

Praxis Note No. 59

Leadership, gender and youth: Reviewing the old and experimenting with the new



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Based on the experiences of INTRAC in Central Asia

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1. Introduction¹

Gender had long been a priority in INTRAC's programme to strengthen NGOs supporting self-help movements in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The self-help activities successfully included women, particularly those in rural areas. Women were also being assisted with micro-credit which was having some impact on poor families. However, we were becoming concerned that these activities were not impacting upon pervading gender power relations. Traditional gender roles were not changing or being challenged. Many women were experiencing increasing pressure to fulfil their responsibilities and role in the home and family.

We were also concerned about the role of young people in communities, particularly after the violence in Kyrgyzstan in April 2010. Young people had been visibly involved in the violence but they had also been active in efforts to restore stability. They had an important role to play in their communities and we wanted to support this through the self-help movements.

We developed a leadership aspect in the programme to support self-help movements. We wanted to bring together new 'agents for change' within self-help groups and NGOs and effectively address gender and age discrimination.

In this paper, we show how we raised gender and youth issues of through promoting the leadership of women and young people in the self-help movement in Central Asia. It describes how new technologies and social media were employed to support action by women and young people in rural communities and what we learnt along the way.

2. Background context

i. Gender and youth in Central Asia

Issues regarding women's leadership in Kyrgyzstan are linked to the social and economic crisis of the post-Soviet transition years. Women have suffered economically, especially in rural areas after the break-up of collective farms and the return of many communities to subsistence family agriculture. As in other parts of the region, they often carry the main burden supporting the family when husbands and sons depart as migrant labour to Russia and Kazakhstan.

The renewed emphasis on national tradition in Central Asia since 1991 carries with it a pressure on women to accept a secondary role, subservient to male heads of households. Young wives coming to live in their husbands' extended families are subject to a strict and often oppressive division of labour, with their mother-in-law often playing a key role. Women suffer from a lack of property rights in the family which often produces negative consequences for them and their children in case of later divorce.

The reduction of state budgets and increase of unemployment in the post-independence period seriously affected 'female' professions such as teaching, nursing, law and accountancy. In some cases, government authorities managed to resist downsizing or retain official or unofficial quotas for women in senior positions. However, in general their situation worsened.

In April 2010, Kyrgyzstan underwent its second 'revolution' in five years. Major disturbances took place around the country as people protested against rising food prices and electricity costs, the sell-off of energy companies and increasing corruption in President Bakiev's regime. Both women and young people were actively mobilised in these struggles and in post-violence stabilisation efforts.

¹ INTRAC would like to thank the funders of this project, ICCO (Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation, Netherlands) and Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Kyrgyzstan) for their material and moral support.

ii. Women and youth in self-help programmes: between tradition and innovation

Self-help groups as a form of community-based organisation became widespread in Kyrgyzstan more than dozen years ago, thanks mainly to various international development programmes and projects with a grassroots approach to poverty reduction. Micro-credit is a key component of many such programmes. Credit is provided on favourable conditions with little or no collateral required, often via loans to self-help groups set up among the poorer and more vulnerable sections of the population.

These are not the only mutual-help groups working in Kyrgyzstan. Other informal and formal groups have been set up successfully among the elderly, sexual minorities, victims of violence, and those with drug-use problems. Nevertheless, self-help groups (SHGs) set up to engage in joint economic activity on the basis of micro-credit are undoubtedly the most numerous. INTRAC's 2007-10 programme included over 1,000 such groups across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Over 700 were in Kyrgyzstan. A study carried out in 2007 showed that over 70% of SHG members were women. Young people on the other hand are generally not well represented in SHGs.

3. Analysing the problem

Studies carried out by a number of donors, NGO partners and INTRAC (see bibliography) raised a number of issues surrounding gender in community development programmes.

Obstacles faced by young women:

Vulnerable young women face unequal relationships at many different levels in the community, household and in their interactions with SHGs. In SHGs, they are usually young wives with small children or single mothers with children. They carry the main burden of responsibility for managing a household and providing economically for the family. It is hard for young women with responsibilities of this kind to escape from the domination of older family members or to take on leadership in the SHG, even in

groups where annual leadership rotation is practised.

