must not drink here." Samat, one of Joldosh's friends, stood up to meet the officer and tried to settle the matter. He suggested that the infraction could be handled more informally. The officer replied with "Of course, we can handle this matter, but we must first write up a citation. Everything shall be under the law." Samat continued his protest, and the officer continued to ask for the mens' identification cards.

Samat had stayed in Moscow for two months without the proper documents. He did not know what to answer. He was drunk and decided to reach an agreement in his own fashion. He tried to get a banknote out of his pocket but the policeman seized him by the arm and said again "The documents?"

Samat began to tremble, his friends tried to sit him down but he turned red and began to curse the policeman. The junior officer pushed him in the chest and Samat dropped down to the ground. The other policeman hurriedly called for assistance. Soon, a small bus came to pick up the illegal aliens and special agents stepped out of it.

Everything was alright with Joldosh's documents. He wanted to present them and he stepped towards the officers. Suddenly, somebody struck him down to the ground. His friends were knocked down, too. Somebody was shouting and somebody tried to run away, in return the policemen used batons.

Joldosh came to life in the police station among his drinking companions. One had a black eye. Others had broken lips. Everyone was angry, and they hung their heads. The air in the small room was filled with the smell of booze and stale cigarettes. Joldosh searched his pockets -

they were empty. "Where is my money?" he suddenly realized. "They took everything. It's no use to argue with them," Samat answered sitting nearby. Eventually, half of Joldosh's friends were deported to Kyrgyzstan, and his offense was registered in police files.

In the course of time he got used to living in Moscow, and got used to behaving carefully. He always remembered his mistakes and his bitter experience with the police. He moved into a more spacious flat, which he rented with his two friends. His son was growing up, he was already five years old. Talking by phone he told his father that he wanted a bicycle, while the daughters demanded dresses. On top of that, Aisha told him that the roof of their house leaked and urgent repairs were needed. All of these things required money and Joldosh thought about where he could get it.

He could not borrow money as all his friends were up to their eyebrows in debt. He had already taken an advance in salary from the crew boss and he felt uncomfortable asking again. Some of Joldosh's acquaintances advised him to turn to informal investments. A man in the neighborhood was a kind of local profiteer; some people gave him money and he put it into use. He was a giant, stodgy man who also quite a long time ago arrived from Kyrgyzstan.

Joldosh met him and he promised Joldosh to multiply his capital twice or three times more, but for some reason Joldosh did not trust this man. However, Joldosh's friends talked him into taking the chance, alleging that the man had been successful in the past. There was nothing to fear, they said. Joldosh collected all of his savings, about one hundred thousand roubles, and gave them to this man under the condition that in a month he would get two times more. This seller collected money not only from Joldosh but from many other people who were in need at that time.

One month passed but there was no news on their investments. The group suddenly realized his absence, and started to search for the man, but he had just disappeared. Joldosh was a man who kept in all of his feelings. While all other investors made noise and tried to trace the seller, Joldosh silently clenched his fists and wept inside. On the day when everyone got to know that this man had disappeared, Joldosh bought a bottle of vodka and drank. He drank for a long time, and even lost track of days and weeks under the influence of liquor. Altogether, he drank for about two weeks. He almost did not answer Aisha's calls. On the rare occasions when he spoke with her, he told her that everything was alright. He felt ashamed. He did not tell her anything about his money problems.

Joldosh came back to being himself only when he got to know that his mother died in one of Bishkek's hospitals. She fought against the disease but finally she gave up. She wanted to see her son one last time, but he was unable to visit her. Joldosh hastily scratched money together to buy a ticket and started off for Kyrgyzstan.

After the funeral, Aisha pleaded with him to stay, to leave that Moscow behind, and to work anywhere near the family. Joldosh was stung by remorse; he wanted to earn back the money he lost. He returned to Moscow and started working as a security guard at a night club. The work was difficult and risky, but the good salary cheered him up. He hoped to earn enough money in six months to return home permanently.

