

Introduction

Roots of the domestic violence problem go back to the very beginning of human existence. Some believe that this supposed to decrease over the years of development, however, this problem still exist and as any issue in the country most suffering group from domestic violence still those vulnerable group of populations. There are hundreds if not thousands of researches, articles and other publications on this issue but we believe that another reminder of this relationship should be useful both for the reader and for us.

In this research we will look at the problem of domestic violence in Uzbekistan. It is important to emphasize that this problem is not officially recognized by the Government. For the purpose of this research domestic violence should be divided into direct and indirect violence where the second is the third party connives or does not create conditions when domestic violence is strongly punished or does not eliminate factors contributing to the development of the domestic violence. We will be mainly concentrating on the indirect violence as we believe that eliminating indirect violence will allow fighting with the direct violence more effectively.

World Wide Web resources define domestic violence as:

- Any physical abuse or threat or pattern thereof, between intimately involved partners, roommates, or family members. Domestic violence and other domestic friction is a significant contributor to homelessness and general domestic upheaval ¹
- This encompasses a wide range of abuse from physical and sexual abuse to emotional and financial abuse eg the victim is controlled in some aspect of their lives through fear of violence, physical or verbal, or they may be deprived of food, sleep or money. ²

It is important to consider that violence is not only physical abuse or sexual but also emotional abuses such as verbal humiliations. This definition of domestic violence allows us to look at this problem from different angles. Furthermore, domestic violence not only involves partners but also family members thus in the stories shown below the reader will see that women are violated not only by their husbands but also by the family of the husband which is rather more urgent for Uzbekistan.

¹ www.tenantrights.net/text/pg-glossary.html

² www.dover.gov.uk/crimereduction/strat2002-2005/app4.asp

The given case study is devoted to the problem of domestic violence in Uzbek families and analysis of those cases and main actors contributing to this problem. We paid attention to the positioning of the women in the family and tried to find answer in historical, social and religious past and present. Indeed the problem of domestic violence occurred long ago, and this is not something we have identified recently, however in our opinion poor socio economic situation in the country and low social security of people as well as other factors make this problem even more complicated with very few available tools for resolution in the nearest future. Moreover we have tried to analyze the policy of the state and what solutions and programs implementing. What are the concrete steps to liberate women in society and family with necessary conditions for their independence?

In our opinion women positioning is controversial with very different rights and privileges accepted in different categories of population. We have not identified direct correlation between violence and advantaged people and poor, between families representing different nationalities or categories of population. Violence have no borders and often unpredictable.

The very important part of the research was allocated to the attitude of police with respect to the domestic violence and what are perceptions. We strongly believe that law enforcement practices require urgent intervention and necessary alterations of the perceptions and views with respect to domestic violence. Although not always the police acts unprofessionally or neglect, however absence of special skills, training and state program with respect to domestic violence makes the police efforts miserable and poor. Furthermore, access of women to justice will be analysed in the present case-study.

Moreover, often poor economic situation of the woman makes her a hostage of the violent family. We came to the conclusion that presently, in addition to secure the family people became hostages of socio economic situation whereas single and divorced women often with children have very little chances to survive. In fact, single mother prefers to suffer pain rather than risk the life of her children and be alone face to face with poverty, low social security and unemployment.

Aims and Objectives

The scope of this research does not include the causes of domestic violence as they are well researched and very complex, ranging from socio-economic to cultural and psychological

reasons. We rather consider these causes and concentrate on analysis of the factors contributing to situation worsening and on the basis of concrete examples attempt to show how on the influence of different factors domestic violence can take its ugliest forms and how it affects women's lives.

We are not exploring why violence occur in the family but we attempting to examine how poverty can affect domestic violence in other words we recognize that despite social class or wealth every women could be vulnerable to violence but we explore on the basis of different stories how social class, wealth and infrastructure can affect dealing and fighting with domestic violence.

Methodology

This research is based on the primary data and stories are taken from the real life. The research cannot be widely based on statistical data as it is not publicly available and we simply base ourselves on the assumptions derived from a number of interviews.

For the purpose of this research we decided not to bond ourselves and create special rigid questionnaire as we assumed that it would crease unnecessary tensions and distrust from women involved in the research due to the sensitiveness of the chosen topic. All interviews were conducted in the friendly atmosphere engaging in open and trustful conversation.

While researching the problem of domestic violence the most problematic part of the research was collecting data and interviewing victims. Mentality of many people in this part of the world is to obscure the problems in the family, since traditionally family issues are not in public domain.

At the same time the official data is silent on cases of domestic violence and getting any numbers supposed to be relevant in our research was next to impossible mission.

Our interviews were rather random. We were targeted to get as much as possible information and then systematize in comprehensible and logical conclusions. Those random data collection projects were the sole source of information based on the evidences of violence in the families with the emphasis on gender relationships tensions.

Surely the research could be impossible without close interaction and exchanges in opinions with our partner NGO's and independent researchers or lawyers.

Question of the research

Main idea was to research numerous facts of domestic violence and analyze the main distinction of violence in the family with other forms of violence existed. The difference we were attracted is the philosophy of marital status, whereas instead of support and protection, parties violent to each other and mercilessly humiliating. What are the situations and their lives, that changes everything so much and makes one of them a hostage and victim and the other forgotten to his mission in the family and the life of other person?

