

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Beijing+25

The Report has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines note of the comprehensive national - level review with the involvement of all the interested ministries and agencies and other national stakeholders.

Chapter 1. Priorities, achievements, challenges and failures

1. What have been the most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years?

On December 6, 2015 Armenia voted for the constitutional reform, which had its positive effect, *inter alia*, on the implementation of the gender policy. Specifically, Article 30 of the Constitution (edited version as of 2015) declares equality between men and women. Also, the following was considered:

- Respective recommendations were addressed to the Armenian counterparts by the two UN human rights monitoring bodies, CEDAW and CAT, in November, 2016;
- Respective recommendations of CPRD were given in March, 2017;
- Sustainable development goals were included into the “2030 Sustainable Development Agenda” of January 1, 2016;
- Agreements were signed between the Republic of Armenia and the European Union on the GSP+ Trading regime (2014), Support to Protection of Human Rights in Armenia (2015), and the EU budget support programme on Public Finance Policy Reform in Armenia.

Armenian legislation does not contain any norm that restricts women’s rights. On the contrary, the latter grants privileges and guarantees for pregnant women and for mothers of children of various ages (1, 3, 8, etc.). Moreover, the equality between men and women is largely reflected in the legislation of Armenia.

Targeted strategic programmes have been adopted and implemented by the Government giving the practicality to the norms of the legislation.

The activities that were implemented in Armenia during the last five years in the area of gender equality and women empowerment are the following:

1) The Decree N197-L of the Government (February 28, 2019) adopted the 2019-2021 National Action Plan for the implementation of the provisions of the UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security;

2) The Government on March 26, 2015 approved the 2015 Annual Action Plan on the implementation of the “Law on Guaranteeing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men”;

3) The Council of the Chairpersons of the Courts, by the N 04-N Decision (August 29, 2014), stressed the necessity to promote gender balance among the candidate judges. The main target was to increase the number of female judges in the judicial system.

Significant steps related to the gender policy have been implemented in fighting against domestic violence and human trafficking.

In 2017 the Ministry of Justice initiated a campaign aimed at the awareness-raising on domestic violence, the purpose of which was to inform the public about this issue as well as about the effective

methods of fighting against it. As a result, the National Assembly on December 13, 2017 adopted the “Law on prevention of violence within the family, protection of victims of violence within the family and restoration of peace in the family,” which ensures preventive and protective mechanisms for the victims of domestic violence, as well as it guarantees the social assistance¹. On February 27, 2018 the Government adopted the Action Plan aimed at the effective enforcement of the Law, and on June 10 the Council on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia was established², which is the body that coordinates the policy on the prevention of domestic violence. The first session of the Council was held in January 2019. The Government and people responsible for this sphere made respective decisions, which derived from the above-mentioned Law³.

Five national anti-trafficking programmes were implemented in the Republic of Armenia (the last one implemented during the period of 2016-2018). Recently, the 2019-2021 programme has been developed. On December 17, 2014 the National Assembly adopted the “Law on Identification and Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation.” Later on, the Government approved the following decrees to enforce the above-mentioned Law:

- Government N 851-N Decree (July 30, 2015) “On approving the procedure of selection of partners among the civil society organizations, procedure of engaging representatives of civil society organizations into the committee on identification of victims of human trafficking and exploitation;
- The N 835-A Decision of the Prime Minister (September 15, 2015) “On defining the composition of the committee on identification of victims of human trafficking and exploitation”;
- Government N 1200-N Decree (October 15, 2015) “On defining working procedure of the Committee on Identification of Victims and Human Trafficking and Exploitation” and “On defining the reporting procedures of the Committee on Identification of Victims and Human Trafficking and Exploitation to the RA Committee on Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation”;
- Government N 492-N Decree (May 5, 2016), “On defining the procedures and the amount of support prescribed by the Law to the potential victims, to the actual victims and to the victims of special category;
- Government N 353-N Decree (April 6, 2016) “On defining procedures for organization of safe return of victims of human trafficking and exploitation and of victims of special category”;
- Government N 1356-N Decree (October 29, 2015) “On approving the procedure for the provision of protection” prescribed by the “Law on identification and assistance to the victims of human trafficking and exploitation, to the victims of special category and their legal representatives.”

Parallel to the adoption of the above-mentioned legal acts, the enforcement activities have been carried out, specifically, trainings were organized for the representatives of the Police, regional administration offices, regional social centres, employment services, guardianship bodies in the respective Marzes (provinces) of the Republic of Armenia (activities are still pending).

¹ The National Assembly adopted the “Law on Social Assistance” (December 17, 2014), which regulates the procedures of provision of social assistance to the persons subjected to domestic violence, particularly provision of shelters for them and finding solutions to their social issues.

² The Board consists of 25 members, who participate at the sessions on a voluntary basis. The chairperson of the board is the deputy of the authorized body coordinating the issues of family, women and children.

³ Those acts are: the Government N 364-N Decree (adopted on March 29, 2019) on “Defining the Sample Contracts for Funding Shelters for Victims of Domestic Violence”, “Requirements to the Shelters and Personnel there for Victims of Violence”; the RA Government Decree on “Defining the Procedure of Centralized Registration of Domestic Violence Cases; the RA Government N 333-N Decree (March 29, 2019) on “Defining the Procedure of Disposal of Temporary Assistance Account of Victims of Domestic Violence”; the RA Government N 786-N Decree (July 10, 2018) on “Defining the Procedures of Formation and Functions of the Council on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia”; the N 1685-A Decision of the Prime Minister (December 28, 2018) on “Approving the Composition of the Council on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia.”

In the last five years, along with the legislative reforms, programmes aimed at strengthening the gender policy were carried out. Specifically, the 2011-2015 Strategic Programme on Gender Policy and the 2011-2015 National Programme on Fighting against Gender-Based Violence were of utmost significance for the RA Government. Every year, annual action plans on gender policy and fighting against gender-based violence, aimed at achieving the objectives set by the above-mentioned programmes, were approved by the Government. Many state, non-governmental and international bodies carried out certain activities for the following purposes:

- Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for gender equality and for the development of partnership relations;
- Improving women's and men's health;
- Enhancing the economic opportunities for women for the purposes of the poverty reduction;
- Enhancing the opportunities for women's participation in projects related to the social and economic development of rural settlements and to the establishment of competitive market;
- Transferring knowledge on gender equality to the field of education and science;
- Improving the effectiveness of gender policy and conducting awareness-raising campaigns at the provincial and communal levels;
- Implementing and monitoring of the above-mentioned activities;
- Media coverage of gender issues for larger public, overcoming gender-based discriminatory behaviours and dissemination thereof through mass media;
- Improving the protection of victims of domestic violence, the provision of services and the effective organization of those services;
- Advancing the qualification of specialists of various fields and transferring of knowledge on domestic violence;
- Preventing the gender-based violence among the society, particularly, by forming the intolerant environment towards violence, eliminating gender stereotypes, conducting awareness-raising campaigns on gender-based violence and providing information and methodological support.

Since 2018-2019 the Government has commenced a reinforcement and/or establishment of a series of effective mechanisms aimed at ensuring gender equality, such as reorganization of the Council on Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men with the purpose of coordination of activities related to the issues of equality of women and men and the development of a national mechanism for equal rights and opportunities for women and men, reestablishment of the Gender Thematic Group, development and enforcement of gender-sensitive budgeting tools and instruments with the support of the European Union.

Armenia documented a slight progress in the Gender Gap Index, which is defined in four major areas: economy, politics, education and healthcare. It shows the difference of opportunities for women and men in each of the mentioned areas. In 2016, according to the Gender Gap Index, Armenia ranked the 102nd out of 145 countries, in 2017 it was on the 97th, in 2018 it ranked the 98th. According to the Gender Gap Indices, in the area of economic activity (ratio between employment levels of men and women; equal pay for the same or similar work, etc.) Armenia ranked the 72nd. According to the Gender Gap Indices in the area of political activity, Armenia ranked the 115th. However, there are also other issues⁴.

⁴ Those issues include:

- Women's economic activity in the labour market in Armenia is 52.8%, which is significantly lower compared to the activity level of men, i.e. 70.7%. Total of 79.6% of employers and 54.4% of self-employed are men, while the women are the majority among those working with no remuneration as their engagement is twice higher than men's (Women and Men of Armenia, 2018 statistical handbook);
- 47.0% of economically not active women are housewives or 98.5% of those engaged in housekeeping are women, meanwhile 42.4% of those women have higher or vocational education (Labour Market in the Republic of Armenia, 2018 statistical handbook);

Furthermore, on May 4, 2017 the Government N 483-N Decree “On approving the 2017-2019 Action Plan of the National Strategy on Human Rights Protection” was adopted, which envisaged a number of activities concerning the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women’s rights.

