

2013

“Social and economic impacts of labor migration on migrants’ households in Tajikistan: working out policy recommendations to address its negative effects”

Gulchekhra Khuseynova
University of Massachusetts - Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cppa_capstones



Part of the [Public Policy Commons](#)

Khuseynova, Gulchekhra, "“Social and economic impacts of labor migration on migrants’ households in Tajikistan: working out policy recommendations to address its negative effects”" (2013). *School of Public Policy Capstones*. 26.

Retrieved from https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cppa_capstones/26

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Public Policy at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Public Policy Capstones by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.

2013

Center for Public Policy and Administration
University of Massachusetts-Amherst

Gulchekhra Khuseynova

Capstone Project

“Social and economic impacts of labor migration on migrants’ households in Tajikistan: working out policy recommendations to address its negative effects”

Content

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgement.....	4
Abbreviations.....	5
I. Introduction and Background information on labor migration from Tajikistan.....	6
II. Methodology.....	10
III. Social and economic impacts of labor migration on migrants' households and their life settings.....	12
IV. Labor migration policy of the Republic of Tajikistan.....	24
V. Policy recommendations.....	26
VI. Conclusions.....	29
VII. Bibliography.....	30
VIII. Appendices.....	32

Abstract

The limited employment opportunities and low labor costs in the middle of 1990s –beginning 2000s that caused increased unemployment among population were main driving factors encouraging a high scale labor migration of Tajik citizens abroad. The labor migration from Tajikistan which, according to different sources, composes one third of the employable population of the country is probably the most dominant social feature of contemporary Tajikistan having its both positive and negative effects on communities, especially migrants' households. During hard economic times and post-war recovery period the labor migration had tremendously contributed in reducing the poverty among population and decreasing unemployment rate in the entire country. As a result, the Government of Tajikistan considers labor migration primarily as an employment sector and as a favorable mean in smoothing social tensions and solving economic problems in the country. However, local and international experts note that labor migration has much higher negative consequences and its long-term costs highly outweigh its short term benefits.

In my research I attempt to assess one of those impacts of labor migration from Tajikistan, mainly its social and economic effects on migrants' households and their life settings. To address this need, this paper aims to answering the following research questions:

1) What are the social and economic impacts of labor migration from Tajikistan on migrants' families and their life settings? And, 2) what are policy recommendations to the Government of Tajikistan to address the negative consequences of labor migration on migrants' households?

The paper focuses its analysis on socio-economic impacts of labor migration from Tajikistan on migrants' households in the following aspects: economic situation of migrant's families from remittances sent by migrants; impact of migration on nutrition and health status of migrants' households, impact on child rearing, child education and changing status of child in the family (child labor), and assessment of psychological impact of migration on women. The final objective of this paper is development of policy recommendations aimed at addressing or reducing the negative effects of labor migration on migrants' households.

The following methods were applied in conducting the study: qualitative and quantitative analysis of empirical data issued by local and international agencies working in Tajikistan; analytical review of assessment/monitoring reports prepared by local and international experts; review of analytical publications, newspaper and journal articles on respective labor migration issues in Tajikistan; and analysis and incorporation of official and unofficial census data into this research.

The key findings of this research are those that beside positive effects of labor migration on migrants' households, such as improved health and nutrition status, increased purchasing power and diversified consumption capacity of family members, there are also long-term negative effects. Mainly, the research concludes the following negative consequences or impacts of labor migration on migrants' households, such as high dependency of migrants' households on remittances and their vulnerability to adverse risks associated with job loss, accident, illnesses, death, etc. of their migrant family member working abroad; difficulties for women in managing the household work in absence of male households (husbands, fathers, older sons); difficulties in

child-rearing in absence of their fathers; negative effects of labor migration on child education, negative effects of labor migration on expanding child labor in the Tajik society, particularly in early ages (consequently, exclusion from education); and, negative psychological effects of labor migration on migrants' wives.

The last chapter of the paper is devoted to giving a list of policy recommendations to the Government of Tajikistan on implementing a range of social and economic reforms with the view of eliminating or reducing negative effects of labor migration on migrants' households in Tajikistan.

Acknowledgement

I extend my deep acknowledgement to people who were helpful and supportive in the process of my work on this paper. Especially, I am grateful to my capstone adviser Michael Ash, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Center for Public Policy and Administration, University of Massachusetts-Amherst for his valuable support and guidance in developing and finalizing this research paper. I am also thankful to Payam Foroughi, international expert on human rights and social justice on Central Asia, Professor of Human Rights and International Relations at OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan for his important advices and assistance in obtaining needed materials and publications for my research. Also, I would like to extend my gratitude to my co-students who collaborated and shared their thoughts and experiences of their work over the Capstone project.

Abbreviations

ADB - Asian Development Bank

CA- Central Asia

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

GOSCOMSTAT - State statistical committee of the Republic of Tajikistan

IFES- International Foundation for Election Systems

HH- Household(s)

ILO- International Labor Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

IOM – International Organization for Migration

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

RF- Russian Federation

RT – Republic of Tajikistan

UN – United Nations

UNDP - United Nations Development Program

USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WB - World Bank

I. Introduction and Background Information on labor migration from Tajikistan

After the collapse of the USSR the Republic of Tajikistan, one of USSR former fifteen states, proclaimed its independence on September 9, 1991, enjoying the status of a sovereign, democratic, law-governed, secular and unitary state. By that time, high production capacity of Tajikistan was well developed; in 1991 the country's income per capita amounted to 1106.8 Somonis or \$400.3. By 1991, the total of 2,308 industrial enterprises were operating in Tajikistan, whereas the industrial share in the country's GDP constituted 25.7% (Olimova S. 2007; 15).