Background of the problem

It is believed that one of the factors causing domestic violence is the low levels of education and cultural background of the person committing violence against women and also the low education and culture of the victims of such violence. This factor is believed to be the most complex to deal with as it is contributed by many other factors that will be attempted to analyzed next. Good knowledge of women of their own rights and well developed infrastructure and legal conditions to support these rights in practice can significantly contribute to the decrease of domestic violence in Uzbek Society. Unfortunately none of these exists in Uzbekistan.

Historical overview

Uzbekistan originally is agricultural country. From the very early history agricultural villages had no or poor access to education and other public services. Women suffered from deep despair living with a family that continuously abused them. The reader could ask what prevented them from divorce and why they kept silence not protesting against the behaviour of their husbands and sometimes whole family abusing and harassing them. There is a whole complex of factors affecting the issue of divorce and among them are traditions and poverty. Traditionally, divorce was shameful and disgraceful, moreover in Islam only men had a right to divorce their wives. In the soviet era women were given more rights in terms of divorces but this old tradition still maintained. Woman separating from her husband will be blamed in

everything and this will not be considered that she had to suffer from abuses and harassments. Woman coming back to her family would bring shame on the whole family and this could further create problems in good arrangements for the marriages of her brothers and sisters, if any.

Now our argument flows into another factor named above which is poverty. Woman originally from poor families had no or very low access to education or profession that could support them in the future. They have no access to the property thus they have to come back to the family of their parents. In most cases family of the parents could barely support themselves and another person or mostly women with her children adding to the family could be hard weight. It is definite that in such families divorced will not be welcomed. Therefore, most women suffering from abuses and harassments live in despair. She has no place to go after divorce as her family is too poor to support her and her children, then what government does about it?

State policy and Police practices

General situation in the country and poor socio-economic in the country is the main state policy with respect to everything. Hiding behind “temporary” economical problems the state as usual has left the arena of social welfare. To the best of our knowledge till this moment of the 21 century there is no a single agency directly addressed to problems of violent families. Authorities have failed to pronounce their position and develop the program. The state passes the topic over in silence and ignores any active measures. Partly this happens due to serious economic problems causing so much tension in the society that there are limited of abilities remains to other issues, partly this ignorance is dictated by lack of freedom in speech. Mass media supposedly responsible for regulating and educating people is not free, but free to glorify the power, the state and illustrate only success and happy stories of our life.

In the same situation is police, corrupted and passive. Unwilling to harm their crime rates statistics with numerous family related issues. The police disregards massive amount of this work and thus “improving” statistics and situation on numbers. Again poor human rights record of Uzbekistan with absence in freedom of speech makes the problem closed for discussion. Population does not know what to do with the problem and how the problem of domestic violence is important.

For implementation of this inactive and passive policies or influenced with corrupted practices, the police often humiliating the victim itself. For example having talked to various women we proved very little trust to police. For many women the image of police men associated with well known illustrations of violence caused in the police jails and investigator offices.

For example the former client of LAS, Svetlana Kim, has told us a story that fact of sexual humiliations and rape conducted by her husband, she was supposed to retell to five different investigators of Yunus Abad district police department every time. Svetlana says that this horror was repeating every time she was telling the story, like they wanted to verify whether the story is true. Svetlana says about unbearable feeling to retell the story of her rape and humiliations by her husband to different and unknown people, who are not hurry to help her, but listen and thus make very skeptical and indifferent. At the end of those five interviews Svetlana has decided to stop visiting the police and forget the story. She finally lost the confidence in police and assured in the idea of injustice and indifference.

Other things we have discovered while interviewing victims is a mercy. Despite the fact of brutal and violent relationships not all women are ready to call for police. They are very much aware of poor situation in the jails, tuberculosis and torture practiced by the police. Many victims we talked to was not ready to jail fathers to their children and thus cut off any even the most miserable assistance husband's provide. They are saying that jail and police is not the solution but making their life and relationship with relatives of husband even more difficult. The same was told by the mother of two children at the age of 30, who was brutally beaten and raped by her husband when normally come to house drunk and angry. She says "I loved him, I love him still, but he makes mistakes, he is violent he does not understand what he is doing. He deserves to spend some time and to think in the jail, but he loves our children and makes expensive gifts and care about them. My children love him, despite obvious threat they feel when he is drunk. No I don't want to see him in the jail, in the middle of the deserts with tuberculosis around and brutal police officers."

This understanding is prevailing in the situation when brutality in other families makes them believe this is normal. Women have changed their views on life, they suffers alone and merciful to violent and strong men. Unfortunately Uzbek legislation does not suppose any other remedy but criminal punishment. Criminal prosecution not always applies to every life situation and resolves or supposes to resolve any case. In our opinion the state obliges to carry

out necessary legal framework reforms on the relationships in the family and introduce necessary changes.