Women’s professional engagement is one of the constituting features of the ICT sector in Armenia. According to the research and data collected by the Enterprise Incubator Foundation, in 2018-2019 the women and girl’s engagement in the ICT sector constitutes 37% in the Republic of Armenia. With this indicator Armenia ranked the 4th in the world.

This indicator gradually increases due to the support of the different organizations in the sector and the conditions were created for an effective combination of career and family life, paid maternity leave, creation of mother and child care premises in the companies.

In the ICT sector high professional qualifications and skills are the priority. The number of women and girls lecturing and studying in higher education institutions in the centres of natural science and technology and scientific research is a favourable precondition and a factor for the development of professional, entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

2. Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country over the past five years through laws, policies and /or programmes?

1. The role of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, engagement in other humanitarian missions as well as rehabilitation activities in the post-conflict period was enhanced. Moreover, the National Action Plan was developed based on the UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

In order to develop the National Action Plan, an interagency commission has been established by the N1014-A Decree of the Prime Minister (September 13, 2017) which comprised of the representatives of all line ministries and agencies. The National Action Plan allows Armenia, referring to the provisions of the 1325 Resolution, to address a number of issues of special importance for the country. Those issues include: focusing on economic and social development of women residing in borderline communities; ensuring a special protection of displaced women and girls; promoting women’s engagement in peacekeeping missions; protecting women’s rights and increase their political participation, etc.

The structure and framework of the National Action Plan Programme are in compliance with the standards developed by international organizations.

2. Protection of pregnant women and ban on the sex-selective abortions and provision of sexual reproductive healthcare services: UNFPA published World Population/ 2017 annual report titled Worlds Apart: Reproductive Health and Rights in an Age of Inequality⁵. The report reflects upon the forms and

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- 15.7% of the labour resource of the Republic of Armenia or 31.3% of those employed are engaged in agriculture, among which women constitute 52.9%, which makes them even more significant players in agriculture development, while in the conditions of non-formal employment they are deprived of social guarantees (Labour Market in the Republic of Armenia, 2018 statistical handbook).
 - As per the results of the Research of the Quality of Life of Households conducted in 2016, 27,8% of rural households are women-headed, and per capita income in these households is almost twice as lower as in men-headed households;
 - In 2017 fertility rate in the Republic of Armenia per woman constituted 1.576 compared to 1.647 in 2016, which is significantly lower than the 2.150 ratio required for natural reproduction of the population;
 - Probability of being poor for households and having children is higher: in households with three or more children under 18, 44.6% of children are poor vs. 34.2% of all children, and in large families 3.8% of children are in extreme poverty vs. 2.0% of all children (Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia, 2017, statistical analytical report).

⁵ “Worlds apart: Reproductive health and rights in an age of inequality,” UNFPA State of World Population 2017, http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_PUB_2017_EN_SWOP.pdf:

consequences of equality in the following areas: maternal mortality, prenatal care, income distribution among population and genders, importance of work and education for men and women, etc. The report presents the positive experience documented in Armenia as the best example of reduction of inequalities related to accessibility of prenatal care and health services. In 2016, Armenia also received the international certificate as a Country that Eliminated Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission.

In 2016 the Law on “Reproductive Health and Rights to Reproduction” was amended, particularly the Article 10 bans sex-selective abortions, the Article 47.12 of the RA Code of Administrative Offences, in its turn, defines administrative penalty charge on doctors for failure to conduct the required measures before and after artificial termination of pregnancy. At the same time, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, major activities were carried out to highlight the importance of girls and them being a reliable generation.

The joint Decree N1129-A of the Minister of Health (May 8, 2015) and N 75-A/1 of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (May 13, 2015) endorsed the 2015-2017 Programme on Prevention of Sex-Selective Abortions and the Schedule for Programme Activities, implementation of which was ensured by the Human Development International Centre NGO funded by the EU.

As a result of the 2015-2017 State programme the capacities of the marzes and urban communities of the Republic of Armenia expanded, the level of public awareness increased, and favourable environment for the policy implementation was created. Such a balanced combination of interventions and activities, selection of a wide range of instruments and the sequence of application have become the main precondition for the achievements made in the scope of the programme.

If in 2016, the sex ratio between newborn children constituted 113 boys vs. 100 girls, in 2018 the NSA documented a significant decline in the disproportion of the sex ratio: 110 boys vs. 100 girls.

3. Initial minimum services for reproductive health protection: in 2017 by the initiative of the Ministry of Health and jointly with the Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform and UNFPA training on the minimum service package for reproductive health in emergency situations was delivered to 173 firefighter-rescuers and 140 healthcare personnel in Syunik Marz, 25 firefighter-rescuers and 30 healthcare personnel in Armavir Marz, and 150 firefighters-rescuers and 119 healthcare personnel in Tavush Marz in 2018. As a result, the participants gained relevant knowledge and skills that enable them to ensure effective implementation of the minimum package of initial services for reproductive health.

The minimum package of initial services for the reproductive health protection is a series of complex priority interventions, which are undertaken in emergency situations to ensure safety of newborns, breastfeeding mothers, pregnant women and girls with the aim to decrease the level of mortality and morbidity among them.

In the scope of the 2019 interventions, it is planned to conduct similar trainings for firefighters-rescuers of the Shirak Marz Rescue Department of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and for medical personnel.

4. Organization of sessions on human rights, including issues that relate to equality of men and women in secondary education: thematic units devoted to fundamental human rights, equality of men and women, elimination of violence, tolerance and civil society are included in the standard and the curriculum of Social Science subject designed for 8-12 grades of the school.

Gender thematic materials are included in elementary school as part of “Myself and the Environment” subject. The students learn about topics that relate to the equality of women and men. Apart from the above, since 2008 Tolerance Education is implemented in secondary school and respective teacher’s manual is introduced for various grades. In elementary school the manual is titled “Tolerance Education”, in main schools – “Diversity and Tolerance”, and in high school – “Dignity and Tolerance”. These manuals allow the teachers reflect upon development and expression of tolerance towards all members of the society in their educational activities. The programme teaches the students to be tolerant, collaborative, contribute to conflict resolution, etc.

5. During the drafting procedure of the Anti-Discrimination Law, the Ministry of Justice has changed it to the “Law on Ensuring Equality,” which defines the notion of discrimination and the types thereof.

The goal of the draft is to ensure equal opportunities for the implementation of the rights and freedoms prescribed for each person and citizen of Armenia regardless of their sex, race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic specifics, language, religion, beliefs, political or other opinions, belonging to ethnic minority, property status, birth, disability, age or any other circumstances of personal or social nature.

This approach is a derivable of the constitutional guarantees, the latter are envisaged not only in the Article 30 of the RA Constitution, but also in the Clause 4 of the Article 86, that states that one of the main goals of the state policy is to promote the actual equality between men and women.⁶

6. In order to increase the role of women in law-making, the following aspects have been taken into account: The RA Electoral Code (May 25, 2016) sets gender-sensitive quotas (compared to the previous Code, the quotas have increased by 10%) aimed at increasing the women’s representation in the legislative power. The last election of the National Assembly of the 7th convocation took place on December 9, 2018. As a result, there are 132 elected parliament members, of which 32 or 24% are women. In comparison, during the previous convocation of the National Assembly women parliamentarians constituted 18%.⁷

3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination?

Actions aimed at the prevention of discrimination are carried out generally regardless of the fact if any discriminatory acts had been committed towards a person in the past or not. The preventive measures are both of general nature (awareness-raising, legal reforms, advocacy, etc.), as well as targeted and specific (enhanced employment opportunities for women, enhanced opportunities in education, reduction of cases of sex-selective abortions, etc.).

Preventive interventions are implemented both by the state, and non-governmental and international organizations. These kinds of responsibilities are assigned to such state agencies as the Police, courts, Penitentiary Services, Probation Services, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Health, etc.

Large scale interventions were implemented by the representatives of the civil society.

At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the issues of empowerment and protection of women from vulnerable groups are reflected in the Gender strategy, which is expected to be adopted by the Government in the coming months.

4. Has the increased number of humanitarian crises-caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events-affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country?

⁶ The Constitutional norm on banning gender-based discrimination is regulated by the RA Law on “Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men” adopted on May 20, 2013 by the National Assembly, which aims at ensuring gender equality in all aspects of public life, legal protection of women and men from gender-based discrimination, support to formation of civil society and establishment of democratic relations in the society.

⁷ If disaggregated by factions, the highest representation of women is attributed to My Step alliance, where 23 or 26% of 88 parliamentarians are women. Five or 19% of 21 parliamentarians of Prosperous Armenia are women. Four or 22.2% of 14 parliamentarians of Bright Armenia are women.