The level of socio-economic development in the country was featured by a respectively high employment rate of employable population (78% in 1991) and by a high educational level of employed citizens: in 1989, for example, 88% of employed population of Tajikistan had higher, incomplete higher, secondary education or basic professional training (Olimova S. 2007; 16).

However, the breakdown of the USSR, the economy of which was constructed on interdependency and labor division principle between its member-states, affected further establishment and development of the newly independent Tajikistan: financial subsidies that had amounted up to 40% of the country's budget stopped, production ties were disrupted, as well as marketing outlets were lost by Tajikistan; a year later in 1992, the country was ceased by unprecedentedly devastating Civil War that lasted till 1997 that claimed at least 100,000 lives. These and other factors caused industrial enterprises to completely stop their operations or work only at 40-50% of their capacity (Olimova S. and Bosc I., 2003; 15). Agricultural businesses and the system of collective farming were totally destroyed, which altogether prompted to increasing unemployment and poverty among population. (See Figure 1 for dynamics of economic activities of population in 1991-1996). According to official data released by the State Statistical

Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan (RT) the level of registered unemployment was 3.2% in 1998, 2.7% in 2000 and 2.2% in 2006 (Goscomstat, 2007). However, these figures do not reflect the actual numbers in the country. How 2000 census showed, the total unemployment rate in 1998 was 9.23%, as well as according to the Labor Force Survey of 2004, the unemployment among employable (economically active) population in 2004 amounted 7.4% (Olimova S. and Bosc, I. 2003; 20). The number of population living below poverty rate during these years is unconceivable too: according to estimates of World Bank the poverty rate among population of Tajikistan was 72% in 2003, 54% in 2007, 47% in 2009 (World Bank Group 2013), and 39.6% in 2012 (CIA Factbook 2013).

Despite the steady economic growth since 1997, Tajikistan's economy remains fragile due to uneven implementation of structural reforms, weak governance, inflation rate (6.4% in 2012), widespread unemployment, and the external debt burden (CIA Factbook 2006). With unemployment officially at 2.5% in 2012 (CIA Factbook 2013) but likely much higher, workers had been forced to migrate to other former states of USSR (largely Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and others) to make a living for them and their families. Migration to this region was “facilitated by the shared Soviet culture, similarities between education systems and fluency in Russian language” (Munshi 2003; Beaman 2009).

Since 1991 and till present, labor migration from Tajikistan became a very common process: International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated that by 2005 almost every family in Tajikistan has had a migrant worker travelling abroad (IMF 2005). In 2006 IFES conducted a survey among migrant’s households in Tajikistan which revealed that out of the 3,023 respondents (households), 50% reported that their family has sent at least one household for work abroad for at least one month out of the year. The data also indicates that rural areas have larger percentage

of households containing labor migrants (53%) than urban areas (43%). See Figure 2 in Appendices (IFES survey 2006, 8). Between 1991 and 2005 it was calculated that 492.2 thousand people left Tajikistan for employment purposes, which constitutes about 8% of the entire seven million population of the country. About 83.3% of labor migrants left Tajikistan during the civil war between 1992-1997 years (Kireyev 2006).

In 2001, according to State Border Committee, 1.2 million Tajik citizens were working abroad out of 3.3 million of population of employable age (IFES 2006). The various surveys conducted in 2003 showed that 18% of the adult population, identified as 15 years old and older, had left the country to look for a job (IOM 2003, 18). According to latest estimates presented in CIA Factbook 2013, more than one million Tajik citizens work abroad in 2012, almost all of them in Russia, whereas Tajikistan hosts 2.1 million of labor force on its territory. It is more likely that actual figures of labor migration from Tajikistan greatly differ from official ones because most of the migration is seasonal and temporal, which is difficult to track accurately. With regard to type of work executed by labor migrants from Tajikistan, IFES survey in 2006 shows that majority of labor migrants work abroad in the construction and building industry -62%, 25% work in the service sector, such as gardening, housework, restaurants, etc.; 20% are engaged in trading goods, 8% - in industry and transportation, and 4% are active in agriculture (IFES 2006, 4). With regard to demographic component, in the first years of the labor migration, workers were mainly middle-age males, however, in last years, this composition started to change – now, young unmarried men, married older women, and younger women with higher education are engaged in labor migration from Tajikistan (Olimova S., and Bosc I., 2003, 27).

The predominant feature of labor migration from Tajikistan is remittances sent or brought by labor migrants to Tajikistan. These remittances correspond to a higher share of GDP, even

though calculating actual estimates of remittances sent solely by labor migrants from abroad is difficult to measure: as was calculated in 2006, remittances to Tajikistan fell within the range of US\$400 million to US\$1 billion a year, or to 20% to almost 50% of total GDP of the country (Justino, P. and Shemyakina, 2010, 9). These remittances are believed to be significantly contributing in reducing poverty in Tajikistan in the post-war period and till now. According to WB, in 2003 remittances and other transfers to households ranked as a second largest income source after wages ((World Bank 2006), and constitutes more than half of average household income (IFES 2006, 4).

