



USAID
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PROGRAM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program



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Glossary

USAID - United States Agency for International Development

EFCA - Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia

NGO – Nongovernmental Organization

TPC - Territorial Public Councils

PTB - Public Territorial Board

TC – Territorial Council

FG – Focus Group

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

IDI – In-Depth interview

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Introduction

Aftermath of 2010 events that took more than 400 lives away, the socio-economic condition of Osh and Jalal-Abad cities have significantly deteriorated.

In this regard, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (EFCA) launched a two-year program titled USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" in 2012. The main goal of the Program is to provide opportunities for women in the South of Kyrgyzstan in taking the lead in interethnic reconciliation and in promoting the role of women in peace building at the local level. The Program has been implemented in Osh and Jalal-Abad -the two cities, where risk of interethnic conflict outbreak has risen after the events of 2010.

Every phase of the Program was planned and implemented based on the following tasks:

- ✓ To strengthen cooperation and trust among women in communities recovering from the conflict;
- ✓ To enhance the role of women in promoting initiatives in reconciliation and conflict mitigation.

Within the Program the EFCA organized and is supporting 16 Women's Initiative Groups in Osh and Jalal-Abad. The Women's Initiative Groups openly select projects proposed by local residents. Those ideas are supported first of all that encourage collaboration between groups still suffering from mistrust and promote community development. The EFCA helps the grantees find required co-financing for their projects from local authorities, private companies or other sources.

Methodology

To collect quality and reliable information reflecting the specifics of the subject both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection are used in the study.

Quantitative method involves carrying out various surveys based on structured closed-type questions that are answered by a large number of respondents. The main objective of quantitative research is to obtain numerical assessment of the issue of concern¹.

As a part of quantitative method, face-to-face interviews with women living in the cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad were conducted. The survey was conducted on the basis of a specially designed questionnaire.

The fieldwork was conducted from 23rd to 27th December, 2014. 7 Interviewers were involved in the work:

Oblast	Number of interviewers
Osh	6
Jalal-Abad	1

Qualitative method involves collection of information in a free format; it does not focus on statistical evaluation, but is based on understanding, elaboration and interpretation of empirical data, and is a source of establishing hypotheses and productive ideas. The aim of the qualitative research methods is to get exploration data, but not the quantitative distribution of opinions. In order to explain and interpret concepts verbal explanation is used, not the numerical.

The qualitative method included:

- ✓ Interviews (in-depth) with representatives of government organizations, various NGOs and international organization;
- ✓ Focus Group Discussions with representatives of target groups of the Program.

Research Tools

The research tools involved the following elements:

- **Questionnaire** – a preliminary version of the questionnaire was developed by the specialists of the SIAR Research and Consulting, and its further revision was made by the representatives.

¹ Agency of Independent Researching of Opinions, "Research methodologies: Quantitative research", available at http://agnim.ru/metody_issledovaniya

The Questionnaire consisted of the following main sections of questions:

- ✓ The Program
 - ✓ Objectives and design of the Program
 - ✓ Components of the Program
 - ✓ Impact/results of the Program
 - ✓ Sustainability of the Program
 - ✓ Recommendations
 - ✓ Demography
- **Guide for supervisors and interviewers** was developed by SIAR to improve the work of the team responsible for the data collection. The Guide includes information on the tasks, objectives, requirements for research and for the Project, in general. The Guide includes a detailed description of the basic processes and procedures for the implementation of each stage in data collection.
- **Focus Group Guide** – in accordance with the goals and objectives of the study a Guide on Focus Group Discussions was developed agreed upon and approved by the Client.

The Guide (Focus Group Scenario) includes the following information:

1. Introduction. The wording of welcome the respondents; explaining the research objectives.
2. Detailed explanation of the rules of Focus Group Discussions and introductory questions creating a relaxing and free atmosphere.
3. Discussion of the research questions and revealing deep information.
4. Closing the Focus Group Discussion and thanking the participants for taking part in it.

The Moderator asked the questions from the Guide gradually switching from general to private questions that kept spontaneity of participants' statements.

Data processing and analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the household survey was entered into a database (SPSS) with the help of SPSS DATA ENTRY module. A data entry monitoring form with integrated procedures has been developed for data entry. After data entry and cleaning, aggregated data and tables have been produced.

To produce transcripts the **results obtained from focus group discussions** were sent to the experienced company staff, who is knowledgeable in the principles of writing transcripts and can convey the meaning, emotion and atmosphere of each focus group. The transcripts of each focus group were sent to the SIAR experts for further development of a comprehensive report.

Geography of research

Within the impact assessment of the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program the following oblasts of the country have been covered (Table 1):

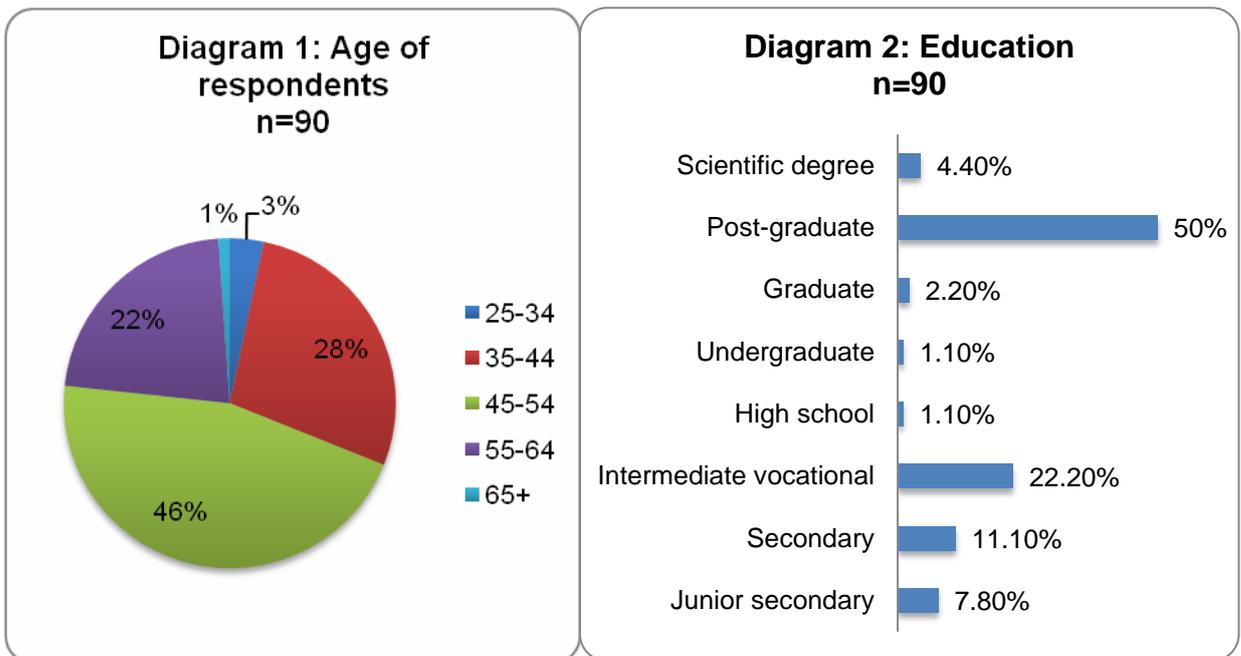
Oblast	City	Number of respondents
Osh	Osh	60
Jalal-Abad	Jalal-Abad	30

Target group

The target group of the study to assess the impact of the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program is the women participating in the “USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program, as well as representatives of government agencies, NGOs, international organizations and representatives of Women’s Initiative Groups.