Infrastructure development and economic situation

Clear failure of the government in recent economic reforms, corruption at all levels, poor social security system and low development of infrastructure add to the problem of domestic violence. As it was discussed earlier women suffering from domestic violence live in despair as they have no other path to go. They cannot divorce for several reasons (not considering moral “obligations”) and this includes the following: financial dependence, poverty of her parents family, no or very low paid job. Woman cannot find herself good job as her parents did not have enough money to support her while she was studying or the job she could find is very low paid so she cannot support herself and her children alone. As reader could see we are describing a woman from poor family who is more marginalized than those of more wealthy family. In one hand social class and welfare could partially solve the problem and will be good basis for a woman to escape from violence and in the same way certain conditions must be created by governmental or nongovernmental institutions to support women suffering from violence, for instance special shelters for violated women where they can spend at least one night and with the further support. This will be discussed in more details later. So the argument is government together with the civil society should create certain environment that allows rehabilitation of women suffered from violence.

The case of Alina can be used to support this argument. Alina, a mother of three children is divorced after several years of continuous violence she suffered from her husband. Sergey was perspective law student when she married him. It seemed that Sergey’s carrier developed very fast. That in its turn had terrible circumstances on their family life. Parties, heavy drinking have showed different side of Sergey. Drunk he used to cruelly beat Alina and moreover this affected their children. Alina says: “When Sergey used to come home drunk, children used to hide under the table as if he would find them he would had beaten them as well. But what could I do I had no work, no place to go, I have nothing to support myself and my children!” Alina, unlike many other women was luckier, once she met very good people who helped her to find a job in foreign company office as cleaner. After some time she could buy a small house and left her husband. Moreover, now she is working abroad and is able to provide herself and children good future. The reader could see that if a woman is given a chance she would have escaped from violence.

Women and the society

Nowadays Uzbekistani society has very little common with equal opportunities rights between man and women. In spite of secular laws prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of gender, we have clear cut picture when old and archaic traditions prevails and constitute other more comprehensible for many people set of rules, where the role of women is often minimized to domestic issues, bringing up children and minor professional career.

There is a combination of old patriarchal traditions and life style of very much modern and western. The society divided into rural and urban population with often exceptions when people from the both camps may confess principles different for the majority of that particular area. According to national thinkers and observers socio economic situation brings very much difference to people believes. The life in the cities with more opportunities and different values

The Uzbek legislation does not suffers nay discrimination rules. Accordingly de jure women may enjoy the same rights and freedoms as those practiced by men. Moreover the labor legislation guarantees preferential rights for women in cases of termination of labor contracts in cases of redundancy or vacations or necessary leaves for baby-minding etc. However practically such rules have reverse affect on the positioning of women, since en employer envisaging future difficulties with extra guarantees for women prefers to hire male employees having less rights and thus being more comfortable.

Thus, tough family traditions and duties surpluses with uncomfortable situations on the work place. Bearing in mind house hold duties of any women and traditions and assumptions prevailing in many families' women jeopardizing women performance on the work place makes women less attractive for her personal career and self-realization and independence.

The most widespread problem for any women and especially those who are educated and young is to find proper job in the view of their young age. Normally employers have no desire to hire young lady of marriage age. Often on the interviews an employers are interested with the plans of women for pregnancy. Although this is the most irrelevant question for any possible position, however this is very normal situation. In the interview with the close friend of ours Natalia who presently occupies high position with the big multinational company, we

found out that at the time she joined the company many years ago, the management proposed her to sign the paper prohibiting her to give birth in three years period. Natalia did not want to sign that paper but the situation on the labor market did not leave other opportunity to agree for humiliating any normal women conditions.

At the same time, you may observe daily glorification and admiration of women and her abilities to reproduction and bringing up children. Surely, are really appreciate the role of women but often deem them as secondary human beings responsible for very natural duties. Women are isolated from important state affairs not only because of strong patriarch traditions but also to the whole system of the state giving less and less rights and opportunities to women.

Women in husband's family

As we said above historically women role in society traditionally was limited to house hold responsibilities. Surely this was correlating with women political, social and economical rights, however presently the situation cannot be the same. The contemporary world and modern philosophy liberates women and give them equal rights to those adopted for men population.

We would like to address this chapter to one of the most controversial chapters of Uzbek family relationships whereas the youngest son in the family invites or brings to live his bride to the house of parents. Particularly this situation causes very many problems, and instead of two sided relationships and love, the couple receives and supposed to coordinate their lives with beliefs and understanding prevailing at parents. Having in mind exceptional national respect of youth to older people, no ignorance to the opinion of elders is possible. Usually the stories like this getting very complicated with very many difficulties for husband becoming the center of quarrels between the new bride and his mother. Such stories are famous and fulfilling the life of the whole society with rumors and gossips, but this is not the only side effect of such relationships. Sometimes such life situations end with violence and brutality. The stories we know evidencing that often violence and brutality becoming the part of this sort of relationships. Unfortunately this tradition has very deep roots in social understanding of marital life, unfortunately since in cases of unhappy and brutal relationships this institution origin even more complications and troubles.

So, according to our statistics 80 percent of all violence marriages we have interviewed believe that independently and alone from parents' contribution the marriage could much easier for both sides. The most widespread problem is husband's dependence on mother's jealousy to the bride and his total and wordless obedience to mother position to the detriment of bride.