As was mentioned above, poor economic opportunities and high unemployment rate in Tajikistan are the primary factors in motivating people of Tajikistan to migrate in seeking for jobs abroad. IFES survey conducted in 2006 identified that 48% of the labor migrants noted that they work abroad to provide life's basic necessities for their households; 39% responded that they leave because of lack of work in Tajikistan; 31% mentioned the remunerations being better abroad than in Tajikistan, and 18% cited the poverty as a reason for working abroad (IFES survey 2006, 4).

II. Methodology

The labor migration from Tajikistan which, according to different sources, composes one third of the entire employable population of the country is probably the most dominant social-economic feature of contemporary Tajikistan with its both positive and negative effects on families and their life settings. To analyze the effects of labor migration on migrants' households, this paper aims to answer the following major questions: 1) What are the social and economic impacts of labor migration from Tajikistan on migrants' families and their life settings? 2) What are policy recommendations to the Government of Tajikistan to address the negative consequences of labor migration on migrants' households?

The goal of this paper is to study of the impact of labor migration of the citizens of Tajikistan on the social and economic status of their families and develop policy recommendations to the Government of Tajikistan to eliminate negative effects of labor migration on migrants' households.

The objectives of this paper is to focus its analysis on socio-economic impacts of labor migration from Tajikistan on migrants' households in the following aspects: economic situation of migrant's families from remittances sent by migrants; impact of migration on nutrition and health status of migrants' households, impact on child rearing, child education and changing status of child in the family (child labor), and assessment of psychological impact of migration on women. The final objective of this research is to develop policy recommendations aimed at addressing or reducing the negative effects of labor migration on migrants' households.

The study is based on application of the following methods: qualitative and quantitative analysis of empirical data: interviews and surveys conducted with migrants' households by local (Sharq Research Institute) and international (ILO, World Bank) institutions in Tajikistan; analytical

review of assessment and monitoring reports prepared by local and international experts; review of analytical publications on respective labor migration issues in Tajikistan published by international organizations, such as ILO, IOM, CIA, etc.; review and analysis of newspaper and journal articles on issues of labor migration from Tajikistan and from/to neighboring regions; and analysis and incorporation of official (Government) and unofficial international agencies, (media, etc.) census data into research.

*Definitions**

Social and economic impacts: under social and economic impacts this paper assesses impacts of labor migration and remittances on economic situation of migrants' households in Tajikistan; impact on nutrition and health status of migrants' households, impact on child rearing, child education and changing status of child in the family (child labor), and psychological impact of labor migration on women in Tajikistan.

Household is a group of related and non-related people living together and having a shared budget. A household may consist of one person.

Household members are all persons who have a shared budget, including persons who live abroad.

Labor Migrant is a household member above 15 years old who migrate from his/her country of residence (but not changing his residency status) for labor purposes and work abroad.

Remittances/ Monetary remittances –money/commodities brought or sent by migrants to their households living in their country of origin/migrant sending country.

The next chapter will explore the effects of labor migration on social and economic conditions of migrants' households in Tajikistan.

* Definitions are extracted from ILO paper 2007

III. Social and economic impacts of labor migration from Tajikistan on migrants' households and their life settings in Tajikistan

With the view to analyze social and economic consequences of labor migration on migrants' households in Tajikistan, this paper draws its attention on the role of remittances sent by labor migrants working abroad on economic conditions of family households, its impact on health and nutrition conditions of the households, impact of migration on child rearing, child education and changing status of child in the family (child labor), and assesses psychological impact of migration on women.

Reduction in poverty and improving purchasing power of households

As various analysis showed migration and flowing from it remittances are directly beneficial to migrants and, especially migrants' households by "providing insurance and enhancing liquidity" (Mughal A. 2007, 48). Migration contributed in poverty reduction in Tajikistan, especially in post-war period of late 1990s and beginning 2000s. According to World Bank estimates the poverty rate in Tajikistan was reduced from 72% in 2003 to 40% in 2012 (CIA Factbook 2013). Consequently, labor migration helped migrants' households improve their purchasing power and enhance and diversify their consumption of products and services, or at least by meeting their basic needs, such as purchase of food items, etc. As analyses conclude monetary remittances has positive impact on migrants' households income and make them less vulnerable to adverse risks and unforeseen contingencies, such as illness, death of a relative, crop failure or natural disaster, etc. (Olimova S, and Kuddusov, J. 2007, 5). According to ILO survey in 2007, 65% of household heads and 53% migrants' wives reported that their income went up after a family member turned into labor migration. However, 22% of household heads and 33% migrants' wives responded that they became poorer after their breadwinning family member(s) migrated abroad, while 13%

of household heads and 15% of migrants' wives reported that their situation left the same, see table below (ILO 2007, 50).

Table 1. Household self-assessment of family prosperity

Has your financial situation changed after your husband left? Has your family become better-off or poorer?	Opinion of head of households (%)	Opinion of migrants' wives (%)
Better-off	65.3%	52.5%
Poorer	21.9%	32.5%
Remained the same	12.8%	15%
Total:	100%	100%

At the same time, these remittances do not permit the households to improve their investment capacity. Indeed, as the new economic theory of labor migration implies, migration and remittances allow the households “to overcome two major obstacles they face: the credit constraint and lack of insurance to hold against unforeseen adverse shocks (Mughal A. 2007, 48).