As part of the quantitative method, 90 women participating in the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program have been interviewed, 60 of which are the residents of the city of Osh, and the remaining 30 are residents of Jalal-Abad city. The survey was conducted among those listed in the list provided by the Client.

The age representation of the quantitative survey respondents, as well as the education background of women who took part in the survey, are shown in Diagram 1 and Diagram 2.

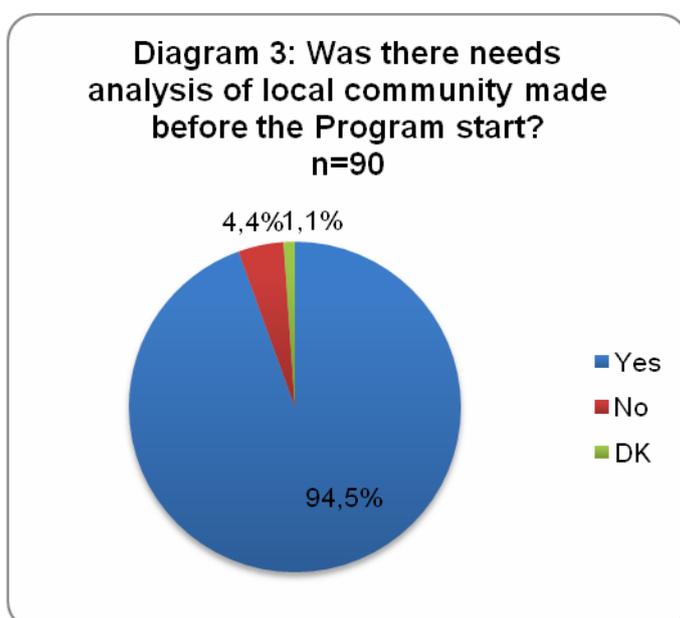


The qualitative assessment comprised of the following elements:

- ✓ In-depth interviews attended by the representatives of local governments, various public funds and representatives of women’s initiative groups established within the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program. A total of 20 in-depth interviews, 13 in Osh and 7 in Jalal-Abad, have been conducted.
- ✓ Focus Group Discussions’ target group is women who took part in the Program. In total 6 Focus Group Discussions have been conducted, three in each city of the Program.

USAID`s “Women`s Peace Banks” program : Planning and start of the Program

Planning is the determining factor in the successful achievement of goals and objectives. Planning is a never-ending process which starts with initiation of the program and continues throughout its implementation. The primary element in planning is a determination of goals and objectives, and its success depends on how clear the goals are formulated. In turn, setting clear / accurate goals is impossible without the analysis of the needs and priorities of stakeholders². In this matter EFCA has had some success that is evidenced from the fact that 94,5% of the respondents indicated that there was a preliminary analysis of the needs of the local community:



When the Program was launched EFCA tried to involve more women from Osh and Jalal-Abad...They all were asking around to know the needs of people.

FGNo2, Osh, 2014

During the trainings EFCA was trying to explore the needs and demands of the community. We worked over problems. Women's Initiatives Database made a tremendous work with authorities.

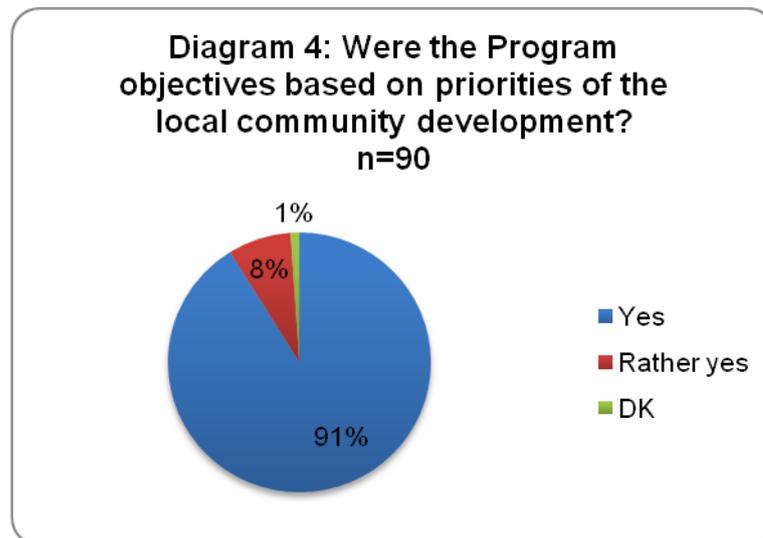
FG No4, Jalal-Abad, 2014

Identification and analysis of the needs of local communities allowed EFCA reflect the primary needs of the people in the goals and objectives of the USAID`s “Women`s Peace Banks” program , as evidenced by the high proportion of respondents' satisfaction with the work EFCA have done.91,1% of the respondents noted the conformity of the goals of the Program with the persistent problems of the local communities, and 7.8% indicated that likelihood that the objectives of the program were based on the development priorities of local communities is quite high, but there is no full confidence in it (Diagram 4).

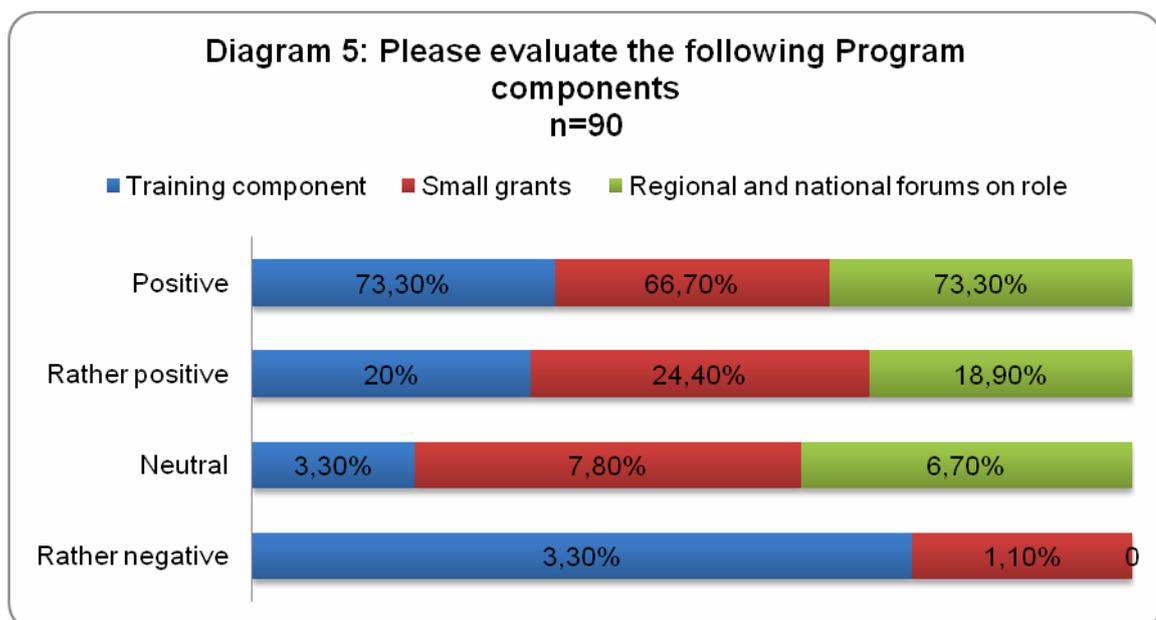
² A.I. Klitsenko «THE ROLE OF PROJECT PLANNING IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT», article