No

5. Which of the following does your country consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes?

In the Republic of Armenia, the gender equality policy implementation is ensured through the institutional structures created at the national, provincial and community levels.

By the Decision of the Prime Minister (December 29, 2000), the Council of Women was created at the Office of the Prime Minister of Armenia in order to coordinate the issues related to the equality between women and men. The Council later was reorganized into the Council Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men by the N1152-A Decision of the Prime Minister (November 19, 2014). On March 9, 2015 the new composition of the Council was approved.

According to the provisions of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action the above mentioned Council was formed to serve as a mechanism that provides assurances of equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all aspects of public life.

Institutional structures were created at **provincial and community levels** as well. In 2005, units for the Protection of Family, Women's and Child Rights were established in the regional administration bodies and Yerevan Municipality. Those, according to the sample charter, develop, implement and coordinate targeted programmes under the state gender policy in Yerevan and marzes. In 2011, in the regional administrations and Yerevan Municipality, all 12 administrative units of Yerevan City Standing Committees on Gender Issues were formed. The sample charter of these committees was approved by the joint decree of the Minister of Labour and Social Issues dated June 12, 2012 (N 51-A/1), the Minister of Territorial Administration and Deputy Prime Minister dated June 18, 2012 (N 78-A). To ensure gender equality and prevent discrimination against women at the community level, the objectives of the guardianship and trusteeship committees were amended to include a component on gender policy. These structures require a reorganization as well.

The general coordination of the implementation of the Gender Equality Policy of the Republic of Armenia is assigned to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, as the authorized body, ensures a methodological support, regular capacity building, provides methodological, analytical and information materials to the above-mentioned bodies.

Currently, in order to achieve gender equality in the country, it is planned to commence the development of 2019-2023 Strategy for the Implementation of the Policy for Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the Republic of Armenia. To ensure the inclusiveness of the document, public hearings are initiated in Yerevan and in a number of marzes.

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technologies is currently introducing a unified road network in order to guarantee the coverage of the public transport services all over the territory of the Republic of Armenia, to increase the access to and the quality of public transport for all the classes of the population, including women, elderly and people with disabilities. It will reduce the time previously required for travel, provide with more comfortable and up-to-date vehicles for regular transports, introduce a common ticketing system and an interactive map. Eventually, the public transport has to become more comfortable, efficient and accessible.

It is worth mentioning that since 2002 it was envisaged to ensure the fulfilment of the right of infertile women to health screening, treatment and, moreover, to the use of advanced technologies for the reproductive healthcare. These services were limited and unaffordable for various groups of the population, especially for women living beyond the poverty line. The Government Decree dated May

27, 2015 (N568) on “Defining the Procedure of Free of Charge or Advantageous Healthcare Services with the Use of Advanced Technologies” and “Eligibility Requirements to Beneficiaries” addresses this issue by granting the opportunity to benefit from the advanced technologies of reproductive healthcare for women and their spouses.

International partners and civil society are also active in this field through implementing various programmes aimed at women empowerment at local self-government level, women leaders’ empowerment from vulnerable groups, as well as promotion of young women to become leaders. Thus:

- Since 2013 the UNDP, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development and the Association of Women with University Education have jointly implemented “Women in Local Democratic Processes” programme, the goal of which was to promote women’s participation in local elections, strengthen the capacities and knowledge of potential women leaders through a series of capacity building activities, innovative methods and tools thus reducing the gender-based challenges that women in Armenia face in social and political decision - making processes;

- Since 2015 “Agat Rights Defence Centre” for Women with Disabilities NGO initiated “Women’s Institute of Leadership and Disability (WILD)” programme establishing a leadership school for women with disabilities;

- Since 2015 the OxYGen Empowering Women and Youth Foundation in cooperation with ProMedia-Gender NGO and WomenNet portal with the financial support of the Government of Sweden has been conducting the “EQUAL: Supporting Women Political Participation at the National Level” programme. The goal of the programme is to promote women representation and participation in decision-making processes in Armenia at the policy level. The programme offers capacity building opportunities for female candidates from different political parties and for elected female parliamentarians in order to encourage their effective participation in decision-making processes at the National Assembly on the political level, and public campaign is another component of the programme;

- In 2019, “Women in Politics” programme, funded by the Good Governance Fund of the United Kingdom and implemented jointly by the UNDP, the RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development and the OxYGen Foundation, has just commenced. Upon completion of a comprehensive study on the women’s participation in political processes at the local level, the programme envisages to create a group of trainers and community mobilizers, who will be responsible for providing consultations to the educated women and youth active leaders from various sectors interested in local political processes. In the scope of the awareness-raising campaign, the programme will facilitate discussions on the women and youth participation in political developments, as well as it will engage them in a policy dialogue by developing and piloting various innovative models of civic participation;

- In 2019, Civil Society – National Assembly cooperation platform was initiated to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men, in the scope of which several discussions have already been organized about the most urgent issues such as gender equality. The latter contributes to the formation of the political agenda.

Women empowerment is also prioritized in the Gender Strategy predicting a series of consistent interventions for the coming years.

Chapter 2. Progress Recorded within the 12 Sectors of Concern

6. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women’s role in paid work and employment?

The goal of the State Employment Policy is the creation of conditions necessary for sustainable employment, which is implemented through state-led regulation of economy and social protection of the

population. According to the Government Decree dated April 17, 2014 (N 534-N), the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs implements a number of programmes aimed at assisting unemployed in job seeking.

In the scope of the Annual State Programme on Employment the following programmes and projects are implemented, the majority of which target women employment and inclusion in the labour market:

Programme/project	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Persons	Of which women	Persons	Of which women	Persons	Of which women	Persons	Of which women	Persons	Of which women
Professional training for the unemployed, those at risk of dismissal, as well as for persons detained and subject to the release in less than six months period	1585	1180	1003	854	1274	1046	165	146	98	94
Lump sum reimbursement to employers instead of recruitment of persons uncompetitive in the labour market	349	247	500	365	736	504	1072	761	831	636
Assistance to the unemployed to obtain practical experience in their professional field through internship opportunities	346	293	355	288	482	391	511	445	425	379
Assistance to the unemployed to find a job in another location	37	23	48	25	25	17				
Partial reimbursement of the salary to employers instead of recruitment of persons uncompetitive in the labour market and the provision of financial support to assistants accompanying recruited people with disabilities	214	150	522	370	436	305			32	13
Assistance for small entrepreneurial activity to persons uncompetitive in the labour market	60	17	72	34	74	31			55	26
Assistance for cattle-breeding (cow, sheep, pig, chicken) activity to persons uncompetitive in the labour market					54	27				
Provision of monetary allowance to persons uncompetitive in the labour market to meet employers for job seeking purposes	996	778	1750	1384	2005	1447			640	507
Assistance to rural economy through the promotion of seasonal employment	3679	1537	6285	2331	7680	2837				
Temporary employment of unemployed through the organization of paid public works			398	No data	287	31				
Organization of professional training by employers for young mothers who are uncompetitive in the labour market and have no professional education									112	112
The maternity leave before the child is three years old shall be granted to ensure childcare but they can return to work before the child turns two so as to receive assistance for childcare parallel to their work.									475	475

In 2004, 11 job fairs were organized, where 341 employers and 7786 job seekers participated; in 2015 – 11 job fairs, where 402 employers and 12390 job seekers participated; in 2016 - 12 job fairs, where 364 employers and 15042 job seekers participated; in 2017 – 12 job fairs, where 371 employers and 11829 job seekers participated; and in 2018 – 10 job fairs, where 326 employers and 9029 job seekers participated.

All of the above-mentioned activities have obviously enhanced the role and inclusion of women in the labour market.

In addition, the Article 10 of the Law on “Ensuring Equality” drafted by the RA Ministry of Justice defines the legal regulations prohibiting a workplace discrimination. According to those regulations any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference towards a person in a workplace with no

objective grounds, as a result of which equality in a workplace is violated and the person is deprived of equal rights and opportunities is prohibited.

7. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?

Interventions in this area are mostly focused on organizing the childcare and an effective combination of parents' employment.

The improvements of the Family Code (December 21, 2017) aimed at more effective protection of children's rights, clarification of adoption and foster family placement procedures, regulation of the deprivation and restriction of parental rights institutes, defining the types of foster care, provision of control mechanisms, etc.

