

THIS IS THE HOUSE BUILT BY...:

RECLAIMING THE CONCEPTS OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY FROM THE
NARRATIVES OF MIGRATION AND RELIGIOUS RADICALISATION

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EU	European Union
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
KTPK	Public Broadcasting Channel
ICG	International Crisis Group
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
UN	United Nations
PIL	Research Company (Pikir Izildoo Laboratoriyasy Ltd)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Numerous migration studies consider the influence of inter-state labour migration on family structures, their adaptation to and their integration in host countries. These studies testify to an increasing importance of migration with family members or other relatives; a tendency of family and kinship ties to strengthen in host countries; and a mitigating influence of family on managing stress arising from their migration experience.

In its work on migration and the protection of the labour migrants' rights for almost 70 years, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has encountered many times how families affect labour migrant's motivations and strategies for adaptation in host countries and their re-integration upon their return to their homeland. At the same time, it is evident that migration processes themselves affect the transformation of families and, subsequently, of local communities.

The current applied research focuses on the transformation of families and local communities in the context of migration. Its purpose is to assist in the development of more targeted and audience-specific information and media resources on labour migrants' rights and to counter radicalisation and involvement in violent ideologies of labour migrants and their families.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative participant observation

This tool was applied in the pilot villages to obtain in-depth data. A semiformal participant observation involved PIL researchers immersing themselves in the very environment they studied to learn about practices of people's everyday lives.

During such observations, PIL researchers analysed families' external and internal social relationships.

The research sample consisted of the following eight settlements across Kyrgyzstan:

- village Ogut in Naryn Oblast
- village Ak-Terek in Issyk-Kul Oblast
- village Sosnovka in Chui Oblast
- village Kalmak-Ashuu in Chui Oblast
- village Kashgar-Kyshtak in Osh Oblast
- village Aravan in Osh Oblast
- town Kyzyl-Kiya in Batken Oblast
- township Shamaldy-Sai in Jalal-Abad Oblast

As agreed with the client, the research sample represented as many different types of settlements as possible, including where:

- there had been conflicts due to religious or ethnic differences;
- most residents had been affected by migration;
- residents rarely resorted to migration as a livelihood strategy;
- population was predominantly polycultural;
- population was predominantly monocultural;
- settlements were most frequently mentioned by media outlets in the preceding year, in connection with various risks and current developments.

We used cases studies as part of a qualitative research strategy to illustrate patterns and examples of situational development. However, these cases studies did not allow for a countrywide generalisation.

In each settlement, fieldworkers randomly selected two households where a family member was either working abroad at the time of research or used to in the preceding five years. The selected households had different backgrounds (social status, ethnicity, faith, age, and gender of migrant family members). Fieldworkers spent 12 days with each of the two selected households.

During their stay, fieldworkers collected data on different aspects of family members' relationships. They used a sociometric technique by Jacob Moreno that interrogates typology of social behaviours within the families on a day to day basis and reveals the following:

- degrees of family cohesion-fragmentation;
- 'sociometric position' of family members in terms of attraction-repulsion and closeness - remoteness of relationships;
- interfamily subsystems, cohesive groups who may have informal leaders;
- communication links and the nature of communications between family members.

All family members were asked to fill in a sociometric questionnaire. First, family members listed people that were practically involved and how often (always, often, rarely) in a respondent's specific social activities: exchanging concerns and secrets; seeking advice; doing household chores together; resting; sharing news; turning for help; and shopping. Second, respondent wrote list people with whom they would prefer to conduct such activities.

The derived data was visualised through the sociograms on family relationships which reflected emotional preferences (a system of mutual or one-sided attraction or repulsion), presence of sociometric 'stars' (selected by most respondents) and 'pariahs' (avoided by everyone) in the family¹.

 *Sociograms on communication links reflected answers to the questions 'With whom do you share your concerns and secrets?' and 'With whom do you usually share news?'*

In 16 selected families, all members filled in the sociometric questionnaires. After processing the initial results, the data on 15 families were included in the analysis of interpersonal relationships which generated sociograms of family relationships and sociograms of communicational links for every family.

Focus group discussions

PIL used focus group discussions to obtain in-depth information on:

- how decisions are made about a relative's migration;
- how migration affects individual families and society at large;
- perceptions and mindsets on the issue of radicalisation in the country and local communities;
- perceptions and mindsets about factors which facilitate and prevent radicalisation.