EFCA policy in communities is such that identifies views of women leaders and hold meetings with the communities. The needs are defined according to the priorities. This is very good when we do those projects that are needed for people.

FGNo4, Jalal-Abad, 2014



The satisfaction with the components of the Program such as training and forums is also high, thus out of 100% of respondents 93.3% gave a positive assessment of the trainings provided within the Program, and 92.2% indicated their satisfaction with the regional and national forums on the role and experience of women in peace-building (Diagram 5).



In this Project we have had 5-days training on mediation, which was taught by an international expert. After this training we also conducted similar training at our resident places. We taught people how to avoid conflicts, how to restrain oneself and how to come out of the conflict situation. This means that the trainings were good.

FG No2, Osh, 2014

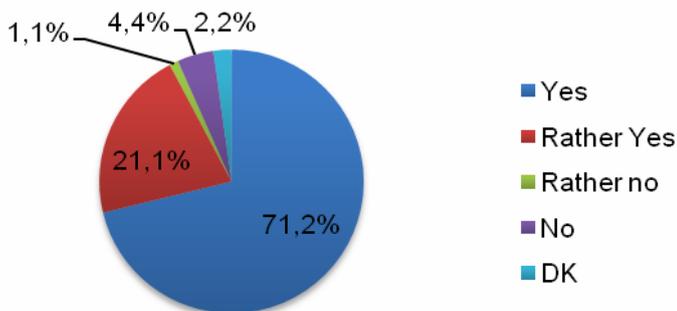
They conduct good trainings.
FG No4, Jalal-Abad, 2014

The seminars were good, we learnt much useful stuff.

FG No3, Osh, 2014

Clarity in determining the role of the participants of the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program has become another factor of the success of the Program. The opinions of the respondents, representatives of TPCs (*transl.: Territorial Public Councils*), PTB (*transl.: Public Territorial Board*) and the Mayor’s Office have agreed that the duties and functions assigned to the participants were clear and distributed in accordance with the capacity of the participants (Diagram 6).

Diagram 6: Have the role of the partners (TPCs, PTB and Mayor's Office) been clearly defined at each phase of the Program?
n=90



Our role is the following: Initiative groups of Territorial Councils and chairs of the Territorial Councils submit applications for co-financing, show their projects, we study their projects and vote for allocating the funds.

In-depth interview, Osh, 2014

*Our role of MSG (*transl.: Municipal Self-Governance*) is to reveal problems and difficulties of our rayon residents, after this we implement the project.*

In-depth interview, Jalal-Abad, 2014

As one can see from the research results the Program participants are well satisfied, in general, with the activities of the EFCA and with the quality of the events held within the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program.

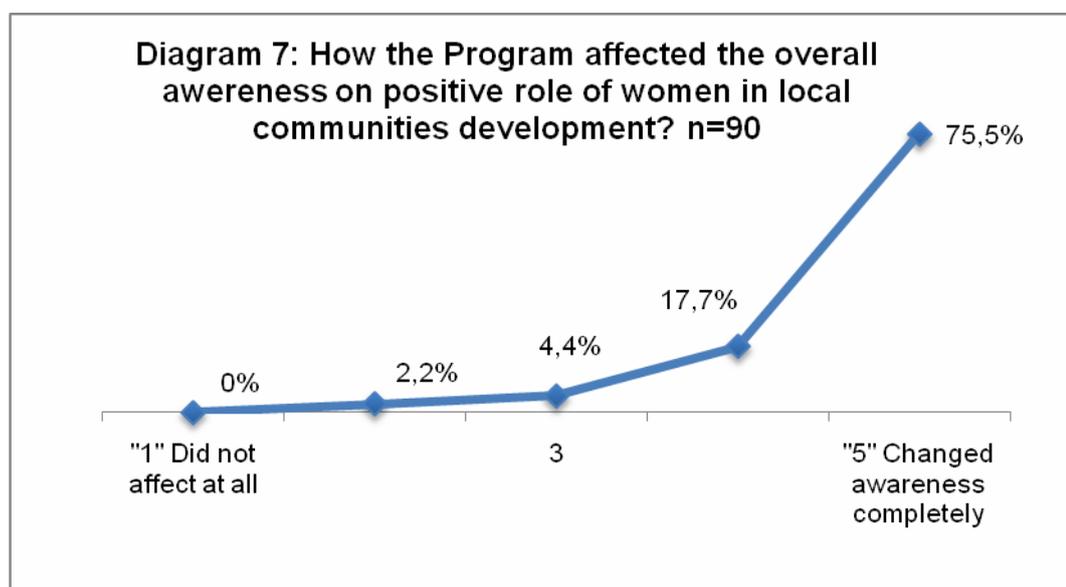
Impact / Program results

The Quantitative Results of the research show that the implemented program was perceived positively because the vast majority of the respondents (75,5%) reported the complete change of awareness about the positive role of women in the local communities development. The belief that the Program had no effect on the awareness of the role of women was not recorded.

Impact of the Program on overall awareness can be seen in both cities, the percentage indicator in Osh is 76.7% and in Jalal-Abad is 73.3%.

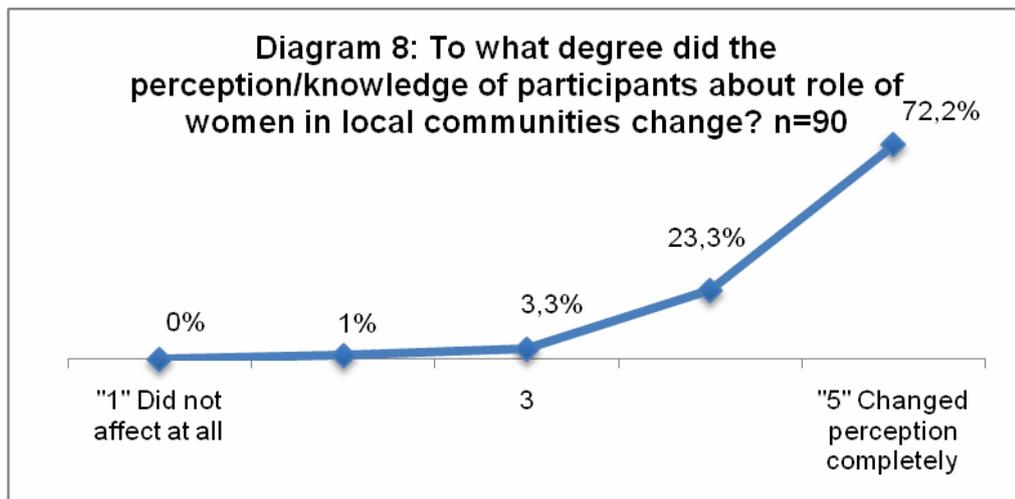
It is a good project because it allowed women to exercise their initiatives. Prior to this, women used to sit at home and did not know where to get support to implement their ideas, and this project really helped.