High dependency of migrants' families on remittances and their vulnerability

Even with slow fluctuation and inconsiderable drop during world economic shocks, remittances flowing to Tajikistan through formal and informal channels continue to grow: for instance, remittances to RT increased from \$1.7 billion in 2007 to \$2.7 billion in 2008 (Marat 2009, 7). According to the World Bank reports the remittances sent by Tajik labor migrants to their households living in Tajikistan constituted 1/3 of the country's GDP in 2009, while ranking Tajikistan as the most highly dependent country on remittances in the world (World Bank, 2011). As 2007 World Bank Living Standards Measurement Survey on Tajikistan showed, about 28% of interviewed households received remittances in last 12 months (2007), and 29% of those households receiving remittances are heavily dependent on them. Besides that, ILO 2010 survey

reported that 77% of returned Tajik migrants confirmed that they plan to leave the country again for labor purposes “in the next working season” (ILO, 2010). This implies that migrants’ family members, who remain in Tajikistan, will continue building their expectations on future earnings from migration of their relatives. This high dependency of households on remittances indicates their vulnerability and lack of sustainability. As surveys showed more sustainable are those migrants’ households who, besides remittances, have other, diversified sources of income (homemade food industry, commodity production, gardening, livestock and poultry breeding, etc.). Women are found being playing a significant role in these all types of activity (Olimova S, and Kuddusov J., 2007,6).

At the same time, experts note that migrant remittances do not contribute to local development, while result in ‘real estate bubbles and rising food prices’ in the country (Marat 2009, 7).

Despite the fact that majority of migrant families’ budget depends on remittances, this does not constitute sufficient funding for family needs. ILO 2007 survey revealed that 38% of interviewed women from migrant families (families having at least one labor migrant travelling abroad) responded that monetary remittances sent by their relatives are not sufficient and, therefore they have to seek for jobs outside the household (ILO 2007, 67).

As several surveys highlighted (Sharq 2003, ILO 2007), migrants’ wives work more than those from non-migrant families. The surveys also showed that women's need of paid jobs is quite high: 65% of interviewed women from migrants’ families responded that they want to work and must have an opportunity to work outside the household (Olimova S, and Kuddusov J., 2007, 55). Table 2 below shows the percentage distribution of employment of women in migrant and non-migrant families in 2006, according to which 68% of heads of households and 75% of migrants’ wives believe that in migrants’ households women work more in absence of the men

than women in families with no migrants, and only 32% of household heads and 25% of migrants' wives said vice versa (that women in no migrant-families work more than women in migrant households).

Table 2. Who works more according to interviewed head of households and migrants' wives? (Olimova, S., 2007; 58)

	Opinion of the head of households (%)	Opinion of migrant's wives (%)
Women in families with no migrants	32	25
Women in migrant's households when husband is not at home	68	75
TOTAL:	100	100

Table 3 reflects on types of employment among women from migrant-having families, according to which around 42% of working migrants' wives work in formal sector, while 58% have in informal and casual jobs.

Table 3. Employment of migrants' wives. (Olimova S., 2007; 59)

	%
In a state-owned enterprise/ institutions	20.8
Employment in private sector	20.8
Work in a dehkan farm	45.8
Engaged in casual/one-time jobs on individual basis	12.5
TOTAL:	100.0

Nutrition and health status of migrants' households

On the whole, overall assessments of migrants' nutrition showed that labor migration positively impacted the problem of supplying their families with food. Remittances allowed migrant's households to improve their living standard, expand the volume, quality and composition of

food, and reduce the poverty level. World Bank 2005 data shows that migrant's families spend most of their family budget (75%) on food (World Bank 2005). However, if by any reason the migrants stop or reduce sending of money to their families, the households were reducing their total expenditures on food to 47% (Olimova, S., and Kuddusov J., 2007, 79) (It indicates the previous assumption of high dependency of migrants' households on remittances sent by their migrant family abroad, as well as their vulnerability to adverse risks in absence of remittances). The migrants' remittances also allowed their households to improve their living standards: the remittances gave possibility to 40% of the interviewed households (ILO survey 2007) to provide their family members with adequate nutrition, 23% - to buy good clothes, 27% - to spend for better medical services to their households (ILO 2007, 80).

ILO survey in 2007 also revealed that 35% of interviewed household heads and 42.5% of migrants' wives confirmed that theirs and their family members' health status improved since their household had gone to work abroad (see Table 4 below). We can presume that this resulted from improved nutrition and access to better health care systems that became available due to remittances. In the meanwhile, however, 14% of household heads and 23% of migrants' wives reported that their health worsened after their husband departed abroad (ILO 2007, 83). They explained it by intensification of work they are doing inside and outside of household in absence of their male family members, as well as because of stress arising from long absence of husbands/ fathers that negatively affects health status of migrants' households in Tajikistan. However, 52% of household heads and 35% migrants' wives stated that their health status remained the same as before (neither improved nor deteriorated) after their migrant household went to work abroad. We can judge here that the health condition of these households didn't change from status quo after departure of their migrant family member just because they didn't

had health problems neither before or after departure or, if they did, the remittances received were not sufficient to improve their health conditions.

Table 4. Did the family health status change after the household member (husband) went to work abroad? (ILO 2007)

	Opinion of the HH head (%)	Opinions of migrants' wives (%)
Health deteriorated	14%	22.5%
Health improved	35%	42.5%
Health remained the same as before	52%	35%
Total:	100	100

However, due to high dependency on remittances, the migrants' households are exposed to high risks and are vulnerable to adverse shocks: if something happens to migrants (job loss, accident, death) that prevents them from sending money to their households, the latter “sinks” into poverty and become deprived of accessing quality health care (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 2007, 82).