One night a group of younger people came to the club. They arrived in two expensive sports cars, well dressed and drunk. They were a group of brawlers who had caused fights in the club before. The manager ordered the security staff to keep them out and called the police in advance. It was dark, past midnight. Three security guards, in addition to

Joldosh, drew out bludgeons and tried to prevent the group from entering. In return, those people cursed and insulted the security staff. Joldosh's partner struck one party-goer with a bludgeon but suddenly was attacked and beaten from behind. Joldosh and a colleague were overtaken, and the young people began to kick them. The young customers were privileged, and acted with impunity. Joldosh saw stars from being struck. Furious, he swung his weapon with all of his strength, striking one member of the unwelcome group. The scene became calm. Joldosh's target fell heavily upon the sidewalk. His friend ran up to him, and said "Aaaah! He's not breathing! Come on, buster, we will get you for this!" The younger man moved towards Joldosh, but the police arrived just then. Everybody was arrested, both the brawlers and the security staff.

Joldosh woke up in the police station and learned that the person whom he hit died in a hospital. Joldosh was put in prison for fifteen years, thanks largely to parents of the dead man who bribed the witnesses and the judge to go hard on Joldosh.

Aisha wept, but she did not have time to grumble at her destiny, she had to feed and raise her family. There was no time even to mourn. The children continued to grow up. They were sorry for their mother, but in their eyes she saw a demand - they demanded normal life, like the other children. She did not have any other relatives in Kochkor. The children could not yet work, so she sold the house in Kochkor and returned her parent's home in Naryn. Joldosh did not object. In their rare phone conversations, Joldosh made it clear that he would be in prison for a very long time. He had not abandoned the family, but he was stuck there.

A short time later Aisha married another man. They began a more or less good life but from time to time he got drunk and beat her, even in the children's presence.

The elder daughter grew up and was sent to Bishkek to live with relatives. She went to school there and in the evenings worked as a nurse.

In prison, Joldosh became a religious man. After his second year of incarceration, he grew a beard and read namaz. He was getting grey. He tried to help his fellow prisoners survive daily life, and to set them on the right path. The others respected him, called him Joldosh baike. Some of them even called him “mullah”. He became a calm, silent person. He tried not to think about his past life. He tried to concentrate on his religion and he saw value only in it. What was a man to do if he lost everything in this world?

Abai Dzhanuzakov is a senior student at the Department of International and Comparative Politics of the American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan.

## Migration issues in the Kyrgyz Republic

In the era of globalization, migration has become a very important research topic because of the growing number of people immigrating. Recent trends show that the proportion of women amongst immigrants is also increasing.

Feminization of migration motivates researchers to make women's migration a separate topic of study. It is an important socio-economic issue for Kyrgyzstan because remittances make up a very large share of GDP, with 10% of the population working in Russia and Kazakhstan, and because women are a vulnerable group of people that need social protection, especially outside of their home country. To protect women economically and socially, and to develop policies for these purposes, the government must understand what motivates women to immigrate.

According to the *Unified Migration Report 2014* made under the guidance of Ministry of Labor, Migration, and Youth of Kyrgyz Republic, there is a growing trend of women migrants. The report says that women make up more than 30% of migrants from the Kyrgyz Republic, and that the highest portion of female migrants in the Russian Federation are from Central Asia.

According to research conducted by International Organization of Migration (IOM) *Labor Migration and Efficient Usage of Human Resources 2009* for the Kyrgyz Republic, most women say that they are skilled specialists in Kyrgyzstan, but after migrating, they are employed primarily as unskilled labor. This leads to inefficiency in the labor market. For this purpose, migration policies for women must be reviewed and updated. Moreover, mothers that migrate leave their children at home due to the high

cost of moving children along with them. This may result in the degradation of child's mental health and lower availability of human capital for the economy of the future. This problem is due to conflicts of interest since relatives who are looking after children left behind often do not invest as much time and effort in raising the child as the biological parents would.

In accordance with National Statistic Committee's historical data, this increasing trend in migration began in the 2000s. Most of the people who migrated to Russia and Kazakhstan did so for employment purposes. Local institutions are now realizing that it is becoming important to separate men and women in the migration data. This idea is due to the evolving definition "unattached migrants" that refers to women that migrate independently from their family and usually are not married. Unattached migrants make up an increasing group of people because of the stable high unemployment rate and the increased frequency of divorces (17% of marriages). The fact that women have become more independent economically and socially has forced researchers to study men and women separately to determine migration incentives.