In-depth interview, Jalal-Abad, 2014



Speaking of the investigated parameters of changing the perceptions and knowledge about opportunities for women in local communities by means of the Program, the estimation obtained is fairly high (72%). With regard to the futility of the Program in this matter, such opinion was not observed (Diagram 8).

In considering the parameter broken down into cities, one can say that the voices were distributed evenly enough with no significant differences between Osh (72%) and Jalal-Abad (73%).



Along with raising of the overall awareness, the respondents in local communities also noted personal development of the Program participants, thus 70% of the respondents pointed at the acquisition of new skills (leadership, organizational) in formulating the business and social projects.

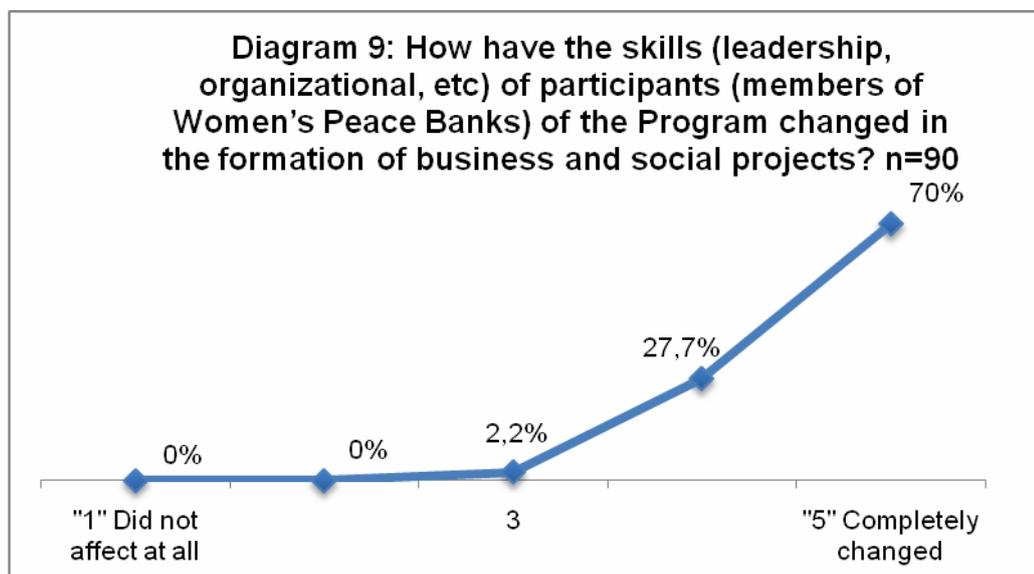
...women have glowed with ideas. They are already going to voluntarily implement other projects, they are applying to other donors and want to tackle the issues of their communities.

FGNo4, Jalal-Abad, 2014

We grew leaders in ourselves thanks to this Project. We were trained to satisfy our needs by developing social projects and social mobilization. We consulted other women on how to write projects... we have got good feedback.

FG No2, Osh, 2014

The results broken down into cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad are almost identical because the percentage indicator of the highest score of "4" and "5" is more than 95% in both cities.



In addition, the survey showed that in 94% of cases the Program also enabled expanding knowledge on social issues related to peacebuilding. This is confirmed by the results of the qualitative study, demonstrating satisfaction of the respondents with the implementing the projects on mediation and strengthening friendship among peoples. Many respondents noted that the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program united the nationalities by formulating and solving the problems by unified forces. Below are some of the Focus Group Discussions participants' statements on this issue.

There are Kyrgyz communities, higher there are Uzbek communities, to be honest, the women have become friendlier, started visiting each other homes...

FGD No1, Osh

- *Project on Bakinskaya Street: Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turk communities bought chairs, utensils, equipment to hold joint events/festivities...*
- *...sewing shop is open, where girl work: Turks, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz.*

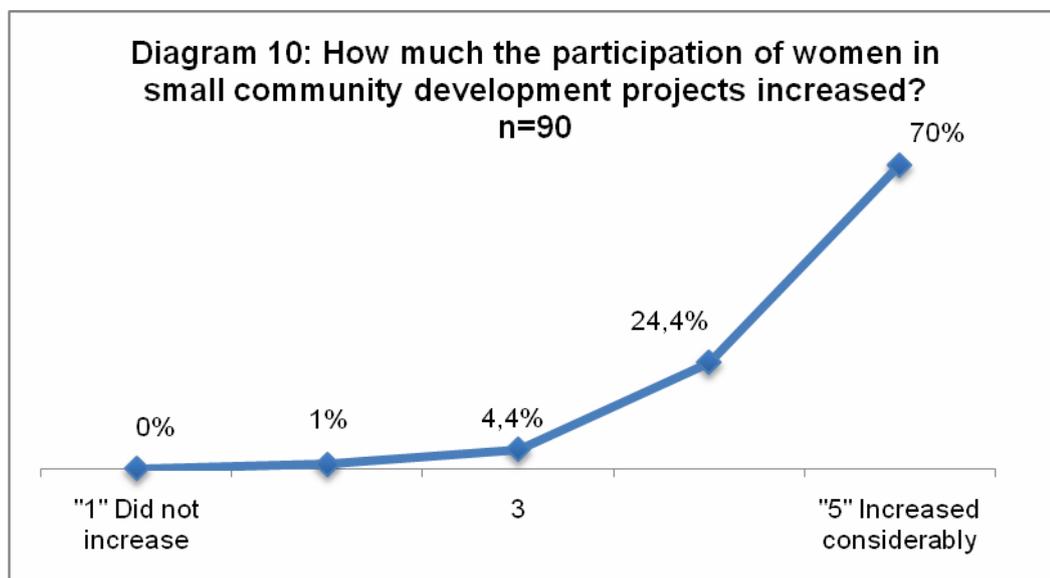
FGD No2, Osh

After the conflict of 2010 people kept their distance, but thanks to the Project there is no more division into Kyrgyz and Uzbeks, we dealt with problems jointly in team...

FGD No3, Osh

Geolocation is an important recommendation in the context of this issue, the respondents noted that the border villages also need such help, because they are the most vulnerable at present.

Active participation of women in small projects to address the socio-economic issues of local communities definitely achieved good results and the results of the quantitative survey confirms this fact that 94% of respondents have positive evaluation, as well as many positive statements of experts and participants of the Focus Groups.