The impact of labor migration on child status in the family

The findings of surveys of last few years conclude that labor migration has a serious impact on the status of children, in particular, the level of their education and expansion of child labor. A significant increase in child labor was noted during civil war time in 1994-1995, when a dramatic number of mainly male citizens were leaving the country for labor reasons, and when women and children had to enter labor market and replace their fathers and elder brothers. Starting from that period, the scale of child labor had been on the rise (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 2007, 83).

Childrearing in migrants' households

With changing traditional values and demographic composition the role of family and especially women in the family had dramatically changed. With cutting-back of systems of social

institutions and high scale labor migration among male population, family became the main socialization and rearing institution for younger generations. This is particularly important in migrants' families than in non-migrant families. As a 2007 survey showed 100% of migrants' wives and 93% of heads of household reported that they face particular difficulties with regard to child-rearing when their fathers are working abroad. We can associate it with highly traditional and patriarchal life style being dominant for centuries in Tajik society, and where absence of fathers makes it difficult for mothers to control growing and upbringing of their children without their fathers. In particular, when there are many children in a family and rearing and controlling them become difficult, their upbringing occurs in the streets where they easily get involved in child criminal matters (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 2007, 84).

Child education in migrants' households

Despite the fact that average educational level of male migrants is in general higher than the average level of education across the country, children from migrants' families miss schoolwork more often and quit school earlier than children from families without migrant (ILO 2007, 100). Table 5 below shows that on close-ended question of do the households face difficulties with children's education in absence of father, 86.4% of household heads and 87.5% migrants' wives confirmed that they do face difficulties, and only 11% and 10% respectively said that their children's education does not depend on whether their fathers went on labor migration, and 2.5% of each group of respondents didn't answer. Some analysis associates this with the reason that remittances sent by migrant households do not meet all family needs, while families have less financial capacity on their own to meet nowadays educational expenses and their financial situation is highly vulnerable to adverse effects (illnesses, accidents, etc.). Also some research concludes that neglecting schoolwork occurs mainly because in absence of fathers/ elder brothers

children are more occupied in the household work or due to poor control from a part of grownups (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 2007, 84).

Table 5. Do households face difficulties pertaining to children's education in absence of father? (ILO 2007)

	Opinion of the household head (%)	Opinions of migrants' wives (%)
Yes	86.4	87.5
No	11.1	10.0
No answer	2.5	2.5
Total:	100.0	100.0

We also may draw our conclusion on the fact that if, for whatever reason, a migrated father stops or is unable to send money to his family from abroad (which significantly worsens family's budget), or money sent are not sufficient to cover all family needs, the household members can no longer afford educational expenses for their children, while, at the same time have to increase the workload outside the household, including the children, to overcome financial difficulties. As a result, children are forced to miss school. The same is applicable with regard to receiving higher education: children from migrants' families are less likely to receive higher education than children from non-migrant families, mainly due to lack of sufficient and stable funding (Olimova S. 2007, 85).

Child labor in migrants' households/the impact of migration on expansion of child labor

Probably one of the most adverse effects of labor migration on migrant's households is the expansion of child labor among migrants' households that both deprives young children of opportunity to receive education, as well as declines human capital in Tajikistan in general scale.

According to analysis children are mainly engaged in house chores, work in family subsidiary plots or in privately-owned farms, and much less children from migrants' families are employed in paid work outside the house (ILO 2007, 85).

As a survey conducted by ILO in 2007 shows (Table 6 below), 70% of household heads and 75% of migrants' wives reported that children are more often involved in labor activities at home when their households migrate abroad for work. By doing this, they try to substitute for their fathers most of all; only 25% and 20% respectively responded negatively, and 5% from each group didn't respond (Olimova, S., Kuddusov J., 2007, 87).

Table 6. Do children work more to help their mother at home when the father goes abroad to work? (ILO 2007)

	Opinion of the HH head (%)	Opinions of migrants' wives (%)
Yes	70 %	75%
No	25.0	20.0
No Answer/Do not know	5.0	5.0
Total:	100.0	100.0

To compare child labor expansion between migrant and non-migrant families, many survey results showed that the children from migrants' families are more likely to be involved in labor activities both within and outside their household than children from non-migrant families.

According to ILO survey in 2007, 66% of household heads and 73% of migrants' wives reported migrants' children being involved in work more than children from non-migrant families, while 24.5% of HHs and 10% of migrants' wives responded that children from non-migrant families work more than migrant's children (Table 7 below gives percentage distribution of the rest responses).

Table 7. Who work more: migrants' children or those from non-migrant families? (ILO 2007)

Who works more?	Opinion of the HH head (%)	Opinions of migrants' wives (%)
Migrants' children	66%	73%
Children from non-migrant families	24.5%	10%
All children work equally	1%	5%
Our children are too young to work	0.5%	5%
No answer/Do not know	8%	7%
Total:	100.0	100.0

Surveys also show that boys work most intensively than girls which is explained by gender specialization of labor in Tajikistani households. It is boys (elder sons) who start earning outside the household when their fathers/brothers stop sending money to them (Olimova S. 2007, 89).