In 2018 and 2019, many obstacles impeding these processes have been solved in practice, as the RA Government, according to the Decision dated January 10, 2019 (N 7-N) and the Decision dated July 19, 2018 (N 811-N) approved the order "On informing an adopted person who has turned 18 about the fact of his/her adoption", birthplace and date, as well as passport details of his/her biological parents as well as it approved the list of those chronic psychiatric diseases, in case of which the parents or one of them can be deprived of parental rights or adoption of a child can be cancelled. As a result of the reorganization of non-commercial state organizations providing childcare services and the framework of available resources, it is envisaged to ensure larger scope of quality services to children in difficult life circumstances, including children with disabilities and their families through the service provision to non-governmental organizations.

With due consideration of the importance of development and enhancement of alternative services in the country, the following interventions are included in the 2019 State Budget Programme on Support to Families, Women and Children:

- a) "Child Development Centre of Spitak Town" is responsible for providing multidisciplinary services to children in difficult life circumstances and children with disabilities (around 100 children will eventually benefit);
- b) "Social protection services for children in difficult life circumstances and children with disabilities" in Kotayk and Gegharkunik marzes (around 170 children will eventually benefit);
- c) "Community-based services for children with disabilities" (around 150 children will eventually benefit).

With the purpose to transfer the right to intervene to those organizations specialized in issues of children in difficult life circumstances, a grant competition was announced on www.azdarar.am webpage. The competition is closed and the results are announced on the official webpage of the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (www.mlsa.am).

The Law adopted by the National Assembly on December 6, 2017 on amending the Law on Employment defines the right of young mothers who are in maternity leave for care of children under three, but return to work before the child turns two, to receive assistance for ensuring child care parallel to working. Thus, in 2018 the programme of assistance to mothers in maternity leave for care of children under three was implemented, according to which the state provides assistance to mothers to return to work before the child turns two for organization of the child care. In other words, there is a state approach to the institute of babysitters, and those specialists, whose jobs were not registered legally, are brought to the legal field. This was a pilot programme, from which 300 women benefited in 2018. The number of beneficiaries for this current year is 500.

Assistance is also provided to foster families. Specifically, foster parents receive not only remuneration for the services provided, but also relevant support. The paid amounts vary depending on the type of foster care.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs expanded also the “Support to Young Mothers Uncompetitive in Labour Market” programme. In 2019, 107 women can benefit from the programme. In the scope of the programme, mothers under 30, who did not receive professional education after graduating the school and are uncompetitive in the labour market, will have an opportunity to undergo 6-months professional training provided directly by the employer. During that period beneficiary women receive stipend, not higher than the minimum monthly salary, i.e. 55000 AMD per month. Hence, for a period of 6 months’ women who are uncompetitive in the labour market receive both 55000 AMD, and obtain professional skills with the employer. In 2018 the programme was planned for 100 beneficiaries, but received more than 100 applications. Through certain reallocations, the Ministry could engage 112 beneficiaries.

Expanded coverage of preschool educational institutions is among the priorities of the Government, which will allow to enhance significantly the women’s employment and opportunities for the combination of employment and child care. Parents of children with disabilities are also included in these programmes as beneficiaries. Particularly, around 100 pre-school education institutions in marzes and Yerevan are established in the scope of the “Education Improvement” project implemented with the support of the World Bank, which serves for around 2500 children. These institutions comply with the requirements ensuring inclusiveness.

In March 2019 the Government of Bulgaria and UNICEF signed an agreement, based on which the former allocated around 125000 USD to the latter for the provision of rehabilitation services for children with disabilities or with development delays in the consolidated community of Amasia, Shirak marz. The expected number of beneficiaries is around 500. Expansion of these services will also contribute to the inclusion of women from vulnerable groups into the labour market.

Taking into consideration the unpaid care and housekeeping, the current regulation of the state policy is as follows:

- To increase the level of social protection for those families who are planning to have the second child (the amount of lump sum allowance for the second child is 150000 AMD in comparison with previous 50000 AMD);

- To increase the level of social protection for families with three and more children (regardless whether the child is one-year-old or not, the person who is authorized for disposal of the household income is also allowed to dispose the household monthly income which is 50000 AMD in comparison with previous 25000 AMD, which is available only after the child turns one-year-old);

- According to the Clause 2 of the Article 29 of the RA Law on “State Pensions”, where the individual has earned the length of service as specified in the Article 9, Clause 2 of this Article necessary for granting a pension and in case of granting of disability pension, in case of availability of the length of service as specified in Article 12 of this Law, the following shall also be treated as part of his or her service: 1) the period of receiving an unemployment benefit; 2) the period during which any of the parents (adopters, guardians) has taken care of his or her disabled child until such a child reaches the age of 18, or the period during which an individual recognized as a guardian has taken care of a person with a first degree working incapacity where such a period shall not exceed ten years; 3) the period during which any of the parents (adopters) has taken care of each of his or her child until such a child reaches the age of two, provided the above period shall not exceed six years.

- Since January 1, 2016 mothers who are not employed or are self-employed also receive maternity benefit. The Decision on “Approval of the Order of Allocation and Payment of Maternity Benefit to Unemployed Persons” was adopted by the Government on October 8. Maternity benefit to

mothers who are not employed or are self-employed is provided for 140 days defined by the Labour Code for maternity leave.

Currently, the Labour Code is undergoing certain amendments, which envisages to enhance opportunities that would allow better combination of career and family life, as well as diversify the state policy instruments for taking into account the unpaid care and housekeeping. Public hearings on the amendments of the Labour Code will be organized sooner. Besides, in cooperation with a number of non-governmental and international organizations, such as the UN, Bari Mama NGO, etc., several programmes are being conducted aimed at providing opportunities to obtain professional qualifications and at providing employment services to parents of children with disabilities. These programmes involve women from Yerevan and marzes.

8. Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?

No

9. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

1. Foremost, legal acts regulating the area of social protection do not define any kind of gender discrimination. Specifically, according to the Law on “Social Protection”, any person residing in the Republic of Armenia, including citizens, foreign citizens with residential status, persons with no citizenship, as well as persons with refugee status, is entitled to the social protection.

According to the results of the Household Survey conducted by the RA National Statistical Committee, the gender disaggregated poverty indicators for 2014-2017 are as follows:

(%%)

Sex	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Extremely poor	Poor	Extremely poor	Poor	Extremely poor	Poor	Extremely poor	Poor
Female	2.3	30.0	2.2	29.5	2.0	30.2	1.5	26.3
Male	2.2	29.9	1.9	30.1	1.6	28.5	1.3	25.0

As can be seen from the table, the poverty indicator does not vary much per sex disaggregation.

One of the programmes in social protection area is the benefit programme for improved quality of life of families, under which families receive family benefits, social benefits, and emergency assistance. Inclusion of women in the families involved in this programme is as follows:

(%%)

	Proportion of female beneficiaries included in the family and social benefit programme out of all persons included in the family vulnerability scoring system	
2014	2	48.2
2015	2	48.1
2016	2	49.6
2017	2	48.6
2018	2	49.4

During the 2017-2018 the activities were aimed at enhancing an online services with the purpose of reducing the potential risks of allocation and payment of pensions and benefits, expanded access to the services and regulation of the allocation administration. Legal amendments and improvements of Electronic Pension information system with the aim to serve the mentioned purpose, resulted in the following:

- Online application for the lump sum allowance for the third or more children, for care allowance and funeral allowance has been introduced;
- The information system that allows to exchange information with Civil Acts Registration Departments on the birth registration and deprivation of parental rights through online inquiry to CARD, receipt of the required data, entry of those data into the Electronic Pension information system and decision making based on such data (lump sum allowance for child birth, allowance for child care under 2, as well as allocation and rejection of allowance for funeral) has been introduced;
- Allocation (recalculation) and payment of pensions and benefits to military servants and their families through Electronic Pension information system has been conducted.

2. Since January 1, 2019 the amount of allowances for elderly, disability, loss of breadwinner has been 25500 AMD.

According to the policy adopted by the Government (January 01, 2019), the amount of the state benefits for elderly, people with disabilities and for the families with no breadwinner have been increased to 25500 AMD, (taking into account that the RA Government sets the benefit amounts prescribed by the law). These amounts are defined by the Government Decree $\eta\text{uunt}\eta$ November 29, 2018 (N 1408 –N). As a result, around 63000 beneficiaries have been receiving 25500 AMD benefit since January 1, 2019.

3. The complex programme on “Social inclusion of people with disabilities 2017-2021” was approved by the protocol decision of the RA Government dated January 12, 2017. The programme is the main guideline for the social inclusion policy for five years, which was developed based on the main principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Most of those programmes were implemented through or in cooperation with non-governmental organizations.