There were no respondents believing that the participation of women in small projects did not increase.

In Osh, number of the respondents agreeing with the view that the participation of women in small projects increased accounted to a significant proportion (75% of respondents). In Jalal-Abad this number was slightly lower and amounted to 60% of the respondents.

Women working jointly with EFCA Project have done a lot...Many streets were illuminated, a sewing shops was established that employed the residents of their district.

In-depth interview, Osh, 2014

They established a new kindergarten, ceil the roof of a secondary school. In short, women activists made significant contribution into socio-economic development of the Territorial Board. I believe that in the future our women will show our society that they are a great force.

In-depth interview, Jalal-Abad, 2014

The positive assessment of the increase in women's participation in small programs in the cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad is observed from the analysis of quantitative data and the results of qualitative data. Such activism of women, according to the representatives of women's initiative groups and the residents of the cities, had a significant influence on formation of positive interaction between the local communities. Thus, 95% of women surveyed said that the Program "USAID Women's World Banks" have certainly contributed to positive interaction between the participants.

We interacted and well cooperated. We worked based on memorandum. Small projects solved vital needs of Jalal-Abad residents.

In-depth interview, Jalal-Abad, 2014

One more criteria to evaluate the research results was the assessment of the separate components of the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program.

To study this question, the respondents were asked to select those factors that, in their opinion, contributed to the success or on the contrary become hindrance in achieving the objectives of the Program.

The first factor with the highest number (74%), promoting the role of women in local communities, according to the respondents' opinion is the activities (trainings, round tables, forums) conducted in the framework of the Program (Table 2).

The Program budget was the second factor contributing to the achievement of the goals that have got 58% of the vote, although there is an indicator of the negative impact of 10% composed of 7 representatives from Osh and 2 representatives from Jalal-Abad. In

Osh, as well as in Jalal-Abad, a significant proportion of women spoke about the importance of the availability of funds for projects, noting that without the financial support provided by the EFCA the implementation of business / social ideas would be impossible.

If not this EFCA project, our problems would not be solved by anyone. We are always given the reason that there is not money.

FG No1, Osh, 2014

With regard to factor number three, which is the relationship between the Program partners, a significant proportion of respondents (50%) said that this factor contributing to the advancement of women in the development of local communities and 13% expressed their negative opinion on this issue.

TABLE No2: What key factors contributed in achieving the goals? Or on the contrary prevented the goals achievement?		
FACTORS	<i>Contributed in enhancing the role of women in local communities development</i>	<i>Hindered from enhancing the role of women in local communities development</i>
1. Activities/Program components	74%	2%
2. Program budget	58%	10%
3. Relationships between the programs' partners	50%	13%
4. Media coverage of small projects	49%	6%

To study the possible reasons that could contribute to the limitation of the implementation of the Program identifying the evaluation of the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program participants was of interest of the present.

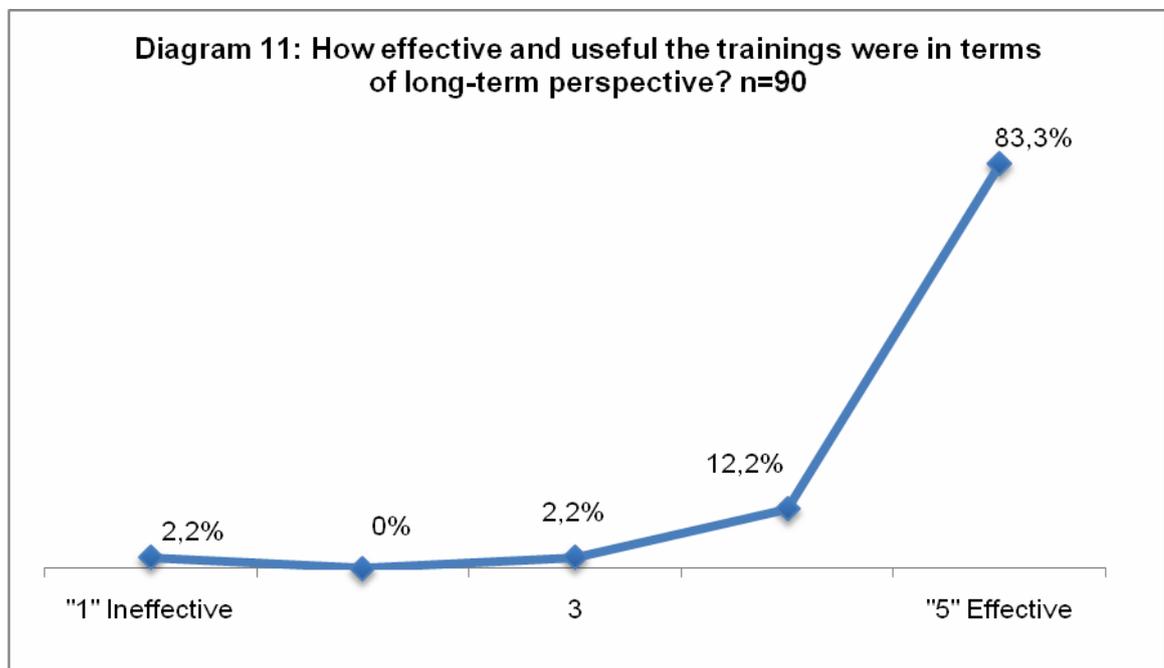
The respondents were handed a list of factors for evaluation from 1 (do not limit at all) to 5 (limit severely). In general, the assessment of the survey participants was given a little more than the average - from 2.7 to 3.4, which suggests that respondents believe that these factors hamper the implementation of the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program to some extent, but nevertheless are not a significant obstacle. It should be noted that the respondents / residents of Jalal-Abad were less critical on many issues. Whereas in Osh, the highest indicator (3.4) restricting the Program implementation was referred to the human resources turnover in local authorities; and the next smaller factor in Osh was the number (3.3), indicating a lack of resources at the local authorities.

TABLE No3: To what degree the following factors hinder the Program implementation? <i>Assess from '1' to '5' where: '1' is 'do not hinder at all'</i> <i>'2' is 'hinder significantly'</i>		
FACTORS	AVERAGE Osh	AVERAGE Jalal-Abad
Local authorities have limited resources	3,3	2,7
Labor turnover in local authorities	3,4	2,7
Passive participation of beneficiaries (Program participants)	3,1	3
Insufficient media coverage of women's initiatives on local communities development	3,2	3,1

Sustainability of the program

Prospects for the development of the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program based on the results of the quantitative survey looks quite favorable in view of the positive trend of the participants' judgments.

The survey showed that presently 95% of the respondents expressed their opinion on the effectiveness and usefulness of the training in terms of the need for further work and 96.6% wanted continue to attend such workshops, seminars and forums.



