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# Livelihood Strategies

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*Gender and Generational Specificities  
of Rural Livelihoods in Transition*

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*Vizamedinkhodjayeva*

**LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES**

**GENDER AND GENERATIONAL SPECIFICITIES OF RURAL LIVELIHOODS  
IN TRANSITION**

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**LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES**  
**GENDER AND GENERATIONAL SPECIFICITIES OF RURAL LIVELIHOODS**  
**IN TRANSITION**

**NARGIZA NIZAMEDINKHODJAYEVA**

Thesis  
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## PROPOSITIONS

1. In the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan diversification is currently the only secure element of a viable livelihood strategy. (*This thesis*)
2. The uncertainty embedded in the present transition of Uzbekistan towards a more market oriented mode of production jeopardizes the development of entrepreneurial activities (both on- as well as off-farm). (*This thesis*)
3. Livelihood theory as reflected in the framework of the Department for International Development (DFID) fails to explain processes of marginalisation and social differentiation as a result of its inherent focus on the household level as the unit of analysis.
4. Only households that have the means to diversify can diversify.
5. Human well-being can only be rightfully understood when taking into account both *emic* and *etic* perspectives.
6. Necessity knows no law; in times of need gender and generational relations are redefined.

Propositions belonging to the PhD thesis entitled:

### **Livelihood Strategies: Gender and Generational Specificities of Rural Livelihoods in Transition**

Nargiza Nizamedinkhodjayeva

Wageningen, 11 February 2013

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## DEDICATION

*I dedicate this work to my paternal grandparents: to my grandfather who was the Extraordinary Commissar of Turkestan in the early 1900s and to his wife, my grandmother, who was designing and implementing literacy programmes in the Central Asian region all her life. These people devoted their lives to the well-being of people living in the region. Likewise, I dream of well-being to every person and, I think, engaging in scientific research about people's lives, needs, constraints and opportunities is one of the best ways to contribute to achieving this dream.*

## XII LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GIS	Geographic Information System
GNP/ca	Gross National Product per Capita
HDI	Human Development Index
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
LVI	Livelihood Vulnerability Index
MTP	Machinery-Tractor-Park
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WFP	World Food Programme
WUA	Water Users' Association
ZEF	Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung (Centre for Development Research)

### MOST FREQUENTLY USED LOCAL VOCABULARY

<i>Dehqon</i>	Peasant
<i>Fermer</i>	Registered owner of a private agricultural enterprise
<i>Makhalya or Elot</i>	Village subunit, neighbourhood
<i>Mardikor</i>	Unregistered casual labourer
<i>Odatiy</i>	Traditional
<i>Qo'shimcha tomorka</i>	Additional plot of land for subsistence agriculture
<i>Qishloq</i>	Village
<i>Uy tomorka or bog</i>	Household plot for subsistence agriculture and house construction
<i>Zamonaviy</i>	Modern

## CHAPTER 1 RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN TRANSITION: INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores how women and men make a living in the rural areas of the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan, one of the countries that entered a period of transition from a Soviet socialist system towards a market economy two decades ago. This transition period has had different impacts on the lives of people living in Uzbekistan. For some transition implies uncertainty and decline in well-being. For others it implies new opportunities and prosperity.

The aim of this thesis is to examine the specificities and dynamics of rural livelihoods in the changing context of the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan along gender and generational lines. More specifically, this research investigates the different livelihood strategies that women and men use to secure their livelihoods in the context of the transition; it explores how people make their choices about livelihood strategies and the reasons for divergence in the chosen strategies, and estimates the resulting levels and dynamics of livelihood security.

This chapter provides the background information for this research. It comprises three sections. Section 1.1 summarises earlier research about the transition period in Uzbekistan and its impacts on rural livelihoods, and explains how earlier research findings motivated and framed the research questions for this study. Section 1.2 presents the objectives and main questions that are addressed by this research. The chapter's final section outlines the structure of the thesis.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Uzbekistan is undergoing a number of economic and institutional reforms, re-organising and restructuring every sphere of its economy. However, this common denominator of a *country in transition* suggests many more commonalities with other transitional contexts than actually exist. The countries in transition are not homogeneous: there are differences in the transition strategies, the pace and path of reforms, the pre-transitional economic situation, as well as the historical and cultural past that shape the peculiarities of today's different transitional contexts.

#### 1.1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW: TRANSITION PATH OF UZBEKISTAN

Overall, the present socio-economic transition system of Uzbekistan is a hybrid system, which combines characteristics of the former command-and-control socialistic system with 'something else' (Veldwisch, 2008: 21). It is no longer a socialist system, but it is not a liberal market economy either.

The specificities of the Uzbek transitional model are well-described in the literature. First, the transitional model of Uzbekistan, by design, considers agriculture the main shock-absorber (Kandiyoti, 2003a; Kandiyoti, 2007) to provide food self-sufficiency through the expansion of subsistence agriculture and wheat production, as well as to

generate investment for the development of the industrial sector (World Food Programme (WFP), 2008). Second, some researchers claim that the agricultural sector largely continues to function as a planned economy, where the state maintains control over most arable land, cotton production and cotton exports (Kandiyoti, 2003a; Kandiyoti, 2003b; Spoor, 2004; Trevisani, 2007; Conliffe, 2009) to ensure a substantial contribution of agriculture to overall national revenues (Kandiyoti, 2007). Third, the Uzbek reforms are gradual (Pomfret, 1999). As explained in the literature, the rationale for this step-wise approach is to ensure economic and political stability in the country (Auty, 2003; Müller, 2006).

Indeed, by having chosen this gradual model rather than instantaneous reform, Uzbekistan has not only avoided a drastic decline in Gross National Product (GNP), but rather has achieved a steady increase in GNP in contrast to the other formerly Soviet Central Asian countries (Anderson and Pomfret, 2002). The continuity of administrative planning has also prevented internal civil conflicts over power and assets, as these have happened in Tajikistan (Collier, 2006).

However, the real income levels of the majority of the population have reportedly decreased (Kamp, 2005). Researchers increasingly believe that income disparity at the household level is greater than before (Ruminska-Zimny, 1997; Mee, 2001). According to Kandiyoti (2003a, 2003b), high levels of administrative control limit medium- and small-scale private entrepreneurship and restrict its potential for improving people's well-being. Local entrepreneurial opportunities are limited to small-scale activities including services, trade and subsistence agriculture. These small entrepreneurs are expected to be self-sufficient, contribute to state budget revenues through taxation, and provide employment opportunities for the population. However, the private businesses fail to do so, primarily due to unfavourable business environment and interference in business affairs by state control entities (Kandiyoti, 2003a).

Kandiyoti also claims that the privatisation reforms boosted unemployment, underemployment and underpayment (*ibid.*). Particularly, there was a considerable decline in rural income after the agricultural sector was restructured. This occurred because the rural population was mainly employed in agriculture before the reforms (Khan, 1996; Pomfret, 2000). Furthermore, like any country in transition from a Soviet past, there was a considerable decline in employment opportunities in the industrial sector and other non-agricultural activities (Dudwick *et al.*, 2003). In addition, the drastic decline in livelihood opportunities was coupled with considerably reduced welfare benefits and subsidies (Pomfret and Anderson, 1997; Kandiyoti, 2003a; Kamp, 2004).

### 1.1.2 RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN TRANSITION: LACUNAE IN RESEARCH

Facing the challenges presented by the transitional context, achieving and sustaining livelihood security has been very difficult for people living in both rural and urban areas of Uzbekistan (Ruminska-Zimny, 1997; Anderson and Pomfret, 2002; Kamp, 2004; IMF, 2008). Nevertheless, there are clear spatial differences in the extent and

severity of poverty among different locations of Uzbekistan (Anderson and Pomfret, 2004; WFP, 2008; Conliffe, 2009). For example, according to the WFP food poverty rates in 2005 reached 30.1% of the population in the province of Khorezm, the geographical focus of this study, and 16.9% in the province of Tashkent (WFP, 2008). Achieving livelihood security is especially difficult in Khorezm because, in addition to the dearth of alternative income-generating opportunities, for the majority of the population there is the insufficient irrigation water supply for subsistence agriculture (Müller, 2006) as well as limited access to arable land (Kandiyoti, 2003a).

Kandiyoti (2003a) suggests that the increasing levels of poverty in rural areas are an immediate outcome of land reforms and unemployment. In general, these land reforms occurred over three periods:

- The period between 1991 and 1997: reformation of *kolkhozes* ('collective farms' in Russian) into *shirkats* ('partnership' in the Uzbek translation of 'cooperative farms'), when the large Soviet collective farms were re-organised into large cooperatives (Ilkhamov, 1998; Kandiyoti, 2003a). This period was also the beginning of the allocation of *qo'shimcha tomorka* (approximately 0.12ha parcels) to rural households or so-called *dehqon* farmers (see Chapter 4: 34-35), in order to support subsistence agriculture (Law on *Dehqon* Farmers, 1998);
- The period between 2006 and 2008: subdivision of the *shirkats* into small-scale enterprises that were re-allocated among *farmers* as the new owners of these 'private' agricultural enterprises were referred to (see Chapter 4: 35-36), who represented about ten per cent of Khorezm's rural population (Trevisani, 2007; Veldwisch 2008);
- The period between 2008 and 2010: enlargement of *farmers* enterprises through consolidation into larger land holdings among new *farmers* who represented a little less than five per cent of Khorezm's rural population (Provincial Statistics Department, 2010). As explained by some officials, the rationale behind this last land reform was to build on the advantages of the economy of scale, to ease the allocation of agricultural inputs to *farmers*, and to improve quality control over agricultural production (*man 401, open-ended interview, 2009*).

Overall, these land reforms increased the disparity of access to arable land and thus the benefits from agriculture among the rural population. Only a few households became *farmers*, who gained access to about 70% of the arable land (Veldwisch, 2008: 85). Access to land for the majority, the *dehqon* farmers ('peasant' in translation from Uzbek), became limited to the *qo'shimcha tomorka* of about 0.12 ha that were allocated in addition to *bog* or *uy tomorka* (0.12 ha for constructing a house and having a kitchen garden on the premises).

The group of *farmers* that emerged, however, is not homogeneous. Some *farmers* have access to larger and more fertile land than others (Conliffe, 2009). Nonetheless the commonalities among *farmers* are that they all have limited rights to use the land. Most have remained dependent on the state for agricultural production inputs, all are obliged to deliver specific production quotas of strategic crops (Ilkhamov, 1998). And they sell their produce to pre-determined organisations (Rudenko, 2008) at prices that are generally fixed below market value (Conliffe, 2009).

The *dehqon* farmers do not appear to be homogeneous either. The literature on *dehqon* farmers indicates that they keep livestock and practice subsistence agriculture on *uy tomorkas* (kitchen gardens); some of them grow rice on *qo'shimcha tomorka* and some of them rent land from *fermers* either for engaging in commercial agriculture or for growing subsistence crops (Kandiyoti, 2003a; Veldwisch, 2008); others seasonally migrate (Andersen and Pomfret, 2003; Conliffe, 2009). However, the literature so far provides a limited explanation of the differences among these *dehqon* farmers. For example, there is little knowledge about *dehqon* farmers who rent land from *fermers*, and thus are *fermers'* tenants. There is also very limited information about livelihoods in rural areas, where non-agricultural activities contribute most income to ensuring livelihood security at the household level.

Furthermore, the literature indicates that there are different methods of engaging in income-generating activities. For instance, some have regular employment whereas others set up small businesses (entrepreneurships) or work as casual labourers (*mardikorlik*). However, the literature does not provide a comparative analysis of the benefits and constraints to ensure livelihood security from these different methods (Kandiyoti, 1999; Kandiyoti, 2003a; Kamp, 2005).

Finally, earlier research claims that rural households diversify their activities in rural areas of Uzbekistan, engaging in multiple activities (Conliffe, 2009; Veldwisch & Bock 2011). However, it is not yet clear what different patterns of activity diversification are available, how these emerge, and what potential these have for achieving livelihood security. There is also no insight into the question of why people choose to engage in specific activities and what aspects they consider when they choose certain livelihood strategies.

Overall, there is a serious lack of insight from existing literature into the divergence of livelihood strategies and their differential results in this challenging transitional context. This research aims to address these shortcomings by exploring different patterns of activity diversification, analysing people's choices of livelihood strategies, and investigating the differences in these livelihood strategies and their contribution to achieving livelihood security along the lines of gender, generation and socio-economic status. Understanding gender and generational aspects of rural livelihoods in the study area requires careful scrutiny. Thus, the earlier research on these important but still generally overlooked aspects of rural livelihoods is thoroughly reviewed in the next subsection.

#### 1.1.3 RESEARCH FOCI: GENDER AND GENERATION

Earlier gender research in Uzbekistan claims that the existing patriarchal system and gender inequality in livelihood opportunities were always present in the Central Asian region (Kandiyoti, 2002; Kamp, 2005; Kamp 2006). During the Soviet time conditions enabled women to study and work, which changed women's education levels and increased their engagement in productive activities (Kamp, 2006). However, the Soviet system only scratched the surface of gender inequality. Particularly, the Soviet system did not terminate gender-based division of labour and women's economic

dependence on men (Lazreg, 1999; Mee, 2001; Ruminska-Zimny, 2002; Kamp, 2005). Domestic work, childcare and subsistence agriculture remained the main responsibilities of women, regardless of their employment status (Ruminska-Zimny, 2002; Kamp 2004). Women were generally occupied in 'female jobs' (*ayollar ishi*), including health, educational or social services (Pomfret and Anderson, 1997). Most women showed little interest in professional growth because it presented a double burden, engaging in both productive and reproductive activities (Kabeer, 1994; Mee, 2001; Ruminska-Zimny, 2002).

The decline in economic opportunities during the transition period has not improved women's well-being and has reinforced women's dependency on men (Mee, 2001; Kandiyoti, 2003a). Many more men than women have found advantageous positions at work (Ruminska-Zimny, 2002). Many more women than men have become unemployed (Kandiyoti, 1999). In addition, the workload of women has increased as a result of the need for male labourers to migrate for work purposes (Kandiyoti, 2003a). In the rural areas of Uzbekistan, income-generating opportunities for women are generally limited to ill-paid, casual, unregistered and labour-intensive work in subsistence agriculture and micro-businesses (*ibid.*). These women contribute significantly to food production and food security of their households, but are generally economically disadvantaged compared to men (*ibid.*). In addition, as a cultural norm, domestic chores and reproductive activities have remained women's main responsibility (Kamp, 2004; Kamp 2005). Given these gender-specific differences in livelihood activities it appears that in general, women and men do not equally benefit from conditions during the transition period.

Women are not a homogeneous group. Some women manage to achieve better standards of living than others do. Nonetheless, most well-off women generally remain economically dependent on men. This is because women are usually provided access to housing, assets and income-generating opportunities through men (Lazreg, 1999; Kandiyoti, 2003a). Therefore, divorced, widowed or unmarried women generally remain among the poorest of the population (Paci, 2002). This implies that women's dependence on men for access to assets and income-generating opportunities is one of the main factors reproducing gender inequality in the transitional context. This argument is supported by Ellis (2000) who pointed out that there is gender inequality in any context where women and men do not have equal access to or ownership of assets.

Economics and politics are always closely interlinked. The economic dependency of women on men restricts women's decision-making power (Kabeer, 1994). Furthermore, in patriarchal societies it is expected that a woman follow her father's or husband's decisions regarding her engagement in studies and work. In particular, in Khorezm women generally marry before their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday (Kehl-Bodrogi, 2008). Once married a woman is economically dependent on her husband. Driven by this economic dependence a married woman is expected to obey the decisions of her husband and parents-in-law. Some researchers suggest that these cultural aspects are the main factors that reproduce gender inequality in livelihood opportunities (Mandel, 2004; Korf and Oughton, 2006). Ellis (2000) suggests that it is economic dependency

that shapes gender inequality. Taking these suggestions into consideration, this research identifies and investigates the interrelationships of these factors that reproduce and transform gender structures and patterns of livelihood strategies.

## 1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

To address the important lacunae in research explained in Section 1.1, this research has two broad objectives:

- To explore the gender-specific effects of the transformation process taking place in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan and the related changes in livelihood activities;
- To better understand why and how some households manage to achieve greater benefits and livelihood security in the same context of transition than others.

Based on these objectives, the following primary research question has emerged:

*How do people living in the rural areas of the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan secure their livelihoods and what are the gender-specific effects of changing livelihoods as a result of the rural transformation processes during the period of transition?*

This main research question is addressed by answering three sub-questions:

- Which livelihood strategies do people living in the rural areas develop to secure their livelihoods during the process of rural transformation?
- What is the relative livelihood security of people among the diverse rural households and why do they diverge?
- What are the gender specificities of rural livelihoods?

These sub-questions have shaped the structure of the thesis, as presented below.

## 1.3 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

The dissertation comprises eight chapters. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical concepts, objectives and the conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 details the research methodology. It explains the rationale and implementation of the chosen methodological approach, applied at the provincial scale in Khorezm.

Chapter 4 describes what people do and what opportunities they use to secure their livelihoods. The chapter presents income-generating activities performed at the household level. These activities are broadly grouped into agricultural (on-farm) and non-agricultural (non-farm) activities, and migration-based livelihoods (Ellis, 1998). This chapter also explores the contributions of other income-sources to household budgets, such as welfare system provisions and network support.

Chapter 5 explores the gender and generational specificities of rural livelihoods. This chapter identifies a system of interlinked factors that reproduce and/or transforms specific gender structures and inequalities. This dominant gender structure determines differences in livelihood opportunities and decision-making power between women

and men and between younger and older generations. The chapter also explains how and why the dominant gender structure is gradually transforming due to challenges presented by the transitional context.

Chapter 6 reviews how and why people choose specific strategies to secure their livelihoods. This chapter identifies and explains the different considerations that people take into account when making livelihood strategy choices. These considerations define the main elements of people's strategizing and include differences in the availability of opportunities, perceptions of acceptability, capabilities and motives. These four elements are interlinked but diverge by gender, generation and socio-economic status.

Chapter 7 is about what people achieve as a result of their livelihood strategies. This chapter analyses the differences in the levels of livelihood security and identifies the main characteristics of households that are 'in need', 'in the middle', and 'well-off.' This chapter also explores changes in the levels of livelihood security during the transitional period.

Chapter 8 presents the conclusions drawn together from the findings from each chapter that answer the sub-questions and main research question.

## CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this research. The chapter comprises three sections. Section 2.2 introduces the DFID (Department for International Development) livelihoods framework as the central analytical framework of this research. Then, it explains the rationale for applying this framework to this research. The final section of this chapter explains how this research adopts the livelihoods framework and contributes to its further elaboration.

### 2.2 RELEVANCE OF THE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK

This section explains the main concepts of the DFID framework and why this framework is useful for this research.

#### 2.2.1 DFID LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK

Guided by the research objectives and questions presented in the introduction (Chapter 1), this research builds on a broad body of knowledge on livelihoods approaches (e.g. Chambers and Conway, 1992; Scoones, 1998; Bebbington, 1999; Carney, 1998; Carney *et al.*, 1999; Leach *et al.*, 1999; Frankenberger and Drinkwater, 1999; Ellis, 2000; Niehof and Price, 2001; Ellis and Freeman, 2005; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). The first definition of the concept of livelihood, given by Chambers in 1984, described it as a core relationship between assets (what people have), strategies (what people do), and outcomes (goals that people achieve) (Scoones, 1998). Later on this basic definition was reformulated to place greater emphasis on people's capabilities, assets and sustainability:

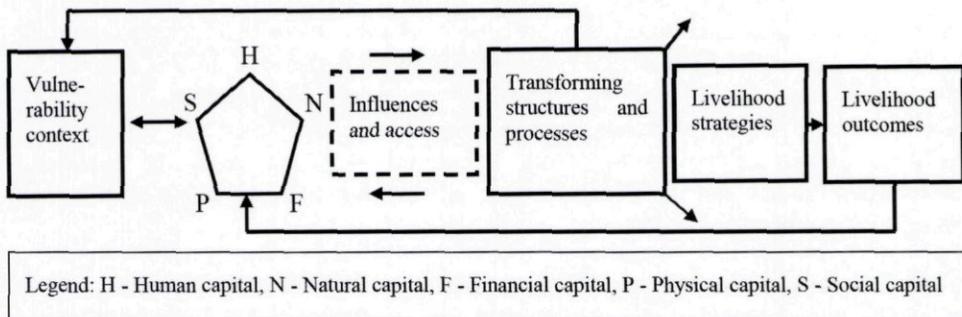
*"A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long-term"* (Chambers and Conway, 1992: 7-8).

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the core elements of the livelihoods framework are (Carney, 1998):

- Access to assets (Scoones, 1998: 7; Ellis, 2000: 32) including human assets (skills, education, health), social assets (networks and associations), physical assets (infrastructure, goods), financial assets (money, savings, loans), natural assets (land, water), as well as political assets (decision-making power [Nicol, 2000]);
- Activities that people carry out using available assets; and

- Outcomes (e.g. livelihood security, accumulation of assets).

Figure 2.1 DFID Livelihoods Framework<sup>2</sup>



Source: Carney, 1998.

The realised access to assets determines people's capabilities (Sen, 1981). Based on this access, people pursue different livelihood strategies. Livelihood strategies include different combinations of income-generating activities (Scoones, 1998). Livelihood outcomes indicate what people have achieved as a result of pursuing their strategies. These livelihood outcomes generally include different levels of food, health and income security, as well as indicators of the sustainable use of natural assets. The assessment of these livelihood outcomes is generally carried out to identify vulnerable households that can be easily affected by shocks (e.g. drought, flood, frost) and stresses (e.g. disease, loss) because of their poor or depleted asset base (Swift 1989; Moser 1998).

In general, access to assets and livelihood activities depends on the vulnerability context, which is generally outside people's control. The vulnerability context comprises critical trends (economic trends, population trends), shocks (economic and environmental shocks), and seasonality (of prices, harvest, income earning opportunities). Furthermore, people's access to assets and livelihood opportunities are enabled or hindered by transformational structures and processes involving institutions and policies. In this case 'institutions' refers to societal rules, norms and practices. For example, policies comprise normative acts and by-laws. Both institutions and policies determine power dynamics and access to assets (Scoones, 1998).

Overall, the livelihoods framework is considered to be holistic. All elements are closely interlinked and influence each other (Niehof and Price, 2001). Particularly, institutions enable (or hinder) access to assets and income-generating opportunities. Based on this access people carry out different activities. The activities result in different levels of livelihood security that in turn determine the available asset base for future activities (DFID, 1999).

### 2.2.2 RATIONALE FOR THE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK

This research applies the livelihoods approach to the transitional context of Uzbekistan society. First, since their inception the livelihoods approaches have been successfully

applied to different societal contexts (Solesbury, 2003), such as in Africa (Korf and Oughton, 2006), the United Kingdom (Oughton and Wheelock, 2003), as well as in countries that are in transition (Pickup and White, 2003).

Second, the livelihoods approach is people-oriented and thus useful for understanding what people do in order to avail themselves of livelihood opportunities and secure their livelihoods within their specific dynamic contexts (Scoones, 1998). The livelihoods approach is comprehensive and integrates the fundamental components of livelihood generation: access to assets, livelihood strategies, resulting livelihood security, institutions and policies, as well as the vulnerability context in which livelihoods are embedded (*ibid.*).

Overall, the livelihoods framework is applicable to a broad spectrum of research objectives and contexts. This is because the framework aggregates the core components of livelihood generation at such a high level that these categories are universal and can be unfolded along any desired angle that is required for a specific research objective. For this reason the livelihoods framework is neutral regarding the specificities of any particular context and thus can be applied to the transitional context of Uzbekistan society. Thus this approach is relevant for addressing the objectives of this research - to explore the gender specificities of rural livelihoods and investigate why and how some households manage to achieve better levels of livelihood security than others (Chapter 1).

Nonetheless there are no perfect theoretical frameworks. Like any theoretical framework the livelihoods frameworks have been criticised and further elaborated. The critiques that are relevant for adaptation of the livelihoods framework within this research effort include two aspects. First, the livelihoods framework is considered to provide too little attention to social relations such as gender, generation and class (Ellis, 2000; Oberhauser *et al.*, 2004; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). Second, the debates and elaborations on the concept of strategy do not explain why people choose specific strategies.

## **2.3 BUILDING ON THE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK**

### **2.3.1 GENDER AND GENERATION**

So far livelihood research in Uzbekistan has largely focused on access to assets and livelihood activities at the household level (Conliffe, 2009). However, households are not homogeneous units. Earlier livelihood research suggests that livelihoods vary by gender and generation (Ellis, 2000; Whitehead and Kabeer, 2001; Oberhauser *et al.*, 2004; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). This implies that access to and control of assets, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes vary among individuals within a household, depending on their gender and age (Kabeer, 1994; Ellis, 2000; Niehof and Price, 2001; Beall, 2002; Oberhauser *et al.*, 2004; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). This research integrates these findings and applies the livelihoods framework through a gender perspective: it explores gender inequalities in access to assets, livelihood

activities and security, and analyses the systems that reproduce and/or transform these inequalities.

To analyse the livelihood systems in the study area through the lens of gender, I combine the DFID livelihoods framework with the basic gender framework (March *et al.*, 1999: 18) that suggests exploring gender inequalities by asking the following questions: “Who has what? Who does what? Who decides? How? Who gains? Who loses? Which men? Which women?” Integrating these questions into the livelihoods framework, I analyse the gender and generational divisions of labour as well as the gender specificities of access to assets, decision-making power and resulting livelihood security (Rowlands, 1997; Bebbigton, 1999; de Haan *et al.*, 2002). In this way I explore why transition does not benefit women and men equally, how transition affects gender structures, and what social and institutional mechanisms transform and/or reproduce gender inequalities. A better understanding of these mechanisms is important and generally overlooked (Ellis, 2000: 139).

### 2.3.2 TRANSITIONAL CONTEXT AND ACHIEVED LEVELS OF LIVELIHOOD SECURITY

Rural livelihoods are embedded in the particular contexts of individuals (Ellis and Freeman, 2005; Ludi, 2008). Therefore to understand livelihood systems it is important to understand the particular context and integrate the study of individual strategies into the analysis of the development processes taking place at the regional level (Roep and Wiskerke, 2004).

The context is shaped by vulnerabilities (e.g. seasonality, trends), institutions (e.g. social norms, rules, ideologies), and policies (Ellis, 2000; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). There are multiple risks within individual contexts that determine vulnerability. Ellis (2000) suggests that these risks can be classified as: economic risks (e.g. market shocks, fluctuations of prices, inflation), physical risks (e.g. lack of rainfall), social risks (e.g. discrimination by age and gender), and political risks (e.g. decision making about access to resources, aspects of inclusion and exclusion).

However, this typology of risks does not include another type of risks that is very specific to the context of Uzbekistan. This regards the high level of uncertainty resulting from on-going reforms that continuously reshuffle the accessibility of assets (Chapter 1) and change the availability of opportunities to engage in income-generating activities. Livelihood opportunities that are available today might become unavailable in the future. As a result there are continuous changes in livelihood security. At the same time, there are path dependencies in the governance system as a result of which new policies and rules are adjusted to old behaviours, which reproduce ‘as usual’ practices (Kandiyoti, 2007).

In general the implementation of reforms re-shuffles and re-allocates wealth among households in any context (Gore, 1994). In the case of Uzbekistan, some households therefore manage to achieve higher standards of living than others (WFP, 2008). This implies that the transitional context co-shapes the process of socio-economic differentiation and re-shapes the socio-economic structure of the population. Guided by the research question and objectives (Chapter 1), I limit exploration of the emerging

pattern and process of socio-economic differentiation to investigate why some households manage to achieve a higher level of livelihood security than others, to evaluate relative livelihood security, to assess changes in livelihood security during the transition period, and to identify the characteristics of households that are 'in need', 'in the middle' and 'well-off.'

### 2.3.3 ELABORATING ON THE CONCEPT OF LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY

The livelihoods approaches generally explore which institutional arrangements, policies and reforms enable some people to have a secure livelihood and hinder others ability to do so (Solesbury, 2003). In order to explore why some households manage to achieve livelihood security and others do not, I investigate how different people respond to existing institutional arrangements. More specifically, I investigate what aspects people consider in making their livelihood choices; I explore why they make different choices about what to do and how to secure their livelihoods and the resulting levels of livelihood security.

Making choices, about what to do, how to act, and why, are the integral parts of strategizing that require closer examination. The concept of strategy is widely debated in the livelihood literature. First, strategies were merely understood as livelihood activities that people carry out to achieve livelihood security depending on their access to assets and capabilities (Chambers and Conway, 1992). However, this concept was criticised for being too broad and for including any 'ex post' behaviour (Schmink, 1984). In response to this criticism several researchers developed different typologies of strategies: 'ex post' and 'ex ante' strategies (Devereux, 2001); 'adaptive' (or long-term) and 'coping' (or short-term) strategies (DFID, 1999); 'economic', 'social' and 'physical' strategies (Singh and Gilman, 1999); and strategies of 'accumulation', 'consolidation', 'compensation' and 'security' (Zoomers, 1999).

Thereafter livelihood researchers suggested that there are important interrelations among strategies, implying that strategies should not be analysed in isolation from each other. They pointed out that households generally pursue a mix of strategies (Devereux 1999, cited in DFID, 1999: 8). Later on Ellis (2000: 60) identified a risk spreading strategy that relies on diversification of income-generating activities (and/or income sources). This strategy of diversification is an essential strategy for securing livelihood in the study area and I discuss this strategy in detail in the following subsection.

Another shift in conceptualising livelihood strategy involves perceiving strategies not only as activities, but also as processes in which people are active actors who make choices. For example, the DFID suggests that people choose different options and ways of doing, assessing risk, priorities, personal lifestyle preferences, intentions and goals (DFID, 1999):

*"People pursue a range of livelihood outcomes (health, income, reduced vulnerability) by drawing on a range of assets to pursue a variety of activities. The activities they adapt and the way they reinvest in asset building are driven in part by their own preferences and priorities. However, they are also influenced by the types of*

*vulnerability, including shocks (e.g. drought), overall trends (in, for instance, resource stocks) and seasonal variations. Options are also determined by the structures (e.g. the roles of government or of the private sector) and processes (e.g. institutional, policy and cultural factors) which people face. In aggregate, their conditions determine their access to assets and livelihood opportunities, and the way in which these can be converted into outcomes" (Farrington et al., 1999: 3).*

In a similar vein, Niehof and Price (2001: 10) explained that:

*"People do not carry out activities in a haphazard manner. They have strategies by which activities are structured and on the basis of which they are planned. These livelihood strategies are part of the system's throughput, as are the decision-making and management needed for strategy implementation."*

Reflecting on these earlier elaborations of the concept of strategy, it becomes apparent that this concept needs further elaboration. I am inclined to think that people's choices and considerations about choosing a livelihood activity as well as of the resulting level of livelihood security are inseparable parts of strategizing. So far, however, more attention is given to the resulting activity and not to people's considerations and their process of choosing. This research explores these important but overlooked aspects of strategizing from the perspective of people following Archer's argument (2007) that people engage in reflexive thinking to make choices.

#### 2.3.4 PATTERNS OF DIVERSIFICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF KHOREZM

Earlier livelihood research suggests that diversification of income-generating activities is an important livelihood strategy. Engaging in multiple activities enables rural households to spread risks and thereby decrease their vulnerability (Ellis, 2000). Some households diversify activities to accumulate income whereas others households diversify activities merely for survival (ibid.).

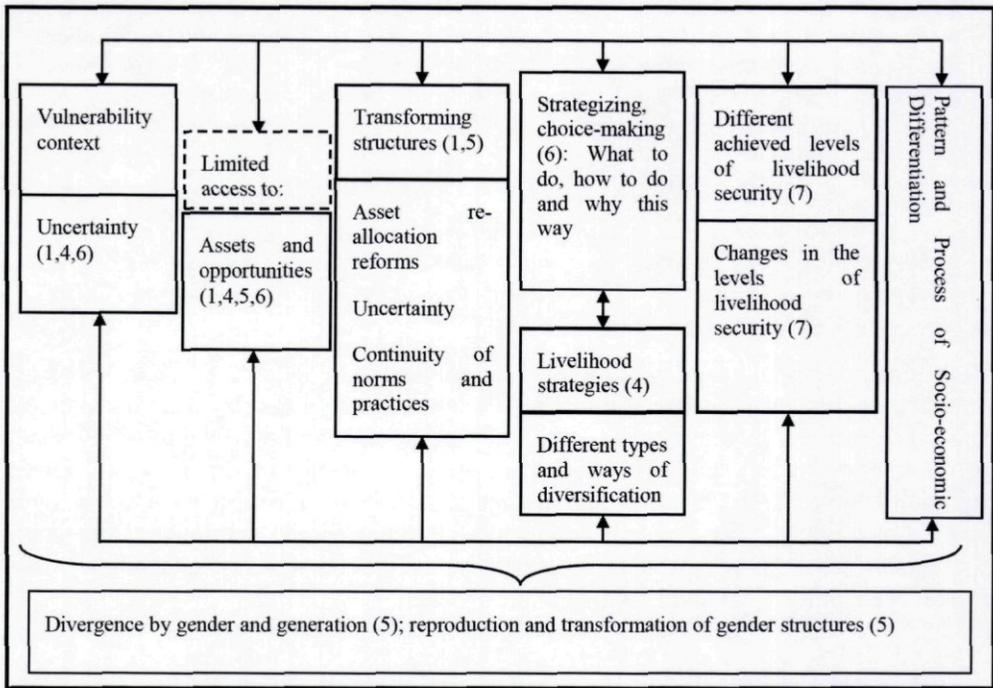
In Khorezm the majority of rural households diversify their income-generating activities, but this diversification does not always ensure improved well-being (Conliffe, 2009: 336). Hence, it appears that different types of diversification result in divergent levels of livelihood security. So far, however, there is no typology of diversification and it is unclear what type of diversification has the potential to ensure livelihood security.

This research aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on livelihood diversification in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan by developing a typology (patterns) of activity (or income) diversification (Chapter 4 and Chapter 6), and by identifying what pattern of activity diversification has the greatest potential to improve livelihood security (Chapter 7).

#### 2.3.5 PUTTING IT ALTOGETHER

This research adapts the DFID framework to address the above specified knowledge gaps and specific questions that arise in the transitional context of Khorezm society (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework\*



Source: adapted from Carney, 1998 (see Section 2.2).

\*Numbers in parentheses indicate the respective chapter numbers in the thesis.

More particularly, this thesis explores:

- The gender-specific effects of the transformation process on rural livelihoods in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan and the specific vulnerability context, which is characterised by a high level of uncertainty and changes in livelihood opportunities;
- Different activity diversification patterns that result in different levels of livelihood security among rural households;
- The concept of livelihood strategy as why people choose specific ways of securing their livelihoods, what they choose to do, and how to secure their livelihoods; and
- The interlinked nature of factors that reproduce and transform gender structures in the specific context of societal transition.

This conceptual framework illustrates the structure and logic of this thesis presented in Chapter 1. The next chapter presents the research design, methods, data collection and analyses.

## CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN: MULTI-CASE STUDY STRATEGY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the methodological aspects of this study. It presents and justifies the research design and explains the process of data collection and analysis. The chapter comprises six sections. Section 3.2 introduces the study site and Section 3.3 outlines the research approach. Section 3.4 describes the research design and explains the data collection methods. Section 3.5 presents the data analysis process. Section 3.6 presents the ethical guidelines of this research.

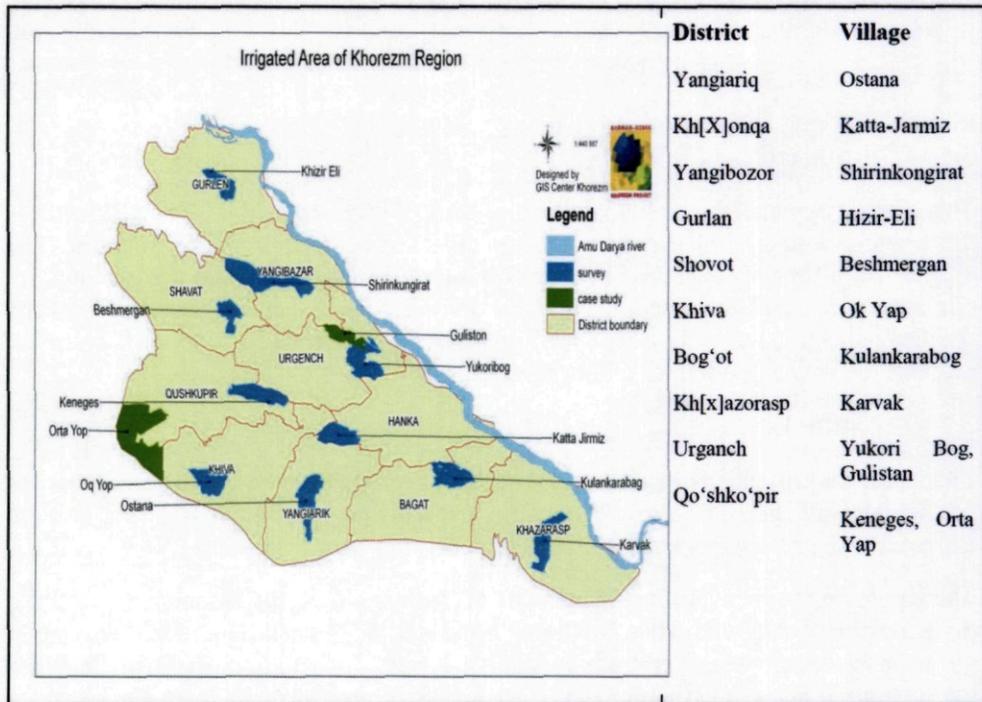
### 3.2 RESEARCH LOCALE

The Khorezm province is located in the northwest of Uzbekistan on the lower reaches of Amu Darya River. The climatic conditions in the province are harsh: summers are extremely hot and winters are extremely cold, dry and windy (Conliffe, 2009).

The Khorezm province borders the deserts of Turkmenistan, the autonomous republic of Karakalpakstan, and the Bukhoro province of Uzbekistan. The provincial government comprises several administrative levels. The province (*viloyat*) includes ten districts (*tumanlar*) (Figure 3.1). The districts comprise villages (*qishloq*) and a district administrative capital. There are 108 villages in Khorezm (Provincial Statistics Department, 2009), which are further subdivided into neighbourhoods (*makhalya* or *elot*). Each district capital is subordinate to the provincial capital of Khorezm – the city of *Urganch*. Across districts and villages there is spatial variability of access to basic infrastructure (e.g. irrigation systems, markets, railways and main roads; Conliffe, 2009).

The province is home to about 1.5 million people. About 80% of the Khorezm population is rural (Project Metadatabase<sup>3</sup>, 2010). Culture in Khorezm has had diverse influences. Before Soviet rule there were four social groups living in the region: the *Sarts* (inhabitants), the *Karakalpaks* (nomads), the *Uzbeks* (foreigners, conquerors) and the *Turkomans* (commercial dealers) (Muraviev, 1830, cited in Chris and Macdonald, 2011). At that time the present-day territory of the Khorezm province was part of a large *Khanate* (*kingdom*) that was of strategic interest to both the British Empire and Tsarist Russia (Hopkirk, 1992). In 1873 Khorezm became a quasi-independent Russian protectorate. During the 1920s the Soviets invaded the region and in 1923 the *Khanate* of *Khiva* was transformed into the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic. In 1925 the territory of the Khorezm Republic was divided into three parts by order of Stalin. One part of the former Khorezm republic became the Khorezm province of the Republic of Uzbekistan; another part became a part of the Republic of Turkmenistan; and the third part became the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan.

Figure 3.1 Research Locale



Source: ZEF/UNESCO Khorezm Project Database, prepared by Lee, A. 2009.

During the Soviet period the population of the Khorezm province became increasingly heterogeneous: Tajiks, Kyrgyzes, Kazakhs, Russians, Koreans, Germans and Tartars moved to or were resettled in the province. In this way the Khorezmian population became multicultural. Nonetheless, the Khorezmians who settled in the region prior to the others generally identify themselves as the 'real Khorezmians' [Field note, 2008-2010].

### 3.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY: MULTI-CASE STUDY APPROACH

A multi-phenomena case study approach (Yin, 1984; Yin, 2002) was applied for this study. By definition a case study is:

*"A strategy for doing research which involves empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 2002: 179).*

There are several reasons why I decided to employ a multi-phenomena case study approach. First, this approach is known for being instrumental, explanatory and exploratory (Kanbur, 2004). It can provide insights into real life situations and is useful for answering research questions about the causal and functional aspects of the phenomenon under investigation (Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Bryman, 2004). Therefore, this approach is useful for conducting research in the transitional context of

Khorezm society - this approach enables the capturing of changes in the societal context as well as the dynamics of rural livelihoods in response to these changes. Second, the multi-phenomena case study approach is useful for understanding and explaining the complexity of the investigated phenomenon (Bryman, 2004). In particular, to explore the complexity the multi-phenomena case study approach relies on 'multiple sources of evidence' (Robson, 2002: 179) that help generate theoretical propositions (Yin, 1984). Building on these multiple lines of evidence the case study research either replicates or inductively elaborates on new ideas and theories (Bryman, 2004). In this way, the multi-phenomena case study approach is useful for both theory testing and building and is thus relevant to this research.