## Policy implications

For Kyrgyzstan, it is important to both support labor migrants and to protect their rights. Modern migration policies would be wise to be based upon the reasons and incentives that caused people to migrate in the first place. This paper has studied determinants in order to see which spheres have to be improved to either avoid brain drain or improve the lives of the migrants who choose to go abroad.

Education is one of the most important factors in determining migration causes,

especially in the countryside. To increase migrant competitiveness in the labor market, education levels must be increased. The government can subsidize families that let their children study instead of working during their school age years. It is also important to open more vocational schools in the countryside and to attract teachers to those schools. Many female migrants say that they were teachers in Kyrgyzstan, but now have a job that does not require high educational qualifications. Thus, two problems can be solved at once: decreasing inefficiency in using human capital by employing teachers, and; increasing the average education level within the country. It is good policy to invest in education and the wages of teachers. Such changes result not only in private benefits for teachers and students but also in social benefits for the entire country. There are many examples in Europe and Southeast Asia that have simultaneously produced economic growth and an education level increase. The correlation between education and the wellbeing of a country is well documented.

It is also important to support women who are divorced and have children as it is extremely difficult for single mothers to earn a sufficient income while also providing their children with the attention that they require. Children left behind by their parents have been shown to be less disciplined and often unsupervised. Lack of supervision may result in decreased levels of education and increased levels of neglect by relatives. Women who are heads of households and bear the entire economic

burden of the family must be supported by special programs. These programs need to provide well-paid jobs so more mothers can remain with their children, or specially supervised programs where parents can leave their children for the period of migration and be sure that their children are under the governmental guidance and get proper education.

The policy makers must understand that if they cannot help current migrants, they have to consider the future. Education is the key to human capital development and country development. It is currently difficult to create new jobs that would motivate people to remain in the country. Educational reforms would help to fight unemployment in Kyrgyzstan over time, and would increase the competitiveness of Kyrgyz citizens on foreign labor markets.

## Conclusion

The main goal of the paper was to explore the differences in determinants for migration decisions among men and women. With more women migrating, it is important to understand the reasons that have caused this new trend to occur. Observing variables in why female workers go abroad helps to understand the nature of migration and the problems that motivated these women to migrate in the first place.



We each would like our children to have a happy childhood. Unfortunately, in our country things do not always turn out as planned. Migrants' children suffer most of all. There are one million Kyrgyz citizens working abroad to make a living. Many of them are young adults in their prime reproductive years. Oftentimes migrants are forced to leave their children with parents, relatives or with acquaintances. Their children may suffer from psychological, physical or sexual abuse and neglect. These circumstances may result in symptoms including problems at school, trouble with the law or even suicide. Only 30% of migrant parents take their children with them. What is the fate of the remaining 70%?

First of all, they are often neglected and do not receive the care that they would from their natural parents. These children can fall into depression, and may even become involved with crime. The most terrible thing in this situation is that they often have no one to tell about it: they may not want to bother their parents who work tirelessly, and they may rather not tell their relatives about it. So, they are left alone with their problems.

What is most concerning is that oftentimes these children undergo psychological and physical abuse at the hand of their relatives. Severe beatings as a form of discipline are widely used in the Kyrgyz Republic, even more so upon a child that is not your own. The most awful thing is that migrants' children are more likely to become victims of sexual abuse. Recently, Kyrgyzstan has seen a spike in reported child rape cases. For instance, 66 rape incidents victimizing children were reported in 2015. Children of migrant workers made up 60-70% of these child victims. These are horrid facts, and it must be asked if this lost generation will be able to cope with the

adult life. The effects of child abuse can be seen in many cases in Kyrgyzstan. The whole world of the victims goes to ruins. Victims lose faith in people and become afraid of adults. It is very difficult for such children to build healthy relations with the opposite sex and the worst thing is that this child feels ostracized. Not everyone is raped and the child finds feels inferior or somehow at fault.