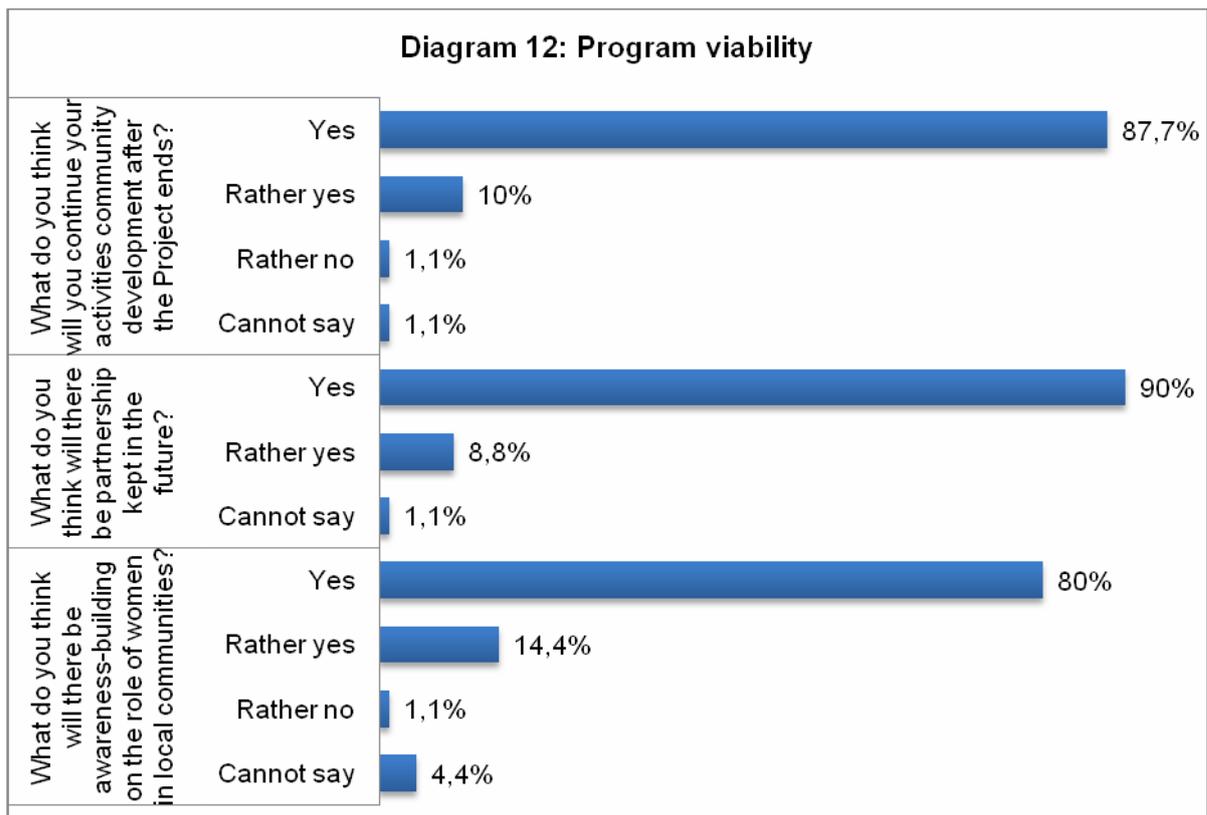
Tendency of increased role and self-awareness of women in opportunities in contributing in solving the socio-economic problems of the communities is clearly defined. Thus, 80% of the respondents think that awareness-building about the role of women in local communities will probably be carried out further because the majority of

surveyed (87.7%) pointed at their intention to continue the work on local communities development (Diagram 12). Answering the question “In what role you are going to continue your activities?”, the respondents stated the following: as an individual – 55.5%, as an NGO member – 42.2% and as a representative of local authorities – 1.1%.

An important factor in the implementation of the Program was the interaction between the partners, which was in 95% of cases and 98.8% of the respondents believe that cooperation with partners will be continued in the future.

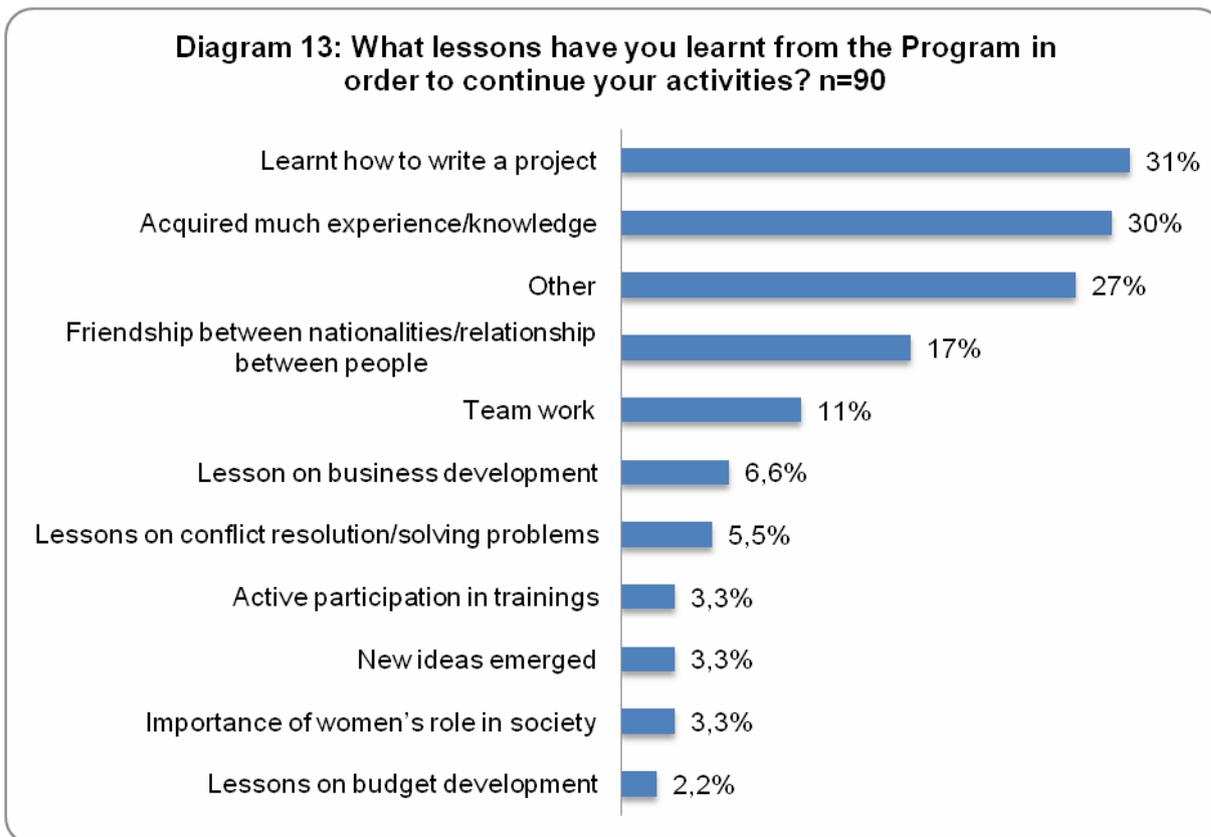
After the budget approval in the process we realized that we did not consider the fluctuation of prices in the market, as well as transportation charges. As it turned out we had to pay 500 soms for loading. However, our people did not stay unconcerned, we collected another 200 soms and completed.
In-depth interview, representative of Self-governing authorities, Osh, 2014

In total 97% of the respondents think that the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program has helped in enhancing the role of women in local communities.

