



# Adapting evidence-based interventions to prevent violence against women in rural Tajikistan: challenges and opportunities.

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# Tajikistan

Over half the male labour force works as migrants outside of Tajikistan, while their wives traditionally live with their in-laws (World Bank 2013).



Population 7.1 Million (UN Statistics Division 2012).

GNI per capita of US\$2,424 (UNDP Data).

# Context: Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Tajikistan

- One third to half of all women in Tajikistan are regularly subjected to different types of violence by husband and in-laws (Amnesty International, 2009).

International Alert's baseline findings:

- Extremely high levels of violence, especially physical violence, among young women age 18-24;
- Young women are likely to experience increased levels of violence, suicide and depression;
- Key drivers: poverty, high levels of food insecurity, social pressure, alcohol and substance abuse.



# Adapting the Intervention

- South African ‘Stepping Stones’ - a basis for an innovative intervention.
- Contextual analysis and Formative research on IPV, gender and livelihoods to inform the interventions;
- Bringing together implementing partners and What Works team to brainstorm and draft the manual - an adaptation workshop in Dushanbe;
- Involving local partners and introducing to, and commenting on, the draft methodology/manual through 3 days of pilot training with the draft manual;
- 5 days ToT for local partners based on the final adapted manual “Zindagii Shoista – Living with Dignity”.



# The Approach

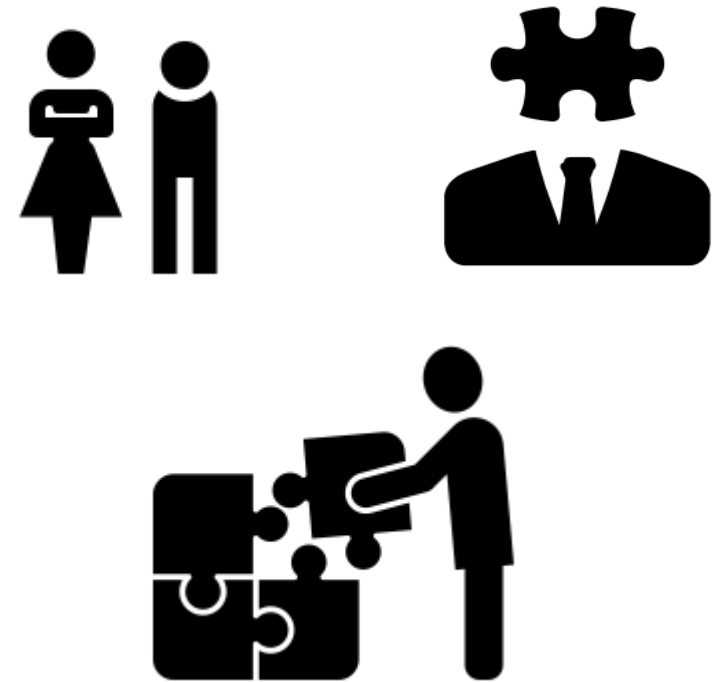
- Focus at family level;
- Integrating social and economic components; e.g. IGA;
- Dividing target families into peer groups - approximately 15 -20 people per group;
- 3-hour sessions over 10 weeks: Behavioural Change & Family Communication, to reflect on social norms;
- 3-hour sessions over 11 weeks: Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment;
- Taking into account traditional cultural practices and social norms.





# Challenges

- Initial resistance within the management of the implementing partners to adapt the methodology;
- Language issue - translation of the manual into Tajik/Uzbek languages;
- Implementation interruptions due to Ramadan;
- Challenges in getting people to talk about gender norms;
- Location changes – security concerns;
- Women tend to 'safer' well known methods in IGAs development.



# Lessons Learnt

- Implementing partners' management to rely more on the local staff's expertise and knowledge of the context;
- Methodology adaptation takes time, and spending a lot of time at adaptation phase is so important;
- The adapted methodology proves to be effective in changing relationships dynamics within families and shifting in the daily experiences of young women;
- Scaling up this evidence based approach is imperative;
- IPV/VAWG need more attention by donors, government and NGOs to tackle.



## Initial Impact

# Recipient Testimonies

*“I used to set the table for breakfast, lunch or dinner every day and, as usual, when I joined others around the table, it was already empty. Last week, when I set the table for dinner...everyone was waiting for me. I was so shocked positively that I could not eat. When I cleaned the table and washed the dishes after, my father-in-law nursed my son to sleep. This happened for the first time in my life in my husband’s family and this is due to the ZS sessions”.*

***“The sessions and activities that I and my husband are involved in on income generation helped us to improve our relationship. We had a cow before as well but my husband was not interested to help me to look after her. Now, he pays special attention to the new cow, received through the ZS project and is very motivated and interested to look after her... He even bathes the cow twice a week”.***



*Thank you !!*