Increased financial problems affecting women:

The provision of micro-credit brings benefits to many families but it would be wrong to ignore counter-examples of those who have built up huge debts. While women are often praised in Central Asia for being more responsible in household budget matters, they often find themselves in a difficult situation because of repayments and resulting pressure from other group members and their families. Often, faced with a financial or family problem, a woman's right to make her own decisions is not respected. Within NGOs and SHGs generally there is a lack of understanding of the principle of independent decision-making and its importance in advancing women's rights.

Women unable to take up senior leadership positions:

While women make up around three-quarters of SHG leaders, they are less well represented in federations uniting SHGs. Senior levels in politics and business are dominated by men. In this environment, many women find it difficult to convert their experience in making practical decisions into gaining elected or paid positions in local government or other agencies. This struggle to gain leadership positions deters many women from even trying to get senior roles.

Leadership styles in SHGs:

Whilst women make up the majority of SHG leaders, the leadership style within many groups is authoritarian. Considerable efforts have been made to encourage the rotation of leadership, but these have not always been successful. As a result, it has been hard to achieve full empowerment for SHG members, and young and often vulnerable women are less able to fully participate.

Absence or passivity of men in the programme:

The existing system of social and economic relations in Central Asia is problematic not only for women, but also men from poorer or marginalised sections of the community.

Large numbers of men have left for Russia or Kazakhstan in search of work. Indeed, self-help groups contain relatively few men and even fewer young men. Men's interest in the programme is usually economic, sometimes political. By contrast, many women gain equally from the social, psychological and cultural spheres promoted by the programme. The gender segregation of roles leads to a situation where certain activities within SHGs are deemed to be 'female'. Most men do not feel responsible for housework and childcare, and many think that social or community issues are equally a woman's domain. This includes many of the activities associated with self-help groups.

How men and women see leadership in Tajikistan

It is no coincidence that when interviewing women leaders about why they join and are involved with SHGs, they often reply: "Circumstances forced me to do it", "I had to support my family", "I have always been a responsible person". By contrast, men were more likely to explain their motivation for joining SHGs as "a desire to leave a footprint" or to "continue the work of my father."

In general, the basic model of female leadership in SHGs remains that of 'mother-housewife', based on the premise that women are 'naturally' better able to care for others and better understand social problems. In contrast, the male perception of leadership is that men are 'naturally' better leaders whilst women are better suited to support roles.

(from the gender and leadership study in Tajikistan, 2008)

4. From self-help to leadership

In planning the programme, we knew that for the self-help groups to become a vibrant social movement able to vigorously defend the interests of the poor, community leadership at all levels needed to be developed. Without a more open and flexible approach to leadership and more active participation in leadership positions by women and young people, this would be very hard to achieve.

The project 'From self-help to leadership' developed a number of ideas about how to better promote issues around youth, gender and diversity in the self-help movement. From the start, we worked closely with the 'Ishenim' network, a group of NGOs with 10 years' experience in promoting the concept of self-help as a way to improve the quality of life and strengthen the voice of the poor in society. The Ishenim network had always taken a broad view of self-help activity which included economic, social/cultural, political and psychological aspects of SHG work.

The project took place over a two-year period between 2009-10. Our aim was to improve the capacity of young leaders (especially women) in self-help groups in the northern regions of Kyrgyzstan, by:

- Providing them with basic knowledge on gender equality, leadership and self-help
- Implementing projects addressing local problems using modern information technologies and social media²
- Strengthening networks of young people within the self-help movement and their local community.

4.1 The project's structure

INTRAC supported a group of NGO partners whose role it was to work directly with the self-help groups.

In the early stages of the project, participants were selected on a competitive basis from SHGs, NGOs and other local channels. The project had six local NGO partners, committed to supporting participants and helping them develop and implement their own projects. This support was initially delivered through a training programme that was conducted over a six-month period.

Later on in the project we decided to put a special focus on issues around youth's role in stabilising the situation in their community and avoiding further conflict. This was in

² By social media, we mean electronic media, digital video, web 2.0, blogging, online video sharing, and social networking. These media are a modern form of expressing rights and provide positive ways in which youth activists (especially young women) can show their leadership qualities in a different way.

response to the turbulence and instability caused by the violence of April 2010 when interethnic conflict erupted around the country.³ We decided to run a similar programme of training. This time, to expand the coverage of the project, participants were given the chance to invite other helpers from their community to join the programme. Participants once again developed projects for their communities. These were used to consolidate learning and doing something of practical value, as a way of developing leadership capacity and confidence.