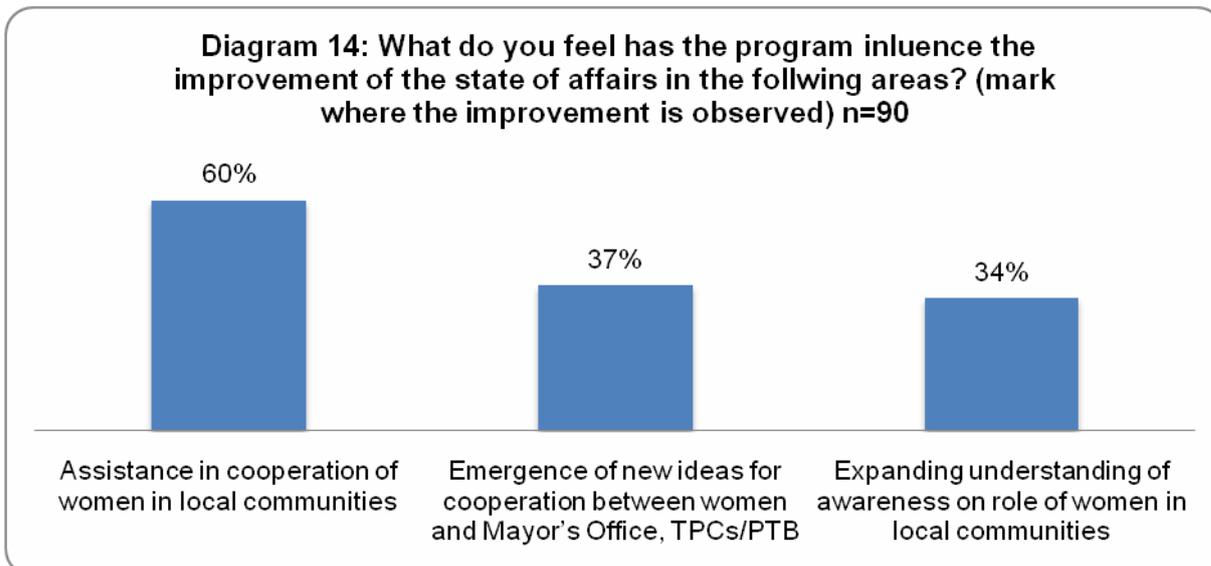


According to the sociological survey results thanks to the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program in 47.6% of cases the respondents were able to acquire new knowledge and experience in various fields, including budget planning, writing/development of projects, business development, learning about conflict resolution (31%). Furthermore, In-depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions also give reason

to believe that practically every participant of the Program has learnt something (Diagram 13).

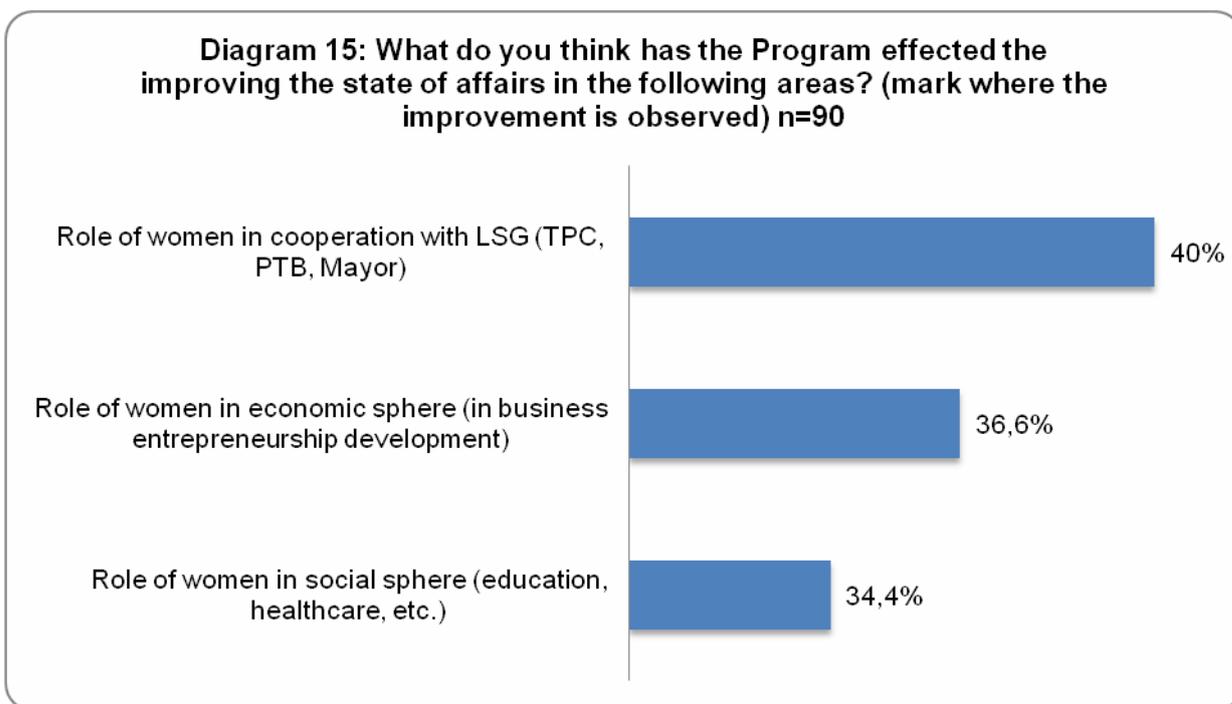


In the context of the observed indicators of promoting cooperation of women in local communities, the largest number of respondents (60%) reported an improvement in the state of affairs in promoting cooperation with women in local communities. The other two areas, on emergence of new ideas for cooperation between women and the Mayor's Office / TPCs / PTB and on enhancing the understanding the awareness of the role of women in local communities received less than 40% of respondents' votes.



Knowledge and understanding of the role and opportunities for women, increasing their status in the socio-economic issues of community development and cooperation with the government are reflected in the Diagram 15 that demonstrate spheres of life, which in the opinion of respondents, have achieved success at present thanks to the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program .

Thus, the highest percentage has been recorded in the field of cooperation / women activities with LSG (TPC, PTB, Mayor) - 40%; it is also important to highlight the economic activities of women; this fact was marked by 36.6% of respondents. 34.4% of respondents pointed at enhancing the role of women in social sphere (Diagram 15).