4. Actions aimed at ensuring active and healthy aging are also in the focus of the state. In this context various social services are provided by state and non-state organizations to elderly and other social groups in difficult life circumstances, specifically:

- 1) Over-night care services provided by social protection institutions (residential) of general and special (specialized) types;
- 2) Day-care services, provided by social day-care centres;
- 3) Home care services, provided by the organizations delivering social services and home based primary care.

Currently care services provided by state and non-state organizations are the following:

- Overnight care services – overall 1380 persons, of which 1210 receive care from state and 170 from non-state organizations;
- Home care services – overall 3950 persons, of which 1350 receive care from state and 2600 from non-state organizations;
- Day-care in centres – overall 1920 persons, of which 20 receive care from state and 1900 from non-state organizations.

The number of people receiving care services has increased by 1000 during the last 5 years.

It is worth mentioning that these services are provided without any gender-based discrimination. The services are provided regardless of sex and based only on the social need which is assessed individually.

10. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

See also the responses to the questions N 1, 2, 6, 7 and 9.

The actions aimed at increasing access to the social protection for women and girls can be divided into two groups: general state policy and initiatives implemented by various partners. The former comprises the following policies:

- So called “babysitters’ programme”, which enhanced the level of social protection for women who take care of their children. See the response to the question N7, the programme is described more thoroughly;
- Maternity benefits to the unemployed and self-employed women were enhanced, so as to grant social guarantees in case of a child birth. See the response to the question N7, the programme is described more thoroughly;
- Family vulnerability scoring system, based on which family and social allowances are allocated. One of the most important components of evaluating insecurity is the assessment of the social group to which the family members belong to. From the social group perspective single mothers have a high probability to be included in the system by receiving a high score of insecurity.

The programmes implemented with the support of various partners include:

- Improvement of social conditions of single mothers in Gyumri, Gavar, Vanadzor and Artashat cities, implemented by the Caritas organization;
- In 2013-2016 the project on “Promotion of women’s economic independence in Lori marz”, with the support of the European Union;
- In the framework of the project on the “Promotion of self-employment among households” 42 young women and girls from Lori marz received the necessary knowledge and skills for berry processing, reprocessing and utilization, and set up planters of high-value crops. The given project was funded and implemented by the WCC Armenia Round Table Foundation. Those planters yield in 1 or 2 years, after which they will produce the volume necessary for the utilization of a natural and processed product. A Centre for Utilization of Agricultural Produce was established in Berd village in Lori marz to promote the utilization of a natural and processed agricultural product produced by the programme beneficiaries, which will be compliant to the requirements of tourists. The Centre serves as a specialized area which offers the local agricultural product to the potential buyers.

11. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

There is a wide network of healthcare organizations in Armenia. Armenia is one of the few countries, which has healthcare facilities even in the smallest rural settlements. There are 614 obstetrician-maternity posts, 255 ambulatory polyclinic medical organizations, 80 polyclinics, 101 women consultations and cabinets, 52 medical centres in Armenia, which include also obstetrician-gynaecological clinics, 11 maternity hospitals – 4 in Yerevan and 7 in Marzes.

The programme of proportional development of marzes was enhanced to reduce the difference in quality and access to the healthcare services between urban and rural settlements, as a result 15 large medical centres were opened in the past years – in Hrazdan, Ijevan, Armavir, Gyumri, Ararat, Goris, Aparan, Gavar, Alaverdi, Qajaran, Noyemberyan, Chambarak, Meghri, Artashat, Vanadzor. Around 30 healthcare centres and medical posts were renovated. In upgraded medical institutions not only the renovation of the buildings was carried out, but they also were equipped with the up-to-date medical equipments, supplies and furniture. The medical personnel were trained as well.

Women's health, including maternal healthcare was and remains until now the state priority at the national level. Two decisions were approved by the Government in 2014-2019 aimed at the improvement of women's healthcare and ensuring equal rights in healthcare sector: Decisions on "Approving 2016-2020 National Programme, Strategy and Action Plan for Improvement of Reproductive Healthcare" and on "Approving 2016-2020 National Strategy and Action Plan for Healthcare and Development of Children and Adolescents". In addition, the draft Government Decree on "Approving the Order of Healthcare and Service with the Use of Advanced Technologies of Reproductive Healthcare and Requirements to Beneficiaries" was developed and circulated.

For an effective regulation of the reproductive health and reproductive rights, a number of amendments to the Law on "Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights" were adopted by the National Assembly in 2013 – 2016.

In the last five years the Minister of Health approved a number of procedures, strategies, programmes, decrees aimed at improving reproductive health, especially the use of advanced technologies of reproductive healthcare, types of methods and medical ethics, which allow women to overcome infertility problems and enjoy one of the fundamental human rights, i.e. benefit from the results of progress.

The next result is the fulfilment of the right to medicinal abortion, which is included in the clinical guidelines of the N 975-A Decree on "The organization and provision of medical care in cases of abortion" approved by the RA Minister of Health in 2010 and which is now successfully applied by all the healthcare institutions.

These reforms are aimed at supporting the most vulnerable groups, improving the quality and accessibility of women's healthcare, especially in rural areas (so as to reduce the inequality between the rural and urban areas), depending on the level of material security of the family, education level, etc.

While the legislation is quite favorable in this area, the situation analysis reveals some restrictions on reproductive health care issues, particularly in terms of the availability of more effective contraceptives and medication (necessary for medicinal abortions) and in terms of the limited access to reproductive auxiliary technologies, both for women and men.

The progress in the quality of the emergency medical aid (1-03 ambulance service) is obvious in terms of purchasing new vehicles, upgrading services, equipping with new instruments and with high quality personnel.

Since 2008, a free birth certificate system has been introduced and continues up until now to support women's access to the reproductive healthcare services, including the ones living in rural and remote areas. The system contributes to the real accessibility of free birth care for women of all social backgrounds⁸.

⁸ Introduction of child birth health certificate system contributed to the improvement of obstetrical indicators, specifically:

- ✓ Increase of the early registration of pregnant women by 35%. Improvement of screenings of pregnant women, increase of HIV testing up to 90% and higher;
- ✓ Increased coverage of screening for the incidence of pregnancy syphilis, gonorrhea, trichomoniasis, which in recent years constituted around 95%;

Reduction of early infant mortality by 10% in the structure of infant mortality According to Demographic and Health Survey Results of 2015:

- ✓ Index of at least one prenatal visit reached 99%, while the index of child deliveries in hospitals reached 99.4%;
- ✓ 100% of child deliveries were attended by qualified medical personnel;
- ✓ 92% of women received antenatal assistance within 2 days after delivery;
- ✓ Under the State Order for Maternity Care, a ultrasound study of a widespread exacerbation during pregnancy for early diagnosis of congenital malformations has continued regardless of the place of residence, which allowed 7% increase in intrauterine detection of born defects as compared to previous years;
- ✓ Medical organizations for the treatment of infertility with reproductive auxiliary technologies have been created, there are currently 6 of them. Approximately 1000 fertile married couples annually benefit from the use of these auxiliary technologies to overcome infertility and record pregnancy facts.

The most important integral indicator of maternal health is maternal mortality ratio. As per the data provided by the Ministry of Health, during the period of 2000-2018 the average three-year ratio of maternal mortality (of 100000 deliveries) reduced by almost 2 times (39.9 in 1999-2000; 23.8 in 2008-2010; 19.9 in 2016-2018). However, the average three-year maternal mortality indicator in Armenia significantly exceeds the average of EU states, but is lower than the average in CIS countries for more than 1.5 times.

In the recent five years programmes aimed at improved access to and quality of maternal and child healthcare were implemented. Specifically:

1) In the scope of the “Targeted maternal and child healthcare” programme, “Child birth and health certificate” programmes were continuously implemented. The state order annually covers prenatal and antenatal surveillance of all (60000-65000) pregnant women in the Republic (coverage 95% and more, according to the DHS, 2015), 37000-40000 deliveries (deliveries in maternity hospitals constitute 99% and more, according to the DHS, 2015), around 15000 pregnancy diagnostics in clinics.

2) By the 1941-A Decision the Minister of Health approved the new standards of assessment of medical institutions as per levels of healthcare services, all 57 maternity hospitals were assessed, based on the results of which the levels were reviewed and recommendations for optimization were submitted.

3) The Decree of the Minister of Health of 2018 (N3403-A) was aimed at the reduction of artificial interruptions of pregnancy, especially sex-selective abortions, which is defined in the Procedure of Artificial Interruptions of Pregnancy.

4) To improve the quality of healthcare, 77 specialists received training abroad, and around 685 medical doctors and 900 nurses were trained in the country. More than 50 professional guidelines of disease treatment were developed and introduced.