4.2 Elements of the project approach

The 'From self-help to leadership' project had several important differences from other training programmes that INTRAC had previously worked on in Central Asia. These differences are summarised below:

Traditional/INTRAC leadership training programmes	INTRAC's experimental community leadership programme, 'From self-help to leadership'
Focus on the individual as a leader or manager in an NGO	Focus on leadership in the context of self-help and social movement activism
Little attention to gender differences or women's leadership	Priority given to women's and youth leadership and an exploration of gender power relations
Reliance on academic or theoretical material	Action-oriented programme with local community projects using social media
INTRAC did not have programmes targeted specifically at young people	INTRAC actively focussed on young peoples' participation; recognition that leadership in youth was essential given the turbulent political situation.

³ In summer of 2010 after April's violence, the provisional government gained approval for a new constitution with more power for parliament and less for the president. The new rules were tested at national elections in October 2010 but resulted in a parliament 'hung' between proponents of the new and old systems. The political situation remained tense and potentially volatile.

In many leadership development programmes, leadership is seen as something to be striven for, an achievement by the individual in the face of competition. Young people and women are often disadvantaged in this kind of competition. Through the project we promoted an alternative space for developing a concept of leadership, oriented on cooperation.

We did not discard the importance of developing the participants' individual skills, knowledge and attitudes. However, the emphasis was on collective leadership and a facilitative rather than commanding or domineering style. We also worked on developing the participants' ability to understand and analyse processes taking place in their community. This analysis was then usually carried by the community themselves or the local youth group.

Resource mobilisation was another key component of the programme. This was not just financial resources but other human and material resources. Different forms of social media were introduced and explored as an important new potential resource.

Below we describe the structure and content of the programme in more detail. We highlight the challenges we encountered, how we addressed these and what we learnt along the way.

i. From individual to collective leadership

In aiming to strengthen collective leadership, we did not ignore the need to devote time and attention to participants' individual skills, knowledge and attitudes.

When we launched the programme in 2009 we ran a five-day youth camp which looked at individual and collective leadership. Issues such as basic concepts and information around self-help and leadership, partnership, young people and adults, gender, traditional norms of masculinity and femininity, social change and social movements were explored. Participants were introduced and trained in a range of new information and communication technologies (ICT). They learnt the basic skills of working with new media and were encouraged to consider how

they might use them to promote community issues in their areas. We also facilitated participants in defining 'blue-sky' ideas for the future. Participants suggested any ideas, no matter how radical or unconventional, aimed at addressing social problems in their community using the media techniques they had learnt.

Through these sessions we aimed to give the participants space for individual self-expression, and at the same time support a collective spirit. For example the youth camp talent show gave participants a chance to show off their abilities and creativity and have these valued and respected in a collective forum. The project tried to define leadership as a "way of life", not just a formal position in an organisation or at work.

Later on in the project we built further on the concept of collective leadership by looking at the role of the leader in facilitating links between different groups or organisations. The mass popular mobilisation that led to the April 2010 events in Bishkek had inspired youth to create a number of new associations to respond to the post-violence instability. We emphasised the importance of knowing who else is active in a community or those that are working on similar issues. Without this networking, efforts may be wasted, duplicated or in direct contradiction with each other. The facilitation of collective dialogue was highlighted as one of the key functions of an effective leader.

The networking aspect was further developed in an expanded workshop meeting with participants from the south of Kyrgyzstan. The majority of participants were from the north, where there had not been the same level of violence. The southern participants were from a variety of youth associations, including two young representatives of our NGO partners in the south who had been active in the humanitarian aid effort after the June 2010 inter-ethnic clashes in Osh and Jalalabad.

Challenges in recruitment of participants

We experienced some challenges right from the recruitment stage of the project. As noted earlier only limited numbers of young people are active in self-help groups. This made it

difficult to recruit a large number of participants from this age contingent.

To address this, we widened the age range and included some adults (mostly aged between 30-44). In terms of inter-generational communications and support, this was a positive move. On the other hand, we found it more difficult to meet the needs of the different categories of participants. We also found that some young people who had only recently got involved in community affairs and had little knowledge of SHGs and their activities. Others had difficulty understanding the terminology relating to development and civil society.