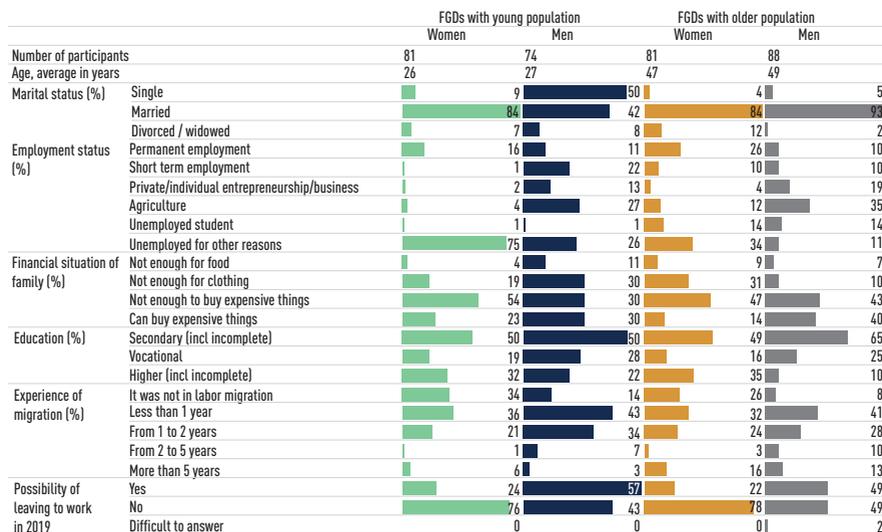
Focus group discussions were held with residents of the eight pilot settlements. In total PIL researchers conducted 32 focus groups discussions, four in each settlement, separately for each of the four groups:

- young women (28 years old and younger)
- young men (28 years old and younger)
- older women (35 years old and older)
- older men (35 years old men and older).

The total number of participants of the groups was 324.

1. <https://psychology.academic.ru/2424/социограмма>

Diagram 1. Social and demographic characteristics of respondents.



The average number of participants in female groups was 10. As for male groups, recruiting young men was difficult in many settlements for the following two reasons: a) many had migrated for work and were absent; and b) they often declined the invitation to discuss the proposed issues. As a result, participants in young men's groups averaged 9 and in older men's groups - 10.

Diagram 1 shows an insignificant average age difference between male and female groups participants: young men groups - 27; young women - 26; older men - 49; older women - 48.

Marital status among younger groups varied more noticeably: 84% of young women were married compared with only 50% of young men. Among the older participants, 84% of women were married, which was nine per cent less than for the older men.

Two thirds of young women and one quarter of young men were unemployed. The share of unemployed older women was two times less (34%) than among the young women but three times higher than the percentage of unemployed older men (11%).

Larger shares of young and older men worked in agriculture, 27% and 35% respectively. Of men engaged in business, including as private entrepreneurs or individual entrepreneurs, 22% were young men and 19% older men. The share of private entrepreneurship, individual entrepreneurship and business among young women was 2%, older women

- 4%. The percentage of women working in agriculture was 4% among young women and 12% among older women. 16% of young women and 26% of older women had permanent jobs.

In terms of financial wealth indicators, young men and older women were the worst off. 41% of young men and 40% of older women said they lack sufficient means to buy food and clothes. The percentage of young women in the same position was 23% and of older men - 17%.

The rate of completed secondary education was the same for young men and women - 50%. It was different for the older population: women - 49% and men - 65%. More than one third of women of both age groups had completed tertiary education. Only 25% of young men and 10% of older men received higher education.

As mentioned before, the participants were recruited for focus groups discussions based on their migration experience, among other criteria. However, in some settlements (especially nos. 3 and 4) both the young and the older women did not usually undertake migration, except for divorcees and widows who were mostly young and were not likely to return home. PIL adjusted to this situation by including women who had migrant relatives.

Most of the participants with experience of migration had less than a year experience: 45% of young men; 36% of young women; 32% of older women; 41% of older men.

Respondents with 1 to 2 years of migration experience were 34% of young men and 21% of young women, 24% older women and 28% older men.

People with the most extensive experience of 5 years and over, included 13% of older men and 16% of older women.

In 2019, it was mainly young and older men who actively considered migration, respectively 57% and 49%. Among women, those considering leaving was 24% of young women and 22% of older women.

All respondents were selected by the method of convenience with the assistance of local community activists. During the recruitment, PIL informed potential respondents about the research. PIL field workers contacted only people who had given informed consent to participate in the study.

Each participant was approached in person or by phone one day before a focus group discussion. Group moderators discussed with the participants the questions of voluntary participation, confidentiality of the obtained data, ethical standards of the data usage, and publication of the report.

○ Secondary data analysis

In addition to the above-listed primary data, PIL investigated secondary data on popular perceptions of radicalisation and its factors and, particularly, the following:

- Quantitative data from the study, *Determination of the level of knowledge among women and youth about the radicalisation and violent extremism*. PIL conducted the research for the Women's Progressive Social Union 'Mutakalim' as part of their project on countering women's radicalism in Jalad-Abad and Chui oblasts, supported by EU-Hedayah;
- qualitative and quantitative data from the study, Gender in Society Perceptions, funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and implemented through a joint programme of UN Women, UNFPA and IOM called 'Evidence-based approach to facilitate responsive gender policy and programmes for equality and lasting peace in Kyrgyzstan' in partnership with the Kyrgyz Ministry for Labour and Social Development and the Kyrgyz National Statistics Committee;
- quantitative data from the PIL survey on religiousness and civic participation².

2. G amza D. and Jones P., *Religious Regulation and Political Mobilization in Kyrgyzstan Dataset*, June 2019.