5) More than 95% of pregnant women after the voluntary consultations received during the prenatal surveillance, applies for HIV testing, HIV positive women receive antiretroviral treatment, as a result of which mother-to-child HIV transmission has been eliminated in the recent years, and in 2016 Armenia received the international certificate as a Country that Eliminated Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission.

Since 2008-2009 academic year, the "Healthy lifestyle" course is taught in the 8th -9th grades of the country's primary schools, and since 2010 it has been included in the curriculum of 10th -11th grades as well. The course includes topics on reproductive health and sexual education.

12. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?

1. Gender gap analysis: by the initiative of the World Bank in 2015 analysis of school textbooks was conducted to reveal gender representation and gender balance issues therein. Textbooks of courses such as Social Sciences, History of Armenia, World History, Armenian Literature of the 10th-12th grades, as well as the standards, programmes and teachers' methodological manuals were examined. The results of the analysis were concluded in the document titled “Analytical certificate on the integration of gender-sensitive approaches in school education in Armenia”, which was submitted to the team of experts developing the National Educational Guidelines.

2. “Healthy lifestyle” courses for school students: A course on “Healthy lifestyle” is included in the curriculum of the 8th -11th grades of the secondary schools, which is taught 14 hours a year per each grade. The course is intended to raise awareness on the healthy lifestyle principles and preparedness for

family life. The course includes the following topics on sexual education: Puberty and Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS Prevention, and Harmonious Society.

By the circular of the Head of Staff of the RA Ministry of Emergency Situations (April 16, 2015) the headmasters of technical vocational educational institutions of the Republic of Armenia were assigned to organize classes on issues of reproductive health among youth, and involve non-governmental organizations in that process if necessary⁹.

In 2018 jointly by the Ministry of Emergency Situations, Moscow Regional Office of UNESCO, National Institute of Education and Arabkir Medical Centre Institute of Child and Adolescents Health, the trainings for around 247 teachers of Yerevan City teaching healthy lifestyle educational component were organized, the modules of which include topics on prevention of domestic and sexual violence.

3. Trainings organized for headmasters, deputy headmasters and specialists of schools and technical vocational educational institutions aimed at the formation of gender-sensitive mindset and gender-related knowledge. Thematic materials on gender issues are also included in the training modules of teachers of elementary schools and teachers of Social Sciences course. Since 2015 during the pre-attestation training courses organized for teachers of secondary schools a topic on the equality between women and men has been introduced (1.5 hour).

At the same time, “Gender issues and steps to prevent” topic was included in the in-service training curricula for headmasters, deputy headmasters and for the faculty of technical and vocational educational institutions.

During 2015, 20 training sessions were conducted for 42 headmasters (in 2 groups) and 1016 faculty members (in 48 groups) of TVET institutions. The training materials included such topics that relate to the policy on equality between women and men.

Since 2016 every year the UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science and National Institute of Education, has marked “The Biggest Lesson of the World”, the main objective of which is to present the Sustainable Development Goals to the students. Training materials were developed for students and teachers that would facilitate presentation of the Sustainable Development Goals in a more explicable way. This time the Biggest Lesson of the World was presented to the students of the 7th -9th grades (8 hours) of the Yerevan N50 school focusing on the topic “Safe Educational Environment: let’s stop violence at schools and elsewhere”, which included training materials on gender equality¹⁰.

In 2018, in cooperation with the UNICEF, educational events (6 hours) dedicated to the Sustainable Development Goals were organized for 50 students of the Yerevan N50 school.

4. The awareness-raising on gender-based violence, information and methodological support to personnel responsible for in-service training of pedagogical cadre was promoted: in 2014 awareness-raising events on gender-based violence for the training personnel of the National Institute of Education of the

⁹ During 2015, awareness raising activities on topics related to healthy lifestyle, interrelations between genders and prevention of domestic violence were conducted in a number of institutions. Specifically:

- N1 TVET of Abovyan, State Politechnic and State Energy Colleges of Abovyan, with the support of the Hope and Help NGO; In the framework of the Capacity Building on Combating Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation, a seminar-simulation game was conducted, during which topics on violence were also presented;
- Open lecture was organized in Yerevan State Agricultural College on Reproductive Health of Persons in Puberty. As well as discussions on what is healthy lifestyle were organized with the students during the hours of physical activity. Methodological guidance on Specifics of Sexual Education of Adolescents and Ways of Reducing Behavioral Risks was developed. In the Yerevan State Agricultural College 1 hour per year is allocated to the discussion of these topics.
- Seminar on Reproductive Health Issues in Puberty was also conducted for the students of the Armenian National Politechnic University;
- With the support of Aravot NGO, Hope and Help NGO and Youth Centre of Lori Marz, seminars on healthy lifestyle, interrelation between sexes and prevention of domestic violence were conducted in the State Medical College of Vanadzor,
- Experts from Shengavit Medical Center of Yerevan and Republican Center of HIV Prevention conducted seminars on the above mentioned topics for the students of Armenian National Agrarian University.

¹⁰ <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>

Ministry of Emergency Situations was conducted, which included topics on identification and prevention of gender-based violence. Three roundtable discussions were organized aimed at increasing the effectiveness of awareness raising and capacity building activities.

In November-December 2015, a training course was organized for 30 specialists of the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and 50 social sciences teachers of Lori marz on the issues of the equality between men and women, gender-based violence and on the respective activities carried out in schools.

5. The implementation of the awareness-raising activities among students on the professional orientation aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes in order to enhance motivation among girls and boys towards professions that traditionally are not considered for their sexes. “Bringing up at school: Issues of professional orientation” manual was used. During the classes of head teachers, the students receive information on issues regarding professional orientation aimed at overcoming gender-based stereotypes, formation of motivation among girls and boys towards professions that traditionally are not associated with their sexes (applicable to 2016).

6. Courses and consultations on the professional orientation for students: In 2014 in career centres of 12 regional colleges of the Republic of Armenia, events were organized on the issues of the professional orientation among students, on the professions available in vocational education, on the introduction of the existing labour market demand for professions, as well as on the overcoming the gender-based stereotypes related to the selection of professions among girls and boys.

Freedom from Violence, Stigma and Stereotypes

13. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific context or settings, have you prioritized for action?

The Sexual Assault Crisis Centre jointly with the Investigative Committee published a report on the cases of sexual offenses investigated by the Committee during the period of 2015-2016. According to the report, in 2015 investigators of the RA Investigative Committee examined 131 criminal cases initiated for sexual offenses, 95 persons were involved as suspects/accused and all of them was male. Thirty (30) of the suspects/accused were actually the spouses of the victims (31.6% of the suspects/accused). Total of 142 persons were victims of the mentioned 131 criminal cases, of which 11 were male, and 131 were female (92.3% out of all victims).

In 2016, the investigators of the Investigative Committee examined 157 criminal cases initiated for sexual offenses, whereas 113 persons were involved as suspects/accused and all of them was male. Forty-three (43) of the suspects/accused was actually the spouses of the victims (38.1% of all suspects/accused). In the mentioned 157 criminal cases 162 persons were victims, of which 11 were male, and 151 were female (93.2% of all victims).

Similar statistics was compiled by the RA Investigative Committee for 2017, according to which 161 criminal cases initiated for sexual offenses were examined, 93 persons were involved as suspects/accused and all of them was male. Twenty-nine (29) of the suspects/accused was actually the spouses of the victims (31% of all suspects/accused). In the mentioned 161 criminal cases 166 persons were victims, of which 15 were male, and 151 were female (91% of all victims).

The Investigative Committee has not yet published any statistics for 2018.

As stated above, persons committing sexual assault are mainly men, and the vast majority of victims is female (91% and more out of total number of victims).

The number of sexual offenses committed by partners / spouses is also significant (1/3 of total number of victims).

In 2016, 359 criminal cases of domestic violence were filed by the Investigative Committee¹¹. Three of these cases were committed by mothers, 14 by fathers, 3 by step-fathers, 9 by siblings, 15 by children (including adopted children), 2 by wives, 136 by husbands, 3 by grandchildren, 6 by husbands' parents, 15 by bride/groom.

In 2017, 458 criminal cases of domestic violence were filed by the Investigative Committee¹². Five of these cases were committed by mothers, 17 by fathers, 1 by a step-mother, 2 by step-fathers, 6 by siblings, 2 by grandparents, 35 by children (including adopted children), 13 by wives, 167 by husbands, 6 by grandchildren, 8 by husbands' parents, 13 by bride/groom, 1 by a guardian, trustee or a foster parent.

In 2018, 519 criminal cases of domestic violence were in proceedings of the Investigative Committee. Twelve of these cases were committed by mothers, 27 by fathers, 2 by step-fathers, 13 by siblings, 4 by grandparents, 40 by children (including by adopted children), 12 by wives, 193 by husbands, 7 by grandchildren, 9 by husbands' parents, 13 by parents of engaged couples.