To address this, the different terminologies were linked to practical examples and games to illustrate their meaning. Face-to-face discussions also gave an opportunity for participants to explore what the terms meant and how they could relate these to their own communities.

ii. Focus on women's leadership, youth and diversity

Gender roles

To develop participants' understanding of gender roles and stereotypes participants undertook practical exercises and games. As noted at the beginning of this paper, this project was driven by the concern that SHGs were having a very limited impact on gender inequality. These sessions encouraged participants to start challenging existing gender relations in the context of effective and collective leadership.

Leadership styles

An additional concern was the authoritarian style of leadership exhibited in many SHGs. This prevents many women and young people (both young women and men) from fully participating in, and benefitting from, SHGs. To challenge this, leadership was explained and explored as a power relationship. While identifying problems with authoritarian leadership styles, the team also explored problems with other leadership styles. Crucially for the project's aims, myths about women's and youth leadership – where issues of power and hierarchy frequently occur – were discussed and dispelled.

In the discussions, it could be seen that male participants tended to see the role of the leader as helping to solve practical problems in the village (e.g. building or repairing social infrastructure), while female participants focused more on the human dimension (e.g. relationships at the village level, motivation to solve problems, participation – who was missing from discussions and who was essential to involve). In this way gender concerns were brought to the fore, acknowledged, discussed and positively addressed.

Gender and religion

There were several discussions on gender and religion. The men in the group were particularly devout, while some women participants were concerned about the effect that increasing religious influence might have on their opportunities in life. The trainers took an open approach, emphasising that these are factors that a local leader will likely have to contend with.

Gender and youth

Gender and youth issues were developed further in the latter part of the project and brought together in the concept of diversity. This was a particularly important issue given the interethnic clashes that took place in Osh in June 2010 and the fact that many villages around Kyrgyzstan are mono-ethnic in character. We were able to see how successful the early stages of the project had been in that participants from the first workshops were clearly more comfortable discussing gender, age and diversity issues than some of the youth association representatives attending for the first time.

Challenges in participation

We noticed that although the programme was designed to increase women's meaningful participation in SHGs we had challenges in women's participation. Several women in the programme had great difficulty in leaving their families and children for long enough to complete the course modules. We addressed this where we could, for example we supported one female participant with bringing her child to the training so that she did not miss out. Additionally the bulk of the group had no experience of participating in

interactive training and many had a poor command of Russian (the project's main working language). Although this was a limitation in some respects, most of the discussions were conducted in Kyrgyz enabling those with limited Russian to understand the training content.

iii. Practical project work

Practical project work was a key focus throughout the leadership programme. In this way, participants were immediately putting what they had learnt into practice. All participants had to identify, plan and implement a practical project. In the first part of the programme, the guidelines for projects were very wide. The project had to:

- make a contribution to the development of the self-help movement
- be aimed at changing traditional gender stereotypes
- use new information technologies and unique design ideas
- reflect problems affecting young people and self-help groups.

This resulted in a wide range of new and exciting projects being delivered in the participants' home communities (see box 'Raising gender and youth issues...' on page 9 for more details).

In the latter part of the project, we decided to narrow down the criteria. Faced with the dramatic events taking place in Kyrgyzstan and affecting all regions and levels of political life, we decided to ask for projects on the theme of 'the needs of youth' or 'situation analysis' in the community. These particular themes were highly relevant to the country context. Young people were keen to assert their demands on the new government. They felt they had previously been ignored. The state of flux with the new government impacting upon local government and appointments and community structures made situation analysis activities essential.

Many of the participants had not been involved in developing projects as the main function of the SHGs had been the provision of micro-credit. As such project development was a new aspect of their work. In order to address participants' lack of experience

training was given on project design and organisation. Abundant time was given to various practical tasks and exercises within the training module, and group and individual counselling was provided inside and outside the modules. Participants developed individual learning plans and were mentored participants' in developing their projects through the discussion of their ideas. The results of these discussions were developed into project proposals.⁴

The project training also looked at improving participants' knowledge in analysing results and improving their presentation skills. To increase participant's confidence and provide invaluable feedback, representatives from partner NGOs, SHGs and local experts were invited to listen to the presentations on mini-projects. The feedback received from NGO and SHG leaders was much appreciated by the young people involved in the training programme.

iii. Experimenting with social media for community action

We decided to introduce the use of social media and new information communications technology (ICT) in the latter stages of the project. New media opened up a range of new possibilities for participants and their communities. They were a new way to enable people to express themselves and get their problems noticed by local officials. The new methods and technologies were attractive to women and young people and offered them opportunities to develop and show new skills.