For example Nodira Eshonhodjaeva who is divorced and lives independent live with two years daughter in Tashkent city, says that her mother in law from the very beginning of their common life was provoking to conflict and soil her reputation. This caused trouble in her good relationships with the husband who was not able to neutralize his mother and wife. Quarrels, and fights lead to early days divorce and Nodira's lonely motherhood. Nodira is sure that should they live separately this would not be a case. Although Nadira's story does not terrible in the scenes of violence however classically demonstrates normal situation in the lives of many people. Again, the story is very much usual and even happy, since Nadira was able to leave that family and be on her own, without losing her health and moral good stands with people she does not love.

There are very many other sort of stories when violent and crazy husbands in conjunction with their parents coordinating their violence with respect to young and defendless victim. Often this possible with respect to people poor, unable to live separately and win the bread. Often this is possible after long campaign of physical pressure and disparagement. When victim loses control, self-confidence and obeys to whatever stupidity implanted in the new family.

Below we would like to demonstrate cases of domestic violence when the whole family takes part in humiliation and harassment over the women. Despite the fact this is surely not usual situations for normal people in any part of the world, but exceptional and unique for group harassment.

Radjabova Shahnoza was happy young girl when she married Rahimov Usmanjon. Her troubles started almost from the very first day of their life. Everyday, mother of Rahimov used to find a new work for her to do. All she used to do was cleaning house, washing things of the whole family, cooking food and doing everything else, including work that is usually done by men. Life she so much dreamed of turned out to be life of a slave in the house of husband. Later Shahnoza had her first baby girl and even this did not make family of her husband happy and satisfied with Shahnoza. Her husband kept beating and abusing her periodically and all

these abuses were fully supported by parents of Rahimov saying that it was needed for educational purposes. Moreover Shahnoza was constantly directly abused by her mother and father in law. Many people tried to help this woman, but even interaction of neighbors, relatives or police did not help. Shahnoza did not have a place to go with her two children as her parents family was too poor to support them or at least find a place to stay, her husband found another woman and drove out Shahnoza from his house. Shahnoza went to court and she was awarded with a right to own one room in the house of her husband. However, after this, abuses against poor women worsened. Officially, Shahnoza was entitled to monthly payments from her husband, she was receiving these funds rarely and she could not go to the court as Rahimov could be criminally prosecuted only if he did not pay the compensation constantly for more than six months. Rahimov knew this condition very well and he paid this compensation after five or four months. Once Shahnoza was cleaning a house when another quarrel started. Tashmuhamedov Umarjon – father in law, tried to rape her, he jab a carrot into her mouth when neighbors overheard Shahnoza shouting and crying.

Aygul was the eldest child in the family. Her parents could hardly support the whole family. When Aygul got married her parents were even more glad as their burden became easier. Aygul lived with her husband and family. Her husband used to go to work early in the morning and come back late in the evening. Aygul stayed in the house alone. Once, brother of her husband came back earlier than usual and badly raped Aygul. He threatened her not to tell anything to Aygul. She was in a very difficult position, she did not know whether to go to police or keep silence. Aygul preferred the second choice as she thought no one is going to believe her and if she divorces because of that she has no place to go. Aygul understood that she made a very big mistake when brother of her husband raped her for the second, third and many other times. He blackmailed her of telling to Aygul's husband that she agreed to have sex with him. Once husband of Aygul came back home and saw Aygul with his brother. He did not want to listen to anything Aygul said and terribly beaten her. It turned out that Aygul is guilty in everything that happened to her.

Gulnara lived with her husband and his parents for four years. From the very beginning sexually she attracted her father in law and threatened to stay with him in the same house was insisting to live separately. She shared her cause with the husband, who without any hesitation punched her in the face. She understood she did wrong, since this was a real shock for her husband as well, but he did not know how to react. She decided to forget this incident and stayed to live in that house. Later the same month, the father in law has invited her to the

room for a serious conversation and tried to convince her for the sex. Gulnara refused and shocked left the room. On the next day she decided to collect her possessions and leave the house, her husband severely punched her few times. The father in law has also added that all she is saying is lie, and that Gulnara is crazy young woman. Gulnara left that house and sure that should they live separately the problem could not arise and destroy their marriage.

Indeed the most often the cases of violence and cruelty may be seen in cases when young couple lives with the parents of husband. This tradition exists on the whole territory of Uzbekistan and supposed to guarantee easy old age for parents. However not always new bride is happily accepted in the new family. As we demonstrated above in some cases the whole family participates in cruel and inhuman humiliations.