Socio-ethical and psychological impact of migration on women

Migration of men abroad put an ambiguous ethical and psychological effect on women left alone in households. Firstly, women feel less protected from the absence of their males. Surveys show that the feeling of insecurity and anxiety is more dominant among migrants' wives living in urban areas. It is explained by the fact that in rural areas women are more secured by traditional mechanisms of interaction with outside world historically developed in Tajik society: in absence of their husbands, women are still able to communicate with the members of their extended families: husband's brothers, father or mother-in-laws, etc. This is supported by the fact that 61% of interview women responded that their level of social interaction did not increase after their husband's departure abroad (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 95).

Secondly, women's psychological stress results from their concern and anxiety about their family members working abroad. Mothers' nervousness is further aggravated by difficulties of

child-rearing by one parent only (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 97). Due to difficulties to measure the level of psychological stress from absence of their husbands, fathers, elder sons due to labor migration, some surveys focused on consequences of women’s stress due to their family member(s) long absence due to migration. As table 8 below presents, 15% of household heads and 25% of migrants’ wives responded that migrants’ women are more likely predisposed for smoking, 22% and 2.5% respectively think women are likely predisposed for alcohol, 11% and 7.5% respectively reported that there is a possible inclination for women to look for a partner, 3% and 10% said there is no consequence respectively, while 3% and 5% reported women being predisposed to suicide, respectively. In the meantime, 46% of household heads and 50% of migrants’ wives did not respond to the question (Table 8 below). The latest can be explained by rooted cultural and traditional ethics and Islamic traditions mostly prevailing among urban population that prevent from openly speaking about negative consequences. However, at the same time, it is worth noting, that traditional systems of interaction and collectivistic approach in interactions significantly ease the condition of women in migrants’ families.

Table 8. Socio-ethical and psychological impact of migration on women (ILO 2007)

Can the stress associated with the husband's migration affect behavior of the wife remaining at home?	Opinions of HH heads (%)	Opinions of migrants' wives (%)
Predisposition for smoking is possible	15%	25%
Predisposition for alcohol is possible	22%	2.5%
Inclination to look for a partner is possible	11%	7.5%
No consequences	3%	10%
Suicide	3%	5%
No answer	46%	50%
Total:	100.0	100.0

The psychological stress and anxiety are also linked with increased nationalistic movements in migrant receiving countries, mainly Russia, and associated with it frequent cases of deaths among labor migrants from Tajikistan. As was reported by one of the articles of Tajik news agency Asia Plus, only for the year of 2008 Tajik authorities had counted 324 deaths among Tajik labor migrants in Russian Federation, and that at least 80% of them (259) were killed in “ethically motivated attacks”. On December 15, 2008 a Moscow court convicted a group of teenagers for executing murder of 20 Tajik migrants (New York Times, 2008).

In last 2012 year, 1055 dead bodies were deported from Russia to Tajikistan. However, the actual number should be higher as some of them are buried right there and not sent to Tajikistan. Local and international experts name labor migration a tragedy for the people of Tajikistan. Besides, the last events indicate the increasing number of deaths among female migrants: only last year 93 deaths were estimated among female migrants from Tajikistan. (Bobonazarova, O., 2013). This is a considerable number in respect to relatively small population of 8 million in the country.

IV. Labor migration policy of the Republic of Tajikistan

The labor migration from Tajikistan began to increase during 1993-1994, however, the Government of Tajikistan had started developing its labor migration policy in the beginning of 2000s. The state labor migration policy took various measures of institutional and regulatory character, directed to monitoring the flow of labor migration from Tajikistan abroad, creating better facilities encouraging the flow of employable but unemployed population, and improving state relations with main migrants-receiving countries, such as Russia. The Government created a network of agencies within and outside the country providing the citizens with legal support on various issues, legal residency and labor laws of migrant receiving countries, etc. Also the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of RT established its representative agencies in five region of Russian Federation supposed to assist citizens of Tajikistan residing and working in Russia on various daily issues. However, their quality and timeliness of their services to citizens of Tajikistan was always under question and criticized by population.

The state also implemented several legislative steps on securing labor migration, mainly in 2001 several amendments were made in the Law on Migration and the Concept of labor migration of citizens of RT abroad was adopted. This Concept determines labor migration of citizens is considered as one of component of the state employment policy (Kuddusov, J. 2004, 106).

In 2002 the state adopted the Program of Foreign Labor migration for 2003-2005, which was extended in 2006 for 2006-2009 years, and afterward, in 2004 the Government adopted a “Resolution on regulating foreign labor migration”. The objectives of the latter document were to strengthen the capacity of state agencies and improve their capacities in their regulatory work of labor migration abroad (Olimova S., Kuddusov J., 2007, 28). However, the document bore general recommendation character, didn’t include financial support, as well as didn’t have

stipulated specific tasks and agencies responsible for implementing those tasks, which made difficult to measure the implementation of the Program.

To stimulate smooth employment of citizens abroad, the state ordered establishment of intermediary firms that was working based on licenses issued by state agencies. These firms are supposed to assist the citizens with departure, allocation and securing best matching jobs in receiving countries: majority of these firms were created and are operating on the territory of Russian Federation. However, these firms neither provide vocational trainings to migrants, nor involve in rendering legal protection. Besides, Tajikistan ratified a set of intergovernmental agreements with migrant receiving countries, such as Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, etc., to regulate labor migration flow between the countries, as well as to coordinate joint activities in this field.