The implementation of social projects using new media and ICT was a big challenge for both participants and trainers. These were new themes for Kyrgyzstan, where to date there have been few attempts to use new media to increase the voice of vulnerable groups.⁵ Most participants had very limited

knowledge and skills in this area. There were no computers, cameras or camcorders in their families. Even for the NGO partners with relatively well-developed technical resources, new media as a tool for advocacy remains undeveloped.

We found, to our surprise, that the male participants were no more IT literate than the women. However, it could be clearly seen how important participants' level of basic education was to fully use new media. The project addressed these issues by organising several master classes on new media. The classes gave participants a chance to develop skills in three media: online blogging, photography and video making. They eventually chose which media best suited their own project idea. The approach taken in training was very practical – looking at how to use and operate the technology (computers, internet, cameras and video recorders). It also emphasised the need to start with planning the content of the project, i.e. what message you want to convey. Over the course of the project implementation phase, it emerged that of the three media, photography proved the easiest to use when resources were scarce in remote villages in Kyrgyzstan.

5. Project results

5.1 Tackling gender, age and diversity issues

The project successfully opened up issues around gender and youth. This was partly due to the programme style which was facilitated in a participatory way. It was also due to the success in bringing together a very mixed group. Women participants found the programme easier than men, but both sexes gained significantly from it. The project style focussed on exploring social issues and relationships that women felt comfortable discussing. Men, on the other hand, were more accustomed to looking at the business and economic side of community projects, which was less a feature of the programme.

⁴ Small grants (100-200 USD) were made available based on a short application form.

⁵ Kyrgyzstan is not an advanced country for internet access (rating just 99th on the International Telecommunication Union's index of ICT development in 159 countries around the world). Some 77% of internet users are concentrated in the capital (according to a 2009 GIIP study). In rural areas and poorer, squatted areas around Bishkek, internet access remains very limited, despite attempts by the World Bank, the UK's Department for International Development and others to establish local information

resource centres. Moreover, according to project participants, in some rural areas the local authorities deliberately hold back the spread of new technology in order to limit public access to information.

The project was able to tackle head-on controversial political issues around conflict and power. Moreover, the turbulent and unstable situation in the country confirmed that the project was on the right track, dealing with priority issues for social movements in Kyrgyzstan. Due to involvement in the programme and the skills and confidence it build in participants, they were able to get involved in youth associations, women's networks, and community level processes during and after the April 2010 violence.

5.2 Raising issues in the wider community

In the early part of the project, participants implemented eight mini-projects. The box below details some of the projects and outputs. These projects were particularly interesting and have potential for replication and development.

Raising gender and youth issues in peri-urban areas around Bishkek

Konush kayryktary (Voices of suburb communities) www.kadam.kloop.kg

This project created a blog to highlight the situation in the 'new-build' areas of Bishkek, the inhabitants of which are predominantly internal migrants. The blog members raised issues of home security, health and bride kidnapping. A separate column was devoted to young people in these areas.

Young people and new media

This project was aimed at teaching new technology skills to teenagers and young adults living in new-build housing developments in Bishkek, including how to write and manage blogs. It was the first time the two participants had worked as peer trainers and they were very proud of the results, including blogs about real issues concerning youth such as bullying and extortion in local schools.

Discussing problems affecting rural youth

Tong zhashtary (Youth of Tong district) - www.jashtar.kloop.kg

A blog created to reflect the lives of young people in Ton district, Issyk-Kul oblast. The participant was active in an official youth committee and the information that she collected was of direct use for local services for young people.

Young people and emergency situations

This project highlighted the rise in ground water in the village of Sretenka in Chui province, by creating and showing a social video made by young people in the village and the school committee.