A common critique of case study designs is that they lack a statistical generalisation of the population (Bryman, 2004). This is because case study designs generally aim to generalise about theoretical propositions as opposed to providing a statistical generalisation about populations (*ibid.*). To address this critique in this research I have applied a multi-phenomena case study approach that includes multiple qualitative and quantitative (statistical) data collection methods and thus enables generalisation on both theory and population. This method of combining qualitative and quantitative data and methods is defined in the literature as a Q-squared method (Kanbur, 2004).

### 3.3.1 Q-SQUARED METHOD

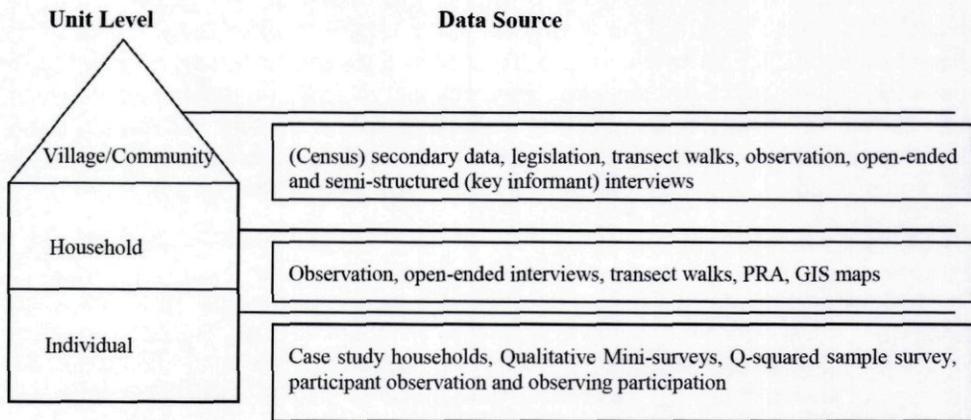
The Q-squared method applied in this research embraces multiple qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Combining qualitative and quantitative data collection methods is useful for verifying the collected data by building on the strengths of each method (Hammersley, 1996; Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Kanbur, 2004). In this way the Q-squared method can help achieve more complete research findings that are statistically representative, that provide meaningful insights into people's realities (Bryman, 2004: 454) and that "allow people to speak for themselves" (Brockington and Sullivan, 2003: 60). In particular qualitative data are useful for exploring causal mechanisms that cannot be easily quantified (Silverman, 2004), for revealing the complexity of the phenomena under investigation, and for making sense of this complexity (Bryman, 2004). Quantitative data are also useful for statistical analyses and generalisation about studied populations (de Vaus, 2002).

In this research I combine qualitative and quantitative data for "triangulation, facilitation and complementarity" (Bryman, 2004). Triangulation involves cross-checking research findings based on qualitative and quantitative data to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings (*ibid.*). Facilitation involves using qualitative findings to explain quantitative data and/or inform about quantitative needs and vice versa (*ibid.*). Complementarity involves collecting qualitative data for aspects that are difficult to capture with quantitative data and vice versa (*ibid.*). In this way facilitation and the complementarity of qualitative and quantitative data are particularly useful for this study because data are not easily available in the context of Khorezm (Veldwisch, 2008).

### 3.3.2 EMBEDDED CASE STUDY: MULTI-LEVEL UNITS OF ANALYSIS

The case study design employed in this research is embedded - it incorporates the units of analysis that are situated at different levels in order to look for consistent patterns of evidence across units (Yin, 1984). This is particularly useful for the livelihood research, which requires engagement in analysis at different levels. For example, inclusion of the analytical units at different levels is needed to understand how gender structures and livelihood systems are being affected by the transitional context. The levels of analysis in this research included: individual, household, village and provincial levels (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Data Sources and Levels of Analytical Units



Source: Author's presentation.

The household level was the main unit of analysis in this research. However, the definition of a household varied depending on the data collection method and its research objective (following Agarwal, 1997).

In particular, I engage in ethnographic and case study research to analyse households as arenas where different household members have different preferences and decision-making power depending on gender and age (Ludi, 2008). Thus, engaging in a case study approach at the household level I consider the case study household as the "basic unit of human social organisation" (Niehof and Price, 2001: 10). More specifically, I explore the rules and norms as well as the roles of every household member and their participation in decision-making processes. This way I investigate the different realities of individuals who have different positions in the household and thus different access to the household budget, food, assets, activities and livelihood security, through the lens of gender and generation.

In parallel, by conducting a sample survey I apply a different definition of the concept of household. This is because the purpose of the sample survey is to explore statistical differences across households. Through the sample survey I define a household as a group of women and men who are together to pool, use, and allocate resources. This

differs from definitions that have been used by other researchers who conducted surveys in Uzbekistan. For example, Kandiyoti (1999: 5) defined a household as: “people living under the same roof and sharing the same cooking pot (*kazan bir*).” My definition was different in order to include migrants who were away from home (i.e. not literally “under the same roof”), but still contributed significantly to the household budget.

### **3.4 MULTIPLE RESEARCH PHASES**

The fieldwork took place between April 2008 and November 2010. It included three field periods (17 months of the author’s time from early spring to late autumn<sup>4</sup>) as well as continuous research efforts with the help of assistants throughout the entire research period in 2008 and 2010 and throughout each year to capture the seasonality of rural livelihoods (Table 3.1).

The field research period comprised three phases and can be referred to as a sandwich approach. It first focused on qualitative research in 2008 followed by a quantitative sample survey and the continuation of qualitative research in 2009. Thereafter, the third field period in 2010 finalised the field research with a qualitative focus. This sandwich research approach was useful for capturing the dynamics of livelihood strategies, livelihood security and gender specificities of rural livelihoods over time, and for collecting in-depth qualitative and representative quantitative data. Having several phases of field research was also useful because it provided time to reflect on collected data, generate preliminary theoretical propositions, and further test them in the field during subsequent phases of the field research. A case study protocol was designed to organise systematic data collection and data management (Bryman, 2004; Annex A).

Table 3.1 Research Phases, 2008-2010

Research phase/ Time Period	Purpose	Method
<b>Familiarization/</b> <b>Three months, April-June 2008</b>	To improve or verify the initial research design (elaborated in the proposal for this PhD research)  To explore the heterogeneity of the province and to identify criteria for selecting two villages, for selecting case study households, and to get tentative ideas about the main issues related to livelihood activities, access to assets, livelihood security as well as the gender specificities of rural livelihood systems	Key-informant open-ended and semi-structured interviews, transect drives and walks, observations, collection and analysis of secondary data
<b>Intensive/</b> <b>29 June 2008-November 2010</b>	To conduct in-depth research in sufficient detail about rural livelihoods and their gender specificities	Case study households, open-ended and semi-structured key informant interviews, participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methods, qualitative mini-surveys, observation
<b>Extensive/</b> <b>Seven months, April-October 2009</b>	To gather data about access to assets and activity patterns; gender-segregated data about the division of labour, gender roles, and norms within a household, and data on changes in these roles during the period of transition  To gather data about what aspects people consider when making choices about what to do, how to secure livelihoods, and why they choose specific ways of doing (activities, strategies) for securing their livelihoods  To gather data for estimation of achieved levels of livelihood security and their changes in the period of transition and the reasons for these changes	Sample survey
<b>Validation/</b> <b>Three months, June - August 2010</b>	To get updates about changes in the societal context and to understand what these changes imply for the preliminary findings of this research  To fill in research 'gaps' and verify preliminary results	Case study households, open-ended and semi-structured key informant interviews

Source: Author's presentation.

### 3.4.1 FAMILIARIZATION PHASE

The research started with a three-month familiarization phase between April and June 2008. The main research methods during this period included key informant interviews, observations and transect walks. The purposes of this stage included:

- Investigation of provincial livelihood heterogeneity among different locations. In particular I focused on spatial differences in livelihood activity patterns, access to infrastructure (e.g. roads, markets, factories, networks to supply water, electricity, gas) and natural assets (e.g. variations in cropping patterns, dry areas, green areas) across different locations of the province. The purpose of understanding these differences was to identify the criteria for the selection of two villages and four case study households (two in each village) for in-depth case study research (Annex D);
- An inventory of all possible income-generating activities of the rural population within the province to gain insights into gender differences in livelihood generation.

To explore provincial heterogeneity I also considered several sources of secondary data at the village, district and provincial levels. However, the interviewed employees of the Provincial Statistics Department revealed that not all of their data were reliable because the last population census was conducted long ago and the department did not have enough funds to collect data again [*man 433, key informant interview, 2008*]. Similar concerns about the reliability of secondary data have been faced by other researchers (e.g. Veldwisch, 2008). Therefore, instead of relying on secondary data to understand the spatial heterogeneity of access to assets and income-generating activities in the province, I conducted transect drives and walks in every district of the province. During this period of time about 40 key informant interviews were conducted to understand and map the differences within the province. These interviewees were categorised into three groups. The first group comprised people who had carried out research in the province. The second group included officials and managers of agricultural and industrial units who shared their knowledge about the province. The third group of key informants included people living in the villages.

Based on these interviews, observations and transect drives, the following criteria for describing the province's heterogeneity were established:

- Access to irrigation water and remoteness to the main irrigation systems because gaining income from agriculture is impossible without irrigation water supply;
- Remoteness to the district and provincial urban centres and markets because these locations provide different income-generating opportunities.

These findings are also in line with the findings of Conliffe (2009). Based on these criteria, two villages were selected:

- The village of *Orta Yap* ('the middle river') in the district of *Qo'shko'pir* with a population of 15,959 people living in 3,047 households (based on village records for *payek* [flour ration] distribution, 2008), located relatively far from the

provincial centre and that faced considerable irrigation water shortages in 2008; and

- The village of *Gulistan* ('the place of flowers') in the district of *Urganch* with a population of 10,395 people living in 2,697 households (based on village records for *payek* distribution, 2008), located relatively closer to the provincial centre and having relatively better irrigation water supply in the dry year of 2008 than *Orta Yap*.

### 3.4.2 INTENSIVE PHASE

The intensive phase started with the first day of my field research and ended with the last day. The purpose of this phase was to gain insights about how things happen in relation to rural livelihoods and their gender specificities and how these are being reproduced and transformed during the transition period. The main methods and techniques of this phase included: observation, resource mapping, case study research of four households, semi-structured diaries filled by the members of the case study households and four mini-surveys of a qualitative nature.

#### *Living in the Village: Participant Observation and Observing Participation*

Understanding of village life is only possible when one experiences it first hand, observing and participating in peoples' lives on a daily basis. Observations are a powerful anthropological and ethnographic method of qualitative research that are particularly useful when there is a need to gain insights into people's reality, perceptions, and problems that they face in their changing context (Bryman and Burgess, 1999; Brockington and Sullivan, 2003). Employing this method requires living together with the people being studied, experiencing the same living conditions, participating in people's economic and social life events so that they gradually accept the presence of the researcher. Much information can then be obtained through relaxed informal conversation and observation (Brockington and Sullivan, 2003).

While living in the village I engaged in two methods of observation. The first was observation of subjects without direct engagement in their activities. The second was observing through direct participation (Bernard, 2006: 347) in the activities of the subjects (e.g. making furrows and cleaning seeds from cotton along with the subjects). This second method was particularly useful to gaining proximity to the subjects and building rapport. My life in the village was not the same as those who live there permanently. Over time I gained a status that was somewhere between being an insider and an outsider. Particularly, being from the same country and thus exposed to the local culture and the same context of societal transition, it was easy for me to become an insider, to build friendships and to understand the intricacies of people's lives. I was an outsider because I was from an urban area and I neither grew up in a Khorezmian village nor married a Khorezmian man or intended to live in the village on a permanent basis. In addition, I am from a family with a mixed cultural and racial background that can be broadly defined as Eurasian. Thus my habitual behaviour was different from the typical behaviour of women who lived in the village. The interviewees in this research expected me to be different from them. Therefore, as a

strategy to build rapport with interviewees I behaved naturally. I believe that if I chose to behave unnaturally in an attempt to match the patterns of local behaviour, my behaviour would appear false and strange to people living in the villages.

While living in the village I continuously engaged in ethnographic research. These techniques enabled me to learn about how people discussed particular issues, how they explained their reality and how they defined the meaning of their lives. For example, talking about sensitive issues required a special effort to encourage people to share, to engage in open communication and to feel comfortable. To achieve these results it was important not only to understand people's personal context but also to understand the ways people discussed these issues: for example, what phrases they used, what words they chose, as well as the tone in which they spoke. For example, I have learnt that the acceptable way to talk about poverty in this context was not to name the households that struggled for survival as 'poor' households, but to refer to them as 'the households in need' or as 'mal-provisioned' households (*kam taminlangan* in Uzbek). Another technique to keep people interested in being interviewed was to joke and to engage in observing participation: for example, to discuss issues while also helping them to carry out specific tasks they were busy with at the moment of the discussion.

For interviewing people I also used different PRA (participatory rural appraisal) techniques and visual aids (Chambers, 1991; Chambers, 1994; Brockington and Sullivan, 2003). For example, these were used to explore expenditure patterns at the household level as well as different seasonal cropping patterns on different plots of land. The great advantage of the visual aids was that these tools could act as ice breakers and facilitate communication.

Overall, living in the village was useful for understanding the village context, resource allocation processes and social relations among the people within the community as well as within households. While living in the village I visited dozens of households and observed a number of social events. For example, I observed several *kelin to'y* celebrations for weddings, *beshik to'y* celebrations for child births, and *sunnat to'y* celebrations of boys' circumcisions. In this way, I learned a lot about livelihood strategies and community-based support systems. In addition, to better understand people's perceptions of gender norms I watched several local movies that the interviewees had referred to for an explanation of local cultural norms. These movies were particularly useful for understanding local gender structure.

### *Understanding Village Structure: Interviews and Qualitative Mini-Surveys*

A village is not only an administrative unit but also a community. The community is an arena of social relations that help determine the allocation of assets and thus access to assets by households that have variable socio-economic status. Therefore, exploration of the community rules and norms is important to better understand gender and generational differences in access to assets and income-generating activities.

To obtain general information about the villages, I visited the Water Users' Associations (WUAs), *Sho'ra* (village administration), and the offices of the Women's Advisory Committees. I conducted a number of open-ended and semi-structured

interviews to better understand the role of the village administrations in the allocation of assets such as arable land, irrigation water and welfare provisions. In addition, I explored the activities of the Women's Advisory Committees and their role in promoting opportunities for women. I also conducted four qualitative mini-surveys within the two villages during the familiarization phase. These surveys included several open-ended and semi-structured questions that enabled me to have a focused and conversational dialogue that ensured flexibility in elaborating on additional questions during the interviews as well as verifying the validity of discussed issues and research findings (Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), 1990). The four mini-surveys had the following foci (Table 3.2):

- Labour migration of men: reasons, advantages and disadvantages of labour migration;
- Constraints to carrying out on-farm, non-farm and domestic activities in the villages;
- Gendered and generational division of labour; and
- People's perceptions of the concept of livelihood security and changes in the levels of livelihood security during the period of societal transition (thereafter referred as the mini-survey on livelihoods).

Table 3.2 Qualitative Mini-Survey Topics and Subjects, 2008

Mini-Survey Subject	Orta Yap Village, Qo'shko'pir district		Gulistan Village, Urganch district		Total, Interviews
	Female Interviewees	Male Interviewees	Female Interviewees	Male Interviewees	
Migration	6	5	6	7	24
Problem analysis <sup>5</sup>	5	3	13	6	27
Gender divisions of labour	14	7	15	9	45
Livelihoods	9	2	11	6	28

Source: Author's presentation.

These mini-surveys are not statistically representative of the rural population since the main objectives were to gain insights into livelihood strategies, their gender specificities, and to explore differences in perceived realities between women and men. Nonetheless, a sampling method based on systematically selected neighbourhoods was applied for identifying interviewees. The criteria for identification of streets where survey were conducted within the selected villages were similar to those for identification of the villages. These included the neighbourhood's location relative to the irrigation systems and distance to the village centre.

Geographic Information System (GIS) based maps of the project database were used to identify the streets where surveys were conducted. Once the particular village streets were identified, every fifth household on the selected streets was chosen for

conducting an interview. When the selected households did not agree to participate in the survey, the next house was approached for an interview.

Mini-surveys on migration and problem analyses were replicated in 2009. The reason for replicating them was that, according to the secondary data, there was considerable variability in access to irrigation water between the agricultural seasons of 2008 and 2009. The year 2008 was a dry (or atypical) year [*man 435, open-ended interview, 2008*]. Thus the findings from the mini-surveys of 2008 depicted the peculiarities of rural livelihoods during a year in which irrigation water was scarce. Replicating the mini surveys in a more typical year in 2009 was useful for exploring the differences in livelihood activities between 'atypical' and 'typical' years and for better understanding the relationship between migration and irrigation water supply. The qualitative data from these mini-surveys were also useful for selecting case study households and for facilitating the design of questionnaire forms for the sample survey that was conducted in 2009.

#### *Understanding Household Structure: Case Study Households*

As I explained in Section 3.3, the multi-phenomena case study approach was the central strategy of this research. The case study approach was also applied at the household level. More specifically, I selected four households for case study research to explore gender specificities of rural livelihoods at an individual level. For selecting case study households, I identified two that were relatively well-off and two that were in need. The criteria for selection of case study households were based on a preliminary analysis of the qualitative data collected through initial observations, transect walks, key informant interviews and qualitative mini-surveys. By these criteria, the level of livelihood security at the household level generally depended on:

- The demographic composition and dependency ratio of a household (e.g. the number of adult women and men relative to children);
- The regularity and amount of income, including the proportion of cash and in-kind income, which depended on engagement in on-farm or non-farm activities, labour related migration (an activity pattern), and the ways of engaging in these activities (Chapter 4).

The variability in livelihood security among the visited households was also apparent, from obvious differences in access to food, land, livestock and other assets.

Based on these criteria two households were selected in each of the two villages (Figure 3.1). The case study research on these selected households began in May of 2008 and ended in November of 2010. This enabled me to capture seasonality with respect to people's strategies for adapting to changes over time.

The main techniques employed in the household case study research included: open-ended and semi-structured interviews, multiple observations, life histories and diaries that were kept by household members. In particular, life histories were very useful for building rapport, as well as for gaining insights into people's values and their perceptions of life. Following Chambers (2004), by interviewing people through open-

ended and semi-structured questions I avoided asking leading questions, pressure and domination.

In general, within the context of Uzbekistan people do not feel at ease about being interviewed (Veldwisch, 2008). Therefore, following Bryman (2004) I used diaries to investigate different kinds of behaviour and perceptions, to gather precise estimates about specific research aspects (e.g. food security, income regularity) and to explore dynamics about research phenomenon over time. The interviewees tended to be more open about sensitive issues in written rather than oral interviews. This finding was similar to those of researchers who compared the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods (Tourangeau and Smith, 1996, cited in Bryman, 2004).

The diaries used in this research were a mixed form of researcher driven-and-free text diaries (Bryman, 2004). More specifically, the diaries comprised structured, semi-structured and open-ended questions that were answered by the interviewees in written form on a daily or weekly basis over the course of two years. To motivate the interviewees to write in the diaries on a regular basis for this lengthy period of time, the interviewees received a small compensation for their time. This approach follows the advice of Chambers (2004) to ensure at least some direct benefit to the research subjects for participation in the research.

Finally, keeping in touch with the members of case study households through diaries for the entire research period was also useful for strengthening rapport between the researcher and the household members. Anytime upon return to the study area, the diaries made it easier to reconnect with people.

### *Exceptional Case Study Households*

In addition to the above mentioned case study households, in 2009 I included one more (the fifth) case study household (Chapter 6) as “an exceptional case” (Bryman, 2004: 49). This was the household of an exceptionally successful businessperson who was identified through the daily analysis of the qualitative notes from the sample survey (Section 3.4.3). Several open-ended interviews were conducted with the household head to investigate household business strategies for achieving business success and livelihood security.

### 3.4.3 EXTENSIVE PHASE: SAMPLE SURVEY

The main purpose of conducting the sample survey was to collect statistically representative data about the patterns of activity diversification and their gender specificities among the rural population in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan. Conducting a sample survey in Uzbekistan requires a rigorous preparation, including: designing and pre-testing the survey forms, designing the database, sampling households, recruitment and training of research assistants, and obtaining all the necessary permissions to conduct a survey from authorities at the provincial, district and village levels.

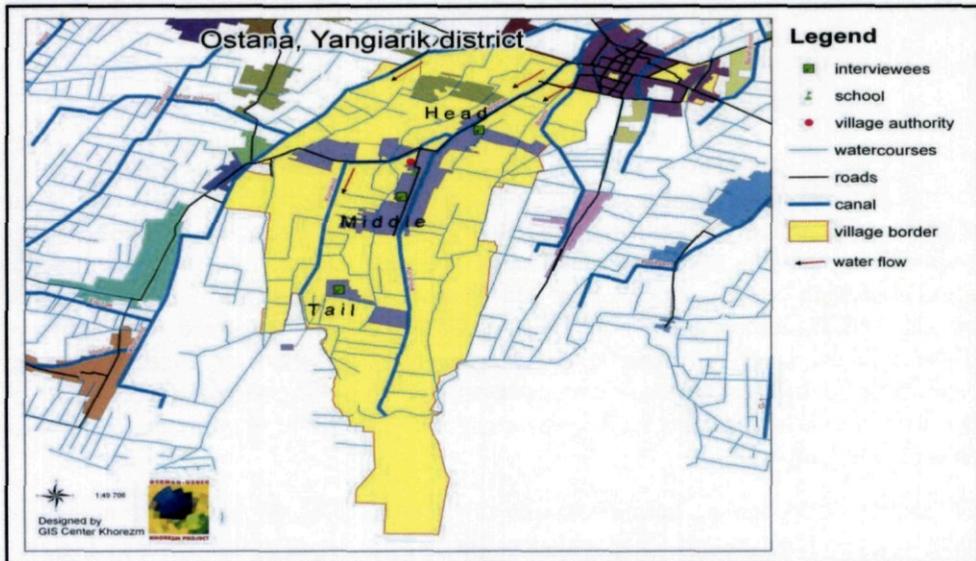
### Sampling

To reflect the spatial heterogeneity of Khorezm, at least one village in each of ten districts of the Khorezm province was included in the sample survey through multi-stage sampling (Bryman, 2004; see Figure 3.2). The first stage of sampling included randomly selected villages. The second stage of sampling included systematically selecting the streets where surveys were to be conducted within each village. The third stage of sampling was to actually sample the households (houses) on the selected streets. The final stage of sampling was to identify interviewees within households.

The survey sample comprised 300 households. For statistical purposes a minimum sample size of at least 30 households per village (Hinton, 1995: 53) were systematically selected in each of ten villages.

The random sampling of villages was based on a list of all villages in the province provided by the Provincial Statistics Department. Before conducting interviews in each of the villages the *Sho'ra* (village administration) was approached for the required permission to conduct the survey. Once this permission was obtained, a GIS based map of the village streets was prepared. The selection of streets for sampling was based on their proximity to the beginning, middle and end parts of the irrigation system (Figure 3.3). When there were several streets in each of the locations, the street closest to the beginning of the irrigation canal, the street closest to the middle section of the irrigation canal, and the street closest to the end of the irrigation canal were identified.

Figure 3.3 Sampling Streets at the Village Level



Source: ZEF/UNESCO Khorezm Project Database, the map prepared by Lee, A., 2009.

Once the streets were identified, every fifth house was approached for an interview by walking down the identified streets, following the method applied by Veldwisch (2008). When people refused to participate in an interview, the neighbouring house was approached for an interview. The most common reason for refusal was that a daughter-in-law would not participate in an interview or sign any form without the permission of her parents-in-law or husband, who were not available at the time the household was approached for an interview [*woman 79, sample survey, 2009*].

To ensure that at least 30 *farmers* were included in the entire sample survey (Hinton, 1995: 53), at least three *farmers* were interviewed in each of the ten selected villages. When the general sampling approach did not include at least three *farmer* households within a village, they were purposefully selected and sampled. A total of 34 *farmers* were interviewed in the sample survey, including 14 who were selected through the general sampling approach and 20 who were purposefully selected. The *farmer* households were interviewed using the same survey questionnaire used for the other households. An additional interview was conducted only with individual *farmers*. The selection criteria for the direct sampling of *farmers* included:

- The inclusion of *farmers* with different quota crops (compulsory amounts of specific agricultural products). More specifically we surveyed, five silkworm, twelve cotton-and-wheat, twelve orchard, one poultry, one fish, and three livestock *farmers*; and
- The inclusion of male and female *farmers* to ensure that both genders were included.

In general, *farmers* were overrepresented in the sample. Despite representing less than five per cent of the rural households (Provincial Statistics Department, 2009), the *farmer* household sample included 34 out of 300 sample households, or 11%, in order to have a statistically representative group of *farmers*.

### *Survey Design and Content*

Considering earlier survey experiences in Uzbekistan (Kandiyoti, 1999), the survey form designs were based on the qualitative data collected before the survey. Particular attention was given to clarifying potentially confusing issues, such as the terms employment, income, costs, and the concept of access to land (*ibid.*). For example, to avoid confusion between employment and livelihood activities (*ibid.*), every source of income and livelihood activity at the household level were covered by the survey questionnaires. Likewise, specific questions were asked about all types of income received from different income sources to include both in-kind and cash income. All of the different ways to access land were considered in order to obtain meaningful data on access to land.

The survey questionnaire comprised nine forms (Annex B). In addition to structured questions that are standard for quantitative surveys (de Vaus, 2002), the survey forms also included semi-structured questions to obtain answers on topics that did not fall into the pre-identified categories. In a similar vein, there were a few open-ended questions to explore “why” questions. The qualitative survey data were either analysed

through quantification (post-defined categories) or through the use of Atlas.ti software (see Section 3.5).

### *Sample Survey Research Team*

The survey was conducted with a team of research assistants. A rigorous approach was used to select and train the research assistants. The team included seven people, including five women and two men. The advantages of having female research assistants were the following:

- In the study area it is not socially acceptable for unfamiliar men to enter a house if the resident men are not at home;
- It was socially acceptable for unfamiliar women to speak with both women and men.

The advantage of having male assistants was that they were conducive for conducting interviews in households and places where men constituted a majority.

Before launching the survey I conducted an on-the-job training to improve the interviewing skills of the research assistants and their understanding of the research objectives, and their familiarity with the survey questions. In addition, I prepared a guide that explained every survey question and the principles of conducting a sample survey. To ensure the quality of the work and to build up the research capacity of the research assistants, in-depth discussions about the progress, complications, weaknesses and strengths of the process of conducting the survey were carried out on a daily basis. The key points of these discussions were documented as daily minutes for further analysis and reflection. In addition, every sample survey interview was accompanied by a reflection note prepared by the research assistants. These reflection notes included:

- An assessment of the reliability of data shared by an interviewee;
- Any additional information relevant to the main research question.

Overall, there were several advantages provided by the team of research assistants. First, the research assistants spoke the same Khorezmian dialect of Uzbek language as interviewees fluently. My Uzbek language skills are very limited<sup>6</sup> and would prevent conducting the survey in Uzbek, which was a necessity when interviewees could not speak Russian or English. Second, having the team enabled me to engage in multiple research methods, i.e. continuing qualitative research that was carried out in parallel to the sample survey in 2009. Having the research team also speeded up the process of carrying out the survey considerably and enabled the collection of required data in a relatively short period of time. Another advantage of having research assistants was that they were not only enumerators, but also resources for insight about life in Khorezm. The reflections and opinions of my research assistants were enriching and very useful for my data analyses. Several focus group discussions were conducted with the research assistants to address and gather multiple perspectives about specific research questions; for example, about network building, provincial spatial heterogeneity.

### 3.4.4 VALIDATION PHASE

The validation phase of this research occurred from June to September 2010. The objectives of this phase were to validate the preliminary findings, to update information on changes in the context, and to assess what these changes implied for the research findings. Based on the experiences from 2008 and 2009, I knew that the research findings could quickly become irrelevant. For example, the categories of new *farmers* and *ex-farmers* emerged as a result of land reforms in 2008. It was coincidental that the sample survey took place in 2009 after the implementation of this reform. Otherwise, the survey results would have been historical rather than contemporary. The validation phase was also a very useful opportunity for collecting additional qualitative data to fill in the research 'gaps' identified during analysis.

## 3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

This research employs a Q-squared multi-strategy approach to analyse qualitative and quantitative data through triangulation, facilitation and complementarity (see Section 3.3.1).

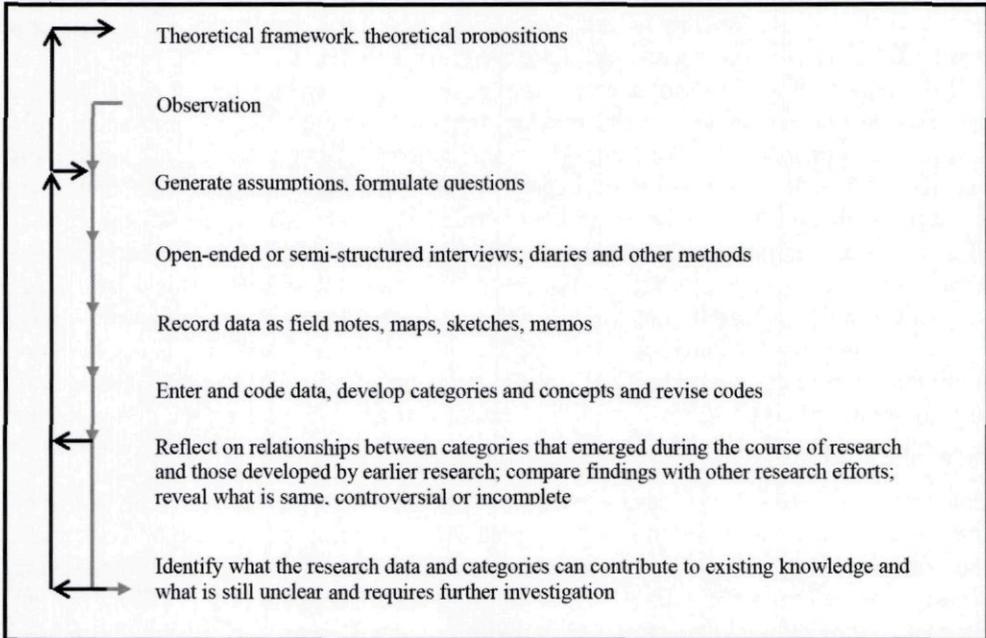
### 3.5.1 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data analysis process started in the field (Yin, 1984; Bryman, 2004; Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The qualitative data analysis was based on grounded theory or theory building techniques (Charmaz, 2006). These techniques were cyclical and iterative (Bryman, 2004; Figure 3.4). In particular, the qualitative data analysis process involved several stages. First, the data were documented as narratives, field notes, memos, tables, sketches, diagrams and maps and thereafter were entered into an Atlas.ti software database. The collected qualitative data focused mainly on what was said, but also included information on how it was said (Yin, 2002). Thereafter, the data were synthesised through analytical reflection on what they implied for addressing the research objectives - the theoretical framework, methodology and empirical findings (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Specific parts of the narratives and field notes were then labelled with specific codes linking them to specific concepts or ideas. Over the course of this process, the codes were revised several times, changed to different codes, merged with other codes, or fragmented into additional codes based on the analysis of additional data. As suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990) the qualitative data were generally organised, coded and reflected upon through the following foci:

- To better understand what is happening, why and how;
- To gain insights about how people perceived their reality and why they perceived them in these ways;
- To better understand causal relationships among different aspects of rural livelihood systems and their gender specificities;
- To explore the links between the data and the theoretical framework; and
- To generate and further test theoretical propositions, thus building a new theory.

To explore a specific concept, all the data related to a specific code were retrieved as a single output document and analysed together (e.g. through comparison of different examples, summation, integration and re-structuring).

Figure 3.4 Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis Processes



Source: adapted from Bryman (2004: 404).

### 3.5.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The initial variables in the database were created based on the questions in the sample survey forms. New variables were created during data analysis. The qualitative data were re-computed into quantitative categories that were defined post-analysis. For example, the general perceptions and definitions of the concept of *well-being* were recomputed into two variables as material and immaterial aspects of well-being.

Thereafter, descriptive statistics were applied to identify patterns, the degree to which they were representative, common tendencies, and the variability among different groups in the population. The descriptive statistics primarily included the generation of frequencies, means, standard deviation, ranges, percentages and quartiles. Bivariate analyses (cross tabulations, Chi-square tests) were carried out to identify connections between one variable and a number of other variables. For example, these techniques were useful to explore the relationships between gender and access to land, between gender and livelihood activities, and between food security and activity patterns.

### 3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The challenges of conducting social science research in Uzbekistan are well-explained in the literature (e.g. Veldwisch, 2008). Wall and Overton (2006) propose 'unethical ethics' to address these challenges. However, although I agree that there is a need to find ways of carrying out social science research in Uzbekistan, I believe that there are no good reasons to downplay the importance of ethical principles of conducting research. In my opinion researchers share the responsibility of bringing good practices into the region as well as to make sure that peoples' lives are not jeopardised because of research. I do not agree that a researcher may justify unintended harm as acceptable and proper. For example, Wall and Overton (2006: 64) stated that the "potential for justice and beneficence can be used to justify the potential for harm." In contrast to these researchers, I believe that adhering to ethical principles should be the top priority of any research in order to avoid causing any harm to peoples' lives. In carrying out research in this context, it is very important to be compliant with the ethical guidelines of social science research (Dowling, 2000; de Laine, 2000; Scheyvens *et al.*, 2003; Bryman, 2004). Particularly, it is essential to have informed consent. It is also very important to explain and ensure that people understand their right to share information or to withdraw their participation and information at any time during the course of the research.

Following Bryman (2004), ensuring informed consent and explaining the purpose of the research were the main ethical principles for conducting this research. To explain the purpose of this research, I generally introduced myself as a PhD student doing research about life in the villages. In addition, with the support of the ZEF (Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung [Centre for Development Research]) project 'Economic and Ecological Restructuring of Land and Water Use in the Khorezm region of Uzbekistan', all required permissions to carry out this research were obtained from the provincial, district and village authorities.

Another ethical consideration of this research was that I avoided creating expectations of help being rendered as a result of this research. Furthermore, I always explained to the interviewees that they were not obligated to answer questions and that they had the right to anonymity of their responses. Thereafter, I ensured the anonymity of the provided information whenever requested. In addition, the researcher and research assistants made sure that the interviewees did not mind that their answers were written down while recording data. Any data that the interviewees did not want to be written down were not included. Whenever interviewees wanted to withdraw from this research, I destroyed the written notes with their data in their direct presence. All of the interviewees were given my business card with my contact information in case they wanted to withdraw their participation and data afterwards. Finally, the interviews were conducted with respect to the interviewee's values, traditions and culture and at a time that was convenient to them. The interviewees were also visited on multiple occasions when necessary.

## CHAPTER 4 MAKING A LIVING: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

*Heat, scorching sun, there is even no shadow of a tree. I am walking through a village towards the fields to see and talk to women working there. I pass by an open-air market full of people selling vegetables, meat, home-made food and goods from China. I pass by grey houses made of clay that have amazing capacity to maintain a cool temperature indoors. The windows are closed, nailed with off-white fabric from outside, to avoid dust from the street as well as to allow light into the rooms. In contrast to the windows, the doors are open wide to whosoever, like the arms of a welcoming person. Some boy is passing by on a bike, carrying huge piles of grass. Another one is walking the same way, shuffling his feet and shepherding sheep with a long stick. I keep walking, feeling poking stones in my shoes jumping in there from the earthen village road. The sun is getting even hotter, burning my skin through the clothes. I hear the roaring sound of an engine, approaching me from behind. I look back and see a big cloud of dust pushed up by the caterpillar wheels of a very old tractor that has just stopped. Two men jump out of the tractor, loudly talking to each other, and walk into a house nearby. I again get surprised by a woollen hat on the head of one of them that some of these people wear in this sunny weather for protection from extreme heat and sun. The next moment, I see a teenage girl who sneaks out of the rear door from the other side of the same house. There are two huge buckets in her hands, to carry water from the well. She looks at me and smiles with shyness, probably wondering what I am doing in her village. Smiling, I say: 'Salam' (the short form of 'Assalomu alaikum', meaning 'Peace to you'). She bows in reply. Now, this is my turn to feel embarrassed.*

*Source:* Field note, April 2008.

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the rural areas of Khorezm people generally engage in multiple income-generating activities to make a living. At the household level, these activities include different combinations of on-farm and non-farm activities and work related migration. In addition, people rely on state welfare as a source of financial support in case of need. In a similar vein, they also rely on social networks in cases of shortages or emergencies.

The aim of this chapter is to explore what people do to make a living and what opportunities and constraints different households experience when securing their livelihoods in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan. The chapter comprises eight sections. Section 4.2 explains the research approach to data collection and analysis. In Sections 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5, I present data on people's engagement in on-farm and non-farm activities and work related migration at the household level. Next in Section 4.6, I develop a typology of common activity patterns. In Section 4.7, I explore people's reliance on the state welfare system. In Section 4.8, I explore the strategies of reliance on social support networks. Section 4.9 concludes the chapter with generalisations

about what livelihood opportunities and constraints people experience when engaging in different activities, and which activity patterns are common in the study area.

## 4.2 DATA SOURCES AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

To explore what people do to make a living at the household level I employed a number of research methods. In particular, the findings in this chapter are grounded in the data from the sample survey ( $n=300$ , 2009), the mini-survey on problem analysis ( $n=27$ , 2008;  $n=30$ , 2009), the mini-survey on migration ( $n=24$ , 2008; and  $n=30$ , 2009), the mini-survey on livelihoods ( $n=28$ , 2008), four case study households (May 2008–November 2010), the secondary data from the most recent census at the provincial level (e.g. data about *farmers* from the Provincial Statistics Department, 2008–2010), and some legislative documents of the Republic of Uzbekistan (e.g. Labour Code, Laws on privatisation, land use and land allocation).

The findings presented in this chapter are based on qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were useful to understanding the complexities of peoples' realities and to gain insights into peoples' opportunities and constraints with respect to engagement in different income-generating activities. Quantitative data were useful for exploring the extent of people's engagement in different income-generating activities and for identifying the most common (the most frequent) activity patterns and income sources of people living in Khorezm.

## 4.3 ON-FARM ACTIVITIES

Every household in the study area relied on small-scale subsistence agriculture to meet at least some of their food needs. In general the opportunities to engage in subsistence agriculture depended on access to arable land (parcel size), land use rights<sup>7</sup>, and access to irrigation water and other agricultural inputs.

These determinants of agriculture varied among three types of land users:

- *Dehqon* farmers who had access only to *uy* and *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots (see Section 4.3.1);
- *Fermers* who engaged in quota production of agricultural products, commercial farming and subsistence agriculture (see Section 4.3.2); and
- Tenants who rented land from *farmers* (see Section 4.3.3).

As presented in Table 4.1, almost all rural households had access to *uy tomorka* plots (299 out of 300 sample households<sup>8</sup>). The interviewees also identified this plot of land as *bog* (home plot, kitchen garden, or orchard). In addition, the majority had access to *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots (253 out of 300 sample households; 84%). *Dehqon* farmers only had access to these two types of plots (148 out of 300 sample households; 50%). *Fermers*, who represented about five per cent of the rural population in Khorezm (Provincial Statistics Department, 2009<sup>9</sup>), generally had access to *fermer* parcels in addition to *uy* and *qo'shimcha tomorka*<sup>10</sup> plots. Tenants who rented land from *farmers* included 118 out of 300 sample households (39%). In addition, tenants had access to *tomorka* plots.

Table 4.1 Access to Land by Various Land Users, 2009

Land User	Total Land (minimum-maximum)	Sample Household	
		Frequency	%
<i>Dehqon farmer</i>	0.03-0.76 ha	148	50
<i>Fermer</i>	1.14-118.17 ha	34	11
<i>Fermers' tenant</i>	0.10-10.28 ha	118	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.03-118.17 ha</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300 households.

In general, *farmers* had access to most of the arable land in the province (Veldwisch and Bock, 2011). The typical size of *farmers'* parcels was considerably larger than that of the other land users. More specifically, the total size of *farmers'* parcels varied between 1.14 ha and 118 ha, whereas the total size of the *dehqon farmers'* parcels varied between 0.03 ha and 0.76 ha. In regards to *farmers'* tenants, the total size of the parcels used varied between 0.1ha and 10.28 ha (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Parcel Sizes by Type, 2009

Type of Land Holding	Size of Land Holding
	Minimum-Maximum (Median) <sup>11</sup>
<i>Uy tomorka</i> <sup>12</sup>	0.02 - 0.20 ha ( 0.06 ha)
<i>Qo'shimcha tomorka</i>	0.06 - 0.66 ha (0.12 ha)
<i>Fermer's parcel</i>	0.97 - 118.00 ha (6.50 ha)*
<i>Parcel rented from a fermer</i>	0.10 - 10.00 ha (0.12 ha)

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300 households, including n=34 *farmers*.

\*According to the Provincial Statistics Department (2009) the majority of cotton farmers had access to at least 80 ha.

Apart from the differences in access to land, there were also differences in access to irrigation water. For example, one incentive to rent land from *farmers* was that they had more access to irrigation water than on *tomorka* plots:

*"If there were no farmers, there would be no problems with water. They take most of the irrigation water and, as a result, ordinary people have problems with irrigation"*  
[woman 100, sample survey, 2009].