However, the overall actions of the Government of Tajikistan in the field of labor migration were not as efficient as the Tajikistan Government claims them be. The system of regulating and assisting with legalizing labor migration from Tajikistan abroad is not consistent with nowadays realities and migrants need. The nowadays state programs and activities do not provide adequate help to labor migrants, and the latter continue facing many problems abroad with no adequate support from their country. The state policy is focused on encouraging labor migration among population as a major way to overcome unemployment and, consequently, reduce social tensions, while ignores conducting consistent and efficient long-term economic reforms to provide jobs for its population within its boundaries.

V. Policy recommendations to address negative consequences of labor migration on migrants' households in Tajikistan

As analysis show labor migration from Tajikistan along with positive effects (poverty reduction, smoothing families' purchase power, nutrition, etc.) causes many negative side effects on migrants' family wellbeing. Many experts and analysts see labor migration as a new disaster for the people and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (Bobonazarova O., 2013).

However, the Government of RT considers labor migration as a valued and only means reducing social tensions and solving economic problems in the country. However, as past and recent researches revealed the negative effects of labor migration bring more long-term and highly costly consequences, and surely prevail its positive impacts.

To address the negative consequences of labor migration on migrants' families, mainly to eliminate their high dependency on remittances, vulnerability to adverse risks, expansion of child labor, etc., the following policy recommendations should be taken into consideration of the Government of RT in short and long-run perspectives:

Firstly, the Government of RT should shift its focus from encouraging labor migration to developing economic opportunities for its population within its borders through creating new types of economic activities and supporting enterprises of small and medium businesses. It is particularly justified by the findings presented above that labor migration causes health, psychological and other problems (difficulties with child-rearing, children's exclusion from education, expansion of child labor) not only due to the absence of fathers and husbands, but mostly due to low economic opportunities within the country. The domestic employment policy should be focused so to maximize local employment and minimize the flow of population

abroad, consequently reducing the negative effects of labor migration on families and community lives. This can be done through encouraging international investment into national and local economies, providing favorable micro-credits for opening small and medium businesses, as well as through reforming state tax policy.

Secondly, based on the above findings that 61% of migrants' wives are in need for better paid jobs but face difficulties in finding well-paid jobs, it is necessary to facilitate employment of women, particularly in rural areas, in self-run businesses to eliminate their high dependency on the remittances (29% of migrants' households are particularly highly dependable on remittances) and increase their self-sustainability. This should be done through launching various technical programs and vocational trainings that increase education level, as well as provide specialization in different fields of activities. It is important to expand the range of profession that is attractive to women.

Thirdly, efforts should be taken to reduce the gender imbalance, as well as inequality among children in accessing education in all levels (high, technical, vocational, higher levels), particularly for children from migrants' families who have limited resources to overcome their educational costs, through providing social benefit programs to families in need, especially in accessing education.

And, finally, as it is impossible to eliminate entirely labor migration from Tajikistan abroad, it is crucial to enhance social protection policy both of the migrants and their family members. As the findings revealed the migrants' wives and children are most vulnerable and negatively affected by labor migration. The state policy should provide incentives for migrants to obtain the social security and increase their responsibility for their families left behind in their home country (Olimova S., and Kuddusov J., 2007, 108). Also, the government should take measures to

prevent and eradicate the exclusion of children from education and expansion of child labor, especially in younger ages in the country through establishing special social assistance programs and institutions that will help migrants' households to overcome the negative effects of labor migration on their lives.

VI. Conclusions

This paper examined the social and economic consequences of labor migration of migrants' households in Tajikistan, assessed labor migration policy implemented by Government of Tajikistan, as well as came up with policy recommendations for addressing negative consequences of labor migration on migrant's family members. The analysis of social and economic impacts of labor migration included assessing impact of remittances sent by migrant on economic situation of migrant's families; impact of migration on nutrition and health status of migrants' households, impact on child rearing, child education and changing status of child in the family (child labor), and assessment of psychological impact of migration on women. The final objective of this research was developing policy recommendations aimed at addressing or reducing negative effects of labor migration on migrants' family households.

The paper concludes such key problems migrants' families face from labor migrations, as high dependency of migrant's households on remittances and their vulnerability to adverse risks associated with job loss, accident, illnesses, death, etc. of their migrant household abroad; difficulties for women in managing the household work in absence of male households (husbands, fathers, older sons); difficulties in child-rearing by one parent; negative effects of labor migration on child education, negative effects of labor migration on expanding child labor, particularly in early ages (consequently, exclusion from education); and, negative psychological and socio-ethical effects of labor migration on migrants' wives.

