

## IWPR in Tajikistan Promotes Involvement of Local Communities in Work to Reduce the Growth of Radicalism and Extremism among Youth

Local communities on the southern borders of Tajikistan with Afghanistan, in the region named after Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadoni (the former Moscow region) discussed the situation with the growth of extremism and religious intolerance among young and offered their vision for solving the problem.

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Photo: CABAR.asia

On August 27, IWPR in Tajikistan, together with a Government Committee on Women and Family Affairs, held a dialogue meeting with activists in the area to discuss the causes of increased religious intolerance and the question of youth joining banned extremist and terrorist organizations. The discussion was preceded by a video showing the fate of a Tajik woman whose only son died in an active combat zone in Syria and Iraq.

Among the main reasons contributing to the growth of religious extremism, residents of the Hamadoni region called unemployment and low living standards among the country's population. In the region, where population exceeds 138 thousand, there is a high level of unemployment, and those jobs available are poorly paid.

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Photo: CABAR.asia

This is an agricultural area, and the population lives mainly on income from their personal household plots. There are no industrial enterprises in the region, lack of kindergartens in rural jamoats, and youth leisure time is not organized either. As the participants in the dialogue meeting noted, this worries local communities, because young people strive for a good life, but they lack not only income, but also a good education.



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*Photo: CABAR.asia*

District named after Hamadoni is one of the most vulnerable in the southern, Khatlon region of Tajikistan. 22 natives of the district, including three women, joined the radical groups in Iraq and Syria.

After divided into groups, residents of the region presented their vision of solving problems to reduce the level of tension among young people. In addition to preventive lectures and discussions in schools and kindergartens, activists proposed creating jobs based on existing opportunities.

For example, open canning and sewing workshops, train young people in relevant professions, increase teachers' salaries and open kindergartens in villages where women have no one to leave their children with when they go to work in cotton fields.

Experts, Saidahmad Kalandarov, Bogigul Islomova and Lola Olimova shared their observations with the participants on the role of raising children in the spirit of tolerance, religious tolerance, state policy in the field of women's and family rights, as well as methods for solving such problems in other areas and in neighboring countries of Central Asia.



*Yormuhammad Saidov on the need to strengthen parental control over the Internet use by children Photo: CABAR.asia Photo: CABAR.asia*

The chairman of the rural jamoat Tudaboen, Yormuhammad Saidov, noted the need to strengthen parental control over the use of mobile phones and the Internet by children. "We

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are pleased that our young children are already free to use mobile phones at the age of 2, but parents do not always know that their children are recruited through the Internet and social networks,” he said and offered to teach parents how to use monitoring programs.

Residents of Hamadoni district noted the need for such dialogue meetings in all rural jamoats.



Photo: CABAR.asia

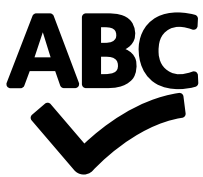
On the same day, an intellectual game was held for the youth of the region on the topic “Prevention of violent extremism and religious tolerance”, which was attended by 40 girls and boys, residents of Hamadoni, aged 15 to 28 years. Experts helped young people to master the issues of religious tolerance in a playful way, to learn more about the religions existing in the world, about the legislation in the field of religion and the fight against violent extremism. The winners were awarded symbolic prizes.

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Photo: CABAR.asia

IWPR holds dialogue meetings with local community activists and holds intellectual games for youth as part of the project “Stability in Central Asia through an open dialogue”. Similar meetings are held in many areas of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in order to increase tolerance and reduce the growth of radicalism among the population of Central Asian countries.



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