In particular, during the dry year of 2008 24% of those with access to *uy tomorka* plots and 29% of those with access to *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots faced drastic water shortages and thus could not engage in agriculture on their *tomorka* plots, whereas only 14% of the *farmers* experienced a shortage of irrigation water (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Access to Irrigation Water by Land Types During the Drought Year of 2008

Land Type	Sample Household	Sufficient Irrigation Water Supply in 2008, Sample Household
	Frequency	%
<i>Uy tomorka</i>	299	76
<i>Qo'shimcha tomorka</i>	246	71
<i>Fermer's parcels</i>	34	86

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300 households including n=34 *fermers*.

The opportunities to benefit from agriculture also depended on land use rights: different types of land had different use restrictions (Sections 4.3.1-2 and 4.3.4). Furthermore, those households that had access to *fermers'* parcels had different access rights; for example, as a *fermer* or as a tenant. These differences in access rights to *fermers'* parcels formed the basis of labour relations in agriculture (see Section 4.3.3). In the following subsections, I explore these different on-farm opportunities and labour relations in detail.

#### 4.3.1 DEHQON FARMING

*Dehqon* farmers only had access to *uy* and *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots, and were relatively free to decide what to grow. In particular, on *uy tomorka* plots they could grow any crop or tree of their choice and also could keep livestock or poultry. The only land use restriction for *uy tomorka* plots was that there must be a house on this type of plot [*man, sample survey, 2009*]. Once an *uy tomorka* plot was registered, it was also compulsory to pay land taxes as well as all other payments for municipal utilities, (e.g. electricity).

In general, any registered household in a village was entitled to an *uy tomorka* plot. Some people had access to *uy tomorka* plots by inheritance. Others had access to *uy tomorka* plots based on the authority of the *Sho'ra Rais* (head of village administration), who was responsible for land allocation within each village. *Uy tomorka* plots were generally allocated to households as opposed to individuals. These were usually registered in the name of the male household head and women generally gained access to *uy tomorka* plots through men (Chapter 5).

On *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots only non-perennial crops were permitted. For example, growing trees on this type of plot was not allowed. Likewise, it was not permitted to have any type of construction on these plots. In particular, 91 out of 148 *dehqon* farmers (61%) used this type of plot to grow crops for their own use whereas 57 out of 148 *dehqon* farmers (39%) also grew some crops (vegetables, melons, rice) for commercial purposes (i.e. for selling a part of their agricultural produce at *dehqon bozor* or peasant markets).

Any registered household in a village was entitled to a *qo'shimcha tomorka* plot. This plot type was generally registered in the name of household men, similarly to the *uy tomorka* plots. However, 47 out of 300 sample households (16%) did not have *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots. This was either because there were no more *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots available for distribution in a village or there were no *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots that were fit for productive agriculture:

*"All the drainage water from farmers goes to our tomorka. Then we cannot use this land. The level of ground water is too high"* [woman 28, sample survey, 2009].

Overall, *dehqon* farmers had very limited access to arable land. Given this limited access to land, their engagement in subsistence agriculture provided an important but insufficient income for achieving livelihood security.

#### 4.3.2 *FARMER FARMING*

Being a *fermer* in Khorezm required being registered as the owner of a private *fermer* enterprise. *Farmers*, however, neither owned the land nor were they free to decide what to grow on most (75-80%) of the parcels. In general, *farmers* were obliged to grow specific crops and to sell their agricultural produce to a particular organisation at a fixed price as specified in business plans that were approved by a state authoritative body [fermer, man 440, open-ended interview, 2008].

To qualify as a *fermer* the key eligibility criteria included:

- Experience in farming, management, business planning and accounting;
- University level education;
- Ownership of machinery;
- Sufficient household labour; and
- Sufficient financial capital.

Those who met these eligibility criteria and wanted to become a *fermer* submitted their applications to *Hokims* (governors) at the district and provincial levels who made decisions about land allocation, re-allocation and withdrawal. Once the application to become a *fermer* was approved, the applicant was registered as the manager of a '*fermer's* enterprise' on a regular employment basis. This way, *farmers* had an employment record in their official labour book that provided the entitlements for all employment benefits; for example, paid sick and annual leaves, a larger retirement pension than a minimum retirement pension in the future (Labour Code, 1996). *Farmers'* legitimate income was a salary specified in the business plan and not the profit from the agricultural business.

As a legacy of the Soviet agricultural system *farmers* were generally heavily dependent on the subsidies and supply of agricultural inputs received in the form of credits or advances that must be paid back after harvesting crops [fermer, man 441, open-ended interview, 2008]. *Farmers* always had difficulties accessing cash and using their profits from growing quota crops. All *farmers'* transactions were carried out through a bank so that *farmers* were dealing with agricultural inputs and outputs, but not cash payments [fermer, man 441, open-ended interview, 2008]. The only

opportunity to withdraw cash from the bank account was to receive salaries for the registered *fermer's* employees as well as for the *farmers* themselves<sup>13</sup>. As a result, the main incentive for being a *fermer* was not a modest salary from growing quota crops, but the opportunity to generate a side income through commercial farming (e.g. growing and selling rice, livestock, melons). Opportunities to generate a side income from commercial farming varied according to different types of *farmers* (Chapter 6).

Overall, *farmers* had access to larger plots of land than *dehqon* farmers. Although *farmers* did not own the land and had limited land use rights, they still had more opportunities to generate a cash income than *dehqon* farmers did.

#### 4.3.3 WORKING FOR FARMERS

About one-third of the sample households (93 out of 300) had at least one household member working for a *fermer*. There were four different ways to work for a *fermer*: regular registered employment, unregistered long-term work, unregistered casual labour (*mardikorlik*), and unpaid work.

Regular registered farm employment implied regular (long-term) employment with a monthly salary and other employment benefits. It was generally very difficult to find a regular employment opportunity with a *fermer* or elsewhere. *Farmers* generally employed their own relatives who were thus the first to get this type of regular employment opportunity, regardless of their contributions to farming activities:

*"Farmers employ their wives who do not work in the field but only receive a salary and other employment benefits"* [woman 269, sample survey, 2009].

Nonetheless, apart from employing relatives, *farmers* provided regular employment to people with specific technical qualifications such as tractor drivers and accountants.

In general the salaries of *fermer's* employees were low, irregular and insufficient to make a living. The formal monthly salary was generally equal to about UzSoums 80,000 (USD 1 = UzSoums 1500 in 2008)<sup>14</sup>. Nonetheless, registered farm employment was considered advantageous, compared to the other ways of working for a *fermer*, due to the associated entitlements provided by the Labour Code (1996):

*"I rarely receive a salary. 'Why do you work then?' you ask. I need to work till my pension age so that the amount of my future pension is good"* [woman 10, sample survey, 2009].

Unregistered long-term farm work generally entailed manual labour. In addition, unregistered farm workers carried out several unpaid agricultural activities (e.g. weeding, hoeing and irrigation). Workers perform this unpaid work in order to receive the first right for opportunities to perform paid tasks during harvest periods. In general unregistered labour was not protected by the labour code. As a result it was up to a *fermer* to decide how much to pay, what to pay, when to pay, and whether to pay these workers at all. Nonetheless, some of these farm workers operated on the belief that a *fermer* would eventually register them as regular employees as was the practice among Soviet *kolkhoz* chiefs [woman 301-1, case study household, 2008].

Engaging in unregistered casual farm work (*mardikorlik*) was even more difficult than engaging in unregistered long-term farm work. The *mardikorlik* status did not exist in the Soviet period, rather it emerged during the post-Soviet transition period. This type of work was mostly carried out during peaks in agricultural activities (e.g. rice transplanting, cotton picking). *Mardikors* were generally paid on a daily basis. Payment amounts were verbally agreed upon in advance. Payments to *mardikors* were generally higher than payments to registered farm workers. For example, *mardikors* could earn UzSoums 300,000 per week for rice-transplanting working for several *farmers*. However, the workload of *mardikors* was considerably heavier than of any other farm workers. Because *mardikors* received payments based on their performance they sometimes worked 12-14 hours a day.

Finally, the other way of working for a *fermer* was carrying out unpaid farm work in exchange for not losing regular employment elsewhere. Performing this unpaid agricultural work during peaks of agricultural activities (e.g. cotton-picking season) was generally obligatory for typically non-agricultural public employees; for example, for teachers at schools and universities. This social obligation to harvest cotton originated during Soviet time. Any kind of unpaid work is generally identified as *hashar*<sup>15</sup> - the mobilization of free labour and resources<sup>16</sup>.

Overall, labour relationships between a *fermer* and farm workers can be characterized as a patron-client relationship in which the *fermer* is a patron or benefactor to their clients (the workers) who in turn are economically dependent on the patron whom they feel obliged to serve when needed (Galt, 1974). More specifically, in these described relationships the benefits of farm workers from on-farm activities depended on *farmers*. Perceiving an income-generating opportunity provided by *farmers* as a favour, farm workers generally felt obliged after receiving the *farmers'* favours and thus were loyal to them (Box 4.1). Having an advantaged position, the *farmers* in turn acted based on self-defined human resource policies and labour codes.

#### Box 4.1 Patron-Client Relationship: Working for a *Fermer*

*Female interviewee:* Our family worked for an *ex-fermer* for a year. We always did what he said and he rarely paid us. He always promised to give us a better payment after the harvest, but he never did. Then my daughter-in-law got pregnant and we needed to get an employment contract from the *fermer* to receive some maternity benefits and child allowance. I asked him, he promised, but he never did it. Then he just disappeared. Then a new *fermer* came. He is really good. He paid us UzSoums 10,000 for irrigating the fields and gave us five *sotka* [0.05 ha] for growing our own vegetables.

NN: But did you finally get an employment contract with the new *fermer*?

*Female interviewee:* Yes we did.

NN: Did you negotiate the conditions of work and payment there?

*Female interviewee:* No we just signed it. Why make trouble? Anyway we do not understand what is written there [laughs]. But we could apply for child allowance. This is what is important. The new *fermer* is very kind.

*Source:* [woman 301-1, case study household, 2009].

4.3.4 TENANT OF *FERMER*

There were three ways to become an on-farm entrepreneur as a *farmers'* tenant by renting land from *farmers*:

- Renting land in exchange for farm labour growing quota crops;
- Renting land in exchange for farm labour growing a *farmers'* optional crops;
- Renting land in exchange for a payment (without a labour obligation) or based on a sharecropping arrangement.

*Farmers'* tenants that were farm workers who rented land in exchange for labour included members of 85 out of 300 sample households, or 28%. This group included registered and unregistered long-term farm workers (Section 4.3.3). These *farmers'* tenants were generally provided access to about 0.1 ha for subsistence agriculture.

Those who rented relatively large pieces of land (e.g. one or more hectares) from *farmers* for payments or based on sharecropping arrangements included 33 out of 300 sample households, or 11%. Making choices about what crop to grow on rented land generally depended on a contribution (share) of agricultural inputs (e.g. seeds, fertilisers, machinery and transportation). When a *farmer* contributed most of the agricultural inputs the choice of crop was the *farmer's* decision. When a tenant contributed more agricultural inputs (other than labour) than the corresponding tenant decided what crop to grow.

Tenants who rented land for a payment generally engaged in commercial farming. These tenants were generally returned migrants or people from the *Urganch* city [*woman 303-1, case study household, 2010*]. In general, the land rent became higher after the last reform, which was implemented in 2009 [*woman 303-1, case study household, 2010*].

*"To rent one hectare of land costs about UzSoums two or four million. The rent depends on the type of crop. If you want to grow rice, you pay for one tonne of rice. If you grow lazer [a type of] rice, you pay for the price of lazer rice. If you want to grow wheat, the rent equals to one tonne of wheat"* [*man 449, open-ended interview, 2010*].

Renting land was beneficial for both *farmers* and tenants, regardless of the fact that renting land was generally unregistered and thus illegitimate. Those who were not *farmers* often wanted to rent some land from *farmers* because their land generally had better soil quality and irrigation water compared to *tomorka* plots (see Table 4.3). *Farmers* wanted to rent out some land to generate side income or decrease labour costs.

Overall, the opportunities to make a living from on-farm activities depended on access rights to *farmer's* land that varied among different land users. *Farmers* and larger-scale *farmers'* tenants had more opportunities to engage in profitable commercial farming than the other land users (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Land Use Among Different Types of Land Users, 2009

Land User	Type of Agriculture
<i>Dehqon farmer</i>	Subsistence agriculture
<i>Fermer</i>	State quota, production, commercial farming and subsistence agriculture
<i>Fermers' tenant for labour</i>	Subsistence agriculture (less than 0.4ha of land)
<i>Fermers' tenant for a payment</i>	Subsistence agriculture, commercial farming (0.5 ha of land or more)

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300 households including n=34 *fermers*.

#### 4.4 NON-FARM ACTIVITIES

Rural livelihood activities are not limited to agriculture only in Khorezm. Engaging in non-farm activities plays an important role in securing rural livelihoods because in contrast to different on-farm activities, these non-farm activities provide cash income.

More specifically, 167 out of 300 sample households (56%) included members who engaged in one or more non-farm activities. In general, there were three ways of engaging in non-farm activities: registered regular employment, unregistered casual work (*mardikorlik*), and self-employment (or entrepreneurship).

In particular, 81 out of 300 sample households (27%) included members who engaged in non-farm activities, either through regular employment in public sectors (e.g. education, health care, public welfare, government administration, and military), or through private entrepreneurship (e.g. rendering commercial services). Little less than one-quarter of the sample households (66 out of 300 sample households) undertook non-farm activities on an unregistered casual basis (*mardikorlik*), and 54 out of 300 sample households (18%) carried out non-farm activities through self-employment (entrepreneurship).

##### 4.4.1 REGULAR NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT

Having regular non-farm employment provided employment benefits that were similar to those provided for regular on-farm employment. However, during the post-Soviet transition period regular non-farm employment opportunities have decreased. Several industries did not survive the privatisation reforms (*x[h]ususiy lashtirish*). Others reduced the number of employees or employment benefits. Some industries replaced regular employment with unregistered casual employment (*mardikors*).

In general, 81 out of 300 sample households (27%) had at least one household member with regular non-farm employment. Salaries from these regular employment positions were generally irregular and insufficient to ensure livelihood security. In addition, those who had regular non-farm employment in the public sector revealed that part of their salary was deducted for undisclosed reasons:

*"The director [school director] again deducted UzSoums 50,000 from my salary for electricity at my home. The previous deductions are already enough to pay for the electricity for a year ahead. It is because others do not pay that we have to pay. Others do not have employment, so their money cannot be deducted. Then they do not pay for months and we have to pay in advance to fulfil the district quota to collect these fees"* [woman 55, sample survey, 2009].

Some respondents with regular employment explained that their salaries were transferred to compulsory banking cards (plastic cards)<sup>17</sup>. Afterwards they had difficulties withdrawing cash from their bank accounts because there was no cash available at the bank.

#### 4.4.2 NON-FARM *MARDIKOR* EMPLOYMENT

Non-farm *mardikorlik* employment was similar to on-farm *mardikorlik* work. Non-farm *mardikors* worked on a casual (day-to-day) basis without an employment contract. At least one household member from 66 out of 300 sample households engaged in non-farm *mardikorlik* employment working for 12 hours a day or longer. The daily wage of non-farm *mardikors* was generally higher than the salary of regular non-farm employees, but the payments for non-farm *mardikorliks* was never guaranteed (Box 4.2).

##### Box 4.2 Labour Market of Non-farm *Mardikorlik*

Three of us (a driver, my female research assistant and I) arrived at the *mardikorlik bozor* (labour market) at around ten o'clock in the morning. A group of about 70 men<sup>18</sup> between 16 and 50 years old almost jumped on us. We introduced ourselves and explained that we could not offer any work. We explained that we were interested in learning what kind of jobs they hoped to find there. Some of them left saying that they were not interested in having 'empty' talks. Others remained and explained that they arrived there at five o'clock every morning and waited for any job opportunity until five o'clock every evening regardless of the weather and season. Some of them reported that they were about 150 people waiting for work at five o'clock that morning.

Others explained that they had previously been employed by the state construction organisations. Some were skilled and had a good education. They also explained that they chose to stand close to the construction materials market because the buyers were likely to also need construction labourers. Some employers needed labourers for a day, others for periods up to a few months. They said that they worked about ten hours a day in construction earning about UzSoums 7,000 to 15,000 per day. Sometimes workers received food as well as payment for their work, but sometimes they worked without having lunch. Sometimes they were cheated by employers and not paid for their hard work.

NN: Do you always receive the payment you have agreed to?

*Male interviewee* [man, 25 years old, *mardikor* market]: No, some of them cheat and do not pay.

NN: What do you do then?

*MI*: I just leave. I cannot fight. What can I do?

*Source*: Field note, August 2008

#### 4.4.3 NON-FARM ENTREPRENEURS

Fifty four out of 300 sample households (18%) engaged in non-farm entrepreneurial activities. These people could be registered as entrepreneurs, however, registering a small-scale entrepreneurship was generally avoided because people feared external control over their business that accompanied registration. Running a small-scale business was a conscious choice for these entrepreneurs because it was less visible than a larger-scale business. These unregistered small-scale entrepreneurial operations were generally single-person businesses.

Engaging in retail was the most common type of small-scale entrepreneurship (49 out of 54 entrepreneurs engaged in retail). Some entrepreneurs sold goods that they produced themselves (e.g. bricks, pillows, curtains). Others bought goods at cheaper prices at one location in order to sell them at a higher price in another location. Others offered various services (e.g. taxi services, in-home medical treatments, tailors). The opportunities to make a living from these small-scale activities were limited due to a general lack of demand. There was an oversupply of many goods and services because they were widely available.

*"There is a tailor in every house. Who are we to tailor for?" [woman 333, mini-survey on problem analysis, 2008].*

There were also medium-sized enterprises such as workshops that made and sold bricks or furniture. These enterprises mainly employed family members. Some entrepreneurships were registered but others were not. The growth of these businesses was constrained by the scarcity of land to build a factory on and shortages of electricity, water, natural gas, gasoline, and machinery parts.

In addition, starting-up a business was difficult because of limited access to start-up capital. Credit was difficult to obtain and required collateral. Many interviewees felt that available credit had high interest rates and was too risky (132 out of 300 sample households; 44%). Others (141 out of 300 sample households; 47%) reported that they did not even consider this option. Only 27 out of 300 households (9%) reported having received some form of credit.

Large-scale enterprises were generally under some state control, regardless of their private registration status. Most of these businesses emerged as a result of the privatisation reform in the 1990s when the former state industries were redefined as private enterprises, limited liability organisations, or joint-stock companies (with at least 51% of the shares owned by the state). Although these organisations gained the status of private enterprises, their management remained very similar to the previous system. For example, these organisations generally had an appointed 'chief' who was renamed a 'director' or 'manager', a state plan that was renamed as a 'business plan', and a subsidy that was renamed as a 'business loan', or 'credit' taken from the state [man 438, open-ended interview, 2008].

In general, the registration status of non-farm businesses depended on their scale of production. Large-scale businesses were generally registered but small-scale

businesses could practically remain unregistered. The scale of business in turn, determined the size of profits. For example, the daily income of a local retail trader could be UzSoums 10,000, whereas the daily income of an entrepreneur who engaged in cross-border trade could be considerably higher. Some of the interviewees shared that those who engaged in trade of rice, transporting trucks of rice from Khorezm to Tashkent, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, were the richest people in the province, who even acted as private investors:

*"The [richest] people give money to farmers and agree about the amount of crop to be grown. These investors are richer than farmers. Some farmers engage in trade themselves, without investors" [man 351, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2009].*

#### 4.5 SEASONAL LABOUR MIGRATION

Nearly one-half of the rural households (133 out of 299<sup>19</sup> sample households; 44%<sup>20</sup>) had at least one member who was a seasonal migrant and thus relied on remittances (Table 4.5).

Remittances were an important income source not only for achieving food security but also for meeting social obligations (e.g. weddings), treatment costs, renting agricultural land from *farmers*, constructing houses, investing in local entrepreneurship opportunities. For example, returned migrants generally invested in opening a shop, buying cars to work as a taxi driver, and buying agricultural machinery for rendering services to *farmers*.

Table 4.5 Extent of Migration, 2009

Migrants within a Household	Sample Household	
	Frequency	%
One migrant	88	29
Two migrant	33	11
Three migrant	8	3
Four or five migrants	4	1
No migrants	166	56
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

The amount of remittances depended on the destination, the duration of migration, and migrants' skills. Those who worked outside Uzbekistan could send about USD 1500 per month whereas migrants within Uzbekistan could send USD 80-300 per month. In general, migrants worked as unskilled workers in construction (83%), agriculture, industry, or trade (13%). Only four per cent of migrants worked as skilled workers

(e.g. as managers). Most of these skilled migrants started to engage in migration long ago and later became recruiters of new migrants.

The migration season generally started in February and ended in October (79 out of 133 sample households; 59% of migrants). Migrants were generally men and only a few of them worked outside the country for several years (Chapter 5).

Migration was perceived as a risky business and a last resort for securing livelihoods. Migrants generally worked under difficult conditions that were exacerbated by being unregistered and unprotected by any legislation abroad. In some cases they might be not paid for their hard work. About 42% of households that reported migration labour as an important income-generating activity (56 out of 133 sample households engaging in migration) did not receive remittances regularly. Nonetheless, a lot of men decided to migrate because they could not find any income-generating opportunity locally.

*"It is very difficult to find a job with a reasonable income locally. Therefore migration has considerably increased over the last ten years. Soon everybody will leave for migration. No land, no factories, no employment. What can we do?" [man 328, mini-survey on migration, 2008].*

#### **4.6 ACTIVITY PATTERNS: DIVERSIFICATION AND SPECIALISATION**

As explained above, most households engaged in several income generating activities. This strategy is defined in the livelihood literature as activity diversification, which spreads the risk of income failure (Ellis, 1998; Ellis, 2000).

Overall, 188 out of 300 sample households (about 63%) diversified their activities in the study area (Table 4.6.1). There were two types of activity diversification: *uni-sectoral* diversification and *multi-sectoral* diversification. *Uni-sectoral* diversification refers to the combination of activities within one sector, such as a combination of either several on-farm or non-farm activities. In total, 60 out of 300 sample households (20%) engaged in *uni-sectoral* diversification. *Multi-sectoral* diversification is the combination of on-farm and non-farm activities as well as migration. In total, 128 out of 300 sample households (43%) pursued a *multi-sectoral* diversification strategy.

A little more than one-third of the households (112 out of 300 sample households) did not diversify income at all; they engaged only in one income-generating activity such as migration, subsistence agriculture, non-farm work or entrepreneurship (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Diversification Types and Activity Patterns, 2009

Type of Diversification	Activity Pattern	Sample Household	
		Frequency	%
<i>Uni-sectoral diversification</i>	On-farm activities	41	14
	Non-farm activities	19	6
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Multi-sectoral diversification</i>	On-farm activities and migration	25	8
	Non-farm activities and migration	43	14
	On-farm and non-farm activities	45	15
	On-farm and non-farm activities and migration	15	5
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>128</b>	<b>43</b>
Specialisation	Migration	50	17
	On-farm activity (single activity)	17	6
	Non-farm activity (single activity)	45	15
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300.

#### 4.7 RELIANCE ON WELFARE SYSTEM

Many households depended on the state welfare system that offered cash income in the form of pensions, child allowances, disability payments or a monthly allowance for households in need (Chapter 3). In addition, it included entitlements to free health care services<sup>21</sup>. Seventy-seven per cent of the sample households (230 out of 300) received at least some welfare benefit.

Reliance on the welfare system was considered an important livelihood strategy of rural households. For example, a retirement pension was ranked as one of the five top sources of income by 195 out of 300 sample households (65%). Unlike income from different on-farm and non-farm activities, welfare benefits were paid quite regularly and generally in cash:

*"Pension and child allowance are our main income because it is in cash and we cannot get income from the land every month. We have a pensioner at home, so our livelihood is secure"* [woman 428, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008].

However, exclusive reliance on welfare benefits could not provide livelihood security. For example, the monthly allowance for a child was about UzSoums 15,000 per

month. This was “*only enough for two days if you cannot breastfeed your child*” [woman 115, sample survey, 2009]. The disability payments were also insufficient for meeting many health needs, “*not enough even for buying insulin [a life-sustaining medicine for diabetics]*” [woman 117, sample survey, 2009]. The amount of the retirement pension varied between (minimum) UzSoums 30,000 and UzSoums 300,000, depending on the salary level during the last five years of employment.

The eligibility criteria for welfare benefits were difficult to fulfil. For example, households that earned a monthly income above the formal minimum standard of living of about UzSoums 30,000 per person in 2008 and UzSoums 45,000 per person in 2010 did not qualify for assistance. The interviewees explained that this income level considerably underestimated the cost of living. The minimum amount of UzSoums 30,000 was enough to buy bread and nothing else. For instance, electricity payments and land taxes for *tomorka* plots were about UzSoums 20,000-50,000 per month, a visit to a doctor cost about UzSoums 10,000, and one kilogram of meat was UzSoums 12,000 [personal observation, *dehqon bozor*, 2010].

In addition, even when a person proved her/his eligibility for some welfare benefit, it was difficult to receive the full amount of these benefits. In some cases maternity allowances were paid with mobile charging cards or lottery tickets instead of cash [woman 302-1, case study household, 2008]. People were generally unaware of how to report or appeal unfair and unequal support from the organisations that distributed welfare benefits [woman 25, sample survey, 2009]. Some interviewees preferred not to complain at all about benefits received, as they did not want to endanger their relationship with those who were in charge of providing the welfare payments.

#### 4.8 RELIANCE ON NETWORKS

Social networks are multilateral connections and/or informal personal relationships among individuals that are generally based on mutual help (Kuehnast and Dudwick, 2004). In the study area having supportive social networks was an important strategy for securing a livelihood, which was similar to the post-Soviet transitional contexts in some of the other Central Asian states (e.g. Kyrgyzstan [ibid.]). The majority of the sample households (253 out of 300; 84%) reported that they had good social networks to rely on in case of need.

Policies and legislation defined how things should happen, whereas social networks shaped household reality and determined how things actually occurred. Having social networks was important in every aspect of daily life (e.g. to acquire a house, to acquire food, to get medical treatment, to buffer income shortages, to access land, to access educational and livelihood opportunities, to acquire information and advice, to secure interest-free loans from friend [multiple observations, case studies, 2008-2010]. Engaging in continuous exchanges among social network members was important for achieving livelihood security also because there was limited cash in circulation.

Some social networks functioned on the basis of reciprocal exchanges. As a result, as an aspect of inclusion and exclusion not every person could become a network member. Similar to some other Central Asian countries, networks often comprised

people of similar socio-economic status, some were primarily well-off people and other networks were primarily people in need (Kuehnast and Dudwick, 2004).

In general, there were two types of network relationships: interdependent and dependent. In interdependent relationships both parties had similar decision-making power and were interested in specific benefits from each other. For example, there was a case when a hospital manager and a *fermer* agreed to grow melons based on a win-win mutual agreement about contributing inputs and thereafter sharing the benefits (e.g. labour provided by the hospital manager - agricultural work carried out by nurses from the hospital - and the other agricultural inputs - land, irrigation water - by the *fermer*).

Dependent relationships connected members with different decision-making power (e.g. different positions at work, gender and age). In these relationships certain members needed a specific benefit or help from a person with the influence and/or power to resolve a problem. Reciprocity in dependent relationships was not always necessary and generally depended on the personality of network members and/or the type of network.

#### MAIN TYPES OF NETWORKS

The main social networks in the study area included kinship networks, community networks, and networks of 'influential people' (*nufuzli odamlar* in Uzbek).

Being a member of a kinship network generally did not require reciprocity, especially among the closest relatives. People were generally eager to do everything possible to help a close relative. This type of network was associated with 'sitting in one board' (*bir kemada bo'lmoq*) where the motto was 'one for all and all for one' (*hamma bir yoqadan bosh chiqarib*).

Community networks included close friends, neighbours and households belonging to the same *makhalya* (neighbourhood) or village (*qishloq*). To benefit from these community networks it was essential to be integrated. The benefits from community networks varied depending on a member's 'position' in the community [*jamiatda Oz o'rni bo'lmoq*] that generally depended on their position at work (e.g. *Sho'ra* or village head versus a *fermer* worker) as well as community opinion or the reputation of the household members. Community opinion generally depended on adherence to community norms and the local code of conduct.

Influential people had the power to resolve other peoples' problems due either to their experience or employment position at key organisations. Social networks of influential people overlapped the community or kinship networks. In addition, networks of influential people included members from different periods of peoples' lives (e.g. classmates, colleagues).

Displaying *mehmondorchilik* (hospitality<sup>22</sup>) was a typical way to build and maintain social networks (*aloqalar o'rnatmoq*). In order to be hospitable and to have the capacity to receive guests at home, people would limit daily food consumption

[*multiple references, sample survey, 2009*]. Likewise people saved on food and basic need expenditures and engaged in migration in order to meet social obligations and to have a positive image or position in the community (e.g. adhering to community norms of serving a variety of food at important social events such as weddings) [*multiple references, sample survey, 2009*]. Although hosting these social events was expensive, they had important meaning and traditional value to local people. These events were widely perceived as functional ways to build social networks. Finally, *mehmondorchilik* and social gatherings were also important for gathering information, getting advice and access to income-generating opportunities. Overall, the strategy of reliance on multiple social networks was essential for finding livelihood opportunities, for buffering livelihood risks and failures, and for achieving livelihood security.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter explores what people in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan do to make a living and what different opportunities and constraints they face in doing so. In general, rural households employed a combination of multiple livelihood strategies to secure their livelihoods. These strategies included engagement in on-farm and non-farm activities, migration and reliance on the welfare system and social networks. These strategies varied from household to household due to differences in the availability of opportunities. For example, some households had better access to land and irrigation water than others. Some households were able to diversify their sources of income whereas others were not.

Opportunities to engage in on-farm and non-farm activities and migration were constrained by access to assets (e.g. financial capital, land and labour). Access to labour at the household level depended on gender divisions of labour and household demography. In the following chapter I explore different gender and generational structures within households to further explain the differences in gender and generational opportunities within and across households.

## CHAPTER 5: DIVERGENT REALITIES: GENDER AND GENERATION

*Sipping very hot tea from a small piyola cup, with slow and powerful moves, a mother-in-law was explaining me the order in her house. Both of us were sitting at a very special place: a short-legged dining table, surrounded by long mattresses and pillows. "And what is important to do as a mother-in-law?" I continued with another question. Whilst listening to my question, the mother-in-law called her pregnant daughter-in-law (kelin). The latter came into the room, replaced the empty teapot with a fresh one and bowed, curving her shoulders and silently watching the ground. The mother-in-law told the woman to cook food. The woman bowed again and disappeared. Trying to enjoy the salty-water tea, I was waiting for an answer to my question. "Did you watch a very popular movie 'Rebellion of brides'?" the mother-in-law asked, replying to my question with a question. Then she started to tell the story.*

*The movie was about a traditional Uzbek family with several sons who married and lived together in the parental house. The mother-in-law was managing the tasks for the brides, directly or through her sons. "It is important to keep all in order [tartib intizom] at home. To tell who has to do what, such as, who is to cook, what to cook and when to cook for the family," she said. Besides, the mother-in-law was allocating the income pooled from all the household members for different needs. "You see, it is very important to know how to use the budget," explained my interviewee. "Young daughters-in-law waste money for buying dresses and jewellery, and then there are no longer sufficient food stocks," added she. Then she continued, telling that the youngest bride in that movie did not want to follow the orders of her mother-in-law. In addition, she listened to loud music and she asked for money to buy something only for herself. The youngest bride also instigated other daughters-in-law against the orders of their mother-in-law. Having known that, the mother-in-law left the house. As a result, there was chaos. Living in the same house, every couple listened to their own music and cooked their own dish, doubling the costs of food. Nobody wanted to share anything. Men started fighting and women started shouting at each other. "You see, it is very important to keep peace among the brides. Yeah, it is easier when the oldest sons and their wives move to their own houses, but it is not always possible," explained the mother-in-law and paused with significance. "And what happened then to this family?" I asked. She replied with a smile: "Yeah, all and especially the children were very unhappy. Her small grandson was crying too much and did not eat well. And then the mother-in-law returned. Seeing her at the doorstep, the grandson started to smile. And all were so happy that she came back!"*

Source: Field note, July 2008.

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I explore the gender specificities of rural livelihoods. As presented in Chapter 4, income is often derived from multiple sources and activities, which diverge by gender and age and hence the hierarchical position of an individual within a household. For example, these hierarchical positions include: a male household head

(*oila boshlig'i*), his wife as a mother-in-law, a son and his wife (daughter-in-law) and their children. Positions differ in access to assets, decision-making power and livelihood opportunities, and in turn produce a gender specific structure at the household level. By local discourse these gender structures are broadly categorised into two types: 'traditional' (*odatiy*) and 'modern' (*zamonaviy*) households.

In this chapter I explore these two types of gender structure. First, I analyse the traditional gender structure that is dominant and typically exists in extended households. In these households access to resources and the division of labour are gender specific, as defined by the cultural norms of what is acceptable or proper for women and men to have and to do. In this way, these norms co-shape gender rights and responsibilities, decision making and livelihood opportunities.

The chapter then explores households with a modern gender structure. In these households, there is a different pattern of labour division, decision making, rights and responsibilities. Modern gender structure existed in some households in the study area before the post-Soviet transition period (e.g. in multicultural households and households that were exposed to different cultures). Now the challenges of the transition period have gradually changed the gender division of labour at the household and community levels, and with it the everyday realities of women and men living in rural areas.

The chapter comprises six sections. In Section 5.2, I explain the conceptual framework and methods used in the analyses presented in this chapter. Section 5.3 presents the dominant traditional gender structure, its cultural norms, gender division of labour and decision-making processes. In this section I also explain how these norms create gender and generational inequalities in access to assets and thus income-generating opportunities at the household level. In Section 5.4, I present gender-segregated data that illustrate the differences in engagement in livelihood activities between women and men. In Section 5.5, I explore the newly arising modern gender structure and explain the factors and reasons of its divergence and emergence. Section 5.6 concludes the chapter.

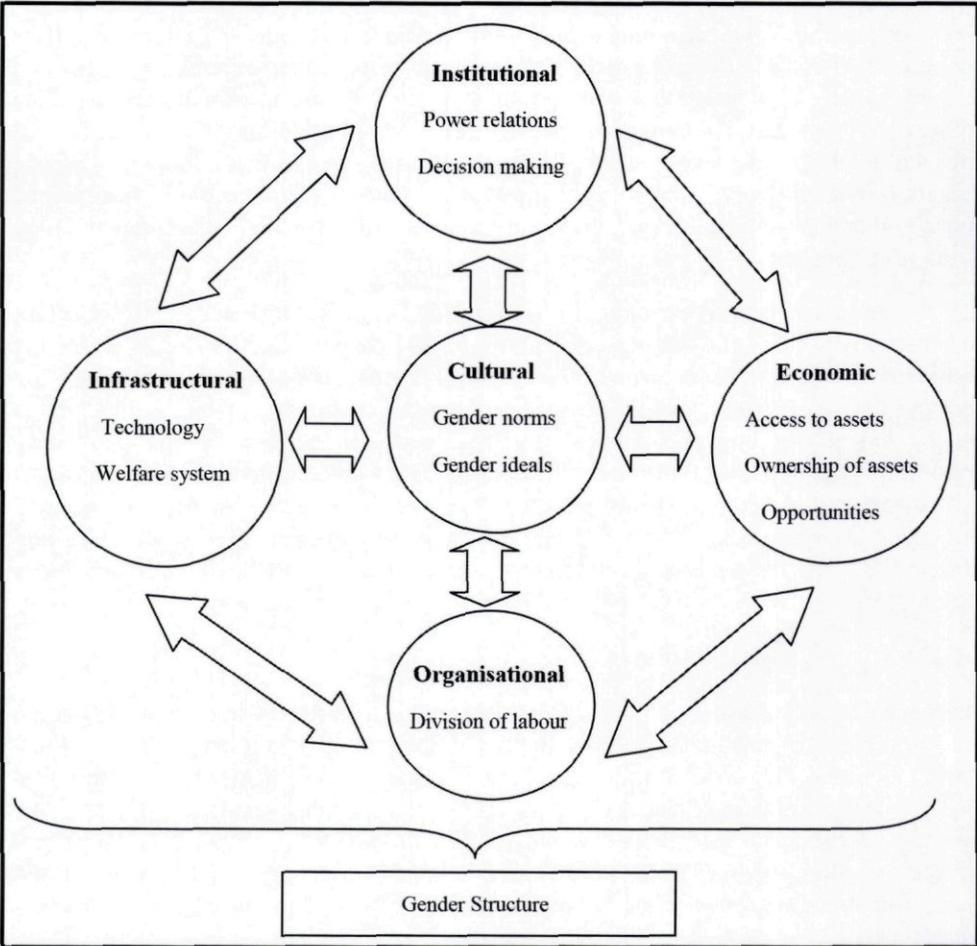
## 5.2 THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Theoretically, this chapter addresses the critique that livelihoods frameworks give too little attention to power relations such as gender and generational relations (Ellis, 2000; Oberhausen *et al.*, 2004; de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). For example, the DFID livelihoods framework (Chapter 2) only implicitly includes gender issues into the concepts of *structures and processes* and *social capital* (DFID, 1999). To address this critique I explore the individual realities within households, investigating which of the household members have what, who decides what, who does what and who gains what.

When exploring gender patterns and specificities of livelihood systems, different researchers emphasise different factors that cause reproduction or transformation of gender structures. For example, Duncan and Smith (2002) stress the role of cultural norms (or a cultural factor). Reeves and Baden (2000) underline the importance of

decision-making power (as an institutional factor) whereas Breen and Cooke (2005) argue that it is the division of labour (as an organisational factor) that reproduces gender inequalities. Other researchers claim that unequal access to assets and economic opportunities (as an economic factor) perpetuate gender inequalities (Ellis 2000; Mukhopadhyay, 2008), whereas others underline the importance of access to basic service infrastructure including childcare, public transportation, and other relevant public services (van Doorne-Huiskes and van Hoof, 1995). My main argument in this chapter is that each factor on its own is important, but together these factors reproduce and/or transform specific gender structure at the household (*oila*) and the community (*atrofdagilar*) levels only in an interrelated manner (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Interlinked Factors of Gender Structure



Source: Author's presentation.

More specifically, cultural norms and values shape the identity and normative notions of “what being a woman or a man is, and what they should do as a consequence”

(Duncan and Smith, 2002: 19). The gender ideals or dominant perceptions about women's and men's roles shape the gender-specific division of labour.

In traditional gender structure the division of labour is gender specific and implies that women's main responsibility is to engage in reproductive activities at home; men's main responsibility is to engage in productive income-generating activities outside the home. Women do not have time to engage in income-generating activities as many hours as men do because they need to take care of children and sick people and to attend to domestic chores. As a consequence when women enter the labour market employers do not consider female employees to be 'good workers' who will work overtime as men generally do. Furthermore, women need employment close to home and thus their income-generating opportunities are typically limited to locally available part-time opportunities that are generally ill-paid.

The division of labour is also closely linked to infrastructural factors. For example, the absence of decent-quality child care and health care facilities, as well as lack of affordable means of replacing manual labour (e.g. running water, laundry machines, adequate electricity and gas supply) requires some household members to 'sit at home.' This lack of infrastructure, on top of the dearth of well-paid income opportunities, renders the gender division of labour a rational strategic choice.

The flip side of this division of labour is that men and women have divergent access to assets and decision-making power. Women have access to housing, assets, income opportunities and livelihood security through men. This unequal access to assets is the main reason for deprivation among women (Kabeer 1994; Ellis, 2000). Being economically dependent on men, women and youth are generally subordinated to the decisions of men and elders in the household. In this situation of economic dependency, women in the study area generally make the rational choice of not deviating from traditional women's roles such as marriage, motherhood, and being a homemaker.

Nonetheless, different women have different needs, ambitions and individual circumstances. Some women want to study, be economically independent and to become professionals. Some women do not have anyone to rely on (e.g. some cannot or do not want to marry, some divorce and some are widowed). Some women do not regularly receive remittances from their husbands who migrated for work purposes several years ago. In some cases one's husband is sick or cannot find a job. These women need to struggle on their own in order to meet their household needs and this need creates new and different household gender structures.

The findings presented in this chapter are based on data collected through multiple quantitative and qualitative research methods. These methods included the case study research of selected households ( $n=4$ , 2008–2010), self-written diaries, multiple observations, key informant interviews, the mini-survey on the gender-specific norms and the division of labour ( $n=45$ , 2008), the sample survey ( $n=300$ , 2009)<sup>23</sup>, the mini-survey on migration labour ( $n=24$ , 2008 and  $n=30$ , 2009), and the mini-survey on livelihoods ( $n=28$ , 2008). Each of these methods was explained in detail in Chapter 3.

The qualitative and quantitative data for this chapter were analysed using Atlas.ti and SPSS software. In regard to data analysis I define a household as an arena of relationships among household members with different individual realities and consider the individual (not a household) as the main analytical unit.

### 5.3 DOMINANT GENDER STRUCTURE

In the study area 283 out of 300 sample households (94%) were composed of extended families. In these households, more than two generations of close relatives lived together in the same house. The gender structure in these extended households was generally traditional (*odatiy*). These traditional households were hierarchical and patriarchal, where the rights and responsibilities of household members depended on their gender, age and household position.