Based on the application of the resident A. from the Alexandrovka Village of the Moskovskii District, it was established that two boys, a one year-old boy and a two and a half-year-old boy, constantly experienced physical abuse on the part of their grandfather, B.T. Under unknown circumstances the one year old boy suddenly died. A subsequent investigation was closed, with no results. Despite reports of ongoing abuse by neighbors and other authorities, B.T. has received no sanctions, other than removal from the home for two days.

A 64 year-old resident of the Uzgen District of the Osh Province and his two sons raped a 10 year-old girl whom her mother left with her relatives after she became divorced and went to Kazakhstan to earn money. The mother took the girl away from the relatives' home after two years of sexual abuse. The sons and their father beat and raped the girl repeatedly, and threatened her life to ensure her silence. The head of the family stated that he had raped the girl only once. His eldest son, a 36 year-old man, raped the girl when he was drunk. The younger son, who is 22, said that he did not realize what he did, though he did it twice. The girl tried to resist them, spent nights in the attic and even ran away, but they found her and forced her to come back home. Eventually, she reported the crimes to a trusted neighbor.

According to the Chui Province City Department of Internal Affairs, a 35 year-

old resident of the Sokuluk Village regularly beat a 6 year-old niece who stayed with his family. The man stated that it was the proper way to raise a naughty child. An inspection of the scene revealed a belt, a stick and a whip used to beat the girl, along with blood stained clothes. The girl was brought to the Sokuluk regional hospital with multiple injuries to the face, shoulders and forearms, along with bruises and head injuries resulting in brain damage. The injured girl's mother was working in Russia during the time of the abuse.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science, a total of 1,027,123 pupils in the country go to school, and 22,672 of them are the children without biological parental care. Reported cases of physical and sexual abuse have been rising, and there are undoubtedly many more cases that have not been reported. Stigmas and shame surround the failure to report these most serious crimes. When children are raped we rightly blame the rapist, but we must also look to the conditions in which the children were left. Politicians are pleased by money from abroad being sent back and put into the Kyrgyz economy. The state is benefitting from migrant workers, and the state must take some responsibility to protect these children.

It is, of course, necessary to develop the economy, and to create jobs and opportunities for citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic. We cannot wait for the economy to improve and for all of the migrant workers to return home to protect these neglected children. It is

essential that schools and the municipal administrations work to prevent, report and prosecute cases of child abuse and neglect. As a first step, we must raise awareness. Children must know the boundaries of legal and illegal behaviors, and they must know how and when to report inappropriate acts. The children must also be convinced that they can trust the authorities, and the state must ensure that the authorities really are trustworthy. Later, we need to keep records of migrants' children in schools and to inform law enforcement agencies if something suspicious-looking happens. Furthermore, we must create a special group from among the municipal bodies which will regularly inspect the homes where migrants' children live. This method will require that money to be budgeted, but it is entirely worthwhile to provide these resources to our most vulnerable citizens, and to show caretakers that the welfare of the children is being monitored.

The economic problems in Kyrgyzstan have forced thousands of people to work abroad to earn a living. It is impossible to live without an income, but it must be asked if the safety of your own child is worth trading for foreign wages. The parents of these children who are left behind must ensure that the children are left with trustworthy and loving adults. The state must educate and monitor these children to prevent these abuses from ever happening in the first place.

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## MIGRATION WITHOUT TEARS: HOW TO MITIGATE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND

By Aidai Beishekeeva

It is true that Kyrgyzstan is a country of migrants, and that the remittances sent by immigrants constitute a considerable part of the national economy. Estimates are that approximately 600,000 people from Kyrgyzstan work abroad, of which 500,000 work in Russia. Those 600,000 people send the remittances that make up 32% of the country's GDP (Vinokurov, 2). It is understandable why some parents leave their children to find work abroad. However, the nation as a whole may fail to realize the true effects of labor migration. Certainly, the effects of labor migration can be measured in terms of increased income and prosperity. It may be hoped that if children of labor immigrants receive remittances from their parents, they will be set for a better future. It is much more difficult to measure the psychological and interpersonal aspects of diminished family unity. The absence of parents often leads to poor academic performance, aggressive behavior, and lesser social development of children when compared with nonmigrant families.