Surely the most well known tragedy happened in the city of Nukus, the shock and horror of that story revealed the topic on the newspapers, usually blind and ignorant. That story is about the young lady whose marriage was settled with the man from the close neighborhood. The husband was severely beating the lady, and she was hiding this fact, but sharing only with her older sister, who believed that situation is not so bad or beatings not cruel. The sister could not help her as she was poor, and was sending the lady back to husband. This was repeating for quite a long time. One day the relatives of husband have convicted her of stealing and in response severely beat her till the death. However the husband who was working in the police has imitated suicide by hanging her in one of the rooms. The required medical post-mortem examination was not conducted. The only person who did not believe in suicide was her father, and despite of police prosecution, beatings in the jails of city of Nukus and threats has gathered more than 400 people at the building of city prosecutor. He demanded initiation of the investigation on the fact of death of his daughter. We do not retell the story in details when the father was forced to leave the country and seek for asylum in the neighboring Kazakhstan or his appeals to embassies and international offices accredited in the republic. We do not retell how father illegally has disinterred the grave. We do not retell particularities but would like to note the date and the place when she was killed the whole husband's family was in the house and thus actively or passively participating in killing of the woman and hiding the facts of her death. After that the family was confusing the investigation, threatening the father and using all possible tools to put pressure. We see the passiveness of victim who could not decide what to do with her life and get rid of that situation, resistance of the brave father who at the right time ignored the symptoms of violence and blindly missed the chance to save her life, we see the sister of women who got used to violence as many other and passively

observing her sister humiliated, we see husband who was intimidated and shamelessly hiding the fact of her murder, we see the family of husband which was directly taking part in humiliations and murder of women, we see authorities intervened after 400 people gathered before the building of prosecutor and evidencing the brutality of husband. All those people are very much normal for today Uzbekistan and typical. They exist everywhere but less prominent when violence is not mortal. They prefer to observe but to change or do the live around them better. They don't know that women must be respected and be much different to ideas and image they used to accept. The case and people's roles demonstrate old fashion understandings, views and participation in other people live. The society has reached the stage when we can rethink our traditions and be more flexible to accept.

Rather different was the case of Gulbahor. She is good looking young woman from middle class family. That was just a small talk conversation when she asked what was the topic of our research and interestingly Gulbahor had something to tell us about violence she faced in her life. Gulbahor got married late for Uzbek traditions, she was 27, for her husband it was the second marriage and for Gulbahor it was the first. In the beginning everything was not that bad, although the family of her husband overloaded her with house work. It was already 18 months they lived together and they had no children. Gulbahor's husband had children from his first marriage and this easily proved that something was wrong with Gulbahor's health. Gulbahor says that after the first year of their marriage her life turned into hell. Gulbahor says: "No, he never beat me but at the same time this was such a moral pressure from him and his family that the only thing I wanted sometimes is to die. They treated me like a slave, they could order me to do such a hard work that a man can hardly do!" Gulbahor wanted to separate with her husband when she found out that he father was diagnosed with cancer. Gulbahor did not want to upset her father, she knew that he had few months to live and she tried to pretend happy. Gulbahor's father passed away and she divorced her husband, with good money left from her father she started new business. Gulbahor learned new profession and now she is successful business lady. She insisted us to show in the research that violence is not just about beating, this also includes moral harassment and humiliation. It is important to say that Gulbahor suffered from a very serious nervous exhaustion and she was taking medication for several months after divorce.

The story of Gulbahor is an example of few that resolved well and being self-sufficient and financially independent allowed her to stop violence against her. Contrary to the story of Gulbahor, Camilla Temirova told us how life turned out for her. Camilla's marriage was

arranged as many other families in Uzbekistan. She married son of the richest family in their small town. Her father in law was respected rich person who had spoiled children. Camilla was not allowed to work although she had good education and the argument for that was that they have enough money for several generations after. Her husband was very outgoing person and after almost ten years of marriage he started gambling. Couple of years later Camilla's father in law passed away, little later they were in the situation when they had no money as her husband lost all money left by his father. Camilla's husband never worked and he did not want to do anything. It was a time when Camilla should think about marriage of her daughter and son. They started selling jewelry and property, her husband became heavy drinker and almost everyday cruelly beat Camilla. She had no other choice but to clean other people's houses to somehow support herself and children. The reader can conclude that poverty was in the roots of the violence in the family of Camilla.

Cases of violence

While interviewing the victims of violence we have faced with different kinds of women, younger and older, those who was married in love or so called settled marriages. In all those cases we see different stories, people and perceptions. We were talking with victims of severe cruelty and those who were more lucky and beaten rarely. But the main conclusion we have identified was their readiness to accept male's cruel education methods for better and happy future for themselves and their children. We have tried to analyze their life standpoints and roots of such abeyance and passiveness.

For example Lola who is 29 years old, living in constant violence from her husband's side says that: "It's normal when the man is firm and able to keep his wife attentive, it's not crime if a man sometimes demanding and even battering, but when we see the cases of constant violence and cruelty like in my case this is not normal, this is not good, this is inhuman". On this example we can observe weird views and believes, and those coming from the women whose rights are violated, whose body is beaten, whose psychological health is damaged.

Other situation we faced incidentally in the office of LAS, when the lady came for legal aid was telling the story to one of our lawyers. Her case did not related to the topic of domestic violence but at some stage she expressed the view that beatings and severe education of women who was suspected in unfaithfulness is good and normal for good stands of the family. She was arguing that cruelty may resolve problems in family and that couple better knows

how to manage their relations. Seemingly she knew what she was talking about, but to could not find the answer or was shocked when we asked her: “Why don’t you beat your husband when he is unfaithful to you or you suspect him in other wrongdoings for the good stands of the family?” The lady could not reply to the question of our lawyer and could not understand how a wife is able to beat her husband and why the duty and care for the family and decision making now belongs to women. Indeed poor education and archaic traditions have contributed a lot to understanding that man is powerful and unlimited in rights to form the family relationships with no respect to women and her needs.