#### 5.3.1 HIERARCHICAL DIVISION OF LABOUR IN *ODATIY* HOUSEHOLDS

In *odatiy* households the older men provided livelihood means and managed the lives of the women and younger men living in the household. The women and younger men in turn were expected to assist the older men (Tables 5.1-2). The male role as breadwinner was of the highest respect and rank.

*“My mission is to earn in any place and anyhow. It does not matter where and how. The most important thing is to have a job” [man 301-1, case study household, 2009].*

The income of a household head was also most respected. In general, the income of men was more esteemed than the income of women even in those rare cases where women earned more than men. Furthermore, regardless of how much women earned, reproductive activities remained a female responsibility:

*Female Interviewee: “If a woman earns more than a man, she shall anyway behave as a woman. The man is the household head and the man shall not do female work (x{h}otin kishini’ ishi). It humiliates his self-esteem. Even if a woman works all day long to earn money and earns more than a man, she shall do her female work at home” [woman 302-1, case study household, 2008].*

*Male Interviewee: “If a woman earns more than a man, then there is more money in the family budget. But it is not good for their relationship. If a woman is brought up well, she will behave correctly to her husband. I personally want that a woman does her female work. Earning money is the male work” [man 302, case study household, 2008].*

Table 5.1 Differentiation of Men's Household Responsibilities, 2009

Male Member	Main Role, Responsibilities and Rights in Traditional Household
The oldest man	As household head must be responsible for earning money, resolving problems, managing the activities of the younger household men, managing agricultural work, finding paid work [ <i>jobbirovni ishga joylashtirish</i> ] for household members, allocating money for household needs, providing for family members according to their needs, raising and arranging marriages of the children, building houses for sons, and keeping peace in the family
Men between the ages of the oldest and youngest household men	To help [ <i>ko'maklashmoq</i> ] the household head; particularly to earn money, to provide for himself and his children, to act upon the instructions of the household head, to perform 'male' jobs [ <i>erkakni' ishi</i> ] at home, to irrigate fields, to feed livestock, to study, to raise and arrange the marriages of children, to build houses for sons, to protect women and the younger members of the family, to maintain a good household reputation (image) in the village, communities, or work places
The youngest man	To help the household head and the older brothers; particularly to earn money, to provide for himself and his children, to act upon the instructions given by his father and older brothers, to work on <i>tomorka</i> plots, to feed livestock, to irrigate fields, to perform 'male' jobs at home, to study, to raise and arrange the marriages of his children, to ensure the good reputation of his household (members) in the village and other communities.

Source: Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009.

The older women's role was to manage the reproductive activities inside home as well as to engage in productive activities outside the home in case of need. In times of 'economic difficulties', the older women (but generally not the oldest) were the first ones to enter the labour market. The youngest household woman generally entered the labour market last (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Differentiation of Women's Household Responsibilities, 2009

Female Member	Main Role, Responsibility and Right in Traditional Household
The oldest woman	To manage domestic chores; to raise and manage children, grandchildren and daughters-in-law; to control work on <i>uy tomorka</i> pots; to manage and control the household budget for daily household needs; to help and advise her husband; to keep peace in the family; to feed poultry and livestock; to help her husband earn money if not retired; to organise wedding parties; to receive and cook for guests if there are no daughters-in-law; to carry out easier work at home if retired
Women between the ages of the oldest and youngest household women	To help the oldest woman in the household, to obey the instructions of elders, to attend to domestic chores (e.g. cleaning, laundry, cooking), to attend to childcare and health care if there are sick people at home, to work on <i>tomorka</i> plots, to milk cows, to help her husband earn money for their children if needed
The youngest woman	To help elders, to obey the instructions of elders, to attend to domestic chores (cleaning, laundry, cooking, dish washing), to take care of household members, to attend to childcare and health care if there are sick people at home, to work on <i>tomorka</i> plots, to take care of livestock and poultry, and to perform tailor work at home

Source: Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009.

The wife of the household head generally allocated different tasks to the younger household women. However, these allocated tasks were of different workloads, depending on the household position of the younger woman. For example, the wife of the household head typically allocated easier tasks to her daughters and more difficult tasks to her daughters-in-law.

*"My daughter will get tired when she is at her new home when she gets married herself" [woman 301-1, case study household, 2008].*

Apart from variations in workloads, different reproductive activities had different ranking. For example, cleaning the dishes was an activity of the lowest ranking woman that was generally done by the youngest daughter-in-law when there were several daughters-in-law in the household.

*"Nobody will respect me here if I start washing the dishes instead of her" [woman 302-3, case study household, 2008].*

The youngest daughter-in-law typically had the heaviest workload. Any household member could 'tell' [*aytganimni qil*] the youngest daughter-in-law what to do, and she in turn could 'request help' [*yordam so'ramoq*] only from the youngest children in the family. An older daughter-in-law was one step higher than a younger daughter-in-law, especially when only the former had children. As observed in the case study households, a daughter took over some work from a daughter-in-law only when the latter was pregnant and felt sick. This work was generally related to work outside home.

*"I feel pain in my hands. I had to do a lot to prepare the field for irrigation. Now, it is my responsibility to do this, because my sister-in-law is pregnant" [woman 301-3, case study household, 2008].*

### Decision-making Power in Odatiy Households

Decision-making power at the household level was divided into female and male 'spaces' or territories (*o'rmi* or 'places' in Uzbek). In general a woman's 'space' was to make decisions about reproductive activities inside the home, whereas a man's 'space' was to make decisions about productive activities outside the home. The decision-making power also varied by age and household position. The household head could make decisions about what every household member should or should not do:

*"I quit my job because my husband did not allow me to work" [woman 195, sample survey, 2009].*

*"You know, I am actually trained as an accountant. My husband doesn't let me work though. Now I work for a farmer because the farmer's land is just across the street. Therefore my husband allowed me to work there, but I get less money." She was neither sad nor angry but had a smile on her face [woman 303-1, case study household, 2008].*

It was usually agreed upon before marriage if a woman was supposed to work outside the home, close to home, or only inside the home. Men generally did not want women from their household to work outside the home.

*“Uzbeks usually do not want their wives to work outside of home. She should take care of her husband and make sure that he has clean clothes and is not hungry. And his responsibility is to provide for the family and bring money” [woman 302, case study household, 2009].*

In general, there were several disincentives for women to work outside the home. Even when women worked they generally did not keep their income. The household budget was managed by the wife of the household head. She decided how to allocate and use money for different household needs. When something special was to be bought, she needed to get the approval of her husband beforehand. In contrast the household head who earned money and gave it to the custody of his wife, could decide to take the money back and use it according to his own will. Since a man earned this money he had the first right to use it. In addition, since working conditions in the villages were difficult for both women and men, women preferred to work at home. Furthermore, women were discouraged from working outside of home more than men because of the general attitude among men regarding women as inferiors at work:

*“My chief [a man] can shout at me at work. All men at my work think they can boss around me” [woman 303-1, case study household, 2009].*

In extended households, women generally entered the labour market with the permission of men. In contrast to men, women generally never determined what men should do:

*“My husband does not ask for my opinion or permission. For example, when he leaves home to earn money for a month, he just says that he needs a bag with his clothes” [woman 302-4, case study household, 2008].*

Nonetheless, depending on their personality women could influence the decisions of men. For example, some women could push their husbands to fulfil their ‘male’ responsibility of providing for household needs:

*“When men are unemployed and do not bring income, their wives say to them not to do female work but to do their own male work. This means that men shall earn money” [man 304-2, case study household, 2008].*

Other women influenced men’s decisions by not allowing them to leave for migration as illustrated in Box 5.1:

## Box 5.1 Influencing Decision-Making at the Household Level

My wife does not let me work far away. I left once and then she stopped eating and sleeping. When I called her she always cried, so I had to come back. I want to earn well, but I have to work here and do whatever I can do," - said the man with a tone of helplessness. His wife was sitting nearby and happily smiling. Then she said: "Yes, I cannot eat and sleep when you are away. I want you to be with me. I know families when men leave and then never come back to their wives. They either marry there or do not survive.

Source: Mini-survey on migration labour, 2008.

Similar to women, men generally did not enter the 'female' territory of domestic chores and if entered, they did so in a specific way. For example, when a household head had concerns about the management of domestic activities, he communicated those through his wife. Likewise, men generally could directly talk to their daughters but not to their daughters-in-law. A well-trained daughter-in-law was supposed to act proactively, just by interpreting the behaviour of others without asking questions or having disagreements (Box 5.2).

## Box 5.2 Practice of Interpreting Signs

NN: Why do daughters-in-law not talk to their parents-in-law? Who says or decides to do so?

*A daughter-in-law:* Nobody forbids you to talk. But it is a tradition that we [daughters-in-law] do not talk to our parents-in-law. When a daughter-in-law gives birth to her first child, her mother-in-law buys her a good dress and then the daughter-in-law might start talking to her. Even if the mother-in-law talks we do not talk back. In some families daughters-in-law start talking to their mothers-in-law within a year; others start talking within five or ten years or never do. I think this is showing respect for them, and it is better not to talk to avoid conflict. I understand what I have to do based on signs. If I see dirty clothes on the floor, I understand that these need to be washed. When I had just gotten married I cooked and added too much cooking oil to *palov*<sup>24</sup>. My mother-in-law took the plate with *palov* and put it on a spoon so that oil accumulated on one side of the plate. This way I understood that I added too much oil, which is wasteful.

Source: [woman 302-2, case study household, 2008].

## 5.3.2 ODATIY HOUSEHOLD NORMS EMBEDDED IN TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY NORMS

The *odatiy* household gender structure was embedded in the gender structure of communities (e.g. village community, communities at work and school). It was essential to adhere to community norms in order to be well-integrated in the community and to have a 'good reputation' (*yaxshi obro'*) and thus be respected by community members.

Gender ideals at the community level were reinforced through specific events. For example, when a woman got married and moved to another village the older female members of the community generally came to her new home soon after the wedding to see how well she behaved, cooked, served and cleaned. There was a specific code of conduct determining what a 'good girl' (*yax[h]shi qiz*) was expected to do. For

instance, she had to bow to greet community members, she had to talk in a low voice or not at all, she had to dress in a specific way, she had to clean the entrance of her new home every morning [*woman 340, mini-survey on gendered labour division, 2008; multiple observations, 2008-2010*]. The way she behaved defined her reputation and was important for being integrated.

This integration into the community was crucial in order to have access to assets and opportunities for livelihood security. Nonetheless, there were women who were different and did not behave in traditional ways, and faced exclusion as a result. For example, before the last land reform an exceptional young female *fermer* managed all of the necessary negotiations to start a farm business by directly talking to men outside of her household. Although she was a successful *fermer* she was stigmatised in the community. This was because she spoke directly to men and was divorced. In any case of divorce women were stigmatised as being the 'guilty' party [*woman 304-3, case study household, 2008*].

*"You better do not go to her, because if you do, people will not think of you well"*  
[*woman 421, open-ended interview, 2008*].

Women's 'space' to talk to men stretched with age. Generally it was accepted for the older women to talk directly to men. Nonetheless, a woman of any age was expected to seek the permission of her husband, parents or parents-in-law to go outside home and engage in any business with men. However, this conditioning to avoid entering into open negotiations with men was one of the reasons why women were not able to avail several livelihood opportunities (Box 5.3).

#### Box 5.3 "Maybe Something is Left for Me"

A woman with whom I met on several occasions by now was standing on the road, looking at how five men, standing across the road and loudly talking to each other, pulled huge pieces of meat out of a car and put them back. One of these men had just slaughtered sheep and brought the meat to this place to sell. The men were negotiating prices for the meat.

I asked, "Why are you looking at them?"

"I also want to buy some meat. It is cheaper and fresher," said she without making any move.

"Why do we not go and buy?" I asked.

"Maybe something is left for me," answered my friend.

"Do you know them?" asked I.

"I know one of them," answered she.

We were standing there for another quarter of an hour in the extremely hot sun and inhaling the throat-tearing dust and gasoline vapours from the cars passing by. The men seemed to not even notice us. Then they divided the meat and left. We were left without anything and went away disappointed. I wondered how these men could guess that we wanted to buy meat too.

*Source:* [women 303-1, case study household, 2009].

communication practices and unequal negotiation power through men daily

behaviours. Due to these inequalities men had more advantages than women with respect to access to information and opportunities. As a result women's opportunities to find a job were fewer than those of men:

*"Men cannot go for vacations because they have so much work. And I cannot find any job, funny" [woman 303-1, case study household, 2008].*

Gender ideals were also reinforced through women's advisory committees at the village, district and provincial levels. The activities of women's committees at the village level were generally based on a plan designed by an upper level organisation at the district or provincial levels. The official mandate of these organisations as stated in their charter was to promote gender equality and women's opportunities. However, the women's advisors who were interviewed interpreted their roles in their own way.

*"Our role is to explain to women how to be good home makers and how they shall behave in their new families when they are married. For example, we explain that they need to listen to and obey their husbands, be tolerant and not to argue" [woman 430, open-ended interview, 2008].*

### 5.3.3 UNEQUAL ACCESS TO ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The gender 'spaces' had specific implications for women's access to assets and opportunities. In general women's access to assets and housing was mediated through marriage. A married woman lived in a house and used the assets of her husband or his parents. When a woman married the only property she had was her *sarpo* - a big chest, decorated with drawings or colourful stones and filled with wedding presents. After wedding it was customary that a woman have a child within the first three years. If a woman could not have a child due to health reasons she could be divorced and sent back to the house of her parents.

*"What can I do? I cannot have a child. Therefore, I was divorced. Now I rely on my dad. But once he is not there, what then?" [woman 255, sample survey, 2009].*

In contrast to women, men were provided with housing by their parents even after marriage. It was a common case in the study area that parents also arranged marriages for their sons. If not arranged, marriages required the permission of the parents. Paying a bride price (*kalim*) was common, although it generally had a nominal value (e.g. it was equivalent to the dowry and/or covered by the girl's share of the wedding costs). As for the interviewed brides they were proud rather than upset about the bride price practice, especially if their bride price was higher than that of other girls in their neighbourhood [*woman 408, open-ended interview, 2008*].

In addition, women from traditional households were generally convinced by their parents not to continue their education after primary school (Box 5.4) regardless of the fact that education could enhance their employability and income in the future. Some parents were reluctant to invest in the education of girls because educated young women were generally reluctant to marry at an early age, which was against the traditional norm (Section 5.5).

## Box 5.4 "Why Do Girls Need an Education?"

Why do girls need an education? They sit and work at home. It is a man who shall provide for the family. Women are to take care of children and cook and clean the house. There is no need to be educated for this [man 431, open-ended interview, 2009].

I wanted to study at a university but my dad said that a woman can live without education. Then I stopped studying. My teachers were saying that I studied well and should continue my studies. But I said that there was no point in it [woman 432, open-ended interview, 2009].

I wanted to be a physical trainer, but my father said that instead I should learn how to tailor. Then I went for tailoring courses [woman 429, open-ended interview, 2009].

Source: Open-ended interviews, 2009.

In general men and women were equally represented at the college level. After the completion of secondary school young women and men generally enrolled in colleges to gain certified professional training (e.g. enabling them to work in a factory as a machinery operator or to open a small tailoring workshop) that was rarely followed by a university education. In regard to a university education, many more men graduated from universities than women (Table 5.3). More women than men were enrolled in short-term private courses for developing specific skills (e.g. as an accountant, tailor, iron smith). These courses required only a few months of training in contrast to the three-years of college study. However, women's skills from these short-term courses were less marketable than men's skills. Men were trained as carpenters, mechanics, engineers or iron smiths whereas women were generally trained as tailors.

Table 5.3 Education Levels by Gender, 2009

Gender	Secondary Education	Course	College	University	Total, Adult Individual
Adult Man	350	4	231	85	<b>670</b>
Adult Woman	356	22	213	49	<b>640</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300 households, n=1310 adults.

## 5.4 GENDER-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

In this section I explain the gender-specific engagement in reproductive and productive activities and reliance on the welfare system and social networks.

### 5.4.1 "FEMALE" REPRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Carrying out reproductive activities required a considerable amount of effort in the given context. There were shortages in basic utilities and facilities. For example, there was no running water in homes and bringing water from a well might require thawing the well during the winter. Laundry was done by hand and generally in chilled water. Cooking and heating required collecting firewood. The majority (162 out of 300 sample households; 54%) did not have regular access to gas and/or electricity. To reduce food costs, women had to make tremendous efforts and to invest a considerable

amount of time during the summer and early autumn preserving vegetables and fruit for winter. As a result the fulfilment of all of these domestic activities was time-consuming, labour-intensive and similar to having a full-time job with not less than 12 working hours a day during some seasons.

The working day for women was longer than for men. Women were the first to get up early in the morning and the last to relax and go to sleep in the evening (Table 5.4). Men generally had time to rest at home after a difficult job. In contrast, women generally never had time to rest at home. Some of the interviewed female nurses reported that they were less tired at work in a hospital than at home [*woman 410, open-ended interview, 2008*].

Table 5.4 'Female' Household Activities, 2008 - 2010

Reproductive Activity	Hours a Day	Household Position (Most Input)
Cooking	Two hours a day	Daughter-in-law
Bread-making	Five hours a week	Mother in law
Pickling vegetables	Three-four hours a day (during the season)	Daughter-in-law
Serving and cooking for guests	Two-three hours a day	Daughter-in-law
Washing the dishes	Two hours a day	Daughter-in-law
Buying food and other goods	Once a week	Mother-in-law
Carrying purchased food from the market	Once a week	Daughter-in-law
Cleaning	One hour a day	Daughter-in-law
Laundry	Two hours a day	Daughter-in-law
Tailoring	Four hours a day	Daughter-in-law
Childcare	Most of the time	Daughter-in-law
Care for sick	When needed	Daughter-in-law
Water bringing	Once a day	Daughter-in-law
Working in the kitchen garden, milking cow and feeding poultry	Three-four hours a day	Women
Labour for arranging community events	When needed	The younger women

Source: Self-Completed Diaries by Members of Case Study Households, 2008-2010.

In addition to multiple domestic chores, women continuously took care of children and sick household members. Mothers-in-law took care of children when daughters-in-law worked outside of the home. Grandparents and parents generally did not want their children to stay in kindergartens due to concerns about the quality of conditions and food there [*woman 301-1, case study household, 2008*]. Likewise when a household

member was seriously ill, women had to take leave and/or quit their work to stay home with the sick person and provide necessary care:

*"I quit my job because my daughter became sick and I had to stay at home to take care of her" [woman 210, sample survey, 2009].*

Nonetheless, some domestic activities were exclusively 'male.' These activities included 'heavy' tasks (e.g. buying a cow, buying stocks for winter, construction and home repairs). These activities were generally temporary and did not require regular input. Nonetheless, single women had a lot of difficulty carrying out these activities themselves.

#### 5.4.2 GENDER SPECIFICITY OF ENGAGEMENT IN PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Subsistence agriculture was clearly a female responsibility, but all other productive activities and especially those that earned cash income were mainly carried out by men. In particular, many more men than women worked for a *fermer* as regular employees (64% of farm workers were men). The statistical results indicate that engagement in non-farm activities was gender balanced. This implies that gender equality in income-generating opportunities can be promoted through engagement in non-farm activities. However, concerning engagement in entrepreneurial activities, the majority of entrepreneurs were men (79% of adult entrepreneurs). Regarding unemployment, many more women than men stated that they did not engage in productive activities and defined themselves as homemakers (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Main Productive and Domestic Activities and Income, 2009

Activity or Income Source	Adult Man		Adult Woman		Total, Individual	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>Productive activities</i>						
On-farm activities	182	64	102	36	<b>284</b>	<b>100</b>
Non-farm activities	111	51	105	49	<b>216</b>	<b>100</b>
Entrepreneurial non-farm activities (self-employment)	64	79	17	21	81	100
Migration Labour	129	94	8	6	<b>137</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Unpaid activities or activities bringing in-kind income</i>						
Homemaking and subsistence agriculture	39	16	199	84	<b>238</b>	<b>100</b>
Tenant farming	35	30	83	70	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Other activities and/or sources of income</i>						
Students (who receive small scholarships)	53	54	45	46	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>
Retirement a pensions	92	36	164	64	<b>256</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total, Individual</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1310</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300 households, n=1310 adults.

#### 5.4.3 GENDER SPECIFICITY OF ON-FARM ACTIVITIES

Women contributed a major amount of the labour input for subsistence agriculture and thus contributed considerably to household food security. The majority of workers in subsistence production (84% of adults working on *uy* and *qo'shimcha tomorka* plots) were women. However, *tomorka* plots were generally registered in the name of a male household head (Table 5.6). Less than one-third of the women sampled had *tomorka* plots registered in their name. These women were generally the oldest women in their household. Younger daughters-in-law were never registered as the owners of these plots. In regard to the management of these plots, more than one-third of *uy tomorka* managers were women. This portion of female *uy* and *qo'shimcha tomorka* managers was larger than the number of female managers in any other on-farm activity.

Women and men who worked only on *tomorka* plots generally referred to themselves as 'homemakers' and 'unemployed.' The female homemakers usually explained that

they wanted to be homemakers, whereas male homemakers generally explained that they were not content to be homemakers but were forced to do so because of unemployment. Without employment these men suffered financially and in their self-esteem:

*"I cannot provide for my family. I failed as a man, as a father."* There were tears in his eyes. As for the ethical research concern, I regretted that my interview provoked these feelings and said sorry [*man 415, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008*].

Very few women were *farmers*. Being a *farmer* required working long hours and was difficult to combine with 'female' responsibilities at home. In addition, business communications generally required continuous interaction with men. Women's spouses generally did not like that their wives talked to men outside their household.

NN: *"Why just few women are farmers?"*

*Male interviewee: "For women it is too difficult to be a farmer. They need to attend to home and children. They cannot go to meetings and be there till late. In addition farmers have to run around to negotiate for money, transport and fertilisers. It requires meeting other men"* [*man 302-1, case study household, 2009*].

According to the provincial census statistics after the last land reform, only 14% of *farmers*<sup>25</sup> in Khorezm were women (Provincial Statistics Department, 2010). In addition, the land of female *farmers* was usually less (e.g. not larger than two hectares), whereas male *farmers* usually had access to 80 ha or more. Furthermore, female *farmers* generally specialised in relatively low-return silkworm breeding whereas male *farmers* typically had more profitable enterprises such as livestock breeding. Even when a woman was registered as a *farmer* she rarely managed her land, as illustrated in the table below.

Table 5.6 Access and Management of Farmer Land by Gender, 2009

Gender	Registered Farmer, Frequency (%)	Management of Farmer land, Frequency (%)
Woman	9(26)	3(9)
Man	25(74)	29(85)
Together	(0)	2(6)
<b>Total, Farmer</b>	<b>34(100)</b>	<b>34(100)</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=34 *farmers*.

Generally men who operated agricultural activities on land registered to women were the husbands of female *farmers*. Registering as a *farmer* was easier for a woman than a man [*woman 353, open-ended interview, 2009*].

Men working for a *farmer* generally carried out technical work (e.g. as a tractor operator), whereas women carried out manual work that perpetuated the feminisation of agricultural labour (Tables 5.7-8). More women than men rented land from *farmers*.

About 82 out of 118 *farmers'* tenants (69%) were women. Most of these women rented only a small piece of land. These women generally paid the rental fee in labour and grew only subsistence crops on these plots. On the contrary male tenants generally rented large pieces of land where they grew commercial crops and paid their rent in cash.

Table 5.7 Engagement in On-farm Activities by Gender, 2009

On-farm Activity	Man		Woman	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Managerial ( <i>farmer</i> )	29	16	7	7
Technical work for a <i>farmer</i>	81	45	1	1
Labour for a <i>farmer</i>	72	40	94	92
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>36</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n = 284 individuals\*.

\*Only cases with on-farm activities are included.

Table 5.8 On-farm Labour Gender Divisions by Month, 2008 - 2010

Month	Mainly Male	Mainly Female
<b>January</b>	Cleaning canals	
<b>February</b>	Soil leaching, making beds	
<b>March</b>	Second soil leaching, breaking beds	
<b>April</b>	Cotton planting using tractors	Bringing seeds to the tractor
	Fertilisation using machinery	Carrying bags of fertilizers to a tractor
	Covering furrows with plastic	
<b>May</b>		Loosening hard soil, thinning crops
<b>June</b>	Making irrigation furrows using tractors	Making beds using spades
	Irrigation	Weeding
<b>July</b>	Irrigation	Weeding, trimming
<b>August</b>	Irrigation	Weeding
<b>September</b>	Cotton transportation using a tractor	Cotton picking
<b>October</b>	Cotton transportation using a tractor	Cotton picking
<b>November</b>	Cotton transportation using a tractor	Cotton picking
<b>December</b>	No activity	No activity

Source: Self-Completed Diaries by Members of Case Study Households, 2008-2010.

Furthermore, since being a manager or a technical employee was typically a 'male' activity, men could earn more than women working for a *fermer* [woman 304-3, case study household, 2010].

#### 5.4.4 GENDER SPECIFICITY OF NON-FARM ACTIVITIES

As explained in Chapter 4, non-farm registered (regular) employment opportunities were largely limited to working in the public sector (e.g. education, health care, administration and police). Most of entrepreneurial non-farm opportunities were limited to engaging in small-scale trade and services. In general, there were three levels of engagement in these activities: managerial, technical and manual labour. The results of the statistical analyses indicate that more men than women occupied managerial positions whereas technical and manual jobs were relatively gender balanced (Table 5.9). The scale of these technical activities, however, varied between women and men. For example, a man could work as a machine operator at some large mill whereas a woman typically worked as a tailor at home.

Table 5.9 Engagement in Non-Farm Activities by Gender, 2009

Non-farm Activity	Man		Woman	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Managerial	6	67	3	33
Technical	89	52	83	48
Labour	16	46	19	54
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>49</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=216 individuals\*.

\*Only cases with non-farm activities are included.

As explained in Chapter 4, engagement in non-farm activities could be done through regular (registered) employment, unregistered employment (*mardikorlik*) and self-employment (or entrepreneurship). In general, the proportion of women with regular employment was greater than the proportion of men. These women generally worked in education and health care (e.g. as teachers, nurses or cleaners). The professions of a teacher or a nurse were generally perceived as more prestigious compared to on-farm work for *fermers*:

*"Many daughters-in-law have to work for fermers. For my daughter-in-law the situation is better than that. She has medical education and works in a hospital"*  
[woman 302-1, case study household, 2010].

Some parents, finding a 'good match' (*yax[h]shi juflik*) for their sons to marry, wanted their daughter-in-law to have medical training so that there was a professional health worker at home. Others wanted their daughter-in-law to be a school teacher so that she had a part-time job with a regular income (and other employment benefits)

and enough time to attend to domestic chores [woman 302-3, case study household, 2008].

In regard to regular non-farm employment opportunities for men, men were generally employed at some service or industrial organisation. For example, according to the interviewee visited at a large wheat mill, 83% of those who worked there were men [man 405, open-ended interview, 2008]. Likewise, more men than women worked in customs, administration, police, military, fire brigades and railway organisations (Table 5.10). The employers from these organisations were generally not interested in employing women:

*"You employ a woman. It can take up to six months to train her. Then she marries. Once married, first, she starts asking not to work overtime and not to work on Saturdays. Then she takes a maternity leave or her husband decides that she shall not work. They are not interested in having a good job and career, even if they have an opportunity. They can sit for 20 years at the same place"* [man 420, open-ended interview, 2008].

Table 5.10 Regular Non-farm Employment by Gender, 2009

Regular State Non-farm Employment	Man		Woman		Total, Individual	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Health care	8	25	24	75	32	100
Education	16	35	30	65	46	100
Rural Administration and Police	13	72	5	28	18	100
Service and Industrial Organisations	30	91	3	9	33	100
<b>Total, Individual</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n = 129 individuals\*.

\*Only cases with regular state non-farm employment are included.

As presented in Section 5.4.2, non-farm entrepreneurship was also more common among men than women (see Table 5.5). In addition men ran their businesses at different scales. At small scales men worked as taxi drivers, mechanics or healers (*tabib*). At larger scales few male entrepreneurs established successful businesses producing and selling meat, milk, food products (Chapter 6), water pumps, and furniture.

On the contrary, women generally engaged in small-scale entrepreneurial activities (e.g. small-scale retail). They could sell some of the agricultural produce that they grew on *tomorkas* or on a small plot of land rented in from *farmers* (Box 5.5).

#### Box 5.5 Female Entrepreneur

I grow tomatoes myself. I come to the market during the season every day. I bring two or three bags of paprika and 200 kg of tomatoes. I sell paprika in the morning. I sell tomatoes all day long. I sell 200 kg of tomatoes a day because people pickle tomatoes for winter now. In the late morning, I sold tomatoes for UzSoums 700/kg. In the evening, I sell for UzSoums 500/kg. In the evening, I need to rush home and therefore set a lower price. The bus will leave. It will be difficult to reach home and taking a taxi is too expensive. It is also nice to go together with other women from the village.

Source: [woman 422, open-ended interview, 2008].

Other women had a small shop at home and sold food products and goods from home. In these households men owned a car and could transport goods (e.g. ice-cream, shampoo) from a city to sell in their village. Other women who lived in the villages close to a city collected milk from neighbouring households and travelled by bicycle to a city to sell it there. Others bought food products or goods at cheaper prices and sold them at higher prices at 'moving markets',<sup>26</sup> using local transport. Some women were tailors making dresses, curtains, pillows and mattresses based on advance orders from clients. Other women engaged in entertainment activities (e.g. they were dancers and singers). Some women engaged in cross-border retail trade, buying clothes at cheaper prices in Kyrgyzstan and Tashkent and then selling these clothes within the province. Only few female entrepreneurs engaged in large-scale retail trade as men did. (Box 5.6).

#### Box 5.6 Female-Headed Households: A Woman Engaging in Retail

I used to work in kindergartens as a manager. Now I work at the market and sell melons. I travel to *Syr-Darya* to buy at the melon fields of *farmers*. I reach an agreement with a *farmer* on a wholesale price. We take a big melon as a measure. Then we price melons one by one. If a melon is about the same size, we count it as one. If a melon is a bit smaller, we count it as one-half. This is where my profit is. I then sell smaller melons at the price of the big melon, counting one-half as *one*.

Source: [woman 438, open-ended interview, 2008].

### 5.4.5 GENDER SPECIFICITY OF MIGRATION

Only six per cent of all migrant labourers were women. At migration destinations, these women usually worked as cleaners, dishwashers, salespersons or farm workers.

Women generally migrated together with their husbands, leaving behind children with their parents-in-law. Other women (generally older daughters-in-law) migrated together with their mothers-in-law, leaving the younger daughters-in-law to take care of the home and children. In the case of female-headed households a woman might migrate alone, leaving the older children to take care of the younger children. In general, when children were very small women did not migrate. Likewise, men

generally did not travel outside Uzbekistan and did not leave home for a long time when there were infants at home.

*"To earn, I find a job in other provinces of Uzbekistan. My child is less than one year old. I need to be at home at least once a month to do male jobs in the house. If I migrate outside Uzbekistan it is impossible to be home every month" [man 301-1, case study household, 2009].*

Migration of all the men from a household was uncommon. In general, at least one adult man stayed in the village together with women, children and elderly household members. This was the case for at least 117 out of 133 sample households (88%) that engaged in migration labour. In a few cases, when all men migrated from a household, the women left behind assumed 'male' responsibilities at home on a temporary basis [multiple references, mini-survey on migration, 2008-2009].

*"We wait until my husband comes back. I hope he will come back in September. Then we can prepare for winter. We need to buy coal, repair roof. Once he brings money, I will pickle vegetables for winter" [woman 325, mini survey on problem analysis, 2008].*

When remittances were irregular, limited, or when men migrated for long periods women took over the 'male' responsibility of providing for household needs. These women generally engaged in agriculture and the sale of agricultural produce, which further contributed to the feminisation of agricultural labour (Table 5.7-8). This migration of men also contributed to the transformation of so-called 'traditional' (*odatiy*) households to so-called 'modern' (*zamonaviy*) households (Section 5.5). Living in these 'incomplete' households where there was only one adult (either female or male) to provide for a child or children and elderly household members was particularly challenging. These households generally could not diversify their activities, which was an important livelihood strategy in this context.

#### 5.4.6 INCOMPLETE HOUSEHOLDS: GENDER-SPECIFICITY OF ACTIVITY DIVERSIFICATION

About five per cent of the sample households were 'incomplete.' In these households only one adult earned an income, whereas in extended households several adults worked and buffered household welfare against possible income failures from other sources [man 302-1, case study household, 2008].

For example, female-headed households where there was only one adult woman and no man were generally perceived as the households 'with most economic difficulties' [woman 406, open-ended interview, 2008]:

*"Imagine a woman born in 1975. By now, she has five children. It is too many to provide for. Her husband has gone to Russia to find a job. Yeah, you can say what about child allowance. But it is only till a baby turns two years old. And what then? A child starts working with the mother who works for a farmer. You take one or two hectares of land from a farmer and work there all day long. For this work, you get UzSoums 15,000-20,000. And there are six of you!!! Money and children are so related today. The oldest child can earn some money, transplanting rice. But this work is only*

for 20 days and brings only UzSoums 80,000. Now, count: one sack of flour is UzSoums 40,000, to see a doctor is at least UzSoums 10,000" [woman 408, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008].

These female-headed households did not have enough labour and other assets and were typically in despair (Box 5.7).

#### Box 5.7 Female-Headed Households in Despair

Please, we need help! We do not have a breadwinner. We are in a very difficult situation! We do not have even water for a *bog* [*uy tomorka*] [female - headed household 1, 2008].

I cannot have a cow. It can be stolen. I feel so scared to be alone. My husband is away. He works in Kazakhstan. I do not have a man at home to help me [temporary female-headed household 2, 2008].

I am alone with my three children. My husband died. For my livelihood I can do nothing but work on a *tomorka* and for a *fermer*. It is not enough, but we manage. For example, we miss a meal [female - headed household 3, 2008].

Source: Qualitative notes, sample survey, 2009.

Likewise, a man living in an incomplete household faced similar difficulties. He could not work full-time or be away because he needed to take care of his daughter.

"We live alone. So I earn from whatever I can earn and only close to our home. We manage. How? We decide not to cook *palov* but to cook soup" [man 409, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008].

The diversification of livelihood activities was limited for any incomplete and nuclear household. These households had a shortage of labour, poor access to assets, and limited physical mobility (ability to travel or migrate). Nonetheless, female-headed incomplete households appeared to be more disadvantaged than male-headed incomplete households because women had less negotiation power than men (Section 5.3).

#### 5.4.7 GENDER ASPECTS OF WELFARE SYSTEM AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Many more women than men relied on the welfare system. This was because women were eligible for maternity leaves and reached retirement age earlier than men. For example, women comprised two-thirds of those receiving retirement pensions (164 out of 256 individuals, or 64% of the households having a retirement pension as an income source).

In addition, women relied on female social networks. For instance, a working woman could request that her female neighbour look after her children for a few hours. In addition, women pooled labour to help one another with harvesting or cooking for social events. Similarly, women accumulated savings through pooling assets in rotation, through so-called *chyornaya kassa* (black or 'hidden cash', in Russian). Women who engaged in *chyornaya kassa* were generally relatives, colleagues, neighbours or friends.

*Chyornaya kassa* was practiced as follows. First, women of the *chyornaya kassa* circle identified one of them as a hostess. Then all of the women went to the hostess's home. All of the guests contributed an equal share of cash to the hostess who received a large amount of pooled cash. Then all women cooked and had *tashkil* (lunch). During *tashkil* the women discussed important issues related to their experiences (e.g. they shared information and knowledge about growing and pickling vegetables, growing and vaccinating poultry, curing children of the cold). They also shared some of their problems (e.g. finding a job, a doctor, or a way to resolve problems). In addition, they made agreements to help each other (e.g. to tailor a dress, or make mattresses or curtains). By the end of a *tashkil* another woman of this circle was identified as the next hostess [woman 301-1, case study household, 2008].

The practice of *chyornaya kassa* created a useful social network to resolve problems, share knowledge, pool money, and acquire help, advice, or information. However, not every woman could be included in these circles because not every woman was able to contribute an equal share of money to these gatherings as a result of economic difficulties and circumstances. This form of exclusion further perpetuated the lack of opportunities and economic difficulties of the poorest women.

#### 5.4.8 THE CENTRALITY OF CULTURAL FACTORS AMONG WELL-OFF HOUSEHOLDS

Women experienced different realities depending on the economic situation of their households. Women's success generally depended on *o'rni* ('place') and the success of their male household members. Living in these different realities, women had different preferences. For example, women from relatively well-off households generally liked living in extended households. They felt secure this way and perceived that living with an extended family was an important strategy for buffering against income failure.

*"I feel safe living in the extended family. I know when I do not manage to earn, I still have food"* [woman 36, sample survey, 2009].

In contrast, women from the households with 'economic difficulties' preferred to live separately from their parents-in-law:

*"It was my happiest day when we moved out from the house of my mother-in-law to live in our own house. I pressed my husband to do this. He actually did not realise how I made it happen. I told to my three children that I would buy lots of honey and every day once we move [to push the children to gradually convince their father to move to another house]. Now my husband is angry with me. Because we do not have even glass in windows and the house is not prepared for winter. But I am so happy that I have my own home"* [woman 303-1, case study household, 2009].

In contrast to the households in need, women from the well-off households had relatively better access to pocket money.

*"My own money is what I get for my maternity leave. I can use this money because there is enough money in the family. I usually spend this money to buy presents for my children"* [woman 302-2, case study household, 2008].

*"A woman can spend money she earns for herself, but only if the money situation in the family is good" [man 302-1, case study household, 2009].*

The household gender structure was generally traditional in well-off households. In the cases of households characterized by upwards social mobility, the gender structure generally approached traditional structure. For example, women from well-off households generally did not engage in productive activities outside of the home.

*"Women in the household with a good economic situation can sit at home and do not work for a farmer. There is no need to earn money. Then they can work at home [e.g. tailoring], take care of children, livestock, bog (uy tomorka) and go'shimcha tomorka and live at the costs of their husband" [woman 302-1, case study household, 2009].*

In the most well-off households there were differences in the women's home workload as well. These households invested in mechanised labour-saving equipment (e.g. vacuum cleaners, washing machines), to make women's work easier. However, these better infrastructural conditions did not result in the engagement of women in productive activities, which was similar to some cases in Europe (van Doorne-Huiskes and van Hoof, 1995). This demonstrates that it was not wealth, but economic need and seasonal male migration that resulted in the transformation of gender structures from the traditional (*odatiy*) to the modern (*zamonaviy*) structures. And the cultural factors played a central role in the reproduction of the traditional gender structure among well-off households.

## 5.5 NON-TRADITIONAL GENDER AND GENERATIONAL STRUCTURES

*There is no man in the village anywhere,  
Men went to Russia, since they are paid there;  
And women, children, crippled work in field  
That there is something grown to eat.*

Source: Field note, July 2009.

The challenges of post-Soviet transition resulted in increasing demand for women's labour. In particular, the seasonal migration of men during the annual period when most of agricultural activities are typically carried out resulted in changes in the division of labour and the feminisation of agricultural labour:

*"Before men started to migrate, heavy jobs were done by men, for example, irrigation of fields, transportation of goods. Now, women have to carry out all [agricultural tasks] when men are away" [man 5, sample survey, 2009].*

*"The money that can be earned here is not enough. If my husband works here, he earns too little money (in agriculture). When he works outside the village, he sends money home and we do his work on the land" [woman 412, open-ended interview, 2008].*

Compared to the past, the agricultural workload of women increased during the transition period. Women worked in agriculture before and during Soviet time (Kamp,

2006). Before the formation of the Soviet Union most of women's labour in agriculture was invisible. During Soviet time women engaged in so-called 'female' agricultural activities on the basis of regular employment that brought regular income as well as other employment benefits (*ibid.*). However, after several land reforms the levels of remuneration for women's agricultural labour decreased, whereas the scope of 'female' activities in agriculture increased. In addition, women's work became largely unregistered and thus invisible once again (e.g. Boserup, 1970):

*"It is very difficult and bad to be without men. I have to do all male work myself: I work on one hectare for a farmer and on uy tomorka. In addition, I do all the work at home"* [woman 324; mini-survey on migration, 2009].

Furthermore, local discourses on male and female work started to change. This implies a gradual change in the gender specific division of labour. For example, men who worked in subsistence agriculture started to refer to their work as 'giving help' to women, whereas it was formerly one of their responsibilities:

*"Because of the migration of men, women and children have to do all the work in agriculture. In the past, men worked more on bog [uy tomorka] and go'shimcha tomorka than now. Now men help when they come back home"* [man 371, mini-survey on gender-specific division of labour, 2008].

Furthermore, the migration of men pushed women to directly negotiate for access to assets for on-farm and non-farm activities. For example, the majority of *farmers'* tenants in the study area were women. Generally these women negotiated access to land and irrigation water directly with male *farmers*. These kinds of negotiation were uncommon in the past and came into practice as a result of male migration for work. As a result, women's economic dependence on men gradually reduced (e.g. in households where men migrated for work for a long time and did not regularly send remittances). In these households, the role of household head was generally taken over by the oldest woman<sup>27</sup>.