Prolonged parental absence is linked to diminished psychological health of children. They often start feeling lonely and, worst of all, unneeded. As a result, they may resent their parents for leaving them behind. The head of The Integration of Communities, an NGO that combats the migration problems in Kyrgyzstan, confirms that there is a higher percentage of children from migrant families who miss classes or have peerrelated behavioral issues in classrooms. A psychologist from the Center for the Protection of Children, states that the lack of parental attention is likely to cause academic underachievement. Another aspect of the problem is that children are usually left with their relatives who may not always be good caretakers. Children may miss school, not

complete their assignments or even become involved in more sinister activities. No other relative or amount of money can replace the experience that a child has with his or her parents.

A national survey conducted by Emil Nasritdinov, an anthropologist who studied the problem of parental absence in Kyrgyz households, states that 40% of all migrants' children miss school without a valid reason compared with 29% of children from nonmigrant families. The reasons, as the report indicates, are domestic obligations, lack of interest, and often lack of money.

Of course, not all children are like. Some will study hard to make their situations better while their parents are away. Some will become mature, hardworking and independent. However, the overall effects are far more negative than positive. On a wider scale, social development lags behind for children whose parents have been gone for a few years or more. Because these children often must help to support the households they live in, they have less time for making friends, learning and exploring their interests.

In the worst cases, one parent (usually a father) may migrate for work and abandon his family or find another partner (Malyuchenko, 8). That might cause the greatest psychological damage of all and instill the same thinking in children; that it is normal to break apart from the family in search of a better financial situation. The heavy burden of being wage earners passes then onto the children. That situation only furthers bad performance at school, aggression and pessimistic attitudes.

The effects of absent parents are easy to measure. What is more difficult to understand is what should be done to improve the problem of migration and the

lives of these children in the long term. Education and training programs must be provided both for the custodians and for the children. Aside from traditional education of teaching school subjects, there should be an integrated learning program that will teach social skills and family understanding to these children. As for the government, it should offer educational opportunities alongside of training programs that are most likely to be conducted by NGOs. Failing to address this problem now will only lead to the expansion of existing problems in future generations.

A suggested training program would consist of educational courses for all children, and social skills and family understanding courses for children over 12 and their guardians. Professional psychologists and sociologists will be encouraged to teach the caretakers to keep lines of communication open with the children whose parents have left to work abroad. What should be communicated are the feelings and the worries of children, as would be done in a typical non-migrant household. As the adults, the caretakers should be able to foster understanding between the children left behind and their parents. Children older than 13 or 14 years are very likely to be able to understand the family conditions and thus should be helped to understand the perspective of their parents.

As for the children, it is important to engage them in activities that develop both their social and professional skills. Because they are more vulnerable than

other children, special teachers should be used to identify and cultivate the talents of the children of migrants. Interactive forms of teaching, and the procurement of useful skills, such as technology and foreign language skills, will be emphasized. The purpose this system will be to show these children that they have a right to a good education and with that education they can have good jobs and build a healthy family in the future.

School teachers should also be provided with special training by sociologists and psychologists to better understand the psychology of children from migrant families. These teachers can intervene when small problems are observed, before they grow into larger behavioral problems.

Labor migration, particularly to Russia, is seen as a solution by many families to improve their lives. Migration also causes significant changes in lifestyle and the traditional family structure. Remittances do improve the conditions of families in Kyrgyzstan in the short term. However, migration can easily result in irreparable consequences for children in the form of diminished academic and developmental performance. Therefore, it is necessary to implement comprehensive educational and training programs for migrant families and to monitor and encourage the wellbeing of these vulnerable children.

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By Kubat Kadyrbekov

Globalization is an integral part of present-day society. Year after year, it becomes easier for people to visit other countries as tourists or to find a job in a foreign country. It is not surprising that migration flows have been increasing in a world in which there are greater possibilities available to more people. The world has provided new opportunities for refugees and natives of poor countries to immigrate and start a new life.