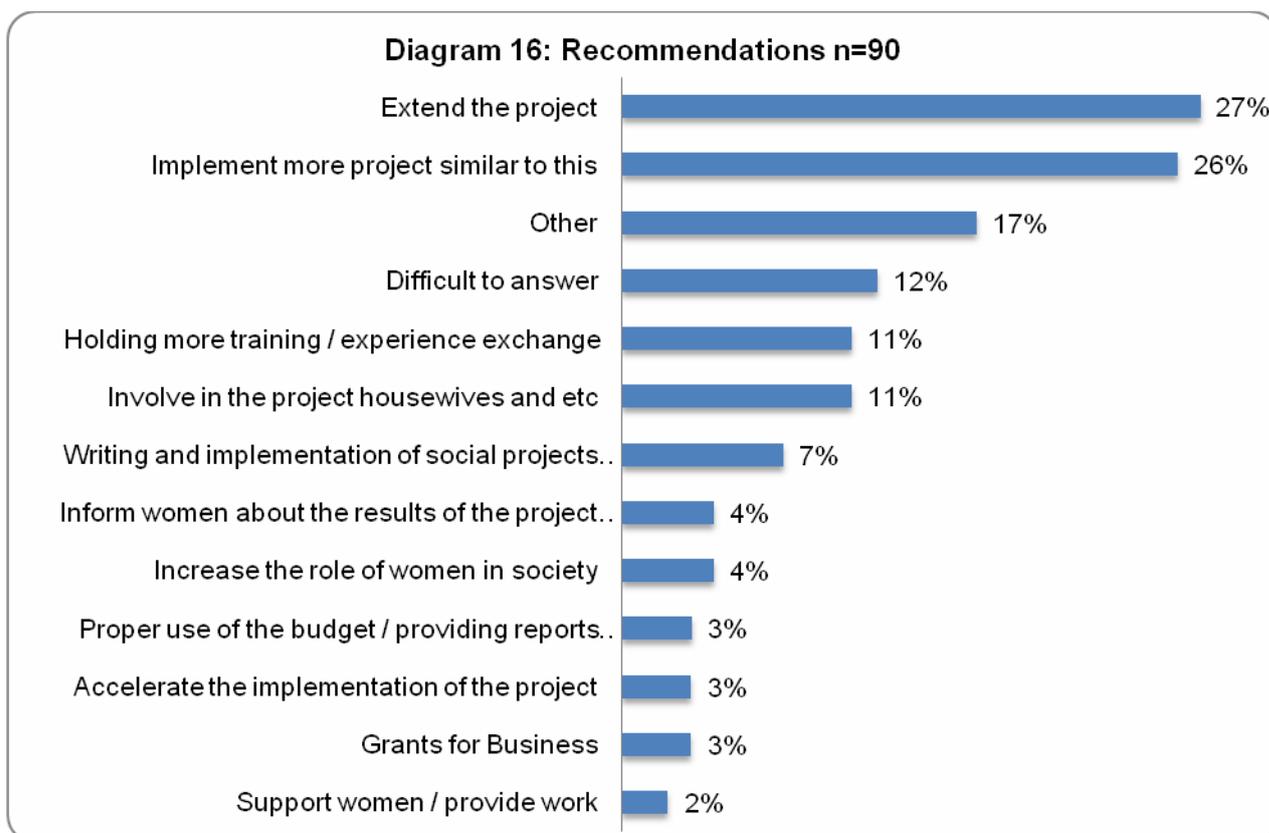


This study confirms the relevance of the implementation of such programs aimed at enhancing the role of women in the development of local communities by providing opportunities to address specific socio-economic needs of the local population.

Recommendations and limitations

The primary recommendations made by the respondents are the following:

- ✓ Extending of the USAID’s “Women’s Peace Banks” program - 27%,
- ✓ Development (writing) new socially oriented programs and fundraising - 36%,
- ✓ Conducting seminars / training / experience exchange platforms with representatives from Bishkek - 11%; the respondents also noted the importance of enhancing the role of women in the society and employment / involvement of unclaimed women (housewives) in such programs– 17%.



The most significant recommendations of the qualitative research are defined as the following: attracting the youth in the programs on development and public services improvement in local communities and training of not only the initiative groups, but also the potential participants.

More such seminars should be conducted. USAID’s Women’s Peace Banks program comprises of mainly women of my age, but it would be good to see young women/girls. They have different opinion, ideas, perceptions.

In-depth interview, Jalal-Abad, 2014

Not only the Women Initiatives Groups should be trained, but also the authors should learn how to write projects. We do not clearly know how to set a goal, it turned out that we just described the subject matter and the problem.

FGD No6, Jalal-Abad, 2014

Furthermore, recommendation of the quantitative research allow reflecting the limitations that were faced by the participants during the Program implementation.

Many authors of the projects also indicated their dissatisfaction with the process of procurement of materials required for the projects. According to them, the EFCA takes the charge for the procurement of the required staff, but the respondents indicated that they would like to be personally responsible for the purchase of staff, which would greatly accelerate the implementation of projects.

In this regard, it is appropriate in the future provide opportunities to the authors of the projects acquire the required stuff personally thus assuming full accountability in front of EFCA.

CONCLUSION

Effectiveness: Based on analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, it is obvious that in general the participants and partners are satisfied with the results of the USAID`s “Women`s Peace Banks” program that in turn indicates the positive impact of the Program on life and household of communities in Osh and Jalal-Abad cities:³

- ✓ 70% of women indicated that owing to the Program they acquired leadership skills and developed organizational capacities;
- ✓ 94% of the participants of the study reported that their knowledge in social issues with regards to peacebuilding is expanded;
- ✓ 95% of women noted that thanks to the USAID`s “Women`s Peace Banks” program there is a positive tendency of interaction between women of various ethnic background;
- ✓ 75% of respondents pointed at significant increase of women initiating and participating in small programs.

Relevance: According to the research results, the majority of respondents (91.1% of surveyed), as well as majority of Focus Group Discussions and in-depth interview participants, stated conformity of goals of the Program with the problems faced by communities in Osh and Jalal-Abad. Such conformity was achieved owing to research and analysis of local communities needs by representatives of EFCA in collaboration with the representatives of women`s initiative groups.

Correspondence to the actual problems of the communities made its impact to the success of each activity held within the Program, that is evidenced by the satisfaction rate of over 90% of the respondents. The trainings and forums held within the Program have had positive feedback in 93% of cases out of 100%.

Coordination: Based on the research results it is shown that EFCA put considerable efforts at the launching phase of the Program that allowed clearly formulate the goals based on the most relevant needs of the communities residing in Osh and Jalal-Abad cities; and identify the roles of the participants/partners of the Program. In this connection the significant share of the respondents (71.2%) agreed that the duties and functions assigned to the participants at every stage of the Program were clear and were distributed in accordance with their capacities.

³See Diagram 13

Program sustainability: On the issue of further sustainability of the Program, more than 80% of the respondents assured that even after the USAID's "Women's Peace Banks" program the women would continue their activities on promoting peace and improving the living standards in their communities. In the opinion of the respondents today thanks to the Program women in Osh and Jalal-Abad take an active part in handling the problems in their communities having been equipped with substantial knowledge in the area of conflict resolution, personal development and entrepreneurship. Demonstration of women their active citizenship enabled them notably increase their significance in the society. Women, the participants of the Program establish various associations with the aim of enhancing knowledge and leadership skills of women representing various ethnic groups.

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