It was a rare case in which all of the men of a household migrated seasonally (less than five per cent of the sample households). Generally at least one man from each household stayed in the village to attend to 'male' responsibilities. In other cases a woman with children lived or moved to live with her husband's parents. Some women assumed the 'male' role as head of the household or other 'male' responsibilities on a temporary basis, but this temporary transfer of responsibilities did not imply transfer of the ownership of assets. And once the men returned from stints of migration labour there was a return to the traditional way of sharing responsibilities.

*"My husband is the head of the family. But he is working in Surkhandarya. Therefore, I am the head for these days"* [woman 301-1, case study household, 2009].

In addition, the ability to earn a higher income through migration labour compared to the income available from local opportunities affected the relationships between generations. The younger generations engaged in migration labour more than older generations and hence, became economically independent from the older generations. As a result the life-cycle practices started to change. Before the post-Soviet transition

period it was the norm for fathers to provide housing for their sons and to pay for their weddings. Because of the economic hardships and the lack of income opportunities this intergenerational norm was challenged. The sons started to find better income opportunities in terms of household food security as well as for their own wedding and housing needs.

The economic independence of children affected their decision-making power. Those sons who generated the most income in a household gradually gained bargaining and decision-making power within their households. They could considerably influence the decision of the household head and even replace them. For instance, they might decide whom to marry, where to work and where to live by themselves. Because parents did not want to lose contact with their children, the former became flexible to the demands of the latter.

Likewise, some young women did not want to be economically dependent on their parents and men in traditional ways. Instead, they decided to study and realise their potential as professionals and be economically independent.

*"I did my Masters. I have got a good job in Tashkent, as a teacher. I can never earn that much, if I work in the village. My parents tell me that I shall come back to the village and marry. I do not want to"* [woman 302-3, case study household 2009].

*"When my husband and I migrated to earn, our daughter without our permission left for Tashkent to enter a University. We did not want her to study. We wanted her to marry. If there is education but there is no family, it is not good, especially for girls. She is already 28 years old and not yet married. She is about to get her Masters and she does not want to come back"* [woman 90, sample survey, 2009].

Challenging the traditional norms, grown-up children also started to directly negotiate their concerns and interests with their parents and parents-in-law:

*"Some daughters-in-law talk to their mothers-in-law now. Before, they could not say a word in her presence. This is because they are economically independent and live separately from their parents-in-law"* [woman 15, sample survey, 2009].

Overall, economic needs challenged and gradually transformed the gender and generational structures in rural areas. Nonetheless, the *odatiy* gender structure remained dominant and was reproduced by economic, institutional, organisational, cultural and infrastructural factors.

## 5.6 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, in the patriarchal and hierarchical society of Khorezm livelihood opportunities diverge by gender and generational structures of a household. In the local discourse there are two types of this household gender structure: *odatiy* (traditional) and *zamonaviy* (modern) households.

The majority of households in rural Khorezm are extended and traditional (*odatiy*). Living in *odatiy* households, women and men of different ages have different roles, rights and responsibilities. Women make decisions in matters inside the home,

whereas men make decisions regarding matters outside the home. Women's main role is to take care of household members and to attend to domestic chores. Men's main role is to provide for household needs. In traditional households, the older generations control responsibilities and access to assets among the younger household members. As an outcome of these traditional norms, women generally have access to housing, assets and income opportunities only through men (e.g. through being married).

This traditional gender structure at the household level is reinforced by daily practices. The community norms define what is adequate to do as a woman or a man. Since integration in the community is important for access to assets and for building social networks, people do their best to meet community expectations. The community norms shape the perceptions of identity as well as of gender ideals that in turn affect the degree of gender specific livelihood opportunities.

Overall, gender and generational structures are transformed and reproduced by the dynamics of economic, institutional, organisational, cultural and infrastructural factors, which are closely interlinked. Given the economic challenges of the post-Soviet transition period, both women and men need to contribute to household income. The challenges of the transitional context, hence, have gradually transformed gender and generational relationships and structure. As a particular result of migration, the younger generations have become economically independent from older generations. This economic independence has increased their decision-making power.

## CHAPTER 6 IN THE LABYRINTH OF 'LIVELIHOOD SPACES': STRATEGIES

*Opportunity:* "Well-off people always have work. Maybe someone is a director of an enterprise. The kolkhoz worker [worker for a farmer] doesn't have such an opportunity" [man 407, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008].

*Acceptability:* "I wanted to be a teacher in physical training. But my dad said that it was not what girls should do" [woman 301-3, case study household, 2008].

*Motive:* "I want to have a good income so that everything goes well. I want that everything is enough, for example, money and food. I want to have a life without problems that there is no need to be worried about and to take loans" [man 160, sample survey, 2009].

*Capability:* "I wanted to be a doctor. I tried to enter a University. But I could not pass the exam. Then I took a hoe and went to the field" [man 351, open-ended interview, 2009].

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

While living in the same context, households diverge in how they secure their livelihood. As a result, some households achieve higher levels of livelihood security and well-being than others. These choices of what to do (what) and for which reasons (why), as well as the ways of doing (how) are the constituent parts of livelihood strategies. In this chapter, I explore these elements of strategizing and investigate what aspects people consider when making their livelihood choices, and how this results in differences in the outcomes for relatively secure and insecure households.

The chapter comprises five sections. Section 6.2, first, presents the scientific debate about the concept of a livelihood strategy and explains the contribution of this research to this debate. Second, it presents the methods for data collection and analysis used for the purposes of this chapter. Thereafter, Section 6.3 explains the fundamental elements of strategizing that include: opportunities, different perceptions of acceptability, motives and capabilities. The interrelation of these elements determines the level of flexibility to adapt to challenges in the context. Section 6.4, first, compares the livelihood strategies of relatively secure and insecure households that rely predominantly on on-farm activities. This is followed by a comparison of two case study households with different types of activity diversification that result in different levels of livelihood security. The section then compares the strategies of an exceptionally successful entrepreneur with the livelihood strategies of the other less successful case study households. Section 6.5 concludes the chapter.

## 6.2 THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

### 6.2.1 CONCEPT OF STRATEGY: CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENTIFIC DEBATE

Applying the concept of livelihood strategy in this research, I elaborate on three aspects of the concept: the definition of strategy, the elements of strategizing in the sense of considerations for making livelihood choices, the dynamic nature of strategies, and differences in strategizing between households with more or less secure livelihoods.

#### *A Strategy: What, How and Why*

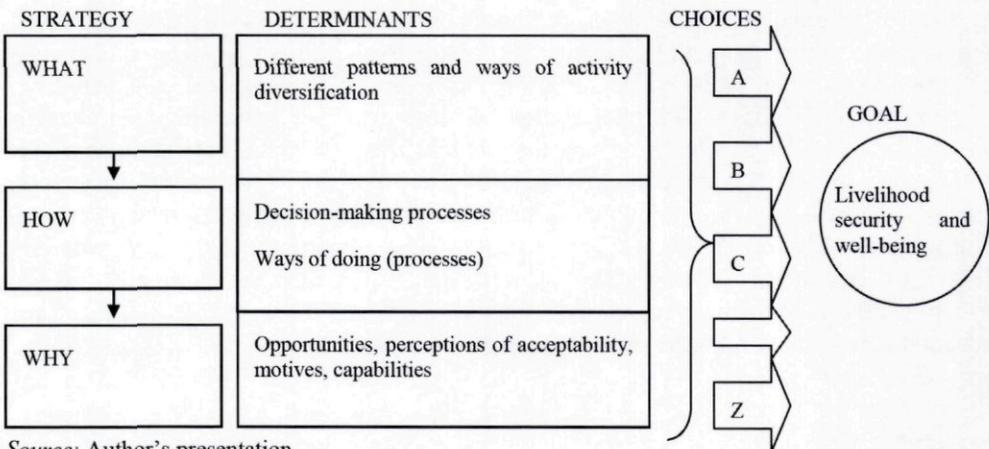
The review of livelihood literature suggests that initially the concepts of livelihood strategies and livelihood activities were used interchangeably (e.g. Chambers 1983; Scoones, 1998). Thereafter, the initial definition of the concept *strategy* was reconsidered to distinguish between *strategy* and *activities*:

*“People do not generally carry out livelihood activities in a haphazard manner. They have strategies by which activities are structured and on the basis of which they are planned” (Niehof and Price, 2001: 10).*

Another elaboration on the concept of strategy was that strategies were re-defined to include not only *what people do* (activities) but also *how or in which ways* people do, i.e. livelihood strategies in terms of decision-making power and processes (de Haan et al., 2002).

Building on these earlier elaborations, I define the concept of livelihood strategy as: making (a) choice(s) from multiple options based on three inseparable aspects that explain the reasons (why people do), the processes (how people do, how they decide about what to do), and the actions (what people do) to achieve livelihood security and well-being (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Strategy: Why, How and Why



Source: Author's presentation.

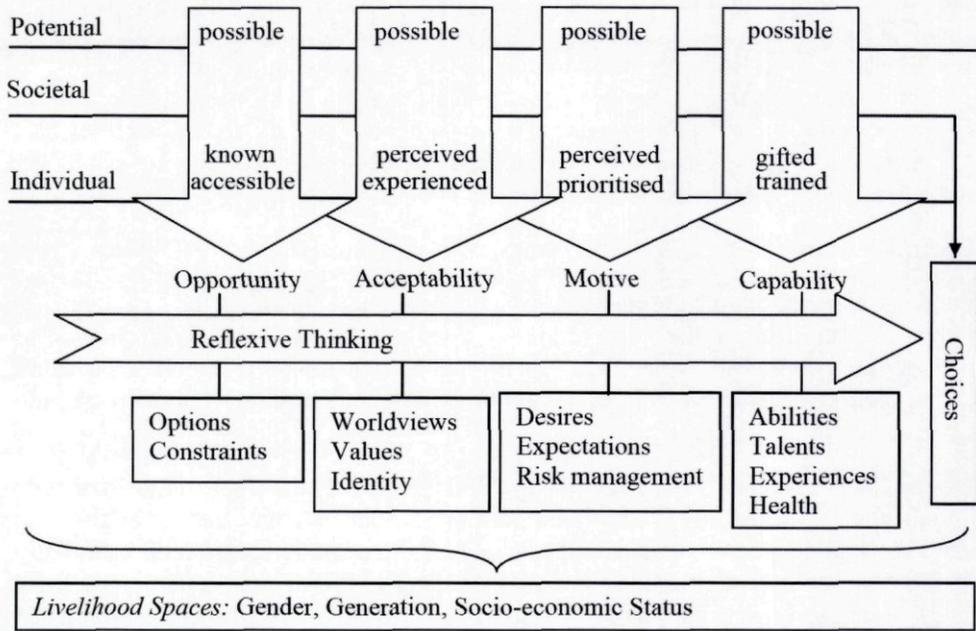
The first element of this definition of strategy is about 'what people do?' implying different income-generating activities that people carry out to make a living. The second element of the strategy is about 'how people do?' This element refers to choice-making about who decides what and who is responsible for what (what to do and how to do). The third element of the strategy is about 'why people choose to do things in specific ways?' The reasons why people choose specific livelihood strategies (i.e. what aspects they consider in making their choices) have been overlooked in the earlier livelihoods approaches and are discussed below in detail.

### *Making Choice: Opportunity, Acceptability, Motive and Capability*

In making choices, people continuously strategize about different aspects of their life. In this chapter, I limit the exploration of people's strategies to their choices of livelihood activities. More specifically, I investigate what aspects people consider in making their choices about what to do and how to do and why they choose a specific way to secure their livelihood.

Archer (2007) explains that people engage in reflexive thinking to 'make their way through the world' through an 'inner-dialogue' or 'internal conversation' that embraces language, emotions, feelings and images. Thus, understanding the rationality of people's choice is embedded in an understanding of this human reflexivity (ibid.). In this research, I apply this theory of human reflexivity to further elaborate on the concept of strategy and to distinguish between the following four elements of reflexive consideration: opportunity, acceptability, motive and capability (Figure 6.2). I argue that while making choices about livelihood activities, people weigh different options and trade-offs through the assessment of these four elements. How they do that differs by gender, generation and socio-economic status and contributes to the existence of different 'livelihood spaces' for women and men, younger and older generations, more and less powerful individuals and households as well as the well-off and the poor. More specifically, I define the concept of 'livelihood spaces' as different levels and scales of freedom to make decisions and freedom to act upon the decisions that determine the flexibility of an individual and/or household to successfully adapt to the challenges in their particular context.

Figure 6.2 Strategizing: 'Livelihood Spaces' of Choice-Making



Source: Author's presentation.

'Opportunity' is defined as "a favourable or advantageous circumstance or combination of circumstances" (Collins, 2000: lemma 'opportunity'). Opportunities generally depend on access to assets such as land, labour and capital (Marx, 1984). Access to assets is constrained by the 'vulnerability' of the context (Ellis, 2000). This vulnerability is shaped by macro-economic critical trends (e.g. economic and population trends), shocks (e.g. economic and environmental shocks) and seasonality (of prices, production, employment opportunities, agricultural crops) (Ellis, 2000). These elements of vulnerability along with policies and practices enable or hinder people's opportunities to gain access to assets and to engage in different income-generating activities. The vulnerability and availability of opportunities differ among contexts, i.e. they diverge from village to village, province to province and country to country. This implies that people's opportunities and thus strategies and choices are place-specific, and that understanding these strategies requires contextualisation.

Furthermore, not all opportunities that exist in a particular context are available at the individual level. First, access to opportunities varies between individuals depending on gender, generation and socio-economic status. Second, people assess the opportunities that they are aware of and/or that come to their mind as achievable ideas differently. For instance, some people take only existing opportunities into account, whereas others are ready to experiment with new ideas. Because people differ in experiences and access to information and knowledge, there are differences in the range of opportunities that they consider.

When making livelihood choices people also consider their 'acceptability', which concerns what is perceived as adequate or acceptable to be or to do. There are different perceptions of acceptability. Giddens (1991) explains that people's choices are influenced by norms and values that are a part of their culture. Acceptability then includes how a 'decent' man and woman are supposed to behave in a specific society. Individual norms might change or are not consistent with societal norms. Norms do not prescribe individual behaviour, as people may decide to do things differently. For instance, in Chapter 5, I reported on households where women took over traditionally 'male' tasks and their households transformed to *zamonaviy* (modern) household structures that no longer conform to the dominant norms of the traditional or *odatiy* households.

Apart from considering opportunities and acceptability, people are driven by their motives. A 'motive' is generally defined as: "an incentive to act, a reason for doing something, anything that prompts choice of action" (Collins, 2000: lemma 'motive'). Motives are about what people want to have, to do, to be or to avoid. Motives are based on desires, aspirations and ambitions as well as on the avoidance and prevention from risk. Motives can be material or immaterial. Motives are generally embedded in previous experiences that build up expectations from a specific way of doing.

Finally, while making choice, people assess their capabilities. 'Capability' can be defined as: "the sum of expertise and capacity" (Collins, 2000: lemma 'capability'). Capability is about what a person can do, given her or his abilities, skills, training, capacities and talents. Individual capabilities of people also depend on their health status.

The main feature of these four aspects of strategizing is that they are interlinked. For example, considering the acceptability of actions, people might decide to discard some opportunities. Likewise, limited by opportunities, people might re-assess their capabilities and reconsider their motives. Similarly, people's motives are co-shaped by their perceptions of acceptability when they want to have what is *normal* in their worldview to have. All four aspects are dynamic and change over time. The specificities, interrelations and dynamics of these four factors at individual, household and societal levels determine the flexibility of people and households to adapt to livelihood challenges.

### *'Livelihood Spaces': Dynamics and Flexibility of Livelihood Strategies*

Livelihood strategies are not fixed but rather are flexible adjustments to changing conditions with the goal of livelihood security and sustainability. Having a goal (vision), people continuously re-assess the available opportunities and act upon changing conditions in their context. Striving for livelihood security, by trial, error and adjustment, people discontinue doing some activities and begin doing new ones. Weighing different options and associated risks, people change their perceptions, reconsider their motives, learn new skills and have new experiences, thus enhancing their capabilities.

Reflecting upon earlier experiences, people generally favour or prioritise some of their choices and strategies over others. People tend to reproduce their favoured strategies as the ways of doing that have resulted in success at some period of their life. Thus, the most successful experiences and strategies become the 'right' ways of acting, unless they start bringing undesired outcomes. When the previously successful strategies no longer produce the expected results, people generally try out something new, continuously adjusting and adapting to changes in their particular context. People and households differ in how quickly or slowly they adapt. Some need more time than others. Generally speaking, well-off households manage to act first in taking advantage of emerging opportunities.

The flexibility to avail opportunities is generally restricted by individual situations that are co-shaped by previous choices. Likewise, with today's choice people pre-define their flexibility in the future. For instance, a carpenter, who has been making furniture for years and decides to give up making furniture and to engage in agriculture instead (e.g. because agriculture provides food security and furniture making does not), will not be as successful in agricultural activities as other people who have been practicing agriculture all their lives. This is because the carpenter lacks the same amount of experience (capability) in carrying out on-farm activities that long-term agriculturists have.

Finally, people never have the same range of choices. This is because opportunities, capabilities, motives and perceptions of acceptability generally differ by gender, age and socio-economic status. These divergences, in their turn, affect people's livelihood choices and, thereafter, the resultant differences in the levels of livelihood security. In a symbolic notion, this is like people are moving through a labyrinth, searching for a way to achieve livelihood security. The 'livelihood spaces' in this labyrinth are neither open for everyone nor known by anyone. The awareness and rights for moving in this labyrinth from 'space to space' depend on gender, age and position within households and communities. As long as there are divergences in 'livelihood spaces' between women and men, younger and older generations, the powerful and powerless, gender inequality and poverty will be reproduced and reinforced.

### 6.2.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative research was my primary method for researching livelihood strategies. The findings in this chapter are based on the data from the mini-survey on problem analysis ( $n=27$ , 2008;  $n=30$ , 2009), the mini-survey on livelihoods ( $n=28$ , 2008), the sample survey ( $n=300$ , 2009), diaries and several in-depth open-ended interviews with household members of the four case study households and one exceptional case of a very successful entrepreneur (Chapter 3).

The long-term research on case study households, qualitative data of the sample survey, in-depth interviews as well as multiple observations were useful for understanding the dynamics of rural livelihoods and the rationale of people's choices. For example, written thoughts of the members of the case study households in the diaries were particularly useful for getting the gist of people's reflexive thinking. The

qualitative questions of the sample survey were useful for exploring *why* questions, such as:

- What income-generating activities do you want to expand, reduce or keep at the same level; and why do you want to do so?"
- What income-generating activities did you start or stop during the last three years; and why did you decide to start or stop those activities?

As explained in Chapter 3, grounded theory techniques (Bryman, 2004; Charmaz, 2006) were used to analyse these qualitative data.

### **6.3 STRATEGIZING: ELEMENTS OF MAKING CHOICES WITHIN 'LIVELIHOOD SPACES'**

The theoretical framework of the work presented in this chapter (Section 6.2.1) suggests that people are continuously strategizing about engaging in productive activities to achieve livelihood security as their overarching goal. In doing so, people make choices, filtering known opportunities through consideration of their motives, capabilities and perceptions of acceptability. In this section, I explore the reasons behind people's choices in the specific context of Khorezm through a thorough analysis of each of these elements.

#### **6.3.1 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS**

As explained in Chapters 4 and 5, not everybody could take equal advantage of opportunities in the study area. First, people differed in the range of opportunities that they assessed. These differences in opportunities were depicted by the results of the analysis of the interviewees' perceptions about why some households secured their livelihoods better than others (Table 6.1).

The analysis of these divergent responses of the well-off households and the households in need revealed that these two groups perceived and experienced existing opportunities differently. Particularly, the interviewees from the well-off households perceived that people from the households in need did not do enough or did not know enough for securing livelihood. In contrast, the interviewees from the households in need reported that they did not achieve desired levels of livelihood security because of multiple constraints. These constraints can be categorised as:

- Poor access to assets; for example, limited land, irrigation water, cash, shortage of gas and electricity (Chapter 4);
- Individual circumstances; for example, personal health, the lack of a father or husband (Chapters 4 and 5); and
- Lack of opportunity; for example, lack of employment opportunities, access to high-quality child care services.

Table 6.1 Living in Different Realities: Why Some Can whilst Others Cannot?

Response, Relatively Well-off Household	Response, Household in Need
The poor are those who are lazy.	We work for <i>farmers</i> and do not have regular salaries. We get just five-ten <i>sotka</i> of land (0.05-0.1ha) from him and some wood. It is not enough.
They buy everything - from potatoes to soap, do not plant basic things in the kitchen garden.	There is no water, no wheat, so there is no bread. The overall condition for planting is bad – the soil and the water. But there is no other opportunity.  There is no health, no land and no water. All goes to <i>farmers</i> . So what can you do then?
They wait for something special from their <i>tomorka</i> .	All the matter is in [absence of] work places. We need kindergarten so that people can work in the city. We need a factory here so that we have work places.
They work in summer only and expect everything.	
They need to know when and where it is cheaper to buy what.	It is cheaper to buy wood now than in autumn. But we do not have money. We have to wait for my son's remittances. He will come back in autumn. Wood will be twice expensive that time. But what to do?
They pickled ten jars of tomatoes for winter and feel happy, but it is so little.	We pickled a few jars for winter. I know it is not much. But we do not have money to buy ingredients.
They do not know how to work in agriculture, how to grow poultry and take care of a cow.	We made bricks all our lives. Agriculture is new kind of work for us.

Source: Responses from Mini-Survey on Livelihoods, 2008.

*“Well-off people have an opportunity. Today rich people who have a job in the city and can become farmers. And kolkhoz workers [farmer worker] have none” [man 409, mini-survey on livelihood, 2008].*

Overall, structural conditions defined the availability of opportunities for on-farm as well as non-farm activities. More specifically, the ability to secure livelihood from on-farm activities depended on three structural factors:

- The scale of activity and the registration status of land; for example, a size (scale) of fertile land and the right to choose how to use this land (Chapter 4);
- The employment status and income regularity; for example, a registered *livestock farmer* with regular and relatively high income or a *mardikor* (unregistered labourer) with irregular income; and
- The employment position; for example, an employer (*fermer*) or an employee (farm worker).

Making a living from non-farm activities depended on the following structural factors:

- The scale and registration status of the activity; for example, a manager of a registered large-scale factory or a small entrepreneur with an unregistered single-person business such as a taxi-driver or tailor;

- The status of engagement in an activity and income regularity; for example, registered employment with regular income or as *mardikorlik* (unregistered work) with irregular income;
- The employment position; for example, an employer or an employee.

In general, these structural conditions defined the logic of local entrepreneurship of running on-farm and non-farm entrepreneurship on a small scale (Tables 6.2-3). On the one hand, only registered activities could be carried out at a large scale and thus could bring a regular and/or high income. On the other hand, having a registered business implied dealing with a number of responsibilities to the state [*fermer, man 440, open-ended interview, 2008*].

Table 6.2 Structural Factors of On-Farm Activities, 2008 - 2010

Parameter	Large-scale	Medium-scale	Small-scale
Main activity	Growing quota crop (e.g. cotton, wheat) production  Engaging in commercial farming	Engaging in subsistence agriculture on <i>qo'shimcha tomorka</i> and rented land from <i>farmers</i>  Engaging in commercial farming,	Engaging in subsistence agriculture on <i>uy tomorka</i>
Size of business	40-120 ha	0.12-0.25 (qo'shimcha tomorkas)  Renting 1-10 ha	0.04-0.12ha ( <i>uy tomorka</i> )  Renting 0.1 ha of land
Access to land	Areas designated for <i>farmers'</i> farms	Any household in a village is eligible for <i>qo'shimcha tomorka</i> but access depends on land availability in a village; difficulties in renting the land	Any household in a village is eligible for <i>uy tomorka</i>
State credit, auditing and business planning	Yes	Sometimes	No
Funding	State credit or subsidies	A credit or personal funding	Personal funding
Registration status, decision-making power, responsibilities	Manager of a <i>farmers'</i> enterprise but not the owner of the land, having many limitations for decision making and responsibilities to the state	<i>Dehqon</i> farmers or a <i>farmers'</i> tenant with some limitation and responsibilities	Registered owner <i>uy tomorka</i> and housing with very few limitations and responsibilities
Ways of engaging in activity	Registered work as a head or a subordinate	Unregistered/registered work as a head or as a subordinate	Unregistered/registered work as a head or as a subordinate

Source: Field notes, 2008-2010.

On the contrary, having a small business had fewer limitations (e.g. access to land), fewer responsibilities (e.g. decision making about what crop to grow or what service to render and in what amount) and was more accessible than engagement in a large-scale business. Furthermore, the differences in the regularity and income level from on-farm and non-farm activities depended on the (contractual) status of engagement (as regular employment, unregistered casual labour (*mardikorlik*) or entrepreneurship/self-employment; Chapter 4). Finally, differences in income depended on the position at work. Employers earned more than employees. However, not everybody had opportunities, motives, perceptions of acceptability and the capability to become an employer, and there was no labour protection mechanism to enable people to secure their livelihoods without having a superior position at work:

*"I am a teacher. But the salary of a teacher cannot feed"* [woman 9, sample survey, 2009].

Table 6.3 Structural Factors of Non-Farm Activities, 2008 - 2010

Parameter	Large-scale	Medium-scale	Small-scale
Main activity	Working in public sectors, large industries	Working in home industries	Engaging in mini-retail business, service provision
Size of business	Hundreds of employees	Family Business	Single-person business
Access to land	Designated areas for factories	Difficulties in getting access to land for building a factory	Home businesses and any household in a village is eligible for <i>uy tomorka</i>
State credit, auditing and business planning	Yes	Yes or No	No
Funding	State credit or subsidies	A credit or own funding	Own funding
Registration status, decision-making power, responsibilities	Manager of a factory but not the owner of the factory, having many limitations on decision making and responsibilities to the state	Manager of private business with some limitations and responsibilities	Manager of private business with very few limitations and responsibilities
Ways of engaging in activity	Registered work as a head or a subordinate	Unregistered/registered work as a head or a subordinate	Unregistered/registered work as a head or a subordinate

Source: Field notes, 2008-2010.

In sum, these interlinked structural factors were common to on-farm and non-farm activities and affected the levels of income from these activities in the same way. On-farm and non-farm activities differed. Income from small-scale on-farm activities was generally in-kind whereas income from small-scale non-farm activities was generally

in cash. Given the cash scarcity in the study area, making an income from on-farm activities was easier than from non-farm activities. This was because consumers had very limited purchasing capacity to pay for non-farm outputs. As a result, there was lack of demand and investment in non-farm activities. In contrast, the outputs of on-farm activities could be directly consumed by household members.

### 6.3.2 ACCEPTABILITY

In making choices, people considered what was acceptable to them or not in terms of what to be and to do. Acceptability depended on people's worldviews and values. Acceptability shaped gender norms, e.g. how it was *adequate* or *odd* to behave as a woman or a man (Chapter 5). Likewise, generational norms determined the acceptability of labour relations between older and younger generations. For example, some older people did not want to be employed by younger people and, therefore, chose not to engage in specific activities:

*"I do not want to work in agriculture. Farmers [employers] are young now. It does not look good when they give orders to an older person"* [man 119, sample survey, 2009].

Likewise, engaging in migration was an acceptable income-generating option for some people and not acceptable for others:

*"I am against migration. Those who migrate do not see their children, parents and relatives for years. It is not good. It is better to work in your village, in your home country and switch on the brain"* [man 66, sample survey, 2009].

Furthermore, the notion of acceptability varied by education level. For example, some people with a University education found it unacceptable to work as unskilled labour when there was no other opportunity to work:

*"I have good education and experience in engineering and there is no job in my profession. How can I work as a labourer or a vendor? I want to work in my profession. Therefore, I am unemployed"* [man 235, sample survey, 2009].

In sum, making choice, people considered what was acceptable for them to be or to do. Some people were more flexible than others in the ability to adjust their perceptions of acceptability to the available opportunities. For example, a kindergarten manager decided to engage in retail at local markets [woman 438, open-ended interview, 2008]. She made this choice and changed her perceptions of acceptability because this was a readily available opportunity to generate income.

### 6.3.3 MOTIVES

The choice of engaging in any activity always involved a motive. Motives could be both material and immaterial. Furthermore, there were 'motives to do something' (e.g. to generate income) and 'motives not to do something' (e.g. to avoid risks). 'Motives to do something' were generally based on people's preferences (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4 Motives to Do: to Start or Expand Income-Generating Activities, 2009

Material Motive	Immaterial Motive
<b>On-farm Activity</b>	
To earn in-kind income, to have food stocks, to reduce cash costs for food	Matter of taste (liking this job), to be your own boss
<b>Non-farm Activity</b>	
To earn cash income, to invest in on-farm activities, to have a better amount of a pension in the future	Matter of taste (liking this job), to work in a desired profession
<b>Migration</b>	
To have enough income for food, for house construction, for buying a car, for starting-up a business, to meet social obligations	To see another country

Source: Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009.

The motives 'not to do something' were generally about avoiding risks. These motives were also both material and immaterial (Table 6.5). For example, some people did not want to work for a *fermer* because of poor earning capacity; others did not want to engage in non-farm entrepreneurial activities because they did not like to work under stress.

Table 6.5 Motives Not to Do: to Slow Down or Stop Income-Generating Activities, 2009

Material Motive	Immaterial Motive
<b>On-farm Activity</b>	
No cash income	Matter of taste (dislike of a particular kind of job)
Low earning	Health risks
	Desire not to work under the hot sun and in dust
<b>Non-farm Activity</b>	
Low and irregular income	Matter of taste (disliking a particular kind of job)
Transport costs	Desire not to work under stress
<b>Migration</b>	
Limited work opportunities at the places of migration	Health and life risks
No guaranteed payment	Desire not to live away from the family

Source: Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009.

Some people decided to engage in some specific activities, regardless of their like or dislike. When there was lack of alternative opportunities, people prioritised some motives over others, regardless of their personal preferences. For example, the motive

to generate income for survival was more important than a person's dislike of work as a *mardikor*.

The interrelation between motives on the one side, and opportunities, capabilities and the perceptions of acceptability on the other side, reflected people's satisfaction with what they did, which is an important element of well-being (Chapter 7). In general, those people whose motives matched their opportunities were satisfied with their engagement in specific activities. In other cases, people either wanted to expand or stop (or slow down) their engagement in specific activities. In the study area, only 51 and 45 out of 300 sample households (17% and 15% respectively) of the sample households were satisfied with the level of their engagement in on-farm and non-farm activities respectively. In regard to farm activities, 151 out of 300 sample households (50%) wanted to expand those activities whereas 98 out of 300 sample households (33%) wanted to reduce the scale of (or stop) those activities. In regard to non-farm activities, 145 out of 300 sample households (48%) wanted to expand those activities whereas 110 out of 300 sample households (37%) wanted to reduce the scale of (or stop) those activities.

#### 6.3.4 CAPABILITIES

Engaging in any income-generating activity required specific skills. The interviewees explained that they decided to start or stop engaging in specific activities because of their education, skills and health status. These three factors reflected the capability to engage in on-farm and non-farm activities that people perceived and experienced. Living in rural areas, almost every person had at least some skills in carrying out on-farm activities, since these activities were generally carried out by people since childhood.

*"We do agriculture from childhood. We cannot do other work"* [woman 260, sample survey, 2009].

In contrast, not everybody had entrepreneurial skills:

*"To be well-off, you need to be fast. People, who are rich now, were either rich before or were fast. For example, there was a man who had a video camera. At that time, it was rare. So he went to weddings and made good money by making videos. Then he got a lot of money and bought a car. He started to rent it out. Then he had enough money to buy a truck. Later he bought a bus and then he bought a to 'yhona [wedding hall]"* [man 413, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008].

Furthermore, people's capabilities were determined by their health conditions or physical abilities. As perceived by interviewees, these physical skills varied by gender and age. For example, some interviewees perceived that women were a 'weak gender':

*"It is a hard work for women to work in agriculture. It is better if they have an easier job"* [man 227, sample survey, 2009].

Likewise, some of the older people had more problems with their health than the younger people:

*"I am sick. I am retired and cannot work. Young people are working because they are fast. I am old and slow" [man 281, sample survey, 2009].*

In making choices about pursuing a particular income-generating activity, people generally reflected on four aspects: opportunities, acceptability, motives and capabilities. These four aspects were interlinked. Explaining the reasons for starting up or quitting a job, people generally referred to a combination of factors. For example, in explaining her choice of engaging in sewing, a woman specified that she wanted to do this job because it produced income (a material motive), her children were nearby when she did this job (acceptability), and she knew how to do this job [capability] [woman 301-3, case study household, 2008]. The complex nature of strategizing was reflected by the fact that each of these four aspects was dynamic. The dynamics of each of these aspects helped determine the flexibility of strategizing and adaptation to changes within the challenging context.

### 6.3.5 FLEXIBILITY OF STRATEGIZING IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSITION

Living in the changing context, people's choices were not static. First, this was the case because people's acceptability, motives and capabilities were not fixed but changed over time; for example, due to new experiences, or changing circumstances. Second, people's choices were embedded in their context; they adapted their choices depending on the changes in that context. Particularly, because of the on-going reforms, income opportunities continuously changed. For example, as a result of the last land reform, 27 out of 300 sample households (9%) found a new opportunity to benefit from agriculture whereas 46 out of 300 sample households (15%) experienced a decline in income opportunities from on-farm activities.

The process of adaptation to changes in the context depended on people's flexibility to reconsider their motives and perceptions of acceptability as well as their ability to enhance their capabilities for availing emerging opportunities or avoiding emerging risks. For example, while adapting to changes in the context, 101 out of 300 sample households (34%) stopped one or more income-generating activities whereas 155 out of 300 sample households (52%) started one or more income-generating activities during the last three years.

In the process of adaptation, making choice, people continuously weighed different aspects of strategizing that determined their flexibility to adapt and benefit from the changing context. As a result of differences in the four discussed aspects of strategizing and the resultant flexibility, some households and individuals did better than the others. The next section further investigates the reasons behind these differences, comparing the livelihood strategies of the well-off households with the livelihood strategies of the households in need.

## 6.4 'LIVELIHOOD SPACES' OF THE WELL-OFF HOUSEHOLDS AND THE HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED

In this section, I explore how and why some household can and other households cannot achieve a decent level of living. To do this, I identify differences in the

livelihood strategies of relatively well-off households and the households in need and investigate the reasons behind their divergence.

To explore differences in making a living from engaging in on-farm activities, I first compare the income-generating strategies of three groups of land users: *farmers*, *dehqon* farmers and *farmers'* tenants (Chapter 4). To explore differences in making a living from activity diversification, I then compare the strategies of two case study households that practice this diversification in two different ways. Then I present the strategies of a businessperson living in the same context as the other case study household members who has achieved considerable success. Thereafter, I compare the strategies of the households in need with the strategies of the well-off households to examine the reasons for their divergence.

#### 6.4.1 DIFFERENCES IN LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES BY LAND USERS

The opportunities to benefit from on-farm activities depended on access to land, which varied among different types of land users: *farmers*, *dehqon* farmers and *farmers'* tenants. *Farmers* had access to most agricultural land (Chapter 4). First, not everybody had an opportunity to become a *farmer*. By the reform design, it was practically impossible to allocate 80-100 ha of land to every household, given the limited availability of arable land. Second, not everybody wanted (had a motive) to be a *farmer*. For example, an interviewed furniture maker did not want to engage in agriculture at all [*man 406, open-ended interview, 2008*]. Third, *farmers'* profits depended on their capability to find ways to generate a regular income. This capability varied among *farmers* depending on their specialisation or sector (Table 6.6). This again depended on the size of the land, the assigned agricultural product for quota production and the opportunity to use some part of the land for the production of something else. For example, it was more difficult for orchard *farmers* to grow crops of their own choice (e.g. fodder) under the trees, compared to livestock *farmers*. Livestock *farmers* had a regular income (e.g. from the sale of milk and meat), whereas other *farmers* had seasonal income.

Table 6.6 *Fermer Types, 2009*

<b>Fermer's by Assigned Quota Product</b>	<b>Fermer's Household</b>	<b>Land Range</b>	<b>Assigned Quota Product</b>	<b>Own Choice Product</b>
<b>Cotton-wheat farmer</b>	12	48 -115ha	Cotton, wheat, silkworms	Livestock, rice, fodder, melons, pumpkins, vegetables, sunflower
<b>Orchard farmer</b>	13	1-48ha	Apple, apricot, grape	Livestock, fodder, vegetables, wheat, melons, sunflower
<b>Sericulture farmer</b>	6	0.97-1.5ha	Silkworms	Fodder grown under the mulberry trees
<b>Fishery farmer</b>	1	6-7ha	Fish	Vegetables, fodder on the land around the lake
<b>Livestock farmer</b>	2	90-11ha5	Milk, meat, fodder and wheat	Vegetables, melons, sunflower
<b>Poultry farmer</b>	1	1ha	Meat and eggs	No data

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n *farmers* = 34.

Apart from the variations in income opportunities among *farmers*, there were also specific variations in income opportunities between *farmers*, *dehqon* farmers and *farmers'* tenants. In particular, these differences in opportunities included:

- The proportion of *farmers* who earn cash from selling their agricultural produce was larger than the proportion of other land users. More specifically, 35% of *farmers* (12 out of 34 interviewed *farmers*) versus 30% of *dehqon* farmers (44 out of 148 sample *dehqon* farmers) and 23% of *farmers'* tenants (27 out of 118 sample *farmers'* tenants) sold a part of their agricultural produce;
- *Farmers* had regular employment at their *farmer's enterprises* and thus were eligible for welfare benefits. In contrast, *dehqon* farmers generally did not register their on-farm activities as an employment either because they were unaware of this possibility or because of unwillingness to incur registration costs. *Farmers'* tenants could not register their on-farm activities as an employment because rented land was generally unregistered;
- *Farmers* could access cheap labour, a share of crops or money for renting out a part of land; this opportunity was not available to the other land users;
- Migration among *farmer* households was considerably less frequent than amongst *dehqon* farmer and *farmers'* tenants' households. In particular, 15% of *farmers'* households (5 out of 34 *farmers'* households) engaged in migration, in contrast to 52% of *dehqon* farmers' households (77 out of 148 *dehqon* farmers' households) and 42% of the households of *farmers'* tenants (49 out of 118 the sample households of *farmers'* tenants). This implies that *farmers* earned sufficient income from engaging in on-farm activities whereas other land users did not manage;

- *Farmers* never relied only on subsistence agriculture, carried out only on *uy* and *qo'shimcha tomorka* whereas 12% of *dehqon* farmers (17 out of 148 *dehqon* farmers) relied only on subsistence agriculture; and
- All *farmers* practiced activity diversification. In contrast, 51% of *dehqon* farmers (75 out of 148 *dehqon* farmers) and 31% of *farmers'* tenant households (37 out of 118 households of *farmers'* tenants) could not diversify (Table 6.7). Some of these *dehqon* farmers explained that they wanted to diversify their activities but did not have an opportunity to do so.

*"To be well-off, buy land [rent in land, become a farmer], try to work on governmental job, receive salaries [regular income]. But there are no workplaces. So we don't have choice. We plant things [on tomorkas]. May be to get a cow? But then you again need land to get fodder for the cows (laughs). If there is no money, then it is like this" [man 425, mini-survey on livelihood, 2008; my interpretations in brackets].*

Table 6.7 Activity Diversification by Different Land Users, 2009

Activity Pattern	Dehqon Farmer		Farmers' Tenant		Farmer		Total, Sample Household	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Uni-sectoral diversification	16	11	30	25	14	41	60	20
Multi-sectoral diversification	57	39	51	43	20	59	128	43
Specialisation	75	51	37	31	0	0	112	37
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=300.

Livelihood strategies for making a living from on-farm activities diverged among different land users because they had different livelihood opportunities.