The level of economic development of various countries is not the same; people from less developed countries try to move to more developed countries with the purpose of finding a job and providing decent life for themselves. Migration gives a lot of people a chance to visit other countries, change their worldview and get invaluable experience. The principal places where the Kyrgyz citizens go to look for work are the Russian Federation (565,000 according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic) and the Republic of Kazakhstan (85,000). In this essay, I will describe the characteristics of the relationship between the Russian Federation and the Kyrgyz Republic in the area of migration.

Migration is a very complicated but natural process of people dispersing throughout the globe. Many countries with developing economies, such as the Kyrgyz Republic, are involved in the process of migration. Reasons for migration are as diverse as the people who do so: seeking higher salaries; improving quality of life and well-being; getting foreign experience on a CV, and; various other motivations. When a state cannot provide its' able-bodied workers with a sufficient amount of employment opportunities, it is only natural that citizens will look for solutions and will travel to those countries where they can find a job and earn a living.

Since March 20, 1992, when a diplomatic relationship was established between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Russian Federation, approximately 200 interstate and intergovernmental agreements have been made between the two countries. These agreements regulate economic, political, military and cultural interactions, among many other areas. Migration today plays one of the most important roles in mutual relations between the Russian Federation and the Kyrgyz Republic. For this reason, there are a number of formal documents between the states which regulate this area.

Earnings are one of the most important factors contributing to the departure of native-born populations. Over the course of several years, a continual increase in remittances to Kyrgyzstan has been observed. Kyrgyzstan ranks second in the world for the amount of remittances received from workers abroad, behind only Tajikistan. The volume of money transfers from Kyrgyz migrant workers amounts to 32% of the country's GDP. This great inflow of money into Kyrgyzstan is not without some challenges.

Despite the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Eurasian Economic Union, there are many roadblocks for Kyrgyz people in the area of migration. For instance, migrants from Kyrgyzstan encounter multiple bureaucratic obstacles when they execute the documents necessary to register a residence or begin a new job. Complex and costly formalization procedures in Russia, which at times have fines lower than the actual permit costs, make these procedures burdensome for both employers and a migrant workers. Illegal migration is another ongoing problem. The number of illegal Kyrgyz migrants in the Russian Federation is estimated to be 100,000 or more. Many of them resided in the Russian Federation before Kyrgyzstan



accessed to the EEU, established illegal labor relations with employers and continue to receive their salaries in envelopes.

Although many understand perfectly well that they violate the law, they nevertheless continue their illegal work activities despite the risks involved. If such undocumented residents want take a legal job, they must reside in their homeland for a minimum of three years before returning. Despite the devaluation of the ruble over the last two years, there has not been a significant return of workers to Kyrgyzstan from the Russian Federation. This points to the idea that the Kyrgyz labor market is in such a sad state that it is still preferable to work in Russia at reduced wages.

For the majority of migrants, external migration is a long term strategy that is brought about by the economic circumstances they find at home. The problem of illegal migration may gradually go away, due to the accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), along with Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Armenia.

The EEU has been sold to the Kyrgyz people with a few basic promises in the area of migration. The accession of the Kyrgyz Republic into the EEU will allow the citizens of member states to work in any other member state without a work permit, and will allow the extension of unregistered temporary stays in other member states. These changes in regulations are hoped to reduce then eliminate illegal migration over time. Allowing the free movement of goods and

workers throughout is the EEU is designed to increase growth and cooperation throughout the bloc.

Economic migration is an objective reality and it is useless to seek to end it. What is needed is comprehensive migration reform that will provide for the needs of migrant workers. The accession of the Kyrgyz Republic into the EEU is hoped to drive not only economic growth for Kyrgyzstan, but also improvements in the lives of workers living abroad. Kyrgyzstan's dependence on the remittances of migrants will not go away anytime soon. It is essential to improve the migration policy of the Kyrgyz Republic in terms of reliability of information for those citizens who want to go to other countries to earn money. Migrant workers must be prepared and informed them about their rights and obligations while working abroad. Knowledge is power, and migrants must be supported by both the sending and the receiving parties, as both economies rely on the labor of the migrant workers. It is recommended that states work closely with civil society groups to reform the rules surrounding migrant workers, and the raise awareness amongst the workers themselves. By doing so, the EEU can function more effectively and the workers can improve their own conditions.



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