In majority of other interviews we have mentioned that women understand and respect men decisions and care. For example Khalida of 19 years old, while telling the trivial story of her relationships with her husband and the parents of husband has told us that men must be responsible and must be bread winner, must be firm with children to give them proper education and good morals, and be loving but at the same time demanding and if necessary cruel to wife. This story demonstrates unprecedented mentality which is despite sufferings and humiliations do not exclude male supremacy with the features of cruelty.

In our understanding this is the main difference between cases of violence in western countries where women do not accept violence as cultural and essential and Uzbek society justifying reasonable violence. This particularity belongs not only to young ladies but even those who was suffering violence for many years.

Rano Ergasheva of 40 years old women. She says about 21 years in marriage with the man who constantly beating her, humiliating and unrespectable to her freedoms and rights. She says that years ago her marriage was settled between families living in the same mahalla (close neighborhood). Their fathers were friends and they believed that children could happily coexist. However the reality was different and the marriage became a real disaster for Rano, who was supposed to stop her education at Pedagogical Institute and became a house wife for her husband. He isolated her from the friends and even the family of her father. Rano was trying to leave her husband and divorce, however at the times when she understood that, the University was far behind. She was burdened with three kids from the man whom she did not love at all, and did not know what to do. Therefore until these days she lives with her husband and got used to suffer brutality. Rano is saying: “I am the most unhappy person in this life, I have lost everything, I have lost respect in myself, I have lost control over my life, and passively observing how the days of my life constituting into the years. I thought that my

beauty and faithfulness will change his attitude, but as long as I thought so and time was passing, my husband became less interested in me and our family. For all my life I was serving his interest and interest of my children. I was doing my best to hide his brutality”.

These were the words of the person who devoted her life to husband, despite obvious evidences that life with such a person is not a possibility, and that her husband is an ordinary criminal.

The same long days of violence was lived through by Nigora Abdurasulava of 53 years old. Her story began with exceptional love of her husband and his long days under the window of her parent's house. Parents were against her love to him, but finally agreed to wedding. At the beginning they lived more or less happily and quickly gave birth to three children, but with time went by, her husband has lost interest to her and became more and more aggressive. Nigora started feel pain not only moral but later physical as well. Her husband, who was educated, handsome and very attractive person changed completely. Nigora felt absolute disregards to her needs, she forgot what is to be in bed with her husband and their common live was limited to family dinners. Nigora is saying that this life lasts for 10-15 years and she does not know what to do. She said the husband lost any interest to her and from time to time, when he is drunk or angry with any of his business problems beating her, if not severely but painfully. Nigora does not want to break her relationships, as very many other women in the same situation completely dependable.

However the things are not the same in every situation, not all women passively observe the days of their life with violent person next to them. For example the young unnamed lady, who was systematically beaten by her husband and finally was raped by one of the friends, applied to the police seeking for protection. In this case the police quickly initiated the criminal investigation and within a month submitted the case to the court. In the result of this investigation both husband and his friend were sentenced to jail. After she applied to the police, the husband and his friend were asking her to withdraw an application, but she refused to do so.

The same stories we hear a lot, where police have a real contribution to the resolution of the problems between couples. However not always we see such professional attitude. In our understanding very much depends on the policeperson and his/her personal understanding of

the problem. For example in the same kind of stories the practice of police in different part of the city is different and different to the practices in rural areas.

For example one of the unnamed clients of LAS was raped by husband and beaten. The same story repeated few times. Neighbors who heard astonishing sounds from their apartment decide to call the police. The police came to the apartment but ignored the quarrel seeing that there were not any strangers but a couple. The lady was asking for their help but police tried to convince her that quarrel is very normal situation everywhere and that they can not loose time by mitigating between two in love. Then the officers have left an apartment and the story ends with dangerous cranial injury. In our opinion police was obliged to help and isolate physically stronger husband to prevent such a consequence.

Our own experience demonstrates that police officers do not like the cases of domestic violence so badly “distorting” criminal indexes and reporting of progress. As we know many police people do not understand the rape of violence in family as a crime. Partly because torture they systematically exploit has not by pass the information on family violence as a crime, or they practice the same in their own families, or as we said such “minor” offences add to much extra work, but the problem with police services exist. This is getting obvious when you see that people in uniform have no idea and training necessary. The scale of domestic violence must learn them for better services and better and professional skills, like those existing in other countries when special people or departments deal with his meter.

Suicide cases

All we said above have really horrible face. Violence, hopelessness and unbearable pain left many people before the only option of committing suicide. We were saying in our general evaluation report that life is getting so poor and tough for many rural area residents. The life which lacks social security, everything and the most primitive things many other problems associated with poverty make women responsible for housing really, really exhausted. As we know labor and entrepreneurial opportunities sometimes equals to null both to women and men.