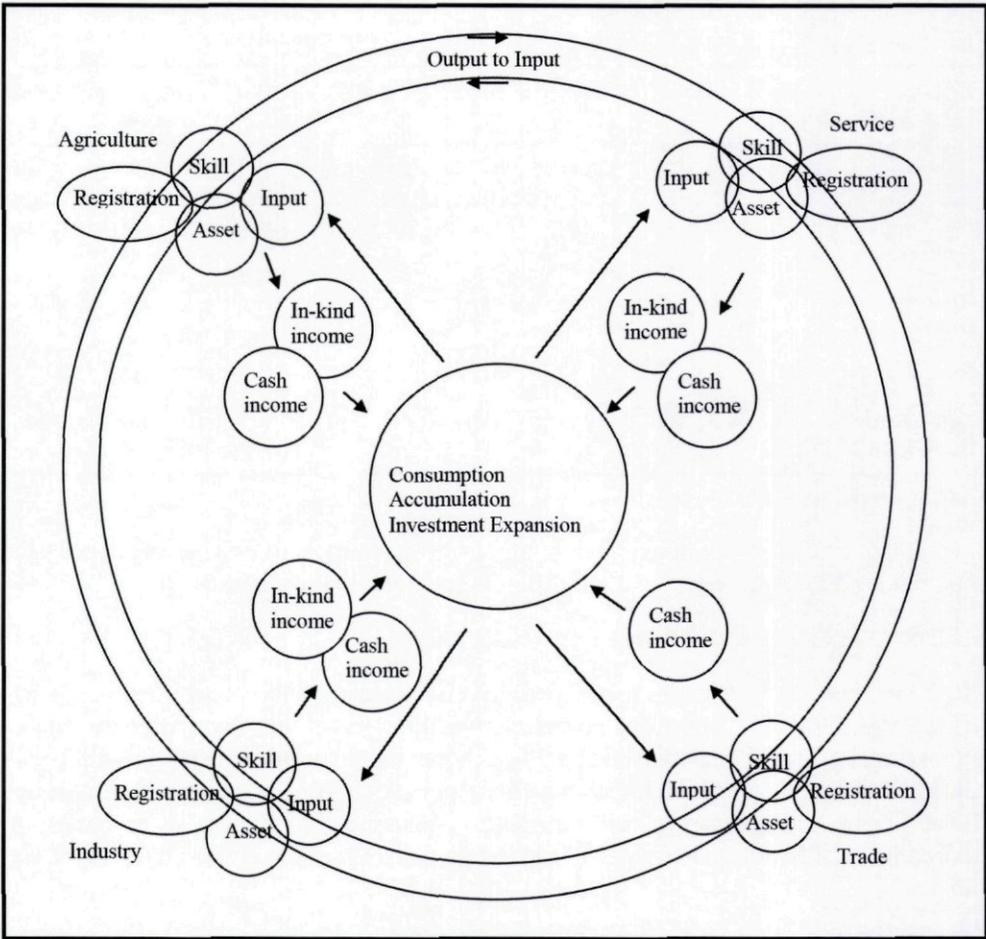
#### 6.4.2 SYNERGETIC AND ADDITIVE DIVERSIFICATION

More than half of the sample households diversified their activities to make a living (Chapter 4). However, not every household engaging in activity diversification could achieve and sustain a desired level of livelihood security. In general, the ability to achieve a desired level of livelihood security from activity diversification depended on the ability to generate a relatively high and regular income. The ability to sustain a desired level of livelihood security depended on the ability to avoid or prevent income failures.

The main argument of this section is that achieving livelihood security and/or sustainability through activity diversification depended on how one engaged in diversification. In Chapter 4, I discussed two types of diversification: *uni-sectoral* and *multi-sectoral* diversification. In this section, I explore two different ways of

diversification, classifying diversification as *synergetic* diversification and *additive* diversification<sup>28</sup>. Both of these ways of diversification can be performed either in one sector or in more than one sector. *Synergetic* diversification involves combining income-generating activities in such a way that assets, income and outputs from one activity contribute to and enable another activity (Figure 6.3). Another way of diversification is *additive* diversification. This way of diversification is about involves multiple activities independently, i.e. without building interdependence of activities. Each of these two ways of diversification has advantages and disadvantages in the given context as the case study research reveals. Particularly, *synergetic* diversification promotes business growth more than *additive* diversification. However, the latter is more sustainable and less risky than the former in this specific context of transition.

Figure 6.3 Synergetic Diversification



Source: Author's presentation [case study household (1), 2008-2010].

The case study household (1) engaged in multiple on-farm and non-farm activities building on the synergy of income, outputs and inputs from all of the activities, with the engagement in and success of every activity, contributing to the fulfilment of each other. At the beginning, this strategy enabled growth. However, once the central element of engaging in on-farm activities failed (access to land), income from the other activities failed as well – similar to a collapsing domino effect as explained in Box 6. 1.

#### Box 6.1 *Synergetic Diversification*

This case study household is an extended family. During the first year of field research, the members of this household engaged in multiple activities, including agriculture, trade, industry and services. They started all these activities one by one, accumulating saving from one activity and investing this saving to start another activity.

At first, one of the household members gained access to a *fermer's* farm of 12 ha (agriculture) due to education, work experience in administration and social networks. This farm enabled the household members to accumulate saving that they invested in building a small wheat mill (industry). Having a mill generated cash and in-kind income from grinding wheat for neighbours (service). This enabled them to produce sufficient fodder to increase the number of livestock (expanding agriculture through *synergetic* diversification). The increased number of livestock improved food security (consumption), enabled the generation of cash from the sale of milk (trade). Furthermore, renting some land for cash to neighbours enabled the opening of a shop (expanding trade). By engaging in trade and industry, the household members expanded their networks that supported further expansion of different services. By expanding and linking multiple activities, household members practiced *synergetic* activity diversification through a synergy of assets, outputs, income and skills. This synergy enabled growth and further diversification.

However, during the second year of field research, the household had to stop this diversification. The household members lost their access to 12 ha because of the last land reform. As a result, the central and dominant asset (land) and activity (agriculture) failed, causing the other activities to fail, as a collapsing domino effect. Thus, the weakness of the *synergetic* diversification is a high risk of failure because of the high level of activity interdependency.

Source: [Case Study Household (1), 2008-2010].

A case study that practiced an *additive* diversification strategy is featured in Box 6.2. In this case study household (2), multiple income-generating activities were combined similar to the first case study household (1), including several on-farm and non-farm activities. However, in the second case study household, separate activities did not depend on one another. For example, engagement in services (taxi driving) did not depend on the engagement in agriculture. Likewise, engagement in regular employment (work at the hospital) did not depend on remittances. Success or failure in one activity did not affect the results in another activity. As a result, the household could avoid the risk of the domino effect inherent in *synergetic* diversification that affected case study household (1).

Box 6.2 Case Study of *Additive* Diversification

This case study household is an extended family. The elderly parents have three adult sons and one adult daughter. The parents receive retirement pensions (income 1). Three sons, their wives and the daughter study and work in Tashkent for about eight months a year and send remittances (income 2) to their parents.

In addition, the oldest man works as a taxi-driver (income 3). In addition, he performs some management work at a local market (income 4).

The household has a cow and some poultry. The women raise poultry (income 5), sell the milk from the cow (income 6), work on *uy tomorka*, growing fruits and vegetables (income 7), and work on *qo'shimcha tomorka*, growing fodder for the cow. The wife of the youngest son always stays in the village. She works at a hospital as a nurse and receives a maternity allowance for her one-year old son (income 8).

*Source:* [Case Study Household (2), 2008-2010].

Thus, *additive* diversification was more sustainable than *synergetic* diversification in this context. Nonetheless, *synergetic* diversification could function and ensure considerable growth and success in some cases within a given context. Achieving large-scale entrepreneurship through *synergetic* diversification was exceptional but possible due to a successful mix of different livelihood strategies.

## 6.4.3 SUCCESSFUL MIX OF LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Cases of large-scale entrepreneurship were rare in Khorezm. A few exceptional cases identified through this research included: a businessperson who was a *fermer* as well as a producer of milk and dairy and meat products (*fermer-producer*), a businessperson manufacturing and selling pumps all over Uzbekistan and a businessperson making and selling furniture all over the Khorezm province. In this section, I present the case of the *fermer-producer* who was very successful in his business due to a specific mix of strategies. Rashid<sup>29</sup> produced and sold meat-and-milk products in different districts of the province.

Before becoming a *fermer*, Rashid lived in the city where he had a successful career, working in administration for 20 years. In addition, during this period of time, he gained valuable experience and knowledge about agricultural and industrial business opportunities in the given transitional context.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Rashid suffered a family-related trauma. As a result, he did not want to continue his work in administration and did not want to live in the city any longer. He moved to live in a village, located quite close to the *Urganch* city. In 1991, he got a *tomorka* of 0.12 ha where he started growing fodder for one and then two cows. In 1994, he gained access to 11 ha of land from a *shirkat* (cooperative farm, reformed *kolkhoz*) for livestock production. Rashid's income from the sale of livestock derived products was daily and regular. In addition, Rashid received tax

exemption for the first two years, due to his status as a *starting farmer*. He gained access to this land due to:

- Accumulated assets and personal investment (not a credit);
- Influential networks that provided valuable information about different emerging opportunities;
- Successful application for land to become a *farmer* among the first ones.

The location of Rashid's farm was favourable to his business model. First, this farm was located close to the head of the irrigation system with adequate water supply. Second, the land was located close to the *Urganch* city with access to the largest food markets in the province at small transportation costs.

After registering his *livestock farmer enterprise*, Rashid increased the number of livestock from two cows to ten cows and a few calves within the first year. Reflecting on that period of time, Rashid said that he was assuming considerable risk by doing this, since he did not know how productive he could be.

A few years later, high profits enabled Rashid to increase his land from 11 ha to 47 ha. Having a larger piece of land, he decided to diversify his agricultural activities. He allocated 32 ha for livestock (60 cows and several bulls and sheep), 10 ha for wheat, 1 ha for apples, 2-3 ha for rice and the rest of land for growing vegetables and fodder.

Rashid expanded his business with his own savings:

*"I do not want to get a loan [from the bank]. The interest rate is too high, 14% and more. I am interested in taking a credit at not more than four per cent per annum<sup>30</sup>."*

Due to the increased size of the land, Rashid needed machinery. He did not want to rely on the machinery from an MTP (machinery-tractor-park) as other *farmers* did. Rashid decided that it was cheaper to buy and repair his own machinery with the help of his sons-in-law who were good in mechanics.

After a couple of years, Rashid accumulated funds to invest in a meat-and-milk factory. He had considerable knowledge about the quality criteria of food production due to his previous experience in administration. Building on this knowledge, he began to produce a wide range of milk and meat products; for example, pressed meat, cottage cheese, cream, butter and yoghurts. Some months later, Rashid opened a fruit processing factory where he started to produce juice and jam. In addition, he built his own wheat mill and opened his own bakery.

Reflecting on the visits to the Netherlands and China in 2007 where Rashid went to learn about the meat-and-milk industry in these countries, he said:

*"Private farmers and producers there specialise in doing one thing. This way, it is impossible to succeed in Uzbekistan. This is because partners generally do not fulfil their obligations as agreed. They do not feel the mutual responsibility. I can fully trust and rely only on myself and I feel that it is risky to depend on others. I need only close people [relatives] in my business who can be trusted. It is important to have my trusted person in every chain of my business."*

As an economic strategy, before starting-up any new activity, Rashid ran a test for its profitability. If a new activity did not produce the expected profits, Rashid did not continue and did not expand this activity. For example, he tried to set-up modern equipment for milking 15 cows and found out that manual labour was cheaper than maintaining milking equipment. Likewise, he stopped the production of some meat products, since consumers could not afford to buy those products at a profitable price. In this case, one of the ways to improve profitability, as Rashid explained, would be to lower the product quality, but this strategy was against his principles. He emphasised that producing high-quality goods was a very important strategy for success in his business.

As a marketing strategy, Rashid paid specific attention to the quality of his products as well as to the price. He set prices somewhat lower than those of his competitors. This way, it was easy to sell the products. Besides, Rashid generally agreed about the amount of sales in advance. His usual customers were hospitals, restaurants, schools and wedding halls.

According to Rashid, the first key to his success as a leader in business was his good knowledge and understanding of the context, its constraints and opportunities. The second key for success was reliance on his personal investment and on people whom he trusted:

*"To succeed, it is important to have loyal people around you who can be trusted, do not betray you; who listen to you and do what a leader says to do. All shall listen to and follow the leader wherever the leader brings you."*

In total, 30 people worked under Rashid's management. Most of his employees were relatives. Rashid managed the activities of his sons-in-law and grandsons whom he appointed as managers of different industrial units. In regard to women, Rashid's daughters cooked for the workers three times a day. As payment for labour, Rashid either paid in cash or provided access to a piece of land, depending on the agreement with his workers.

Furthermore, Rashid explained that his success also depended on his strategy of self-reliance or synergy. He explained that in order not to depend on outsiders, he used the outputs from his agricultural activities as inputs to his industrial activities. He also had his own gasoline powered electrical generator and, therefore, did not depend on the generally unreliable public electrical supply. Similarly, to avoid dependence on unreliable gas supply, Rashid kept several containers of gas.

By relying on this specific mix of strategies, Rashid built and expand his own mini-economy. These included activity strategies, cost-saving strategies, risk-aversion strategies and self-reliance strategies, and investment strategies (Table 6.8). This mini-economy can be associated with the Marxist model of accumulation, expanded reproduction and growth (Roemer, 1978), being tailored to the specific context of transition.

Table 6.8 Mix of Strategies of a Successful Entrepreneur, 2009

Strategy	Example
Income-generating (activity) strategies	Activity diversification Synergy of activity inputs, outputs and activities
Cost-saving strategies	Own investment Cheaper choice when it does not affect quality
Risk-aversion and self-reliance strategies	Pre-test of new ideas Trustworthy partners (family business) Marketing strategy for selling products of high quality and at a cheaper price, compared to competitors Self-reliance strategy, i.e. minimum dependence on inputs from outsiders' businesses
Income-use strategies	Consumption (meeting livelihood needs) and accumulation (generation of savings) Expansion (enlargement of successful activities)

Source: Case Study Household (5), 2009.

#### 6.4.4 LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES OF THE HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED

In this section, I present the strategies of two case study household (3) and case study household (4) that could not achieve a high level of livelihood security (Boxes 6.3-4). Thereafter, I compare these households in need to the exceptional case of Rashid's household (Section 6.4.3) and the case study household (2) presented in Section 6.4.2.

## Box 6.3 Diversifying Activities: a Household with a Relatively Insecure Livelihood

This case study household was a nuclear family. There were five members in the family: two adults (a couple) and their three school-age children (two sons and one daughter). During the first year of my field research, the family had just moved to a new house. The house was still under construction and continuously required investment.

The male household head had regular employment at a state organisation where he worked as a driver. He generally left home early in the morning and returned home late in the evening. Having registered employment, he received a salary. But payment of his salary was often delayed and insufficient for meeting food and other household needs. *To help* the man to provide for the family, his wife was employed at a cotton storage facility that was located close to their home. The manager of this organisation paid her a very small salary and gave her a small plot of land where she grew fodder and wheat. For the use of this land, she was required to give 50% of the harvest to her manager. Apart from this work, the woman sold milk that she collected from her neighbours. The woman engaged in these activities for several years after she had lost her employment as an accountant soon after the privatisation reform.

During the second and third year of my field research, the woman gave up her employment at the cotton storage facility because a new manager paid her even less than the previous manager. In addition, the new manager did not allow her access to land for her own use. Having access to additional land was very important to the household because their *uy tomorka* was unsuitable for agriculture due to problems with soil fertility and the household did not have *qo'shimcha tomorka*. The woman started to work for a *fermer*. As a payment, the *fermer* gave her 0.1 ha of land where she grew fodder and wheat. In addition, she occasionally received some cash. The woman also grew some vegetables and fodder on the *qo'shimcha tomorka* (0.12 ha) of her mother-in-law and took care of a cow that her husband managed to buy during the second year of my field research. In addition, one of the children had an eye problem and received a handicap allowance. This handicap allowance was the most regular income of this household. In several cases, all the household members had to rely on this allowance for food but the allowance was small and not enough.

The household members regularly experienced shortages in food and cash, especially in winter. Thinking of different opportunities, the woman explained that she could probably find some employment as an accountant in the city. But she needed a job close to home, (e.g. to make sure that her children have lunch). And her husband did not want her to work outside the village.

Source: [Case Study Household (3), 2008-2010].

Comparison of this case study household to the case of the successful businessperson Rashid (Section 6.4.3) reveals a number of differences. First, the household in need had only two adults and several school-age children to provide for. In contrast, the majority of the members of Rashid's household were adults. Second, there were differences in access to assets. Rashid was a *fermer* with a livestock farm of almost 50 ha. In contrast, the case study household (3) had access to only 0.1 ha of land. Third, Rashid earned high and regular income. In contrast, the case study household (3) earned a very low and irregular income. Rashid's income was from his own large-scale entrepreneurship. In contrast, the income of the household in need was dependent on the decisions of their employers who did not pay for work on time. The income from small-scale entrepreneurship did not guarantee a regular and adequate income.

Resultantly, the members of the household in need could not afford to save and invest in the expansion of their business.

In terms of similarities, both case study households diversified their activity pattern and income sources, relying on both on-farm activities and non-farm activities. However, though the diversification of income-generating activities was useful to survive, the income of the household in need was hardly sufficient for consumption and insufficient for accumulation, regardless of how much labour the adults contributed. In addition, the case study household (3) had just moved to a new house and had considerable construction costs. Ultimately, the man and the woman in the case study household (3) did not have the knowledge and access to information that Rashid had due to his work experience in administration.

The household in need was trapped in a struggle for daily survival, did not have the opportunity for unlocking other livelihood opportunities and, as a result, lacked the flexibility to adapt to changes in their particular context. As a result, such households required a longer period of time to adapt to changes in the context than the well-off households (Box 6.4).

#### Box 6.4 Being Flexible in the Long Run

This case study household often experienced food shortages. The household was an extended family. There were five adults and one infant in the household. The two eldest members received a retirement pension. In the past, they worked at a brick factory. They did not engage in subsistence agriculture because their income from the brick factory was sufficient. After the privatisation reform, the factory went bankrupt and the couple lost their employment. Then the family started to make bricks on their *uy tomorka* and sell them. However, the income from selling bricks was never regular.

A daughter-in-law received a child allowance, which provided a regular income. Her main responsibility was homemaking but she occasionally worked for a *fermer*. In addition, the oldest man and his two sons migrated to other provinces of Uzbekistan to work in construction. Their remittances were limited and irregular. In addition, during the second year of my field research, the youngest son developed a life-threatening illness while working away from home. To pay for his medical care to save his life, the other household members incurred debts.

With regard to agriculture, the oldest woman explained that they knew too little about agriculture to diversify in related activities. In addition, growing vegetables on *qo'shimcha tomorka* was impossible because there was not an adequate irrigation water supply. Likewise, growing vegetables on *uy tomorka* was impossible because the upper (fertile) layer of soil had been removed to make bricks. Nevertheless, by the end of the first year of my field research, the women of the household started to work for a *fermer*. As a payment for growing cotton, the *fermer* gave them 0.06 ha of land for subsistence and the livelihood security of this household improved.

Source: [Case Study Household (4), 2008-2010].

The case of the household in need (4) had similar demographic characteristics as that of the well-off case study household (2). The activity pattern was similar too (e.g. the men migrated in search for work and the women engaged in locally available on-farm and non-farm opportunities). However, these case study households achieved contrasting levels of livelihood security. One household continuously struggled for

food security whereas the other case study household did not face any food security problems.

This was the case because, first, there were differences in the amount and regularity of remittances received from the men who had migrated. In the well-off household, the men built effective social networks that enabled them to find a job with reliable income in Tashkent. In contrast, in the case of the other household, the men could not find a job with reliable income. Second, the illness of the youngest son aggravated the economic situation of the household in need. Third, the brick making skills were not as marketable as they had been in the past. Given the transitional nature of the context, agriculture started to provide a better income to the household than brick-making, which has lost its profitability during the transition process. In contrast, the well-off household always engaged in profitable activities. In addition, the well-off household was fortunate to engage in agriculture earlier and thus gained considerable prior experience, learned agricultural skills and received adequate income from agriculture by the time the case study household in need had just started to learn about agricultural work. As a result, the household in need had a long way to go to achieve the level of livelihood security of the well-off household. The earlier choice of making bricks, though this was rational in the past, had become a liability with long-term consequences for livelihood security.

Nevertheless, the household in need demonstrated its flexibility to adapt to changes in the long run. The household members started to work in agriculture, enhancing their capabilities and climbing out of severe poverty. This flexibility to adapt to changes generally took a longer time and a larger effort for an insecure household than for a secure household. First, learning new skills and gaining new experience (capability) required time. Second, the insecure households generally lacked opportunities to start new activities; for example, they had lack of financial capital. Struggling for daily survival, they generally have neither investment (savings) nor time to invest in new skills and businesses, thus, to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

## 6.5 CONCLUSION

Living in the same context, some households achieve higher livelihood security than others. The livelihood strategies of the well-off households diverge from those of the households in need. This is because the well-off households and the households in need have divergent 'livelihood spaces' for choosing successful livelihood strategies. These 'livelihood spaces' are shaped by the interlinked elements comprising opportunities, perceptions of acceptability, motives and capabilities. Households assess divergent opportunities, different perceptions of acceptability, different capabilities and have different material and immaterial motives. These four elements also identify people's flexibility to adjust to changes in the context. Furthermore, these elements differ among women and men of different ages and from the well-off households, the households in the middle and in need. Exploration of these divergent 'livelihood spaces' explains the reasons why different people choose different livelihood strategies (as what to do, how to do and why this way) and as a result achieve different levels of livelihood security.

First, the households in need are disadvantaged in their opportunities. At the macro-level, opportunities to derive income from either on-farm or non-farm activities depend on structural factors. Second, people's choices of livelihood strategies are structured by their perceptions of acceptability. Third, the choice of livelihood strategies is narrowed by people's motives and capabilities. Motives can be both material and immaterial, and are not necessarily governed by economic gains. Furthermore, there are 'motives to do something' in order to achieve a set objective as well as 'motives not to do something' in order to avoid risk. In making choices about livelihood strategies, people prioritise some motives over others.

In regard to capabilities, because people differ in training and experiences, their ways of pursuing a livelihood diverge. In this specific context of transition, *synergetic* diversification is more risky and thus less sustainable than additive diversification even though it enables growth.

The crucial specificity of the transitional context is that it is uncertain and dynamic. The irony of this context is that any choice that is rational today might become a liability tomorrow. The ability to achieve and sustain livelihood security in this context depends in part on people's flexibility and space to experiment. In contrast to the households in need, the well-off households generally have greater flexibility to rapidly adapt to changes and to be the first to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

## CHAPTER 7 LIVELIHOOD SECURITY AND CHANGES OVER TIME

*“Well-being is when you get paid for your work and your income is enough to eat well; when you can eat whenever you want to and not only bread; when you do not have shortage of everything; when you do not run into debts; when you, your children and parents are healthy or you can afford medical treatment; when you have peace at home and in the country; when you are respected; when you feel happy; and when you do not worry about tomorrow.”*

Source: Synthesis of 300 responses; Sample Survey, 2009.

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

While choosing different livelihood strategies, people achieve different levels of livelihood security. Some manage to achieve more livelihood security than others. In this chapter, I estimate the achieved levels of livelihood security and identify differences in the characteristics and strategies of households with different livelihood security levels. I also explore how the levels of livelihood security changed at specific moments in time during the transition period.

The chapter comprises seven sections. In Section 7.2, I review the literature on economic and socio-economic approaches to measuring well-being and livelihood security. In this section, I also explain the combination of *emic* and *etic* approaches applied in this research for estimating the achieved levels of livelihood security. Section 7.3 presents the methodology for the rest of this chapter. In Section 7.4, first, I present *emic* perceptions of well-being and explore the differences in these perceptions between women and men as well as the younger and the older generations. Thereafter, I explain how the interviewees characterised households with different levels of livelihood security. Section 7.5 presents *etic* estimates of the achieved levels of livelihood security. This section is followed by Section 7.6 that explains perceived changes in the levels of livelihood security over time. Section 7.7 concludes the chapter.

### 7.2 RESEARCH APPROACH TO EXPLORING LIVELIHOOD SECURITY

#### 7.2.1 POVERTY APPROACHES

The earlier approaches to estimating livelihood security comprise four ways of measuring poverty: a monetary approach that is based on measuring income and consumption, a social exclusion approach, a capability approach and a participatory approach (Laderchi *et al.*, 2003). These approaches serve three main purposes:

- Understanding human development progress at national level;
- Measuring poverty at national level; and
- Identifying the poor and vulnerable people at the local level and understanding the causes of their poverty in order to support poverty reduction.

The monetary and social exclusion approaches are based on a number of economic and socio-economic indicators, which measure; for example, income and consumption levels, national exports and imports, life expectancy, child mortality, income disparity and unemployment. These indicators are the constituent components of the main economic indicators; for example, gross national product per capita (GNP/ca) and population above the absolute or international poverty lines. Likewise, the social-economic and social measures of human progress include for example, Human Development Index (HDI), Gender Inequality Index (GII), and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM).

However, though these indicators are useful for cross-national comparisons, they are not sufficient for assessing people's well-being (Alkire, 2002). For example, a high level of production and export at the country level does not ensure the well-being of people in this country if there are no adequate pro-poor social policies. Furthermore, these indicators at the country level do not capture the local specificities of poverty and give little insight into the situation of vulnerable groups of population in a specific area (Laderchi *et al.*, 2003).

To develop indicators that capture these local specificities, development agencies designed pro-poor livelihood indicators and approaches that enable the identification of vulnerable groups at the community level. Initially, these pro-poor livelihood indices included several dimensions. For example, the Livelihood Vulnerability Index (LVI) combined seven components, such as: socio-demographic profile, livelihood strategies, social networks, health, food, water, and natural disasters and climate variability (Hahn *et al.*, 2009: 75). Combining several dimensions in one index was useful for comparison of one community to another.

However, these combined indices were then found to be of little use in identifying the causes of poverty. To address this limitation, separate indices, focusing on one dimension at a time, were designed and applied; for example, indices of community participation, education, food security, income security, healthcare, reproductive health, sanitation and water (Lindenberg, 2002).

The limitation of these indices is that these are based on *etic* or outsider's perspectives and do not capture different meanings of well-being, as defined by people themselves. To address this limitation, based on people's (*emic*) perceptions of well-being, several researchers developed an inclusive list of multiple material and immaterial domains of well-being (e.g. 173 domains from 32 studies; Cummins, 1996, cited in Alkire, 2002: 191) or categorised these domains into a few broad aspects of well-being (Alkire, 2002). These *emic* definitions of well-being provided useful insights into people's realities (Wallmann, 1984, cited in de Haan and Zoomers, 2005). Reviewing all these multiple dimensions of well-being, Alkire (2002) concluded that the best approach to explore different dimensions of well-being in a specific area was to prepare a provisional list of indicators on basic human needs with some degree of universalism and then test each of these indicators in a specific context in order to identify a few place-specific indicators that were meaningful to the people in that specific context (*ibid.*, 194). Likewise, some other researchers estimated different levels of well-being

by people's own assessments of their achieved levels of well-being (van Praag and Ferrer-i-Carbonell, 2007).

This study takes these earlier elaborations on board and combines *emic* and *etic* approaches to explore the achieved levels of livelihood security in the study area. More specifically, the objectives of this chapter are:

- To estimate the proportions of the population at different levels of livelihood security;
- To identify why some households are doing better than other households;
- To explore how the perceptions and perceived levels of well-being diverge between women and men, the younger (from 18 years old to 34 years old) and the older generations (from 35 years old and older); and
- To explore how the levels of livelihood security have changed over time, comparing the perceived levels of livelihood security for the present time with the perceived levels of livelihood security for the Soviet time, ten years ago and five years ago.

### 7.2.2 EMIC AND ETIC PERSPECTIVES: WELL-BEING VERSUS LIVELIHOOD SECURITY

Exploring the achieved levels of livelihood security, I differentiated between the concept of 'well-being' and the concept of 'livelihood security'. Although these two concepts are closely related, the concept of livelihood security is generally referred to as the economic (or material) aspect of well-being whereas the concept of well-being includes both material and immaterial aspects.

The complication of employing the concept of livelihood security in the study area was that there was no direct translation of the concept into the local language. The closest translation found was its antonym 'livelihood insecurity' or 'being a mal-provided household' (*kam taminlangan oila*). This expression generally referred to economic matters at the household level and thus suited as an alternative concept to the concept of livelihood insecurity. In regard to the concept of well-being, the closest translation of this concept was 'good life' (*yaxshi yashash*).

Adapting the translation of 'well-being' and 'livelihood security' to the local language, I applied an *emic* approach to exploring and estimating different achieved levels of well-being (van Praag and Ferrer-i-Carbonell, 2007). In addition, I have applied *etic* approach to estimating the different levels of livelihood security based on predefined criteria and measures, which was a more objective approach than the *emic* approach. In particular, the limitation of the *emic* approach, if applied on its own, would be the subjectivity of people's assessment of their level of well-being. For example, people who evaluated their well-being as 'good', could differ in material wealth (see Section 7.4). At the same time, the *emic* approach provided important insights into people's reality and explained qualitative 'whys' (Morris *et al.*, 1999; Laderchi *et al.*, 2003: 295), which the *etic* approach was unable to provide. The advantage of the *etic* approach, on its turn, was that it provided a uniform measurement of well-being. Overall, the advantage of combining both *etic* and *emic* approaches was that it enabled

capturing multiple dimensions of well-being and livelihood security. This combination of the approaches also enabled building on strengths of each approach and compensating for the limitations of the other approach. The methodology of application of the presented approach is explained in detail in the following section.

### 7.3 METHODOLOGY: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The findings in this chapter are based on the data collected through the sample survey ( $n=300$ , 2009), the mini-survey on livelihood security ( $n=28$ , 2008) and multiple open-ended interviews with the members of the four case study households (Chapter 3).

As a starting point, the application of both *emic* and *etic* approaches was based on the definition of livelihood security given by Frankenberger in 1996 (Scoones, 1998: 4):

*"[A]ccess to food, potable water, health facilities, educational opportunities, housing, and time for community participation and social integration."*

For what regards the *emic* approach, I first requested each of the interviewees of the sample survey (2009,  $n=300$ ) to define the concept of well-being. This enabled the exploration of multiple dimensions of well-being as defined by the people themselves. Then, based on this definition, the interviewees assessed their levels of well-being at the household level on a five-level scale as: 'very good', 'good', 'satisfactory', 'bad' and 'very bad' for different points of time. Second, dwelling on Frankenberger's definition of livelihood security (*ibid.*), I identified a provisional list of the dimensions of livelihood security; for example, food security, income security, access to assets, access to medical care, access to housing, access to education, community integration. Then I requested the interviewees to assess their level in each of these specific and pre-defined dimensions of livelihood security.

In regard to the application of the *etic* approach, I used several indicators based on a uniform measure of a specific aspect of livelihood security. In general, livelihood security can be measured by different indicators; for example, income levels, food security (Scoones, 1998; CARE International, 2002). In order to select proper indicators in this specific context, I collected measurable data by the same definition of livelihood security, given by Frankenberger (1996, cited in Scoones, 1998: 4). Then, based on the analysis of the collected data and a provisional list of potential indicators (Annex C), I selected three *etic* indicators by the following criteria:

- A context-specific indicator that demonstrates differences in the achieved levels of livelihood security; for example, wealth accumulation levels that are relevant to this specific context;
- An indicator that shows the different levels of livelihood security among the sample households within the study area as well as enables cross-country comparison; and
- An indicator that shows the relationship between different activity patterns and achieved levels of livelihood security.

The selected indicators included:

- Livestock index (Pratt and Rasmussen, 2001);

- Food share in the total household expenditures (Clements and Chen, 2008: 1); and
- The proportion of the sample households, whose costs are below the average local costs of living by three groups of population, differing in the prevalence of cash and/or in-kind income and, thus, relying on different activity patterns.

These *etic* indicators captured different aspects and levels of livelihood security and were calibrated to the measures of livelihood security in the specific context of Khorezm.

### 7.3.1 CALIBRATING *ETIC* INDICATORS TO LOCAL LEVELS OF LIVELIHOOD SECURITY

#### *Livestock Index*

In the study area, the well-off households generally had a lot of livestock. Even those households, whose main business was not related to agriculture, invested their surpluses into livestock. The reasons for this were that, first, investing in livestock could bring higher returns and ensure food security. Second, people considered livestock to be a good way of ‘saving’ that could always be sold in severe need. This strategy of investing in livestock exists in many countries of the world (FAO, 2009).

The households in need could not afford to keep livestock. Some researchers found that the number of livestock at the household level decreased in the study area during the period of transition (Jozan et al, 2007, cited in Conliffe, 2009). The households in need generally did not have livestock because they neither had land for growing fodder nor cash for buying fodder:

*“We cannot have livestock because the feed is expensive and we do not have land to grow fodder. We better buy food for ourselves than fodder for livestock” [man 215, sample survey, 2009].*

Thus, assessing the number of livestock ownership or a livestock index at the household level is a good estimate of differences in the achieved levels of livelihood security in the study area. The calculation of a livestock index is not a new approach. This indicator is generally used in the field of microeconomics (Pratt and Rasmussen, 2001: 2). To develop a locally-specific livestock index, I collected data about the livestock and/or poultry ownership through the sample survey (2009) and adapted the equivalence scales of Pratt and Rasmussen (2001) to the local prices of livestock in 2009 (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Cattle Equivalence Rates

Animal Classification	Animal Unit Equivalent
Cow	0.9
Calf	0.5
Horse	1.25
Donkey	0.5
Sheep	0.20
Goat	0.20
Poultry	0.02

Source: adapted from USDA NRCS (Pratt and Rasmussen, 2001).

Thereafter, to set four ranges of the livestock index, I relied on the analysis of qualitative data from the mini-survey on livelihood security (2008), explaining that:

- The households in need were those who did not have livestock at all. In other words, the livestock index of these households was *zero*;
- The households in the middle were those who had some poultry or sheep but not a cow. The livestock index of these households was within the range (0.1-0.8) whereas the value of one cow was equal to 0.9; and
- The well-off households had at least one cow and the very the well-off households had four or more cows. Thus, the livestock index of the well-off households was within the range (0.9-4.0). And the livestock index of the very the well-off households was within the range (4.1 – 11)<sup>31</sup>.

### *Food Share in Total Household Expenditures*

To reduce the pressure on scarce cash, almost every rural household engaged in subsistence agriculture to grow food for consumption (Chapter 4). Nonetheless, every household had at least some monetary food cost; for example, costs for buying sugar, tea and other food products that could not be grown. In addition, some households could not engage in subsistence agriculture at all and thus relied only on cash income (Chapters 4 and 6). The food costs could take a large share of total expenditures of the households in need that had small cash income as well as a small share of total expenditure of the well-off households having large cash income. Particularly, according to the law of Engel:

*“The poorer a family, the greater the proportion of its total expenditure that must be devoted to the provision of food” (Clements and Chen, 2008: 1).*

Thus, dwelling on this law, I explored the achieved levels of livelihood security, by estimating a share of food costs in the total household costs. To do so, I collected data about average shares of food costs in total household expenditures through the application of PRA techniques, conducting the sample survey in 2009<sup>32</sup>. Thereafter, to set the ranges for different levels of livelihood security by this indicator, I divided the

whole scale of the reported food costs in the total household expenditures into four equal parts. In this way, I set four equal ranges and calculated proportions of the sample population within each level. The four equal ranges included:

- The range between 76% and more as the range of the food costs of the households in need;
- The range between 51 and 75% as the range of food costs of the lower middle households;
- The range between 26 and 50% as the range of food costs of the upper middle households; and
- The range between 25% and less as the range of food costs of the well-off households.

Overall, both the livestock index and the indicator based on food share costs in the total household expenditures captured differences in the achieved levels of livelihood security among the surveyed population in the study area. However, both of these indicators did not capture the relationship between an activity pattern and an achieved level of livelihood security and did not reveal the important role of non-farm activities and migration in this specific context. To address this limitation, I designed another indicator that is explained in the following subsection.

#### *Household Income versus Average Local Costs*

To explore the relationship between activity patterns and achieved levels of livelihood security, I estimated which proportion of the sample households had costs below the average local cost level. Taking on board the finding of Meyer and Sullivan (2009), I considered that the average consumption and not the average income is a reliable measure to identify a local standard level of living.

Calculating the proportion of households below this standard of living, I considered three population groups. These groups differed in the prevalence of cash and in-kind income in their overall income as they relied on different activity patterns. On-farm activities; for example, generated mainly in-kind income whereas non-farm activities (and migration) generated cash income. To identify these groups, I asked the interviewees of the sample households a direct question as: 'what type of income is more prominent in your household, cash or in-kind income or are these equally present?' Then I grouped the sample households as follows:

- Group 1: mainly reliance on income derived from non-farm activities. These are households where cash income is more than their in-kind income;
- Group 2: reliance equally on income from on-farm and non-farm activities (group 2). These are households where in-kind and cash income is about the same size; and
- Group 3: mainly reliance on income derived from on-farm activities. These are households where in-kind income is more than their cash income.

Thereafter I collected information about household costs. However, directly asking a question about costs was not useful. The interviewees were generally reluctant to share

information about their costs or income. In addition, income sources and costs were generally multiple (Chapter 4). To overcome these complications, I designed an approach comprising two indirect questions about an overall estimate of costs at the household level:

*How much cash did you spend for a medical treatment that took place (if at all) during the last three years?*

*How long (months, weeks, days) could your household have lived for this amount of money?*

The first question provided 'an amount' given by an interviewee herself/himself. There were considerable variations in what the interviewees referred to; for example, small costs for treating flu and high costs for a surgical operation. These variations did not matter because the purpose of asking this question was to identify 'a specific amount'. Once a respondent specified 'an amount', the second question was asked to identify a period of time and then to estimate the costs at the household level. The responses to the second question had a number of variations in the period of time. Some interviewees referred to the days, others weeks or months. To standardise these responses, I recalculated all responses into months.

The advantage of phrasing the second question around the time dimension was that it was less sensitive than any other question related to money. The qualitative data from open-ended interviews and the mini-survey on problem analysis, moreover, revealed that the interviewees were eager to share information about their treatment costs, complaining that health care services were claimed to be free but generally were not. However, eventually only 131 out of 300 sample households (less than 50%) agreed to answer this question because not every household had medical costs. Reflecting on this experience, in the future, I would advise to include several alternative questions to ensure a higher response rate.

Having the responses to these two questions, I calculated an estimate of monthly costs (MEC) for each household ( $MEC_i$ ) by dividing the given 'amount' ( $A_i$ ) by the standardised case-specific period of time defined as the months 'to live for' ( $ML_i$ ).

$$MEC_i = \frac{A_i}{ML_i} \quad (\text{Formula 1})$$

Thereafter, I identified outliers in the distribution of costs by applying the statistical Z test and dismissing the sample cases that had a Z-score of less than (-3) or more than (+3) (Hinton, 1995:61).

$$Z = \frac{MEC_i - \text{mean}}{SD} \quad (\text{Formula 2})$$

where:

A mean is a sum ( $\sum$ ) of costs of every household ( $MEC_i$ ) divided by the number of households ( $n$ ):

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n MEC_i \quad (\text{Formula 3})$$

And the standard deviation (SD) showed how much variation existed in the distribution from the mean:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (MEC_i - \text{mean})^2}{n-1}} \quad (\text{Formula 4})$$

There were two households that had considerably higher costs than the other households (Z-score of costs totalling 7 and 8.7 respectively). These cases were dismissed as outliers because the values for these cases distorted the general statistics (e.g. mean, median) of the sample.

Then, considering that a median is 'a better average' than the mean in a distribution where there are considerable differences between higher and lower values (Hinton, 1995: 10), I have calculated the median (the middle value of the scale) of monthly costs for each of the three groups of the studied population. These medians vary in their values because the households that relied mainly on in-kind income had less cash costs for meeting their household needs than the households that mostly relied on their cash income (Section 7.5.3).

Thereafter, I calculated the proportion of the population whose household costs were lower than average local costs (sample median as the average local level of living) for each of the three groups. Thus, those households whose costs were below the median achieved a worse-off level of living, i.e. their livelihood security was below the average local level of living. And those households whose costs were equal or higher than average local costs were relatively better-off, i.e. their levels of livelihood security were equal to or above the average local level of living.

The advantages of the applied indicator are, first, that it allows for examining the relationship between activity patterns and achieved level of living; second, as an *etic* measure, it estimates the achieved levels of living in a uniform manner; third, it is based on an estimate of local average costs of living which is a better estimate of the average level of living than an 'unjustifiable' international poverty line (Laderchi *et al.*, 2003: 245); finally, it is based on an estimate of costs by three groups of the sample households classified on the basis of the prevalence (or equilibrium) of cash or in-kind income; in doing so it captures the multiplicity of in-kind and cash income and costs, and resolves the problem of 'heroic imputations of values for subsistence production' (*ibid.*). The novelty of the designed approach is that it enables approaching sensitive questions about costs through a dimension of time.

The limitation of the designed indicator is that, as any indicator, it estimates only one specific element of livelihood security and hides different dynamics and dimensions within the indicator. For example, this indicator does not capture the gender and generational differences in costs and access to income within a household that I present in Chapter 5. Another limitation of the designed indicator is that it shows consumption levels at the household level, regardless of household demographic characteristics. Per capita costs would show a greater proportion of people below the average local level of living. However, though the collected data allowed calculating per capita values, these values would not be reliable (and therefore not presented) since household costs (as well as income) were not equally distributed among household members (Chapter 5).

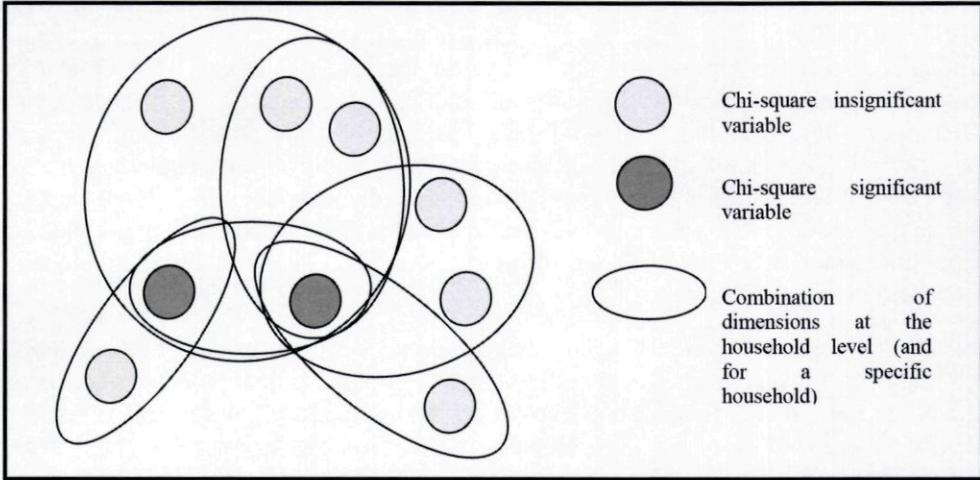
Overall, the presented estimate is only one of several *etic* indicators that I have used and I applied this indicator for a specific purpose: to explore the relationship between an activity pattern and an achieved level of livelihood security, i.e. to identify which activity pattern went along with low proportions of households below the average local level of living and thus has a higher potential for ensuring livelihood security. In order to capture broader aspects of livelihood security, I used several other indicators, combining *etic* and *emic* approaches and qualitative and quantitative data. The reliance on both qualitative and quantitative data was specifically useful to identify which households were well-off, in the middle and in need.