Zhashtyktyn Nuru (Ray of youth)

A project to create a photo exhibition on the life of rural youth. This was the first time villagers had seen an exhibition of this type (see photo on page 10) and it helped to raise awareness of local problems and support the work of a local activist group.

Breaking age stereotypes

Babushki v atake (Grandmothers moving forward) www.babushki.kloop.kg

Literally translated as grandmothers 'on the attack', this project's title immediately and humorously addressed the stereotype of grandmothers as being 'soft' and passive. The project aimed to gain support for older people's needs and issues through the use of new media tools. The blog contained life stories and various tips written by pensioners, and a photo catalogue of products made by them for sale.

Promoting children's rights

Summer holiday for children

This project taught young internal migrants and street children in Bishkek photography skills in order to promote the rights and interests of working children. A photo exhibition showing how working children spend their summer holidays was staged in the host NGO and several local schools.

My childhood in the lens

This was a photo exhibition telling the story of children living in a family-structured children's home. The participants taught the children to take photographs and discuss sensitive issues about their families.

In the latter part of the project, five projects focused on a situation analysis in the participants' communities. Social mapping techniques were used to show key issues, active youth groups and useful resources. The charts and diagrams produced during this exercise proved very useful in opening up discussions with representatives of other youth groups and local authority officials. We were also able to see the impact of the focus on new media. For example, a young female participant from Kemin district in Chui oblast

produced a video film on a controversial gender and youth issue – bride-stealing. This dramatisation involved young people and older community activists and was immediately shown in different youth clubs and community halls in the district. The film led to animated discussions about this very current and complex issue.



© 2009, Syrgak Dildeev, participant on INTRAC's youth leadership programme.

We were able to see how the use of new media was starting to make an impact in another village, Zhele-Dobo in Issyk-Kul oblast. Early on in the programme, a project group in the village put together a photo exhibition entitled Zhashtyktyn Nuru ('Ray of youth') had been created and exhibited, leading to practical discussions how to improve facilities for youth. Later on in the programme, the group continued their project with a situation analysis mapping exercise. As a result, the group began to move from the traditional role of self-help towards an advocacy and rights dimension. They lobbied local government bodies on the issue of youth access to information and eventually won the opening of IT facilities in a neighbouring village.

5.3 Supporting the development of the self-help movement

As illustrated in the example above, the project has been able to support NGOs with assisting SHGs to move from the traditional model of credit provision to a more vibrant and dynamic social movement model which tackles local issues. The project opened a space for women and young people to explore a different concept of leadership style and approach. No doubt this has influenced the transition of some SHGs.

Nonetheless, it would be hard to say that the final aim of the project has been achieved – influencing the basic tendencies and structures of the vast network of the self-help movement is a complex and long-term task. The project has, however, contributed to the diversity of approaches to capacity building and leadership development being used by NGO partners. It developed ideas and methodologies which will undoubtedly be useful in the future.

6. What did we learn – some conclusions

This was a new and different project. It aimed to challenge a number of entrenched beliefs about women, young people and leadership with a view to address gender and age discrimination. We explored new concepts of leadership, challenged traditional power relations, introduced new media and ICT and trained marginalised women and young people in project management. In implementing the project we learnt a number of interesting and useful lessons:

Creating space for marginalised groups

- The more open the recruitment process, the more likely women and youth are to come through and take up opportunities. Any empowerment programme must pay special attention to its system of choosing and supporting leaders.
- When working with marginalised or excluded groups, it is important to focus on facilitative leadership and base ourselves on the experience and skills that these groups already have. This may take time but it provides the essential base for leadership development.
- Programmes need to focus clearly on analysis of the external environment as it relates to women and youth. The local mapping done by participants gave us a very good start in this.
- Explicit attention to men's concerns alongside women's concerns was an essential and successful part of the project.

Focus on individual and collective capacity building

- Group work within the leadership programme is essential alongside individual tasks and activities. Group discussions are particularly important when raising complex issues around gender and power, for example.

Use of new and creative methods

- New media are an important tool for youth and women's leadership programmes. Social media can have a democratising effect and help create a platform for revising old rules and principles and opening up new topics and opportunities for self-help and other community groups.
- For rural groups without easy access to internet, photo and video products have an obvious potential social benefit and impact. They can be used easily and directly in communities.