In this situation many victims complain that low income and miserable life make their husband angry, nervous with often brutal fights and beatings. So, Kholida who is 37 years old women and came to Tashkent as a mardikor says her story: “My husband is a driver in

Kashkadariya oblast of Uzbekistan. His work means random employers with unstable income to plan the budget. Most often he sits without the work, angry for the whole world and himself. These days (every second) he finds the only guilty person, which is me. He was pushing me, yelling at me and beating. I know that the reason is his misfortune and no job to do. He angry for everything even me being his wife. Often he beats children, asking for food, sweats, toys etc. When we don't have food to eat but bread and tea, he asks me to boil an empty boil. After I pour out the water, and he believe that there is always must be something be prepared in the house. Ritually he believes the kitchen must cook, even though there is nothing to eat after. I was about to commit a suicide, especially in cases my children are sick and I have nothing to buy them, no medicine no fruits, nothing.

Indeed the step to suicide was next I was expecting to do. I did not know what to do, I did not know how to change the life". This is the story of women who was about to commit suicide, but the there are hundreds of others who did it, who really committed suicide.

For many years the tradition to commit suicide in Uzbekistan very much differs from those in other parts of the world. Shockingly Uzbek women, some Tajik provinces and the parts of India state chooses to end their lives by burning themselves publicly and when they are alone. There are no words to describe the horror, when young women running in pain burned and falling down on earth in deadly sufferings. There is no power to analyze the situation and what has forced them to do that. Why geographically only this three parts of the world chooses to burn them and thus commit a suicide. Obviously such a terrible option comes to the idea of protest and declares martyr life. Surely a woman who does not want to leave this life quietly wants to say something she could not say alive. She could not say when the society could do something and save her life. Or there are so many such stories around that society became blind to them, became indifferent and men continuing o imitate mistakes of the past. Why Uzbek people have no brave to talk about it, to investigate and try to find answers.

Suicide or attempt to suicide is the worst outcome of domestic violence. Women commit suicide and this is taken as a form of protest against violence as there are no other ways of doing that. The story of 20 years old Robia was told us by Natalya who lived the same neighbourhood. Robia was from the middle class family and her father held position in the local government. Her husband's family lived poorer than Robia's. Robia's mother in law arranged this marriage as she wanted to ensure promotion and career development for her son. Couple of year later Robia's father lost his job and after that Robia's life turned into hell. She

was constantly humiliated by her husband and mother in law on every small detail. She could not divorce as her parents did not want to see their daughter divorced. She had no other place to go. She went to neighbourhood committee, they told her she must be patient and that every young couple goes through this stage. Robia's husband found another woman and started to physically abuse his wife. Robia was hiding in the house so other people will not see bruises on her face and body. The last straw for Robia was that her husband and mother in law openly talked that they doubt who was the father of Robia's baby. Once she left a baby with her neighbour and asked to send baby to her parents' house if something goes wrong. Sahiba suspected something and went to see Robia. She found Robia lying in the kitchen writhing from pain and there was a smell of vinegar. Sahiba called emergency. Sahiba says: "Doctors did everything to rescue her life and I was there with her to hold her hand. Doctors told me that there was almost no chance to save her life as chemical vinegar burnt her internal organs. But there was another shocking incident. Doctors called police to start investigation. Police officers came and the only thing they did was that they came to Robia and said – Does it hurt? You are fool! – I still hope she did not hear them!" Robia died on the same day. Robia's family used all their links to criminally prosecute her husband and mother in law. Sahiba says: "It was too late! No one can return Robia, and this is the fault of our society that we did not recognized this problem, this is the fault of police officers and their attitudes"

We fail to find survived victims of attempts to suicides as this mostly happens in far rural areas where we don't have nor offices or contacts. But we have talked to people working as mardikors on Tashkent labor exchanges who knew that stories in their home villages. One of such stories happened in the same Kashkadariya oblast of Uzbekistan where the lady of 24 years old lived. According to the words of a witness she was belong to poor family working on the cotton fields. Her husband did not have permanent job and was doing different work as a temporary employee. When there was a harvest he was assisting to farmers, at other times he was doing other minor duties. Their family was very usual, with no money, work and future. There are hundred thousand of such families in the region. The witness says that a woman was very normal and usual. She didn't complain about domestic violence or brutality of her husband. Nobody was her friend; nobody knew what she had on her mind. But finally the whole village she lived discovered horrible picture of her suicide by burning herself in the pit she dig for herself. She did it on purpose not to survive not to run into water. Unfortunately this became very normal practice for women willing to end their days.

Save shelter

In researching and analyzing the problem our working group went to psychologist, an expert in marital relationships and managing crisis situations. Rano Izzatovna is a well known expert the Professor of Psychology of the National University of Uzbekistan and popular among many people including victims of domestic violence. Her experience is 15 years of experience in different parts of Uzbekistan and CIS. During our meeting we have asked her advice in drafting the research and what she believes is a real need for making the situation better. Surely she was very informative with some unnamed examples from the lives of some people. However at the end of the meeting she pronounced an interesting idea, that Uzbekistan and Tashkent in particular lacks very simple thing, the save shelter institutions for victims of domestic violence. We do not know how these institutions named in other countries, but the idea is the same, to offer some premises to people who do not want to stay at home with violent husband. Rano Izzatovna said that such institutions she saw in other western countries and those are good to get all kinds of support and advice. In Uzbekistan the situation with this is very bad. According to Uzbek legislation, the residents of the particular territory are not allowed to rent an apartment or take a room in the hotel. Simply said, in case the person is registered on the certain territory and wants to take an apartment in the hotel, he/she is prohibited to do so, and could be fined. The Uzbek hotels do not allow the client to occupy with the residency same as at the hotel.