### 7.3.2 WELL-OFF HOUSEHOLDS, HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED AND IN THE MIDDLE

To explore the characteristics of the sample households at different levels of livelihood security, I relied on quantified *emic* perceptions and quantitative *etic* cross-tabulations and chi-square tests. In addition, to identify gender and generational differences in people's perceptions and assessments of the levels of their well-being, I compared the responses of women and men as well as of the younger and the older generations. Furthermore, I explored changes in the levels of livelihood security over time by comparing people's assessments of the levels of livelihood security for different points of time – the Soviet time (by the older generation), ten years ago (by the younger generation) and for the present (by both generations).

In general, the values of *emic* or *etic* indicators were not the same. This was because each indicator measured (a) different dimension(s) of livelihood security whereas the overall livelihood security for each household was based on multiple unique combinations of multiple dimensions. This created some limitations for applying chi-square tests. The chi-square tests revealed significant results only for those variables that were used for all the sample households and not for all the different combinations of variables applicable only for some of the households (see Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1 Multiplicity of Combinations of Dimensions of Livelihood Security



Source: Author's presentation.

Therefore, to explore the characteristics of the sample households with different levels of livelihood security, I relied not only on quantitative data but also on qualitative data and in-depth case study methods.

### 7.3.3 AN *EMIC* ESTIMATE OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

The achieved levels of livelihood security are not static but dynamic in the transitional context. Continuous reforms reshuffle access to assets and opportunities and create uncertainty about access to assets and income opportunities. As a result, some of those who have achieved success might lose their achievement in a day and those who are unsuccessful today might become lucky and successful tomorrow.

This phenomenon of moving from one socio-economic status to another is defined in the literature as social mobility. Social mobility generally refers to changes in 'income levels, education levels, health status, occupation (non-manual and manual) and ethnic groups' (Encyclopedia of Sociology, 2000: 2711).

In this section, based on people's perceptions, I explore economic social mobility (changes in *economic situation (iqtisodiy ahvol)* at the household level over the last five years. In particular, to investigate economic social mobility, I requested each of the interviewees of the sample survey to assess how much economic situation of their household had changed over the last five years by three standardised responses as: *improved, got worse or remained the same*. Thereafter, I asked them to explain the reasons for their assessment.

### 7.4 *EMIC* ESTIMATES OF ACHIEVED LEVELS OF LIVELIHOOD SECURITY

In this section, I unfold the local perceptions of well-being. First, I present the local definitions of well-being and people's own assessment of the achieved levels of well-

being. Second, I analyse the differences in the perceptions of well-being along the lines of gender and generation. Third, I explain which households are locally perceived as well-off, in the middle and in need.

#### 7.4.1 PERCEIVED DIMENSIONS OF WELL-BEING

Well-being was perceived differently by different people. The exploration of these different definitions of well-being was useful for exploring its multidimensionality as well as individuality. Nonetheless, the analysis of 300 perceptions of well-being identified specific commonalities in people's responses. In general, well-being included economic, social and psychological aspects. For example, the economic components of well-being related to survival and material needs; for example, having food, having health or health care, having shelter and having assets. The socio-cultural components of well-being comprised; for example, having opportunities, being integrated and respected, having a social life, having friends and close relationships and living in peace and not in war. The psychological components of well-being included people's feelings; for example, being happy and having a life without worries.

These multiple dimensions of well-being can be grouped in material and immaterial aspects that are generally either about 'having' or 'being' (Table 7.2). Although the material aspects of well-being were essential, they were not sufficient for being well. In general, once material aspects were met, people referred to immaterial aspects of well-being; for example, being happy.

Table 7.2 Quantified Emic Dimensions of Well-being, 2009

Material Aspect of Well-being	Frequency (% Sample Household)	Immaterial Aspect of Well-being	Frequency (% Sample Household)
Having food security	167(60)	Having family and children	102(34)
Having income opportunities	167(60)	Being happy and living in peace	55(18)
Having savings in money and assets	163(55)	Being respected in the community	26(9)
Being healthy and having access to health care	118(40)	Being self-sufficient	4(2)
Having money to travel	23(8)	Being trusted	5 (2)
Having good housing	21(7)	Having leisure time	3 (1)
Having money and clothes for every season	14 (5)	Being lucky when wishes come true	1 (1)
Having access to education for employability	5 (2)		

Source: Quantified (Post-standardised) Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

The material aspects of well-being nonetheless prevailed in the definitions of well-being given by the interviewees living in the study area: 180 out of 300 sample households (60%) referred to these aspects. Most of these material aspects related to:

- Having food security (180 out of 300 sample households; 60%);
- Having income, especially cash income (180 out of 300 sample households; 60%); and
- Having savings (accumulation) (165 out of 300 sample households; 55%).

The top dimension of well-being (referred most frequently) was food security. This is because food security is a fundamental need and a primary condition for livelihood security.

### *Local Perceptions of Food Security*

Different schools of thought emphasise different methods for the definition and assessment of food security. For example, some of these approaches estimate food security by the assessment of calorie intake or access to enough food (World Bank, 1986, cited in Maxwell, 1996: 157). Others also include the following:

- Subjective understanding of what is good food, following Maxwell - *having access to food people want to eat* (Maxwell, 1988, cited in Maxwell, 1996: 159);
- Psychological dimension; for example, having no fear that there will be not enough to eat tomorrow (*ibid.*); and
- Social dimension; for example, having internal structures (networks) that secure and sustain food security in times of crisis (Maxwell, 1996).

To assess different levels of food security in the study area, I build on these earlier approaches and, first, explore people's perceptions of food security. Thereafter, based on their five-level scale, I assess people's satisfaction with their achieved levels of food security (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3 Quantified Qualitative Definitions of Food Security, 2009

Parameter	Local Definition	Sample Household, Frequency (%)
Variety of food	<p>“To eat other things besides bread, to eat meat.” [woman 27, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“When there are all food products - meat, cooking oil, rice, flour, meat, sausages, cheese, always milk, eggs, fruit, chocolate and vegetable.” [man 197, sample survey, 2009]</p>	45(27)
Delicious food	<p>“When there are all food products to prepare the food you like.” [woman 58, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“To eat traditional food.” [man 105, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“To eat palov every day.” [woman 89, sample survey, 2009]</p>	43(26)
High-calorie food	<p>“To eat high-calorie food; for example, meat.” [man 49, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“To be always well-fed – to have always meat, to have an opportunity to slaughter a hen at any time.” [woman 124, sample survey, 2009]</p>	43(26)
Amount of food, stocks of food	<p>“When there is something to eat, it is good.” [woman 54, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“When you have always tea and bread.” [man 103, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“The most important thing at home is flour, sugar, tea, potato, tomato paste, and onions. If there is stress in these items, then these are the first to buy once there is money.” [woman 302-1, case study household, 2009]</p>	42(25)
Frequency of food intake	<p>“To have a meal at least once a day.” [man 219, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“To eat different meals three times a day.” [woman 47, sample survey, 2009]</p>	36(22)
Food with vitamins	<p>“When you have enough vegetables and fruit, you have enough vitamins and your immunity is stronger.” [woman 44, sample survey, 2009]</p>	5(3)
Other responses	<p>“To eat knowing that you have enough money to buy more food.” [woman 23, sample survey, 2009]</p> <p>“The main thing is peace, even if you drink poor quality water.” [woman 171, sample survey, 2009]</p>	20(12)

Source: Quantified (Post-standardised) Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009; n=167\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

The local definitions of food security show that this concept is multidimensional. Defining food security, people generally referred to variety of food, amount of food,

access to food of local tastes, access to high-calorie food as well as frequency of food intake. The variety and amount of food were most frequently referred to in the definitions of food security.

Based on their own definitions of food security, majority of the interviewees assessed their food security as 'good' or 'satisfactory' (256 out of 297 sample households; 86%). Furthermore, 26 out of 297 sample households (9%) assessed their food security as 'very good' whereas 15 out of 297 sample households (5%) assessed their level of food security as 'bad' (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4 Levels of Satisfaction with Food Security, 2009

Level of Satisfaction with Food Security	Sample Household	
	Frequency	%
Very good	26	9
Good	128	43
Satisfactory	128	43
Bad	15	5
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=297\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

The general problem of food security in the study area was that access to food was seasonal. Assessing seasonality of access to food, 201 out of 300 households (67%) experienced seasonal (winter and spring) difficulties with food sufficiency (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5 Seasonality of Food Security, 2009

Seasonal Food Sufficiency	Sample Household	
	Frequency	%
No difficulties	93	31
Seasonal difficulties	201	67
Always difficulties	5	2
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

### Access to Cash Income

Cash income was the second top dimension of well-being as defined by the people themselves. Cash was extremely scarce in the study area. Having cash was very

important for livelihood security. For example, people needed cash to buy food, clothes, medicine, gasoline, coal or wood for cooking and heating or repair a roof and pay for transportation to the market:

*“Money makes a household secure. We need money for everything” [woman 120, sample survey, 2009].*

### *Having Savings*

Having savings was the third top dimension of well-being by the interviewees' definition. The well-off households generally had savings in livestock. These households could afford to grow or buy fodder. Other well-off households invested in cars which enabled them to work as taxi-drivers or to bring different goods from the market to sell from home. In contrast, the households in need did not afford to have livestock or a vehicle. Almost every household had some food storage. Pickling vegetables and fruit in summer and autumn when food products were the cheapest, was the most important activity of women living in the rural area.

### *Self-assessment of Overall Well-being*

Overall, assessing their own levels of well-being (as defined by themselves), more than half of the interviewees placed themselves in the middle, assessing their well-being as 'satisfactory'. About one-quarter of the sample interviewees perceived that they had 'good' or 'very good' level of well-being whereas about one-sixth of interviewees perceived that they had 'bad' or 'very bad' level of well-being (Table 7.6).

*Table 7.6 Self-assessment of Well-being at the household level, 2009*

Level of Well-being	Sample Household	
	Frequency	%
Very good	18	6
Good	56	18
Satisfactory	172	57
Bad	37	12
Very bad	16	5
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

Furthermore, the assessment of multiple dimensions of well-being diverged by gender and generation, as presented in the following subsection.

## 7.4.2 VARIATIONS IN SELF-ASSESSMENT OF WELL-BEING BY GENDER AND GENERATION

### *Gender Differences in the Perception of Well-being*

While living in the same household, women and men experienced different realities (Chapter 5) and thus perceived and assessed their well-being differently. In particular, when defining well-being, more women than men referred to 'health of household members', 'having food stocks', 'meeting children's needs', 'having their own house' and 'having a good agricultural production' (Table 7.7). This can be explained by the specific role of women within the household as the primary caretaker. Women are responsible for cooking and managing the household budget, and they significantly contribute to the household food security through their engagement in subsistence agriculture and pickling of vegetables and fruit.

*Table 7.7 Quantified Emic Well-being Dimensions, 2009*

<b>Dimension of Well-being*</b>	<b>Female Interviewee, Frequency (%)*</b>	<b>Male Interviewee, Frequency (%)</b>	<b>Total, Interviewee*, Frequency (%)</b>
Not being in need	76(38)	46(46)	<b>122(41)</b>
Having a good health	91(46)	27(27)	<b>118(39)</b>
Having enough food and food stocks	46(23)	22 (22)	<b>68(23)</b>
Having money and savings	53(27)	14(14)	<b>67(22)</b>
Meeting children's needs	28(14)	6(6)	<b>33(11)</b>
Having physical mobility (e.g. access to transport)	19(10)	4(4)	<b>23(8)</b>
Having a house	16(8)	3(3)	<b>19(6)</b>
Having/doing 'good' agriculture	7(3)	0(0)	<b>7(2)</b>

*Source:* Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*\*, including n female=199 and n male=100.

\*Each interviewee referred to more than one of the given dimensions.

\*\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

Furthermore, even when women's and men's definitions of well-being were similar, the meaning of these definitions diverged. For example, both female and male interviewees referred to 'good income opportunities' as an important dimension of well-being. However, men defined 'a good income opportunity' as having a managerial job [*man 107, sample survey, 2009*] whereas women defined 'a good income opportunity' as having a paid job at home or close to home, that allowed for combining productive and reproductive work [*woman 97, sample survey, 2009*].

### *Generational Differences in the Assessment of Well-being Dimensions*

There were also differences in the perceptions of well-being between the younger and the older generation. For example, defining well-being, the older generation (35 years and older) referred to living in the extended families more frequently than the younger generation (younger than 35 years old). Likewise, health care aspects and 'having peace of mind' were mentioned by the older and not the younger people. This may be explained by the fact that the older generation held more responsibilities for meeting household needs as well as experienced health problems more frequently than the younger generation.

The generations differed in their life experiences and thus used divergent benchmarks when assessing the different components of well-being. For example, when explaining problems related to livelihood security, only the older people referred to high unemployment and inadequate welfare provisions. Furthermore, when assessing job opportunities, the older interviewees described them as deteriorated in recent years whereas the younger interviewees considered them as improved (Table 7.8). Nobody from the younger generation assessed the present job opportunities as 'very bad' regardless of the existing unemployment (Chapter 4). This may be explained by the fact that it was generally the older generation's responsibility to have a job and provide for the livelihood of others (Chapter 5). Second, it was easier to find a job for the younger than for the older people. As some of the interviewees explained, it was difficult to find a job for men after their 40th birthday [*man 360, open-ended interview, 2009*]. Third, the younger people who never had a good job in the past, did not feel upset doing any job, in contrast to the older people who had a good job in the past. Finally, the younger people seeing and facing unemployment or lack of income since their childhood, considered these experiences as 'normal' or 'usual' whereas the older people might have had different experiences in their life and thus different expectations and definitions of what was 'normal'. The older generation often compared the job opportunities of today with what was present during the Soviet period, and then identified a clear decline. The younger people, however, considered the development of job opportunities during the last ten years and, then, did not notice major changes (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8 Self-assessment of Job Opportunities for Today and for the Past, 2009

Job Opportunity	Older Generation: Interviewee of 35 Years or Older		Younger Generation: Interviewee between 18 and 34 Years Old	
	Soviet time, Frequency (%)	Present, Frequency (%)	Ten years ago, Frequency (%)	Present, Frequency (%)
Very good	26(11)	13(5)	3(6)	2(4)
Good	97(40)	71(30)	18(39)	18(39)
Satisfactory	96(40)	114(47)	20(44)	21(46)
Bad	18(8)	40(17)	5(11)	5(11)
Very bad	3(1)	2(1)	0(0)	0(0)
<b>Total, Interviewee</b>	<b>240(100)</b>	<b>240(100)</b>	<b>46(100)</b>	<b>46(100)</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=286\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

These differences in benchmarks were also recurring in many conversations. For example:

*The older interviewee: "All the time I think about how to find money and what will be tomorrow. I worked as an engineer during the kolkhoz time and had enough of everything. I have higher education and cannot find a job now" [man 301-1, sample survey, 2009].*

*The younger interviewee: "In the past, it was obligatory to work in the field for cotton growing. Nowadays, you do not have to" [woman 302-3, case study household, 2009].*

Likewise, there were generational differences in the assessment of food security. For the older generation food security had decreased through time, whereas the younger generation thought that nothing much had changed over time (Table 7.9).

Table 7.9 Self-assessment of Food Sufficiency for Today and for the Past, 2009

Assessment of food security	Older Generation: Interviewee of 35 Years Old or Older		Younger Generation: Interviewee between 18 and 34 Years Old	
	Soviet time, Frequency(%)	Present, Frequency(%)	Ten Years Ago, Frequency(%)	Present, Frequency(%)
Very good	33(14)	21(9)	5(10)	5(10)
Good	128(53)	101(42)	25(51)	25(51)
Satisfactory	70(29)	109(45)	14(29)	14(29)
Bad	12(5)	12(5)	5(10)	5(10)
<b>Total, Interviewee</b>	<b>243(100)</b>	<b>243(100)</b>	<b>49(100)</b>	<b>49(100)</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

Those who stated that food sufficiency decreased, said for instance:

*NN: "What is the difference in food security if you compare your income from working in the kolkhoz to your income generated from working for a farmer?"*

*The older interviewee: "In the past, we could eat five or six kilograms of meat per week based on working on one hectare of land. Now, we can eat two-three kilograms of meat per month based on working on this land" [man 256, sample survey, 2009].*

In contrast, those interviewees who stated that their food security had improved, explained that now a bigger variety of food was available on the market, though not everybody could actually afford to buy that food:

*The younger interviewee: "In the past, you could not buy pineapples, bananas. Now, it is possible" [man 242, sample survey, 2009].*

For what regards the overall assessment of well-being (Table 7.10), the number of perceptions of 'satisfactory' well-being increased for both, the younger and the older generations whereas the number of perceptions of 'good' well-being consequently decreased.

Table 7.10 Generational Differences in the Self-Assessment of Well-being, 2009

Assessment of well-being	Older Generation: Interviewee of 35 Years Old or Older		Younger Generation: Interviewee between 18 and 34 Years Old	
	Soviet time, Frequency (%)	Present, Frequency (%)	Ten Years Ago, Frequency (%)	Present, Frequency (%)
Very good	29(12)	12(5)	6(12)	6(12)
Good	80(33)	49(20)	15(31)	7(14)
Satisfactory	95(40)	134(56)	16(33)	24(49)
Bad	24(10)	30(13)	9(18)	9(18)
Very bad	12(5)	15(6)	3(6)	3(6)
<b>Total, Interviewee</b>	<b>240(100)</b>	<b>240(100)</b>	<b>49(100)</b>	<b>49(100)</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=299\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

Overall, the presented data shows that there were differences in the assessment criteria as well as achieved levels of well-being. The following subsection further explores local perceptions about the characteristics of the households that are in need, in the middle and well-off.

#### 7.4.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THOSE WHO ARE IN TOP, MIDDLE AND BOTTOM

Explaining why households and people may achieve different levels of well-being while living in the same context, the interviewees generally referred to differences in scale or type of income-generating activities, position at work (e.g. manager versus subordinate position), regular cash income or access to land, household demography, ownership of livestock and other assets (Table 7.11).

The households in need, as perceived by the interviewees, generally did not have (regular) access to cash income. They could not afford to diversify their income generating activities and engage in on-farm and non-farm activities and/or migration. Most of these households worked for a *fermer*, engaged in *mardikorlik* or relied on subsistence agriculture, generating some small and irregular income from petty trade. In addition, these households often included people with poor health, several children and only one adult (e.g. female-headed households) or only one adult (out of several adults) with employment.

*"The households in need are those with many small children and only one or two people who are working. These are, for example, the female-headed households where the breadwinner died and then the widowed woman and children are alone" [woman 388, open-ended interview, women's advisor, 2008].*

Table 7.11 Perceptions of Socio-Economic Pattern, 2008 - 2009

Dimension	Household in need	Household in the Middle	Well-off household
Income-generating activities, a position at work and access to land	<i>Dehqon</i> farmer	(Sericulture) <i>Fermer</i>	High-rank employee at some administrative office
	<i>Fermers'</i> tenant having access to land of about 0.1-0.2ha	<i>Fermers'</i> tenant having access to land of about 1.5 - 10ha	Cross-border large-scale trader
	<i>Fermer</i> worker	Regular employee	Large scale <i>fermer</i>
	<i>Mardikor</i> (casual labourer)	Small-scale entrepreneur	Factory owner
	Petty trader	Migrant working within Uzbekistan or a migrant that does not have a regular income	Migrant working outside Uzbekistan with a regular income
Diversification of activities	Specialisation or <i>uni-sectoral</i> diversification	<i>Multi-sectoral</i> diversification	<i>Multi-sectoral</i> diversification
Position at work	Subordinate	Subordinate	Heading position (Chief)
Income	Irregular and possibly no cash income	Cash income and in-kind income which is relatively regular	High, regular and cash and/or in-kind income
Household demography (access to labour)	One adult and one or several small children A few adults and many small children	Two or more adults and not many children	The number of adults is more than the number of small children
Ownership of livestock	No cow and maybe some poultry	At least one cow and lots of poultry	Several cows
Ownership of other assets	Maybe a bike	A car	More than one car and machinery

Sources: Qualitative Notes of Sample Survey, 2009.

The households in need were also very young households that had just moved to live in their own house and especially those households that moved to live in a newly settled or a small village on marginal land:

*"We were promised to have everything before we moved here. We were promised electricity, gas, water, clinics, schools, transport. Please, help people. We do not have a clinic and we do not have transport to go to the clinic. To reach the closest bus stop, you have to walk four kilometres. We have a very small school, only three classrooms. There is no gas. There are electricity shortcuts. There is a water pipe but there is no water in it" [woman 23, sample survey, 2009].*

Households in the middle, as perceived by the interviewees, generally relied on multiple sources of income and had a relatively regular inflow of income. Most of these households engaged in *multi-sectoral* diversification, that included non-farm

activities and migration that provided cash income. The households in the middle generally had at least one cow, some poultry and a car.

The well-off households, as perceived by the interviewees, were those where at least one household member holds a managerial position at work or was a large-scale farmer.

*"Farmers are rich because they have land and lots of livestock" [man 171, sample survey, 2009].*

Other well-off households engaged in large-scale cross-border trade.

*"The rich are those who have a truck and engage in trade" [man 423, mini-survey on livelihoods, 2008].*

Finally, some interviewees explained that the well-off households were already wealthy in the past.

*"In our kolkhoz [village] there is an old man, 80 years old, he got a car, for what money? When there was the kolkhoz [collective farm], he had a good post there and two other men as well: one was an economist and the other was an accountant. So they shared all the wealth of the kolkhoz amongst themselves and live well now. Rich people don't do anything themselves, they hire people to work because they have money to do it" [woman 188, sample survey, 2009; own interpretation in brackets].*

Overall, the analysis of the *emic* perceptions of well-being in study area showed that the interviewees differed in how they benefitted from the transition reforms. In the next section, I further explore these differences in the achieved levels of livelihood security with three *etic* indicators.

## **7.5 ETIC ESTIMATES OF ACHIEVED LEVELS OF LIVELIHOOD SECURITY**

The selected *etic* indicators for assessing different levels of livelihood security in the specific context of Khorezm included: a livestock index, a share of food costs in total household expenditures and household costs versus average local household costs. The rationale, process of selection and methodological application of these *etic* indicators are explained in Sections 7.2-3.

### **7.5.1 LIVESTOCK INDEX**

The calculated livestock index showed that, in general, 283 out of 294 households (96%) had at least some livestock or poultry; 233 out of 294 sample households (79%) had a livestock index within the scale of 0.9-4.0 (Table 7.12).

Table 7.12 Livestock Index of Sample Households, 2009

Livestock Ownership Scale	Livestock Index	Dehqon Farmer, Frequency (%)	Fermer, Frequency (%)	Fermer's tenant, Frequency (%)	Total, Sample Household, Frequency (%)
<b>Lowest scale</b>	0	6(4)	0(0)	5(4)	11(4)
% of a land users' category		55	0	45	100
<b>Lower Middle Scale</b>	0.1-0.8	12(8)	0(0)	4(3)	16(5)
% of a land users' category		75	0	25	100
<b>Upper Middle Scale</b>	0.9-4.0	118(80)	20(67)	95(82)	233(79)
% of a land users' category		50	9	41	100
<b>Top scale</b>	4.1-11.1	11(8)	10(33)	13(11)	34(12)
% of a land users' category		32	29	38	100
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>Mean=2.3</b>	<b>147(100)</b>	<b>30(100)</b>	<b>117(100)</b>	<b>294(100)</b>

Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=294\*.

Pearson Chi-Square 20.87 \*\*\*, p=0.001, DF=6 (Hinton, 1995: 314).

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

Based on the Chi-square test, it may be concluded that the livestock ownership differs significantly by a type of land users - *dehqon* farmers, *fermers*, and *fermers'* tenants. Particularly, *fermers* were advantaged in their ownership of livestock and thus in food security and savings, compared to the other types of land users.

### 7.5.2 FOOD SHARE IN HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES

On average, people living in Khorezm spent one-half of their income on food (mean=45.9%; median=50%)<sup>33</sup> whereas the average food costs of people living in the advanced countries is less than 10%. For example, according to the assessments of Clements and Chen (2008), the average share of food costs in the total household budget was equal to 8.7% in the Netherlands and 9.8% in Germany in 2002.

There were considerable variations in the values of this indicator among the sample households within the study area as well. In particular, five per cent of the sample households had food costs within the top scale (10-25% of the total household expenditures). Seventy per cent of the sample households (191 out of 272 households) spent in between 26 and 50% of the total household expenditures on food. The food costs of the other one-quarter of the sample households required more than 50% of

their total household expenditures (Table 7.13). Applying the law of Engel (Clements and Chen, 2008; Section 7.3.1) and considering the average local level of spending for food as 50% of total household costs, the data suggest that one-quarter of the sample households were disadvantaged in their overall livelihood security, compared to the others. Only five per cent of the sample households spent a similar percentage of their total household expenditure on food to those living in the advanced countries, and, hence, achieved a similar overall level of livelihood security.

Table 7.13 Share of Food Costs in Total Household Expenditures, 2009

Level	Share of Food Costs in Total Household Expenditure	Total, Sample Household, Frequency (%)
Top scale	10-25	12(5)
Middle upper scale	26-50	191(70)
Middle lower scale	51-75	63(23)
Lowest scale	76-85	6(2)
<b>Total, Sample Household</b>	<b>Mean=45.9 and Median=50</b>	<b>272(100)</b>

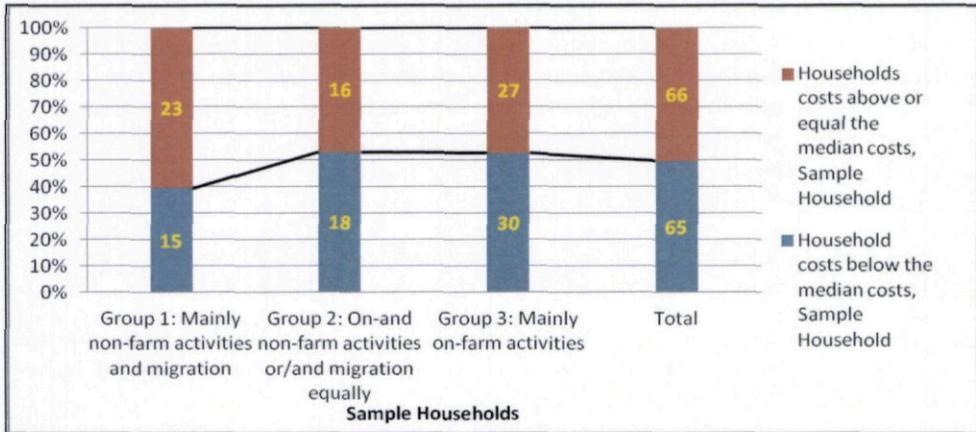
Source: Sample Survey, 2009; n=272\*.

\*Only those who agreed to share information are included.

### 7.5.3 HOUSEHOLD COSTS VERSUS AVERAGE LOCAL COSTS

The average costs of living (group median) varied among households depending on their activity pattern. The average costs of living were highest for those households that generated more cash income than in-kind income (median of group 1 = UzSoums 170,000). They were lowest for those households that generated more in-kind income than cash income (median of group 2 = UzSoums 140,000). Furthermore, as illustrated in Figure 7.2, the proportion of those below the average local costs of living (sample median = UzSoums 150,000) was smallest for households that generated more cash income than in-kind income (group 1).

Figure 7.2 Household Costs versus Average Local Costs (Median) by Activity Pattern



Source: Sample Survey 2009, n=128\*.

\*Only those who agreed and shared information are included.

These findings imply that, in this specific context, rural livelihoods are not only about on-farm activities and in-kind income. Activity diversification and particularly the engagement in non-farm activities and migration are important as they provide cash income, which plays an important role in achieving a better level of living.

## 7.6 DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

In general, 178 out of 300 sample households (59%) stated that their economic situation had improved over the last five years whereas it had not changed for 94 out of 300 sample households (32%). The remaining 28 out of 300 sample households (9%) thought that their economic situation got worse over the last five years.

The changes in economic situation resulted from two causes:

- 1) Changes in income levels because of changes in the household activity pattern; for example, as a result of changes in availability of income-generating opportunities; and
- 2) Changes in household demography.

For example, those who assessed their economic situation as 'improved', explained that this was due to migration. Others shared that their economic situation improved because their children grew up and started to earn money. Others explained that their level of living had improved as they found employment with a regular salary or because they opened a small shop for selling goods right from home. It is important, however, to notice that the criteria of 'improvement' diverged among cases.

*"The economic situation has improved. We rent some land and get income. And the amounts of pension and salary are increasing"* [woman 31, sample survey, 2009].

*"Our economic situation is improving. Before we did not have even bread to eat but now it is better" [man 18, sample survey, 2009].*

Those who stated that their economic situation got worse explained that it happened because of unfortunate life circumstances; for example, the death of a man or illness of a household member. Others shared that income opportunities had declined. For example, some interviewees explained that there was a decrease in payment for working for a *fermer* or that they had to stop growing and selling rice or even subsistence crops because of poor access to irrigation water.

*"The economic situation has declined. It is harder to earn money from year to year, to sow anything because everything withers; there is no water" [man 166, sample survey, 2009].*

*"The economic situation has declined. I am not a fermer, not a fermer anymore" [man 22, sample survey, 2009].*

Some complained about continuously increasing prices for food and consumer goods and thus decreasing levels of real income. Others lost their employment because of the bankruptcy of factories or the decreasing opportunities for cross-border shuttle trade.

*"The economic situation has declined. We used to bring goods from Tashauz and then sell it. But now customs do not allow importing goods" [woman 33, sample survey, 2009].*

Those who stated that their economic situation did not change explained that, they still today had no opportunity to earn sufficient income because of unemployment, small payments and no cash for renting land.

*"The economic situation is the same. It is because of low income. Most people have a larger piece of land. And we have only 40 sotka [0.4 ha] and no money to increase it" [man 211, sample survey, 2009].*

Overall, the applied *etic* estimates of the social mobility showed that the achieved levels of livelihood security were in flux in the context of transition. The majority experienced some improvement in their economic situation during the last five years (between 2004 and 2009). However, the size and quality of these improvements were highly variable among the cases.

## 7.7 CONCLUSION

During the period of transition, some households manage to achieve a better level of livelihood security than the others.

The households in need experience continuous shortages in cash and have very limited access to land and thus cannot afford to have livestock that provides food security and reduces food costs. These households generally cannot afford *multi-sectoral* diversification and rely only on one income source. They are generally female-headed households, one-adult households or one-working adult households where there are several small children or people that require medical treatment. The households in

need are also those that live in newly settled or small villages and/or in newly created households.

Households in the middle generally manage to diversify their activities. As a result, these households have not only in-kind income from on-farm activities, but also cash income; for example, due to their engagement in migration and in non-farm activities. Some of the household members may have registered employment with a regular salary or may regularly receive a pension.

The well-off households have also diversified their activities. These households have access to assets, own lots of livestock, generate savings and can afford to invest in assets and machinery. They have a high and regular cash income as well as in-kind income. Their household members have a good position at work, are successful in migration or are *farmers* having access to large parcels of land. Some of these households are large-scale businessmen engaged in large-scale production and trade.

The achieved levels of livelihood security are not static in the transitional context. For example, those who are in the middle today may be well-off or in need tomorrow. The majority perceives their level of livelihood security as in the middle and as improving in the last five years (between 2004 and 2009). However, size and dimensions of these improvements diverge from household to household as well as along the lines of gender and generation. Apart from migration, economic improvements are generally achieved through expansion and diversification of income-generating activities: engagement in non-farm activities or expansion of agricultural production that is combined with non-farm activities on a private basis. Getting access to welfare provision such as pensions was also an important factor, as well as changes in the demographic characteristics of the households. This underlines the important role of non-farm activities, migration and *multi-sectoral* diversification in improving people's livelihood security. The livelihood security of households declined because of insufficient access to arable land and irrigation water, unemployment and cash scarcity, which limited local demand and stagnated entrepreneurial opportunities. Finally, the continuity of reforms created the feeling of uncertainty about livelihood security among the majority of the interviewed population because of endlessly changing availability of income-generating opportunities.

## CHAPTER 8 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores how women and men living in the rural areas of the Khorezm province in Uzbekistan secure their livelihoods within the specific transitional context of Uzbekistan, how gender structures are being transformed and reproduced and why different households or groups do not benefit from rural transformation processes in the same way. In particular, this research provides insights into the divergent impacts of transition on rural livelihoods and explains the reasons for these divergences and examines how gender inequalities are being transformed and reproduced in this changing context: specifically what factors contribute to this transformation and reproduction. Furthermore, this research explores how people strategize: what aspects they consider in making their choices of livelihood strategies, particularly of the activity patterns that result in different levels of livelihood security. The study identifies differences in the livelihood strategies between households that are well-off, in the middle and in need, and investigates the reasons behind these differences.

This concluding chapter comprises three sections. In Section 8.2 I briefly summarise the main empirical findings of this research by answering each of the three research sub-questions presented in Chapter 1 'Introduction'. In Section 8.3 I reflect upon how the livelihoods framework was used to answer my main research question, and how and what this research contributes to this framework through its theoretical and methodological elaborations. Thereafter, the chapter concludes the thesis with opening windows for further research.

### 8.2 EMPIRICAL RESULTS

#### *8.2.1 What Livelihood Strategies Do People Living in Rural Areas Adopt to Secure Their Livelihoods in the Process of Rural Transformation?*

The overarching objective of any livelihood strategy is to secure and sustain a livelihood. When making their choices regarding livelihood strategies people take into consideration the following four interlinked aspects: opportunities, motives, capabilities and acceptability. When strategizing, people continuously make choices about what to do and how to do to make a living. However, the 'livelihood spaces' for making choices diverge among different groups of population (Chapter 6). For example, when choosing which income-generating activities to engage in, women and men, older and younger people, well-off people and people in need consider their divergent opportunities, material and immaterial motives, capabilities and perceptions of acceptability. As a result, the activities chosen and levels of livelihood security achieved also diverge among these groups of the population. Figuratively speaking people are moving in a labyrinth, searching for a way out to achieve livelihood security. The 'livelihood spaces' in this labyrinth are neither open for everyone nor

known by everyone: the awareness and the right for moving from one *space* to another *space* depend on gender, age and position within a household and community. As long as there are these divergent 'livelihood spaces' for women and men, for the younger and the older generations and for the rich and those in need, gender inequality and poverty will prevail, be reproduced and reinforced.

This argument is supported by the empirical evidence resulting from the analysis of activity diversification – a livelihood strategy pursued by the majority of rural households in the study area (Chapter 4). Livelihood diversification has an important role in achieving livelihood security because reliance on one income source is not enough to make a living in the study area. However, the households in need generally cannot afford to pursue multiple activities and even if they manage to diversify their income-generating activities, this strategy does not ensure the same level of livelihood security as it does for the well-off households. This is because there are different types and ways of diversification comprising different ways of engaging in on-farm and non-farm activities (e.g. as an employer, employee, *mardikor* or entrepreneur), divergent scales of activity diversification (e.g. depending on access to assets, including social networks and power) and different combinations of on-farm and non-farm activities and migration.

In particular, there are two types of diversification: *uni-sectoral* diversification when household members engage either in several on-farm or non-farm activities and *multi-sectoral* diversification when household members combine on-farm and non-farm activities and migration. The latter type of diversification provides both cash and in-kind incomes, in contrast to the former. Those households that engage in *multi-sectoral* diversification at a relatively larger scale are able to generate regular and relatively high income and as a result manage to achieve, improve and sustain an adequate level of living. Different ways of diversification include *additive* diversification when household members engage in several separate activities that do not reinforce or depend on each other, and *synergetic* diversification where activities are interdependent and mutually supporting. Engaging in *synergetic* is more risky than in *additive* diversification in this specific context of uncertainty with respect to access to assets. This is because assets are continuously being reallocated based on endless reforms. As a result, all of the activities that may be adequate at one point might fail if a central element (e.g. access to land) of this way of diversification fails.

Apart from the strategy of activity diversification, there are two other strategies of income generation that support rural livelihoods. The first is reliance on welfare system provisions that provide the most regular income in this specific context. The second source of income is reliance on social networks. However, similar to the strategy of activity diversification, not every household can benefit from these sources of income. In regard to the welfare system provisions, first, the benefits depend on eligibility or endowments and, second, these provisions are not sufficient for achieving livelihood security. In regard to social networks, not everybody can become a member of any network. As a matter of inclusion and exclusion, the social networks of those who are in need and those who are well-off tend to be mutually exclusive. Likewise, there are social networks of men and there are social networks of women. Similar to

the strategy of diversification, the benefits from the strategy of networking diverge by 'livelihood spaces' shaped by differences in opportunities, motives, capabilities and perceptions of acceptability of these different groups of population.

### *8.2.2 What is the Livelihood Security of People in the Diverse Types of Rural Households and Why Do They Diverge?*

The ability to diversify income sources is central to securing livelihood in the transitional context of Khorezm. However, this strategy of diversification is generally pursued exclusively by extended family households with several adults that provide labour and/or generate income. In these extended family households, household members pool their income from multiple activities and welfare endowments and are committed to supporting each other and sustaining their household. The highly successful case of the entrepreneurial household (Chapter 6) provides another example of the role of an extended family as a fundamental requirement for a successful family business in the uncertain transitional context. However, about one-third of rural households cannot afford this diversification and remain vulnerable. These are households with only one or two adults and several underage children. These households cannot afford to engage in multiple activities and/or migration for work purposes. These are also households where there is no man or no woman or where there are people with poor health. Instead of activity diversification, these households engage in activity specialisation; for example, relying either only on remittances or only on subsistence crops grown on *uy tomorka*.

Furthermore, not every household can diversify activities through engagement in non-farm activities and migration that enable generating cash income. Households relying on on-farm activities generally generated more in-kind income than cash income. Their level of income has been more often below the average local level of living compared to the other households. Migration and non-farm activities enabled generation of cash income, which was independent from access to arable land, irrigation water or seasons. This finding implies that non-farm activities and migration play an important role in improving livelihood security of people living in the study area.

In general, there are clear divergences in the levels of livelihood security. There is a small group of relatively well-off, prosperous households and a small group of households which are in need. The majority of the households are in the middle. Their income is low but sufficient for survival. In regard to the households in need, these households generally do not diversify their activities. Their income is irregular and mostly in-kind. These households often incur debts for food from their relatives, friends, neighbours and other community members. These households struggle for having food, consume mostly bread and face food shortages (even in bread) for several days a year, especially in winter and early spring. These are mainly female-headed households where there are several small children and only one or two adults are working. These are also households where people have poor health. These households continuously experience shortages in food, income and basic needs. The households in the middle have at least one cow, some poultry and possibly a vehicle. Nonetheless,

these households occasionally experience income shortages and thus have to save on food. The households in the middle generally have a regular income due to some regular (registered) employment, retirement pensions or regular remittances. Still, their income is not sufficient for having meaningful savings.

Those who are well-off engage in activities that result in a regular and high income. These households generally have access to large parcels of land or engage in large-scale trade that enables them to accumulate assets and wealth for further investments. The well-off households diversify their activities, similar to the average households, but the former are able to generate considerable savings in contrast to the latter.

Complementing these findings with people's perceptions of well-being (Chapter 7), demonstrates that achieved levels of well-being diverge by gender and generation. Living in the same context, women and men as well as older and younger generations experience and perceive their realities differently and from within their 'livelihood spaces'. For example, a man might perceive 'a good job' as having a managerial post whereas a woman tends to perceive 'a good job' as a job at home that allows her to combine income-generation with reproductive activities. Similarly, the older and the younger generations perceive and assess their achieved levels of well-being differently; for example, because of divergent experiences shaping divergent expectations as well as because of differences in opportunities, motive, capabilities, and perceptions of acceptability. Likewise, a well-off household within its 'livelihood space' shaped by opportunities might perceive that the household in need does not do enough to secure livelihood whereas the latter explains that there is no opportunity to do more within its divergent 'livelihood space'. The well-off households generally have a greater flexibility to adapt to changes in the context than the households in need and in the middle. On the contrary, the households in need are generally trapped by their constraints and need help to get out of the vicious cycle of overlapping factors that contribute to insufficiency. The households in need and in the middle generally require a longer period of time and a larger effort to adapt to changes in the context, compared to the well-off households. Though the households in need are able to adapt over time, they rarely catch up to the level of well-being reached by well-off households.

The achieved levels of livelihood security are not static but are very dynamic in the transitional context. The comparison of the perceived levels of well-being at different points in time showed that there was a clear decline in the levels of well-being for at least one-third of the sample households, compared to Soviet time. The perceptions of changes in the economic situation during the last five years show that about 60% of the sample households experienced an improvement in their levels of living. The size and quality of this improvement, however, vary from case to case. Nonetheless, the empirical evidence suggests that upwards social mobility has been greater than downwards social mobility between the years of 2004-2009.