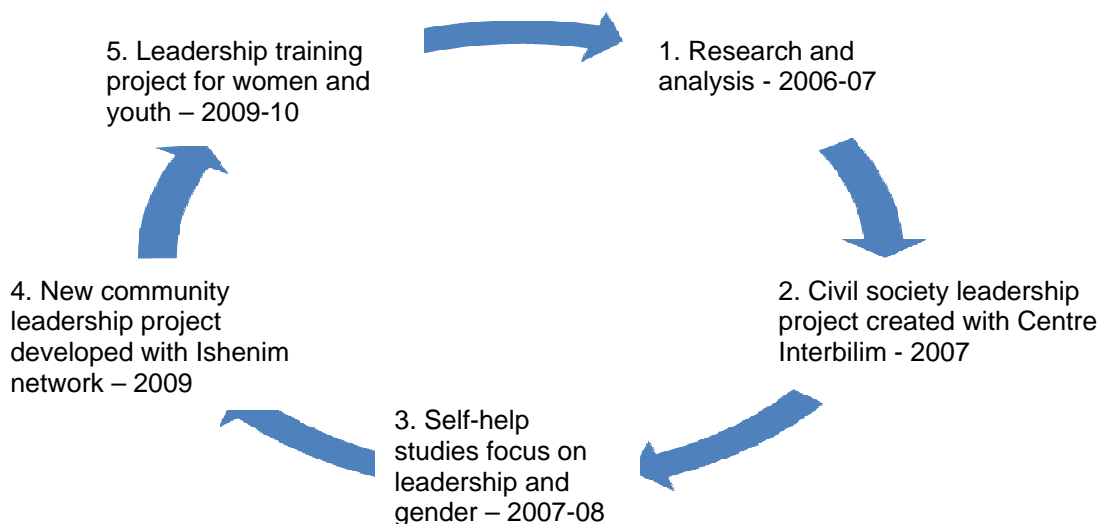
Impact on leadership and equality

- In the longer term, the issue of how to create a zone of alternative, egalitarian leadership remains quite open. The NGOs and SHGs are trying to develop these practices but it is one of many competing priorities (whether these be economic hardship, traditional leadership styles, or other demands). We would like to make contact with a group of determined activists committed to this issue, but these activists are scattered widely and it is hard to bring them together.
- More time needs to be given to promoting youth and women's leadership in the self-help movement. We did not aim to change everything in a relatively short project period of just two years; however we must build on the strong foundations we have put in place with NGO partners and pay special attention to the dynamics of power within NGOs and self-help groups.
- The issue of wider solidarity and links with other organisations needs to be made central. Some well-established development programmes build up a little world of their own. Leadership programmes should try to go beyond this and open up new alliances and opportunities.

Annexes

1. How gender equality and youth participation issues have been researched and promoted in the self-help movement

This diagram lays out the main stages in a cycle of research, discussion and programme development in Central Asia:



2. Short bibliography on community and civil society leadership

These are some regional and international studies used by the trainers' team:

Civil Society Leadership in Transition, Kazbek Abraliev and Charles Buxton, INTRAC Praxis Paper No.18, 2007

Community development in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan: recent experience and lessons learned. Lucy Earle with Bakhodir Fozilhuzhaev, Chinara Tashbaeva, Kulnara Djamankulova. INTRAC, 2004

Is it better to feed people fish or teach them to fish? Report on the impact of the self-help groups method in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Lisbeth Belloni, Zaure Sydykova, Anna Traast. Ishenim, 2004

From Self-Help to a Wider Role in Society. Charles Buxton et al. ECCA /INTRAC, 2007. Available at: www.intrac.org/resources.php?action=resource&id=646

Gender and leadership in local communities. Examples of the activities of NGOs and self-help groups in Tajikistan. Anara Moldosheva. INTRAC, unpublished report, 2008

Results of the leadership programme, Centre Interbilim, 2009

Gender system and discrimination. Margarita Yanskauskaite, Center for equality promotion, Lithuania, 2009

Building Feminist Movements – Concepts and Pathways.; Leadership – clearing the conceptual cloud! Srilatha Batliwala, Harvard University & Scholar Associate, AWID, 2008

Challenges facing social movements, Chiku Malunga, Malawi, INTRAC

Barefoot guide, Community Development Resource Association, Cape Town, South Africa