Such a ridiculous notion comes from the Soviet era, until now have force in Uzbekistan. Rano Izzatovna is saying that even the most primitive task to move for a while or until things will get better sometimes is so difficult especially for people with low income.

The notion of the save shelter Rano Izzatovna correlates with broader independence. Such independence means financial and economical sustainability. She confirmed our views hat majority of women in Uzbekistan are either unemployed or financially dependent on income received by husband. She says that even though her patients are mainly well provided and advantaged people, nevertheless all they have often is money received from violent husband. She says that in the situation of low state finance and subsidies to lonely mothers and low economic opportunities they don't see for themselves and their children the life which could be miserable. Rano believes that neither legal nor other artificial mechanisms are able to change the position of women. She says deep social and economic reforms are necessary.

In case the paradigm shift will happen and women will get financial independence all other problems will be resolved easily. Today women need support from the state, which is not necessary or absent, tomorrow when she will be free and financially efficient many problems will be resolved on her own. At the same time the role of civil society organisations is also crucial. Creation of crisis centers, education of women of their rights and opportunities to learn new, more demanded professions will be a significant contribution to resolving or easing the problem of domestic violence. Surely the problem of domestic violence should be solved by complex of measures and creation of crisis and learning centers is important step in it.

Conclusion

Having interviewed victims of violence we did not identified any age, social-economical, educational distinction. In most of the cases victims of violence represented various groups of population. Rarely we identify them with some type of personality or some background. In our opinion the victim of domestic violence is not the victims itself but actions and brutality of outside forces, other people.

However despite uncertain belonging to the social group, the victim is very much under the influence of socio-economical situation. Often poor people justify or explain their passiveness with generally understandable economical issues. They argue that poverty and unemployment low social security etc. do not contribute to their willingness to live independently or call to police. They are dually threatened with inside world in the family and outside economical and social situation.

Moreover we have identified a lot of common among many victims and their stories. We see obvious correlation between jealous and tradition of Uzbek families when the youngest son brings the bride to live with his parents. In both cases, husbands limiting the freedom of victim justifying their caprice with jealousy or in traditional families with the tradition to watch after the older parents. Our research has demonstrated that initially these limits in freedoms and movement were justified with love and jealous and traditions, but afterwards with simple brutality. Having subordinated the victim, husbands start humiliating physically. The level of subordination reaches the point when deeply dependent person can not set free her mind and will to change the situation.

The tactics used in most of the cases reminded us repeated brain washing, with no independence and self respect at the end. The victim blocking her ability to feel the pain resulted in primitive way of thinking and loosing her personal abilities to resist. She accepts the rule of the game and prefers to suffer and find herself in suffering.

This situation helps them to survive but rarely to resolve the situation in the family.

In the result of our research we came to conclusion about following characteristics inherent in man causing violence.

- They don't believe in life without the violence, and applies educational forms of violence, in order to prevent undesirable;
- Very much under the influence of patriarch traditions whereas the role of the man is superior;
- Often practice aggression in sexual relationships;
- Having in mind above, do not understand how serious are their offences;
- And finally ready to load their sins to other party, having sincere surety that they are right.

On the contrary, victims have opposite features. They do understand and accept their mistakes; they are not sure in themselves and finally ready to accept any aggression as a payment for their bad behavior. Unfortunately we did not have a chance to know victims before the research but no doubt that marital life has left them without power for resistance. Many victims complain of new sicknesses and the most often on changes and understanding of life.

The problem of domestic violence is complex and affected by many different factors such as financial position, low culture or education and problems arising from childhood and many others. This research showed that all women despite the social class, economic welfare, colour of the skin or origin are vulnerable against domestic violence however, how they resist or stop being violated depends on the whole complexity of issues where social and economic welfare plays crucial role. Social security, effective economic system and wide opportunities for women leave far less area for domestic violence to be systematic and treated as normal phenomenon in the society.

In the introductory part of this research we talked about indirect violence – third party conniving or even tolerating domestic violence. The problem of domestic violence is not recognized as such by the government and almost no measures were taken to improve this situation. As we discussed before the problem of domestic violence is not officially recognized by Government of Uzbekistan as such and it takes very lop-sided approach towards looking at the violence in the families. Structures created by government and authority they have in the most cases worsen the situation as those structures force women for patience. In addition to such failure structures governmental agencies do some awareness raising campaigns that are mainly related to improving old habits and traditions that partially and indirectly contribute to domestic violence but these steps look more like few drops in the ocean of the problem as they are not supported by creating and developing economic and legal basis for the problem. In this research we discussed only few factors but we believe that they the most important to concentrate on while solving the problem of domestic violence. One for sure that domestic violence is complex problem and this complexity requires variety of methods used at the same time and one very important factor is improving social and economic rights of women.