### 8.2.3 What is the Gender Specificity of Rural Livelihoods?

The gender structures existing in Khorezm can be broadly categorised as *odatiy* (traditional) and *zamonaviy* (modern). The traditional gender structure remains dominant in the study area. In traditional households, women and younger generations have access to livelihood through men and older generations. The functions of the older generations and men are managerial and the functions of the younger generations and women are executive (as an *organisational factor* shaping a specific gender structure).

These divided roles, rights and responsibilities co-shape divergent income opportunities for women and men. Women's main responsibility is to attend to domestic chores and child care. This responsibility requires considerable effort and time in this specific context, since there are no adequate child care services and labour-saving equipment (as an *infrastructural factor* shaping a specific gender structure). As a result, women generally engage in part-time and ill-paid jobs that are located close to home or within the home. On the contrary, men whose main responsibility is to provide livelihood can work overtime and outside the village and thus have a greater range of income earning opportunities.

The core of reproduction of this specific traditional gender structure is that the majority of rural households are composed of extended families with three generations living together. On the one hand, living in extended family households provides considerable support to household members from one another as well as enables activity diversification that improves the likelihood of livelihood security. On the other hand, living in extended family households implies being a part of a specific patriarchal hierarchy that determines divergent rights, roles and responsibilities for every household member (as an *institutional factor* shaping a specific gender structure). As a result, the ownership of and access to assets, decision-making power and engagement in productive and reproductive activities diverge by gender, generation and the hierarchical position of a person within a household as well as within the community.

The empirical evidence also suggests that the traditional gender structure is being reproduced through specific events, norms and a code of conduct at the community level (as a *cultural factor* of gender structure). These norms are important for the people in the study area for their identity. Adhering to these norms is also important for maintaining a good reputation and thus for being well-integrated into the community. This ability to integrate has direct implications for economic opportunities of the households. To comply with these norms, the male household head is the primary decision maker; for example, about decisions related to what women and the younger people in a household shall do and whether or not they shall work and where. As a result, women generally lack decision-making and negotiation powers to avail themselves of emerging opportunities. For example, to comply with the local code of conduct, the younger women are not expected to interact with men on an equal level (or at all), especially if these men are not a part of their households or community. As an aspect of generational transformation, the decision-making and negotiation powers

as well as gender roles and responsibilities change for women and men over the course of their life cycle events; for example, marriage, birth of children and marriage of children.

Facing livelihood generation challenges during the period of transition, the traditional gender structure gradually transforms to a new non-traditional gender structure at the household level, so-called *zamonaviy* household. In many cases, men cannot provide sufficient income to support households. In other cases, there are no men in a household and women need to provide their livelihoods on their own. In addition, there is considerable seasonal male outmigration. This outmigration of men results in temporary handover of traditionally 'male' responsibilities and household head status to women. As a result, the gender stereotypes of what women and men shall do gradually change. The growing negotiation power of women gradually transforms the traditional gender-segregated behaviour into new gender-aggregated behaviour.

The scale and pace of these gender transformations remain slow and gradual in the rural areas of Khorezm. The transformation of decision-making power to women during periods of seasonal male outmigration is temporary and generally does not exist once men return home. This temporary transformation of the decision-making power generally does not change women's ownership of assets and economic dependency on men (as an *economic factor* shaping a specific gender structure). Once a household manages to achieve a relatively decent level of living, this household generally prefers to return to the traditional gender structure. And it is a rare case that all men migrate from a household. The general practice is that at least one adult man stays at home to attend to 'male' responsibilities. In other cases, the woman and children that are left behind move to live in the households of the husband's parents. Nevertheless, there are changes occurring in the generational structure of rural households, as the younger generation becomes more economically independent from the older generation.

Given the limited decision-making and negotiation powers as well as their economic dependence on men, women generally do not benefit from the period of transition equally. For example, only very few women are *farmers*. Women have access to housing, assets and income opportunities through men. And women's local opportunities are generally limited to poorly paid labourious and casual jobs in agriculture that are generally carried out on an unregistered basis that hides women's labour and contribution to the economy. Overall, the factors that reproduce and transform a specific gender structure are interlinked and comprised economic, cultural, infrastructural, organisational and institutional aspects.

### 8.3 REFLECTIONS ON THEORY AND METHODS

Over the last two decades, the livelihoods framework has been successfully applied and adapted as a theoretical framework for researching rural livelihoods in many countries of the world (Korf and Oughton, 2006; Oughton and Wheelock, 2003; Pickup and White, 2003). First, the success of the livelihoods framework lies in its applicability based on generalisation: More specifically, the framework builds on very general theoretical concepts without specifying characteristics of any context (de Haan

and Zoomers, 2005). Due to this generalisation, the framework is suitable for application across a broad spectrum of contexts and thus has been successfully applied within this research in rural Khorezm. Second, the framework embraces all of the multiple perspectives of rural livelihoods that are again very broadly categorised at a high level. This generalisation makes this framework flexible for focusing on a wide spectrum of socio-economic, environmental, political and structural aspects of rural livelihoods. For example, applying this framework within my research was very useful for understanding the specificities and vulnerabilities of the Khorezm context, what local regulations promote or constrain people's opportunities and how women and men gain access to assets and why they can or cannot engage in specific activities (Chapters 4 and 5).

This research contributes to the existing livelihoods framework through several theoretical and methodological elaborations. Particularly this study explores cultural and structural specificities of the research context that reproduce and transform socio-economic differences among households, between women and men as well as between younger and older generations in their access to assets, livelihood activities and outcomes (Chapters 5 - 7). These socio-economic differences are generally conceptualised in the livelihood literature as the concepts of gender and class (Ellis, 2000). However, the existing livelihoods framework does not consider broader dimensions of this process of socio-economic differentiation, such as the differences in the realities of younger and older generations, women and men, the poor and rich (Chapters 2, 5, 6 and 7). These overlooked dimensions are particularly important to consider in the transitional context of Khorezm in order to understand why and how some can and others cannot achieve the same successes in livelihood security.

Furthermore, this research contributes to the livelihoods framework through elaboration on the concept of livelihood strategy, explaining why people make specific decisions about what to do and how to secure their livelihoods and, particularly, what factors they consider in making their choices. Through exploring people's considerations, this research introduces a new concept of 'livelihood spaces'. In particular, this thesis explains that interrelated cultural, institutional, infrastructural, economic and organisational factors at the macro level (Chapter 5) reproduce (or transform) divergent opportunities, perceptions of acceptability, motives and capabilities for making choices at the individual level depending on individual's gender, age and achieved level of livelihood security (Chapter 6). These divergences in 'spaces' for choosing ways of securing livelihoods, in turn, explain why some can and others cannot achieve livelihood security.

With regard to methodological elaborations, this research combines *emic* and *etic* indicators to explore the changes in the patterns of the achieved levels of livelihood security of the rural population in Khorezm over time. This inclusion of both *etic* and *emic* indicators is useful to capture different aspects of livelihood outcomes. Particularly, the *emic* indicators enable getting insights about people's realities, understanding the controversies in their perceptions, closer representation of their life experiences, and conceptualisation of people's (insider) frameworks. The *etic* indicators were useful for making sense of the complexity of the investigated

phenomena and for estimating the achieved levels of livelihood security using uniform measures. Overall, bridging *etic* or outsider's (researcher's) perspectives and *emic* or insider's perspectives on rural livelihoods is useful for challenging the simplicity of the real world and for revealing the multidimensionality of the concepts of livelihood security and well-being and of even a broader, abstract and general concepts of livelihood outcomes in the livelihoods framework. In real life, people explain their livelihoods, strategies and livelihood choices as well as feelings about what they have achieved in terms of livelihoods far beyond the core elements of the livelihoods framework. The livelihoods framework considerably simplifies these real life complexities to general conceptualisations with a great degree of symbolism and subjectivity, which is nonetheless instrumental for carrying out research on livelihoods and to make sense of people's complex and controversial perceptions. To conclude, the combination of *emic* and *etic approaches* is useful for reaching reliable, internally and externally valid findings about rural livelihoods in this particular context of transition.

#### 8.4. WINDOWS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research explores how transformational processes affect rural livelihoods and their gender specificity. In particular, this thesis contributes to the existing body of knowledge and livelihoods approaches in three ways. First, it elaborates on the concept of strategy, investigating what aspects people consider when making their livelihood choices. Second, the thesis explores different types and ways of diversification and within a specific transitional context, such as: *multi-sectoral* or *uni-sectoral* diversification, and *synergetic* or *additive* diversification. Third, the thesis identifies the interlinked nature of factors that transform or reproduce specific (*odatiy* or *zamonaviy*) gender structures.

However, this research does not investigate how livelihood strategies and existing (as well as emerging) gender and generational structures co-shape the transformation processes. The linkages between the transformation processes and rural livelihoods are two-fold. So far, there is little known about how changes in gender specificities of rural livelihoods co-shape and affect the pace of transformation processes in the specific context of Khorezm. In particular, further research is required: a) to understand the relationship of how changing gender and generational structures as well as livelihood strategies affect the transformation processes and transition; b) to understand the relationship among power structures, different levels of livelihood security, social networking and other important factors that co-shape the process of socio-economic differentiation in the given context; and c) to validate the findings of this research in the broader context of Uzbekistan.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Niehof and Price (2001) differentiate between assets and resources. This differentiation is beyond the scope of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> The arrows in the diagram show the dynamic relationship and influence, rather than direct causality between the dynamic factors influencing people's livelihood (DFID, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> This PhD research was carried out as a part of the larger project entitled 'Economic and Ecological Restructuring of Land and Water Use in Khorezm', which was financed by Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and implemented by the Centre for Development Research (ZEF), in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the Government of Uzbekistan, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MAWR).

<sup>4</sup> The PhD project package was designed in such a way that the author had time to focus on data analysis and write-up during winter seasons, closely interacting with her supervisors in Europe.

<sup>5</sup> The survey forms for problem analysis used in this research were adapted from the survey forms, prepared earlier together with Dr. Madar Samad, supervising my previous research on rural livelihoods in three countries of the Ferghana Valley at IWMI in 2004.

<sup>6</sup> My mother tongue is Russian and my knowledge of the Uzbek language is basic and thus not adequate for discussion of complicated issues. In many cases, I could conduct interviews in Russian in the study area. In other cases, I communicated in both: Russian and Uzbek with the assistance from my research assistants/translators. To ensure correct interpretation of information obtained from the interviewees; for example, the sample survey forms were double translated: particularly, the survey forms were first translated into Uzbek by one of the research assistants. Then, the Uzbek survey forms were translated back to Russian by another assistant at least twice to ensure accuracy of the asked questions. Thereafter, every question of the sample survey was discussed during the intensive training of the research assistants prior to the sample survey. Finally, I have written and distributed the survey guidelines that explained every question of the survey and the key principles of sampling and interviewing.

<sup>7</sup> Land is owned by the state. Individuals can get access to land for use but not ownership. For example, an individual could own a house, but not the land on which the house was constructed (*uy tomorka*). Likewise, a *fermer* could register his *fermer's* enterprise as "private" business but not the *fermer's* land as private property.

<sup>8</sup> Just one female-headed household did not own a home and *uy tomorka*. After her husband died, she and her daughter had to move out of the parental house of her husband. She eventually moved into the old house of a *fermer*, for whom she worked [*woman 119, sample survey, 2009*].

<sup>9</sup> When I started my research in the spring of 2008, there were about 18384 *farmers* in Khorezm, with an average farm size of not more than 12 ha. In autumn of the same year, the state distributed more land. The average size of farms specialized in cotton and wheat then increased to about 100 ha. The number of *farmers* dropped down to 5968 households by summer 2010, about five per cent of the rural population of Khorezm.

<sup>10</sup> *Farmers* were generally not entitled to get *qo'shimcha tomorka* because they had access to a large *fermer's* land [*woman 438, open-ended interview, 2008*]. To overcome this limitation, the majority of interviewed *farmers* registered this additional plot in the name of another household member that actually was living with the *fermer* but whose household was registered separately.

<sup>11</sup> By the law on *tomorka* allocation, the size of *qo'shimcha tomorka* was to be 0.12ha (Government of Uzbekistan, Law No ZRU-138, 1998, amended in 2007). In practice, several *uy tomorkas* and *qo'shimcha tomorkas* were allocated to one household when this household was registered as several separate households in a village register. Some other households did not have *qo'shimcha tomorka* at all (Section 4.3).

- <sup>12</sup> Access to land that is without consideration of the land plot under constructions (houses).
- <sup>13</sup> Withdrawing cash by employers from any registered on-farm or non-farm activity was generally possible only for paying salaries. As a result, these employers lacked cash and generated a side income through underpayment of salaries to their employees. As a common practice, an employer would get the signature of her/ his employee first on an empty form and then write in the amount afterwards.
- <sup>14</sup> The exchange rate was UzSoums 1500 = USD 1 in 2008. "Formal minimum monthly standard of living" was about UzSoums 30000 in 2009 and about UzSoums 45000 in 2010 [woman 439 and man 449, open-ended interviews, 2008 and 2010 respectively]. And whenever the interviewees named an amount in USD or Euro, it is stated in USD or Euro.
- <sup>15</sup> By its origin, *hashar* (in Uzbek, *x[h]ashar*) is an Uzbek tradition of mutual help on a voluntary basis.
- <sup>16</sup> Nowadays this right to use free labour is also called upon for commercial farming. To give an example, I have come across a case when hospital nurses, during their working hours at the hospital, were working on a *farmers'* land under the supervision of their chief (a hospital manager) and a *farmer*. The difference between the traditional *hashar* and the described case of *hashar* is that the former one is about voluntary work and the equal benefit and interest to every person participating in *hashar* and the latter one is about using the free labour of employees only for the benefits of employers [focus group discussions, 2009].
- <sup>17</sup> In 2009, there were new regulations that salaries (in full or partially) were to be transferred to the employee's bank account and encashed using banking (so-called plastic) cards. This regulation further limited already scarce cash in circulation, hitting consumers' purchasing power and further reducing opportunities for small (unregistered) entrepreneurs because the consumers did not have the cash to pay for the services and goods of these small entrepreneurs.
- <sup>18</sup> According to these men, women rarely came to this place. Some women came to the labour market during the rice transplanting season. Some of these people were offered a job as a cleaner. In general, women engaged in on-farm *mardikorlik*.
- <sup>19</sup> The sample size for migration survey was 299 households and not 300 sample households because an interviewee from one household was reluctant to share information about migration in his/her household.
- <sup>20</sup> The migration rate identified through the sample survey of this research is relatively higher than the rate of migration identified by other researchers, doing research in Khorezm earlier (Veldwisch, 2008; Conliffe, 2009). This probably implies that the migration rate is increasing.
- <sup>21</sup> Free health care services were limited to vaccinations, maternity care, first aid and some free diagnostics. The subsidized health care services generally could not provide required medicines and treatment. In regard to the quality of free medical care services, the interviewees complained about the problems with hygiene: for example, there were cases when women were infected with hepatitis B or C at maternity hospitals; children became disabled for their entire life as a result of improper or expired vaccines.
- <sup>22</sup> The general rule for hospitality was that anyone (especially travellers from a location that was far away) who came to your home should not leave your home being thirsty or hungry. The tradition probably came into existence from the Silk Road time when there were many travellers in the region. Furthermore, there were different tales associated with guests; for example, if a person ate at your home, the belief was that this person and seven generations following this person could not attack your home or be an enemy to you [woman 302-3, case study household, 2008].
- <sup>23</sup> Sample frame at the individual level: 1310 adult individuals (670 adult men and 640 adult women) living in 300 sample survey households.
- <sup>24</sup> *Palov* is a traditional Central Asian dish (main ingredients: rice, carrot, meat) that has an important meaning and cultural value to people in Central Asia.

<sup>25</sup> Before the last land reform, in Khorezm, 17% of *farmers* were women (Provincial Statistics Department, 2008).

<sup>26</sup> In Khorezm, there were several moving markets. People moved with their products for sale from place to place depending on the day of a week. For example, there was a market in *Gazavat* on Wednesdays, livestock market on Thursdays in *Qo'shko'pir* district, *Juma bozor* on Fridays in *Qo'shko'pir* district.

<sup>27</sup> When a young couple lived separately from the husband's parents and the husband migrated, the young wife generally moved into the household of his parents for the time of the man's absence [*woman 301-1, case study household, 2008*].

<sup>28</sup> In Chapter 4, I presented two types of activity diversification, explaining different combinations of activities (different activity patterns) in order to explain what people do to make a living (*uni-sectoral* and *multi-sectoral* activity diversification). In this chapter, I categorise activity diversification by the ways of doing to explain how people diversify their activities. I explained two ways of diversification (*synergetic* and *additive* ways of diversification).

<sup>29</sup> The name was changed to ensure anonymity. The name "Rashid" in local interpretation means "the only one" and "always first (or advanced)."

<sup>30</sup> As for the development of the industrial business, Rashid was interested in buying new equipment for processing factories with own investment. He was interested in this equipment because it could increase the shelf-life of his products as well as packquicker than he could do using his old Soviet equipment.

<sup>31</sup> Large-scale *farmers* generally had more than ten cows (e.g. livestock *farmers*). However, these *farmers* generally differentiated between "own livestock" and "livestock that belonged to *farmer's* enterprise", referring to the latter as of not their own livestock and being not specific about the number of livestock of the *farmer's* enterprise. Thus, calculating livestock index, only livestock that was owned was included in the calculations.

<sup>32</sup> To calculate the proportion of food costs, visual PRA tools were used: first, each interviewee of the sample survey (2009) was requested to name main costs of a household during a year. Then, the interviewee was given 100 coins as 100% of their income. Thereafter, the interviewees were requested to allocate the coins by the named list of their costs. This way, counting the number of coins allocated for covering food costs, the proportion of food costs was estimated.

<sup>33</sup> The households assessed their food costs considering both cash and in-kind income.

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## ANNEXES

## ANNEX A CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

Research Sub-question	Data Needs
Main Research Question: How do people living in the rural areas of the Khorezm province in Uzbekistan secure their livelihoods and what are the gender-specific effects of changing livelihoods as a result of the rural transformation processes and post-Soviet transition?	
RQ (1): Which livelihood strategies do people living in the rural areas develop to secure their livelihoods in the process of rural transformation?	<p>Income-generating activities (on-farm, non-farm activities and migration, regular employment, entrepreneurship, <i>mardikorlik</i>)</p> <p>Diversification patterns</p> <p>Income sources (seasonality and types, as: in-kind, cash, in "plastic" banking cards)</p> <p>Ways of doing (e.g. cost-saving, running into debts, accumulation, surviving, coping, adjusting, improving) and reasons for these ways of doing (e.g. why did they start or stop specific activities; why do they want to increase or decrease their engagement in specific activities)</p> <p>Opportunities, entitlements, endowments (<i>de jure</i> and <i>de facto</i>)</p> <p>Social networks support and the matters of inclusion and exclusion</p> <p>Welfare system support and the matters of inclusion and exclusion</p> <p>Health care system</p> <p>Problem analyses (opportunities and constraints to generate livelihood in the given context)</p> <p>Institutional analysis for example, differentiated access to assets (<i>de jure</i> allocation and <i>de facto</i> practices of distribution of assets)</p>
RQ (2): What is the livelihood security of people in the diverse types of rural households and why do they diverge?	<p>Differentiated levels of livelihood security (<i>emic</i> and <i>etic</i>)</p> <p>Socio-economic status and changes in this status over time</p> <p>Village hierarchy (<i>emic</i>)</p> <p>Differentiated levels of food security</p> <p>Household demography (e.g. size, number of adult women and men, number of under-age and school-age children, health status, education levels, main activities of household members)</p> <p>Income patterns</p> <p>Cost patterns</p> <p>Seasonality of income and costs</p> <p>Changes in the levels of well-being over time (<i>emic</i>)</p>
RQ (3): What is the gender specificity of rural livelihoods?	<p>Productive and reproductive activities</p> <p>Access to maternity benefits, basic infrastructure and health care facilities</p>

Research Sub-question	Data Needs
	<p>Gendered and generational division of labour</p> <p>Gendered and generational access to assets, education, income-generating opportunities</p> <p>Gendered and generational cultural norms and decision making</p> <p>Gender and generational differences across differentiated households by different livelihood security levels and demographic characteristics</p> <p>Diversity of gender and generational structures</p> <p>Institutional analysis: multi-level practices reproducing gender inequalities and/or transforming gender structures</p>

*Source:* Author's presentation.





## ANNEX B CONTENT OF SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Forms	Subject	Content
0	Checklist	Research consent, date, time of interview, interviewer and interviewee (age, gender), household location, period of life at this address, distance to city, markets, industries, checklist and coding for other forms
1	Basic information	Household members the older than 16 years old, their age, gender, household position, education, employment status, main activity, number of pre-school and school age children  Migration of household members – who, where, for how long, if sends remittances, how regular are remittances, the amount of these remittances
2	Assets	Access to land, access to water for different types of land; water source; awareness of and support from WUA for water; experience as a <i>fermer</i> , if relevant; number of livestock; household assets; access to credit; savings and their purpose; debts, their purpose, from where, for how long, how much and if there is an interest
3	Activities, income patterns, state welfare support	Inventory of all sources of income, five main activities, their regularity of income, their share in the total income, the type of income (cash, plastic, in-kind), income from work for a <i>fermer</i> before and after land reform, other impacts of land reforms, all types of income, three top sources of income, share of food sovereignty in total food costs, synergy of different sources of income and activities
4	Self-assessment of well-being	Perceptions and assessment of present and past levels of well-being ( <i>kolkhoz</i> time or ten years ago, depending on the age of the interviewee), job opportunities, quality of food, quality of welfare system, quality of recreation, equality in opportunities compared to other households, levels of community support and integration into the community
5	Access to food  Household costs  Problem analysis  Support networks	Consumption of wheat, meat and rice, five main food products, access to these by seasons, types of food prepared for winter, food grown and purchased  Consumption pattern  Problems, solutions, alternatives  Support networks; highest work position of relatives and parents in past
6	Perception of opportunities by gender and generation	Perceptions of gender equality in job opportunities, in payment, in ownership, in education; gender roles in the household; who shall and who manages the household budget, if this person lives in the same household; who shall be and who is the household head
7	Trends in engagement in on-farm and non-farm activities, impact of land reforms	On-farm and non-farm activities started and stopped during the last three years and the reasons for doing so; incentives and constraints to engage in on-farm and non-farm activities

Forms	Subject	Content
8	Health status and care	Health problem (kind and type (chronic, casual) of disease) with any household member in last five years; age, gender and household position of a person with health problems; if this person is able to work and actually works; type of treatment (hospital care or local healers); care taker (gender, household position); treatment costs; treatment sources (state welfare support, community support, support networks, assets sold for medical treatment, migrated to cover treatment costs); how many months could live for this amount, how many months are needed to earn this amount
9	<i>Fermers'</i> benefits and labour	Years of being a <i>fermer</i> ; position before becoming a <i>fermer</i> ; gender of the <i>fermer</i> ; land size and specialisation; quota agricultural products; cropping pattern, agricultural and non-agricultural benefits of being a <i>fermer</i> , cash and in-kind, use of benefits, seasonality of benefits, ranking benefits; farm labour (gender, number of casual and regular labour, relatives and non-relatives)

Source: Author's presentation.

ANNEX C ASSESSMENT OF PROVISIONAL WELL-BEING INDICATORS: EXCLUDED *ETIC* INDICATORS

Parameter	Collected Quantitative Data	Weakness
Income	Income and costs at the household level	A low rate of response
Access to assets	Inventory and number of valuable assets (e.g. land, irrigation water, machinery, home assets); the number of livestock and poultry	Apart from the livestock index, it was complicated to monetise other assets because of their different values within each category
Access to drinking water	Access to drinking water (source of water, availability of water)	There were no variations in access to drinking water at the household level. All households used water from the same wells
Food security: Calorie intake	The amount of consumed meat, rice, bread per week; the number of meals per day; five main food products	Calorie intake per capita calculated at the household level would be misleading because it varies among household members within a household
Access to health facilities	The amount of medical costs; ability to cover medical treatment with own savings; ability to take loans for medical treatment	Only a few cases (two per cent of the sample households) reported that they could not access medical care because they neither had savings nor could take a loan
Access to housing and dwelling conditions	<p>Access to housing</p> <p>Dwelling conditions (material used for making a floor (e.g. mud and not wood for making floor is an indicator of poverty)</p> <p>Resource used for heating and cooking (e.g. cow dung and not gas or coal is an indicator of poverty)</p>	<p>In general, all had access to housing. Some households were still in the process of house construction and thus having a mud floor was temporary.</p> <p>Variations in access to gas generally exist at the village level and not at the household level (see Annex D).</p>

Source: Author's presentation based on the synthesis of the factors of livelihood security, presented by Frankenberger et al., 2000.

## ANNEX D HETEROGENEITY OF SAMPLE SURVEY LOCATIONS IN KHOREZM

Heterogeneity existed within every district of the province and even within different villages. This heterogeneity can be explained by the following factors:

- Distances to the largest markets;
- Availability of public transport to the centres;
- Basic infrastructure and thus access to assets and income opportunities;
- Village demography: small *makhalyas* (e.g. less than 100 households) generally had a worse supply of gas and other resources than large *makhalyas*;
- Age of the settlement: the villages that existed there for centuries or several decades had better infrastructure than recently established villages. The new settlements had poor access to basic facilities, such as: supply of gas and electricity, availability of clinics and schools. In addition, salinity, water logging, high water table were the other problems for generating on-farm income especially in the newly settled areas;
- Origin of the settlement: the primary design for establishing of a village mattered. For example, the *Pitnak* district and its centre were established for industrial purposes (first, for construction of the *Toyamuin* water reservoir that is now located on the territory of Turkmenistan; then there were power engineering and helicopter industries there). Then the border was closed, the district lost its economic basis and was merged with the *Khazorasp* district in 1991. Since then, the area appears to be marginal, compared to other areas of the *Khazorasp* district. Likewise, there were cross-border economic activities between the *Qo'shko'pir* district and Turkmenistan (e.g. the livestock trade, gas supply) and the border closure also caused the loss of important economic activities in those areas; and
- Economic or strategic importance: the better-off villages generally had some unit or organisation, which was important for the province (e.g. location of the best *sovkhos* (Soviet collective farm) in the past; location of a military unit).

## SUMMARY

This study focuses on the livelihood of people living in the rural areas of Khorezm, Uzbekistan, in a time of fundamental transitions after independence from the Soviet Union, with uncertainties in access to assets and income, with traditional patriarchal cultural norms and harsh environmental conditions.

The thesis explores how women and men secure their livelihoods and adapt to changes in this challenging context. It describes their livelihood strategies and gives insight into their deliberations and decision-making about livelihood strategies. It also explains why there are divergences in the livelihood strategies and how these relate to the achievement of different levels of livelihood security.

The research employs a multi-case study approach at the level of the Khorezm province. Within the case-studies, multiple quantitative and qualitative methods of data-collection and data-analysis were used at varying scales. This enables identifying patterns and structures and generating reliable, internally and externally valid and generalisable findings. This research contributes to the DFID livelihoods framework. Based on a critical literature review, and the application of the framework in a transitional context, this research contributes to the further elaboration of the livelihoods framework in three main ways:

(1) A further elaboration about people's considerations when making their choice about how to secure a livelihood, which is an inseparable part of strategizing in the context of transition;

(2) The identification of factors that reproduce and transform gender and generational structures, and which, in their turn, determine access to assets, income opportunities, decision-making power and thus livelihood security; and

(3) The exploration of different types and mechanisms of diversification of income sources. Most rural households diversify their income sources in order to secure their livelihoods. They engage in several on-farm and non-farm activities and migration. In addition, they use welfare benefits and invest in social networks as safety nets in times of need. There are two types of diversification: *uni-sectoral* and *multi-sectoral* diversification. The former comprises only on-farm activities that generally do not provide cash income. The latter diversification and combination of on- and non-farm activities generally produces both - cash and in-kind income. There are two main mechanisms of diversification. The first one is when diversification works synergistically whereas various activities are interrelated and reinforce each other. The second mechanism of diversification functions in an additive way when the activities remain not related and do not depend on each other. The additive way of diversification is less risky in the given context of transition because, as a result of the continuity of reforms, there is uncertainty in access to income opportunities and assets.

Households and individuals differ in their types, mechanisms and patterns of diversification. These differences contribute to the differentiation in the levels of livelihood security. When choosing what to do and how to secure their livelihood, people engage in reflexive thinking and consider divergent but interlinked elements of strategizing: which opportunities are out there; how acceptable the different options are; which material and immaterial motives are taken into account and which capabilities people perceive to have. Co-shaping one another, these four elements shape divergent 'livelihood spaces' that result in the choice of a specific mix of livelihood strategies that are pursued at the household level. These *spaces* also explain why people make specific choices, why there are differences in people's strategies across and within households and why some livelihood strategies have a greater potential for improving people's well-being than others.

More in particular, households differ in their activity patterns (different types of diversification) depending on their socio-economic status and access to assets (including labour), the demographic composition of a household (e.g. extended versus non-extended households) and the position at work of household members. Likewise, people differ in their material and immaterial motives, capabilities and perceptions of acceptability (e.g. as these are defined by cultural norms). The divergent livelihood strategies and 'livelihood spaces', in their turn, result in the perpetuation of the differential levels of livelihood security. The divergences in 'livelihood spaces', hence, reproduce poverty and social inequality and the differences between the well-off households and the households in need. Nonetheless, the context of transition causes continuous and sudden changes in access to assets and opportunities that make all people live in considerable uncertainty about their livelihood security. As a result, the achieved levels of livelihood security are not static and are continuously changing.

There are also structural differences in livelihood according to gender and generation. This research explores these gendered and generational divergences as well as how gender inequalities in livelihood strategies are being reproduced and transformed in the context of transition. The benefits of transition do not equally reach every woman and every man living in the rural areas of Khorezm. Livelihood strategies and 'livelihood spaces' diverge also at the level of the individual, depending on gender, age and position within the household, under influence of the specific gender structure within a household and the dominant gender structure within a community. The factors that shape and re-shape (transform or reproduce) these gender structures are cultural (e.g. gender norms, gender ideals and stereotypes), economic (e.g. access to assets and income opportunities), institutional (e.g. policies, practices, decision-making processes), organisational (e.g. gendered division of labour) and infrastructural (access to childcare and healthcare centres, domestic labour-saving machinery). All of these factors are, moreover, closely interrelated and shape the gender specificities of rural livelihoods in the given context.

This research explains how these interlinked factors reproduce and transform gender structures in the transitional context of Khorezm. The seasonal outmigration of men plays a particularly important role and gradually transforms the traditional (*odatiy*) gender and generational structures into modern (*zamonaviy*) ones, where women and

the younger generations may gain greater negotiation and decision-making powers as well as access to assets, higher education and income opportunities. At the same time, the empirical evidences suggest that it is mainly the economic need that pushes women and men to change their traditional practices. Once a household achieves a relatively good level of living, they often return to the traditional ways of behaviour.

## SAMENVATTING

Dit onderzoek brengt in kaart hoe de plattelandsbewoners van Khorezm, Oezbekistan, in hun levensonderhoud voorzien. Het laat zien dat de veranderingen die gepaard gingen met het uiteenvallen van de Sovjetunie nog steeds grote onzekerheden met zich meebrengen voor wat betreft toegang tot hulpbronnen en inkomsten, patriarchale normen van omgang en de kwaliteit van de omgeving.

Deze studie laat zien dat mannen en vrouwen verschillen in hoe ze in hun levensonderhoud voorzien en hoe ze omgaan met de uitdagingen die deze tijd van transitie met zich meebrengt. De studie beschrijft de verschillen maar verklaart ook waarom mensen verschillende strategieën kiezen en hoe deze verschillende keuzes bijdragen aan meer of minder zekerheid van levensonderhoud.

De onderzoekster maakt gebruik van verschillende kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve methodes van data-verzameling en data-analyse binnen een *'multiple casestudy approach'*. Hierdoor is het mogelijk om patronen en structuren te identificeren en tot betrouwbare, intern en extern gevalideerde en generaliseerbare bevindingen te komen.

Het onderzoek maakt gebruik van het door DIFD ontwikkelde *'rural livelihoods framework'*. Op basis van kritisch literatuuronderzoek en toepassing van dit kader in de context van een land in transitie draagt dit onderzoek tevens bij tot een verdere ontwikkeling van dit theoretisch kader op met name de volgende drie punten:

- (1) Een verkenning van de strategische overwegingen die mensen maken, als zij kiezen op welke manier zij in een transitie-context in hun levensonderhoud kunnen voorzien;
- (2) Een nadere bepaling van de factoren die (in samenhang) de gender- en generatie specificiteit van sociale structuren zowel reproduceren als veranderen en daarmee mede bepalen wie op welke manier toegang verwerft tot hulpbronnen, inkomsten en besluitvormingsprocessen, en daarmee ook de kansen op levensonderhoud beïnvloeden;
- (3) Een verkenning van de verschillende vormen van diversificatie van inkomstenbronnen. Veel rurale huishouden spreiden hun bronnen van inkomsten en ondernemen verschillende agrarische en niet-agrarische activiteiten; verder verwerven zij inkomen door migratie, sociale uitkeringen en investeren zij gericht in hun sociale netwerk als vangnet in tijden van nood. Het onderzoek onderscheidt tussen twee typen van diversificatie: uni-sectorale en multi-sectorale diversificatie. Het eerste type heeft betrekking op de combinatie van verschillende agrarische activiteiten die meestal geen contant inkomen genereren. Het tweede type combineert agrarische en niet-agrarische activiteiten en produceert zowel contant inkomen als inkomen in natura. Verder onderscheidt het onderzoek tussen twee diversificatie-mechanismen: Diversificatie werkt synergetisch wanneer de verschillende activiteiten met elkaar verweven raken en elkaar versterken; diversificatie verloopt op een additieve manier wanneer het om op zich zelf staande activiteiten gaat die elk op zich inkomen opleveren. De additieve

manier van diversificatie is minder risicovol in de gegeven transitiecontext vanwege de continue onzekerheid van toegang tot land en daarmee agrarische inkomensactiviteiten.

Huishoudens en individuen verschillen in hun keuze voor en toegang tot de verschillende typen van diversificatie, en daarmee ontstaan er verschillen in de zekerheid van hun levensonderhoud. De keuze voor een bepaalde '*livelihood-strategy*' komt voort uit een continue reflectie op en overweging van de geboden mogelijkheden en onmogelijkheden. Mensen overwegen welke kansen hen geboden worden, en welke vermogens zij hebben, hoe aanvaardbaar bepaalde keuzes zijn en welke materiële en immateriële voor- en nadelen ze bieden. Deze elementen van hun strategisch denken definiëren de grenzen of reikwijdte van de geboden ruimte tot levensonderhoud oftewel *livelihood-space*. In onderling samenhang bepalen deze vier elementen namelijk de keuze voor een specifieke mix van levensonderhoudstrategieën op huishouden-niveau. Zij verklaren waarom mensen kiezen zoals ze kiezen en waarom zijn daarin verschillen van andere mensen in andere huishoudens. Ze verklaren tevens waarom sommige mensen en huishoudens meer keuzes hebben en die strategieën kunnen ontwikkelen die een groter potentieel hebben hun welzijn te vergroten.

Huishoudens ontwikkelen verschillende patronen van activiteiten en daarmee verschillende vormen van diversificatie - afhankelijk van hun socio-economische status en daarmee toegang tot hulpbronnen, hun demografische compositie en omvang, en afhankelijk van de arbeidspositie van hun leden. Mensen verschillen ok in hun materiële en immateriële drijfveren en in hun waarneming en interpretatie van kansen (bijv. zoals deze zijn gedefinieerd door culturele normen). De eerder genoemde uiteenlopende *livelihood spaces* zorgen er op hun beurt voor dat de bestaande verschillen in zekerheid van levensonderhoud in stand blijven. Verschillen in welzijn en kansen tussen vermogende en hulpbehoevende huishoudens worden zodoende voortdurend gereproduceerd. Tegelijk kan de toegang tot hulpbronnen en kansen in de transitie-context ineens veranderen (bijvoorbeeld door landreformen); daarmee leeft iedereen in voortdurende onzekerheid of de kansen van vandaag er morgen nog steeds zullen zijn en of hulpbronnen die men vandaag inzet, morgen nog steeds ter beschikking staan. Daarmee staat ook de zekerheid van levensonderhoud voortdurend onder druk.

De hierboven genoemde verschillen in strategieën en worden zichtbaar op het niveau van huishoudens maar komen voort uit structurele verschillen in mogelijkheden naar gender en generatie. Zoals deze studie laat zien komen de bestaande verschillen in levensonderhoud en in levensonderhoud-strategieën tussen mannen en vrouwen weliswaar in beweging door al die sociaaleconomische en politieke veranderingen die de transitie-context kenmerken, maar is er tegelijk sprake van een continue reproductie van sociale ongelijkheden. De ruimte voor strategieën van levensonderhoud verschilt per individu, afhankelijk van sekse, leeftijd en positie binnen het huishouden; daarmee speelt een belangrijke rol hoe huishoudens zijn samengesteld (naar gender en generatie) en welke gender specifieke normen en

waarden er in de gemeenschap leven. Meer in het algemeen worden de geldende gender-relaties bepaald door de volgende factoren: culturele factoren (bijv. sekse normen, idealen en stereotype), economische factoren (bijv. toegang tot bezit en inkomens kansen), institutionele factoren (bijv. beleid, gewoontes, besluitvorming processen), organisatorische factoren (bijv. sekse gerelateerde werkverdeling) en infrastructurele factoren (bijv. toegang tot kinderopvang en gezondheidscentra, huishoudelijk werk sparende apparatuur). Al deze factoren zijn met elkaar verbonden en bepalen tezamen het gender-specifieke karakter van *'livelihoods'*.

Dit onderzoek legt uit hoe de bovengenoemde factoren de gender structuren van Korezhm vormgeven en reproduceren, daarbij rekening houdend met de specifieke context van transitie. Het brengt duidelijk naar voren hoe de traditionele (*odatiy*) gender- en generatie-structuur onder invloed van de migratie van mannen langzaam verandert en een meer moderne (*zamononaviy*) structuur laat ontstaan, waarin het vermogen van vrouwen en jongere generaties tot onderhandelen toeneemt evenals hun macht in de besluitvorming binnen huishoudens en hun toegang tot hulpbronnen, scholing en inkomen. Tegelijk wekt het empirische bewijsmateriaal de suggestie dat het voornamelijk economische behoeftes zijn die mannen en vrouwen ertoe zetten om hun traditionele gewoontes te veranderen. Zodra een huishouden een relatief hoog niveau van welzijn heeft bereikt, keert men al snel terug naar een traditionele inrichting van huishoudens.

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **Education**

Duration	Study Programme /University
2007–2012	PhD Sandwich Program between Centre for Development Research (ZEF, University of Bonn, Germany) and Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS, the Netherlands)
2005–2006	Master of Research, Development Studies, University of East Anglia (UEA, United Kingdom)
1993–1997	BSc in Economics, International Economic Relations, University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED, Uzbekistan)

### **Work Experience**

Duration	Employer (Position)
2001–2007	International Water Management Institute, Regional Office for Central Asia (Full-time employment as a Research Officer)
1997–2001	Association for Bankers' Training, TACIS/GTZ projects (Part-Time Employment as a Translator/Interpreter)

### **Professional Training**

Year	Training
2010	Summer School, International Comparative Rural Policies Studies, Oregon State University and Portland State University (USA)
2007	Learning Intercultural competence, ZEF (Germany)
2005	IWMI on-job training at Murray-Darling Basin (Australia)
2004	Gender and Diversity Workshop, IWMI (Sri Lanka)
2004	On-job training on quantitative data collection and analysis, IWMI (Sri Lanka)
2003	On-job training on institutional building of water organisations, IWMI (Pakistan)

### **Internship**

Year	Internship Location
1996	Republican Stock Exchange "Tashkent" (Uzbekistan)
1995	National Bank of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan)
1994	Embassy of Uzbekistan in Moscow (Russia)

Computer skills: SPSS software (quantitative data analysis), Atlas.ti software (qualitative data analysis), Extensive internet use, Microsoft packages.

Languages: Fluent in Russian and English, basic skills in German and Uzbek.

**Publications**

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### COMPLETED TRAINING AND SUPERVISION PLAN

Name of the course	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS (=28 hrs)
<b>General part</b>			
Scientific Writing	WUR	2009	1
Interdisciplinary course "Concept and Theories of Development"	ZEF	2007/ 2008	15
<b>Mansholt-specific part</b>			
Mansholt Introduction course	Mansholt Graduate School	2007	1,5
Mansholt Multidisciplinary Seminar "Gender and generational aspects of rural livelihoods in the Khorezm province of Uzbekistan"	Mansholt Graduate School	2011	1
International Comparative Rural Policy Studies Summer Institute	Oregon State University, Portland State University, USA	2010	1
<b>Discipline-specific part</b>			
A Social Science Perspective on Development: Development Theory, Practice and Research Methods	ZEF	2007	15
Teaching and supervising activities (optional)			
On-job training of nine research assistants	Field station	2008/9	1
<b>Total</b>			<b>35.5</b>

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