VII. Bibliography

- Bobonazarova, O. *Labor migration: tragedy of Tajik people*. 2013, available at: <http://www.dw.de/ойнихол-бобоназарова-трудова-миграция-трагедия-таджикского-народа/a-16699301>
- Bushkov, Valentine I. *Population Migration in Tajikistan: Past and Present.*” Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russia. JCAS Symposium Series 9, 2000.
- Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook 2013*, available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ti.html>
- Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*, 2006.
- Gameltoft, Peter. *Remittances and other financial flows to developing countries*. Center for Development Research, Copenhagen, Denmark. Published by Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002.
- IFES. *Survey of Political Engagement and Enfranchisement of Labor Migrants from Tajikistan, 2006*.
- ILO/IPEC/ "Sharq" Research Center. *Rapid assessment of child labor in cities of Tajikistan*. Dushanbe, Kurgan-Tube, 2005.
- IOM. *Migrant Remittances in Tajikistan*. Moscow: ILO Sub-regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 2010.
- IOM. *Money remittances of labor migrants and their impact on the living standards in Khatlon region of the Republic of Tajikistan*, 2006.
- Justino, P. and Shemyakina, O. *Remittances and Labor Supply in Post-Conflict Tajikistan*. MICROCON Research Working Paper 35, Brighton: 2005.
- Kireyev, Alexei. *The Macroeconomics of remittances: the case of Tajikistan*. International Monetary Fund: 2006.
- Kuddusov, Jamshed. *Problems of population migration in Tajikistan*. Central Asia and Caucasus Journal, # 3, 2004.
- Mamadjanova, Zuhra. *Report of the assessment on “Practices of data gathering on Labor Migration and Human Trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation in Tajikistan” for discussion on the National workshop*. ILO. Tajikistan. 2008.
- Mughal, Abdul-Ghaffar. *Migration, Remittances and Living Standards in Tajikistan*. A report based Khatlon remittances and Living Standards Measurement Survey (KLSS 2005). IOM, 2007.
- Olimova, S. and Kurbanova, R. *Behavioral survey of Tajik migrants on HIV and STI related issues*. IOM, 2006.

Olimova, Saodat and Bosc, Igor. *Labor migration from Tajikistan*. 1-132. Published by International Organization for Migration, 2003.

Olimova, Saodat and Kuddusov, Jamshed. "Families of migrants in Tajikistan: problems and ways of their solution". ILO: "Irfon", 2007.

State statistical committee of the Republic of Tajikistan, *Tajikistan: 15 years of state independence*, Dushanbe, 2007.

The New York Times, "*Tajik village shares fears of migrants*" by Tavernise, Sabrina. December 28, 2008.

The World Bank document, *Poverty Assessment Update for Tajikistan Main report*, 2004.

Umarov, H, and Ulmasov R. *External labor migration in Tajikistan (causes, problems, consequences, regulation)*, Dushanbe, 2006.

World Bank Group 2013, available at:

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.NAHC/countries/TJ?display=graph>

World Bank, *Trade Diagnostic Study*, 2006.

World Bank. *Enhancing the Development Impact of Remittances*. Report No. 35771-TJ. Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, Europe and Central Asia. 2006.

World Bank. *Migration and Remittances. Factbook 2011*. Second edition, available at:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLAC/Resources/Factbook2011-Ebook.pdf>

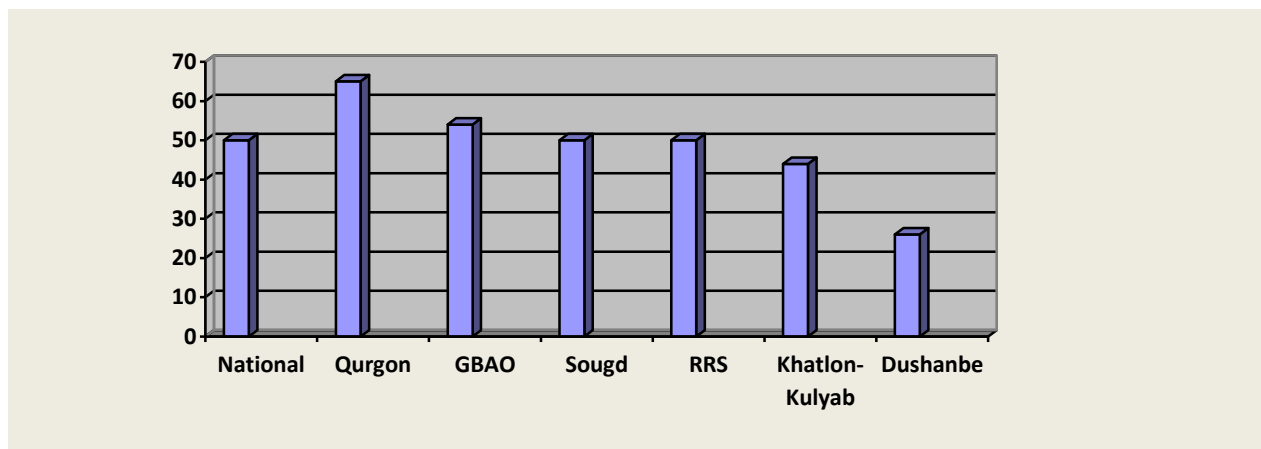
World Bank. *Poverty in Tajikistan*. Materials of the national experts' conference. Kuddusov, J. *Labor market and population employment*. Dushanbe, 2004.

VIII. Appendices

Figure 1. Dynamics of economic activities of population (Olimova S., 2007 derived from census data of State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan.)

Years	1991	1998	2000	2002	2006
Population, thousand persons	5 506	6 001	6 250	6 507	7 064
Labor force, thousand persons	2 526	3 038	3 186	3 463	4 047
Economically active population, thousand persons	1 971	1 855	1 794	1 904	2 185
Employed population by economic sectors, thousand persons	1 971	1 796	1 745	1 857	2 137

Figure 2. Percentage of Households with Labor Migrants, Regional Breakdown (IFES Survey, 2006; 3)



“Does household have any member who works abroad for at least one month out of the year?” (n=3023)

(National- 50%, Khatlon-Qurgonteppa – 65%, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) - 54%, Sougd -50%, Regions of Republican Subordination -50%, Khatlon-Kulyab – 44%, Dushanbe- 26%)