It is worth mentioning that sexual harassment and violence are considered crime, regardless if those were committed in public spaces, educational institutions, workplace or elsewhere.

Sexual harassment committed through information technologies are legally punishable; however, as an aggravating circumstance the latter is envisaged only in the Clause 6 of Part 2 of the Article 142 of the RoA Criminal Code as obscenity, committed through electronic communication network. In 2015 only 1 and in 2017 only 4 criminal cases were investigated against this Clause.

There are no officially registered cases of forced marriages. Early marriages are in the spotlight of the law enforcement agencies only if they have been accompanied by sexual intercourse.

14. What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

The combat against violence was carried out by the punitive measures against violators and by providing assistance to the victims of violence through the cooperation between state bodies, public authorities and non-governmental organizations, and prevention of violence.

In addition to the responses to the questions N 1, 2 and 13, it is worth mentioning that a large scale of awareness raising programmes are implemented for specialists involved in this field. Hence, regular capacity building events are organized in the Justice Academy aimed at the utilization of effective mechanisms of combat against violence, including:

- On September 6, 2017 a panel discussion on the topic "Primary response, investigation and prosecutorial supervision of the cases of domestic violence" was organized for persons enrolled in the list of candidates for investigators and prosecutors, as well as representatives of the Police;
- On December 14, 2017 a seminar was organized in the Justice Academy, where the HELP online course on "Violence against Women and Domestic Violence" was introduced. The course was developed in cooperation with the Council of Europe. During three months upon commencement of the course, capacity building trainings for investigators and judges were implemented. The second phase of the course commenced in September 2018, as a result of which prosecutors, judges and advocates were trained;
- On September 11, 2018 the Justice Academy jointly with the Council of Europe launched the HELP courses (designed for the legal specialists of human rights education) on "Violence against Women and Domestic Violence";

¹¹ Ten (10) of those cases were related to murder, 7 to serious damage to health, 6 to purposeful damage to health, 19 to purposeful light damage to health, 222 to beating, 45 to murder of serious damage to health or threat of damage of assets.

¹² Eight (8) of those cases were related to murder, 15 to serious damage to health, 13 to purposeful damage to health, 40 to purposeful light damage to health, 285 to beating, 39 to murder of serious damage to health or threat of damage of assets.

- A new training course and a methodological manual on “Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia” was developed in the framework of the Council of Europe programme on “Preventing and Combating Violence against Women in Armenia”.

- On November 10-11, 2018 jointly with the CoE a two-day training of trainers from the Justice Academy was carried out;

- As part of the CoE/EU Eastern Partnership 2015-2018 programme structure, in the scope of the Support to Criminal Justice Reform and Combating Ill-treatment and Impunity in Armenia programme distant courses on Violence against Women and Prevention of Domestic Violence, and Punity of Ill-treatment were adopted to the local legal framework (for legal specialists of Human Rights education).

In 2014, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs with the support of the UNFPA developed criteria for social workers to initially identify the victims of domestic violence, as well as they developed training modules on “Domestic Violence” to support their capacity building. In 2014-2015, social workers of all administrative units of social services of Yerevan and of a number of marzes received such training.

In 2014-2017, the National Institute of Labour and Social Research conducted a training on “Gender-Based Violence” for 455 civil servants.

The “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” campaign launched in 2000 continues with annual events implemented (November 25 – December 10) through nation-wide campaigns on “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” and “White Ribbon”. The main objective of these campaigns was to once again raise the importance of issues related to gender-based violence by engaging a growing number of participants, including state structures, mass media, representatives of non-governmental and international organizations, as well as broader community.

Information materials on combating domestic violence were regularly developed and disseminated through national and regional mass media tools. Particularly, videos disapproving violence were broadcasted, as well as numerous discussions with groups of various ages and social backgrounds were organized in Yerevan, marzes and communities.

In 2018, actions were undertaken to establish services for victims of domestic violence.

Six institutions of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs have been entrusted with the following functions of "support centers" for persons subjected to domestic violence as defined by the law:

- 1) Provide information to the persons, who applied to the “support centres”, in a language that is understandable to them, and to the persons with disabilities – in a manner that is understandable to them. Particularly, they provide information on their rights, available services, protection measures envisaged by the law and the the manner in which they are used;
- 2) Provide a necessary psychological and legal counselling and other social services to victims of domestic violence, which are free of charge;
- 3) Decide on placement of persons and their dependents subjected to domestic violence in shelters upon their consent in cases and in the manner prescribed by the law;
- 4) Study the reasons and conditions of domestic violence, maintain statistics on domestic violence cases and submit the results to the authorized body;
- 5) In accordance with the procedure prescribed by the authorized body, organize rehabilitation of persons who committed domestic violence. Soon after receiving a copies of the warning and immediate intervention decisions the person who committed domestic violence is asked to receive appropriate support from the rehabilitation program and participate in certain activities;
- 6) Upon the receipt of copies of the Police decisions on warning and immediate intervention the victim of domestic violence is offered a psychological support in a minimum timeframe;

- 7) In accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Head of the authorized body implement the actions for reconciliation between the victim and the person who committed the act of domestic violence;
- 8) Support victims of domestic violence in job finding and in receiving social assistance from the state or respective organizations;
- 9) Request the respective Police Department to verify the existence of a reason for making a warning or immediate intervention, as well as apply to the court with a request for a defense decision in the cases prescribed by the law only according to the consent of a person who applied to the “support center.”

Three of the above-mentioned centres are located in Yerevan, and the rest respectively in Shirak, Lori and Syunik Marzes¹³.

In July 2018, the Centre for Implementation of Legal Education and Rehabilitation Programmes SNCO of the Ministry of Justice with the support of Government of the United Kingdom launched a joint project (duration 8 months), the objective of which was to support the proper implementation of the Law on “Prevention of Violence within the Family, Protection of Victims of Violence within the Family and Restoration of Peace in the Family” (December 2017). Particularly, it strived to strengthen the due mechanisms of the law implementation through communication strategy developed by the Government in an utmost inclusive manner, through the facilitation of public hearings and dissemination of booklets on “the first source advice.” Within the framework of the project, documents on communication strategy of the “Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims of Violence within the Family”¹⁴ and the “Capacity Building of Civil Servants Engaged in Issues Related to Violence within the Family”¹⁵ were developed.

15. What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

The strategic programme 2011-2015 of the Gender Policy was approved at Government session that took place on May 20, 2011. It has been implemented annually, envisaging separate annual programs. The National Programme 2011-2015 on “Combating Gender-Based Violence” was approved at the Government session that took place on June 17, 2011.

It is worth mentioning that there were no comprehensive strategic programmes adopted, however many issues related to women and girls were included in human rights strategy, national programmes against human trafficking and other documents approved by the Government decisions. Currently, the Strategic Programme 2019-2023 on the “Implementation of Policy Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men” in the Republic of Armenia is being developed.

16. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

¹³ Those are Zatik Children Support Centre in Yerevan, Children and Family Support Centre, Children Social Support Centre of Ajapnyak Administrative District of Yerevan, Children and Family Support Centre of Syunik Marz, Children and Family Support Centre of Lori Marz, Children Social Support Centre of Gyumri Town.

¹⁴

http://www.moj.am/storage/uploads/1212_Communication_Strategy_for_Prevention_of_Domestic_Violence_and_Protection_of_Victims_of_Violence_within_the_Family.pdf

¹⁵ http://www.moj.am/storage/uploads/1212Training_Program_for_Public_Officials_addressing_issues_on_Domestic_Violence.pdf

Promotion of the child participation in responding to the prevention of terrorism and cyberbullying incidents and awareness-raising on available services and support procedures were enhanced.

In cooperation with the World Vision Armenia, the National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Emergency Situations developed Teachers' Manual on "Ensuring Children are Safe Online" and Parent's Manual on "Ensuring Children are Safe Online."

In 2017 within the framework of the "Ensuring Children are Safe Online" programme, capacity building trainings on the above- mentioned topics were organized for parents and teachers in Kapan, Syunik marz, in Talin, Shirak marz and in Yerevan. Around 180 parents and teachers participated in the training activities.

The main content of the training is based on studying the features of using Android, iOS and Windows operating systems and tablets, and on the safe use of electronic resources.

During the meetings, parents and teachers were acquainted with the risks that exist on the Internet for children, as well as the measures that can be undertaken for the safe use of the Internet, and how to protect devices and accounts.

The following acts conducted through information technologies are legally punishable in the Republic of Armenia:

- obscenity acts as defined in the Article 142 of the RoA Criminal Code,
- Illegal collecting, keeping, use and dissemination of information pertaining to personal or family life defined by the Article 144 of the Criminal Code;
- dissemination of pornographic materials or subjects, etc. as defined by the Article 263 of the RoA Criminal Code.

17. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?

Trainings on human rights, women's rights, fight against domestic violence and other related issues were conducted for representatives of mass media mostly implemented by NGOs or funded by international organizations. Specifically:

- The Union of Informed Citizens NGO organized a two-day seminar (August 31-September 2, 2018) for monitoring and media coverage on human rights, criminal justice and social justice,
- In June 2015 the Investigative Committee with the financial support of the OSCE Yerevan Office organized a two-day seminar on media coverage of criminal cases and participants of proceedings, particularly in the context of the protection of victims' rights,
 - On July 1-30, 2015 the Yerevan Press Club conducted a media monitoring on the Protection of the Minor's Rights on mass media broadcasted in Armenia¹⁶,
 - In 2013 the Association of Audio-Visual Journalists with the financial support of the U.S. Embassy published a guideline for journalists titled "Human Trafficking: How to Cover it in Mass Media" and organized capacity building trainings.

It should be noted that one of the most important components in all strategic programs was prevention, in addition to the other programs, media coverage, awareness-raising and vocational training programs were implemented both on human rights protection and on combating human trafficking. Targeted capacity building programmes are also implemented by the YSU Faculty of Journalism.

¹⁶ http://ypc.am/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Monitoring-Report_Children-in-Media_2015_arm.pdf

Since 2016 large scale awareness-raising has been undertaken within the framework of the “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” campaign, which is held annually (November 25 to December 10). For example, in autumn, 2017, within the framework of the “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” campaign, a series of TV programmes was broadcasted on Yerkir Media TV channel, during which critical issues related to the gender equality were discussed.

Massive awareness-raising campaigns and activities are organized on social networks aimed at highlighting the importance of girls and the issues related to the violence against women. As an example of such awareness-raising campaigns we can mention the annual essay competitions that have been organized among men since 2015 by the UNFPA and Mediamax media company on the topic “My Daughter and My Wife are My Friends¹⁷.”

Several interventions aimed at enhancing gender-sensitivity of mass media are included in the gender strategy, since that is a known fact that mass media are one of those important institutional actors that reproduce and strengthen stereotypes, and that they can contribute to the formation of discriminatory perceptions of social roles of women and men and their behaviour rules. Hence, a coordinated work that would follow a tailored policy is necessary.

18. Has your country taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?

Yes, see the response to the question N 2.

Participation, Accountability and Institutions dealing with Gender Issues

19. What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women’s participation in public life and decision-making?

In addition to the responses to the question N 1 and 9, in 2015-2019 the UNDP jointly with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development implemented the “Women and Local Development project” funded by the Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency in Armenia in order to ensure women’s political engagement. The goal of the project was to support women’s leadership and gender equality processes in Lori, Tavush, Syunik and Vayots Dzor Marzes of Armenia providing broad knowledge and mechanisms necessary for gradual fulfilment of women’s rights at the local level.

- Within the framework of the project the following is envisaged: 1400 active women and 197 men received training on leadership, local self-government, gender equality, participatory democracy and cooperation;

- 1009 women received pre-electoral and 95 women post-electoral assistance. Total of 24 female community council members participated in the leadership school, after completion of which 4 small grants projects aimed at enhancement of direct democracy and women’s participation were implemented;

- 121 women beneficiaries of the project ran their candidacies during the LG elections and 89 got elected;

- A network comprised of 132 young people was established as a result of the “Community is Me” camp, which implemented 53 small-scale initiatives in 32 communities aimed at enhancement of direct democracy and women’s participation;

- The “Community is Me” camp allowed young girls and boys initiate a dialogue with the representatives of the RA Government and the National Assembly regarding the public policies;

¹⁷ https://www.mediamax.am/am/news/husbands_wives/20707:

- 122 LSG representatives received training on gender equality in the context of community development;
- Thematic materials and studies on gender equality and participation are developed, which are presented to the partners engaged in territorial administration reforms;
- 5 new instruments of assessment of participation level and community services were developed and piloted in Vanadzor, Vayk, Goris, Yeghegnadzor, Zaritap and Sisian communities, 4 of which were led by women;
- SMS-inquiry tool has been introduced, which facilitated the participation of residents of Goris, Areni, Jermuk and Tatev multi-settlement communities in the prioritization of community issues.

In addition, within the framework of the state programme, female political actors had an opportunity to implement small-scale grant projects aimed at the enhancement of public participation through awareness- raising and capacity building. Information on the number of grant projects implemented since 2015 by female political actors and the general public participation is presented below:

	Number of Participants of the Seminar	Number of Small Grant Projects	Number of Participants in the Small Grants Projects
2015	25	7	1082
2016	27	7	832
2017	25	10	1220
2018	25	7	1000
Total	102	31	4134

20. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase women’s access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies?

The level of women’s participation in decision making in mass media, including through information and communication technologies, is quite high, due to the high proportion of women among editors of magazines and newsletters, and among journalists, as well as due to the high proportion of women among spokespersons of state officials and heads of information units.

21. Did you track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

Such statistics is not yet covered, and it will be possible only after the gender programme is developed.

22. As a donor country, does your country track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

Not Applicable.

23. Does your country have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?

Currently, Armenia does not have a national gender strategy or action plan. Taking into consideration the issues impeding the achievement of gender equality, the development of the Strategic Programme 2019-2023 for Implementation of Policy for Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the Republic of Armenia is underway.

At the same time the Government Decree dated February 28, 2019 (N197-L) approved the National Action Plan 2019-2021 on activities aimed at the implementation of the provisions of UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security¹⁸. The UPR and CEDAW reports are under development according to the schedule.

24. Does your country have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?

See the response to the question N23.

25. Is there a national human rights institution in your country?

Yes, the Human Rights Defender's Office is functioning in Armenia. On December 16, 2016 the National Assembly adopted the Law on the Human Rights Defender.

The Institute of Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia complies with the requirements and standards of the National Ombudsman Institute. The Institute has an "A" status, which indicates compliance with the Paris Principles, as well as being an accredited National Institute of the United Nations.

The Human Rights Defender is granted the status of the national prevention mechanism defined by the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted on December 18, 2002 to the UN Convention of 1984.

Human Rights Defender conducts the monitoring of the implementation of the provisions of the UN CRC (November 20, 1989) and UN CPRD (December 13, 2006) as well as the prevention of violations and protection of the rights of children and people with disabilities.

The Human Rights Defender is guided by the principles of equality before the law, impartiality, publicity, transparency and other principles defined by the Constitution.

In 2018 representatives of the Human Rights Defender's Office in cooperation with international partners, as well as local civil society organizations conducted regular capacity building of judges, prosecutors, investigators, advocates, representatives of police, social workers and mass media on topics related to Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence.

In addition, a representative of the Human Rights Defender's Office held lectures for the students of the Faculty of Journalism of the Yerevan State University on topics related to the violence against women and prevention of domestic violence.

The Human Rights Defender's Office initiated a new campaign for the protection of women's rights and awareness-raising in various marzes of the Republic of Armenia, where parallel to the issues related to the equality and domestic violence, the legislation to combat the latter and international standards are publicly discussed. As a result, discussions were held with the representatives of regional

¹⁸ <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=128902>

administration and local government bodies, as well as regional police departments in Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor, Tavush and Lori Marzes.

Several awareness raising videos regarding women’s human rights have been launched and made available by the Human Rights Defender’s Office.

Women	Men
2018 - 3403	2018 - 4038
2019 – 603	2019 - 740

Protection of women’s rights and exclusion of any type of discrimination against women is one of the fundamental priorities of the Human Rights Defender’s function. The Head of the Research and Education Centre of the Human Rights Defender’s staff is mandated to implement the protection of women’s rights and is responsible for the implementation of strategic directions. Respective specialist of the same Centre is involved in these activities. In 2018 the Human Rights defender has implemented a number of projects in this field. In the scope of the EU budget support programme in cooperation with the UN agencies, capacity building of the representatives of the Human Rights Defender’s Office on women rights and prevention of domestic violence was conducted. Capacity building was comprised of a series of trainings conducted by the international and local experts and of the development of manual and guidelines for the staff (to develop skills required for working with victims of domestic violence). In 2018 in partnership with the international partners, as well as local civil society organization the specialist of the Research and Education Centre of the Human Rights Defender’s Office implemented regular trainings for advocates, police representatives, as well as for social workers and mass media representatives on topics related to the “Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence.” In addition, the representative of the Human Rights Defender’s Office held lectures for students of various faculties of the Yerevan State University on topics of “Violence against women and prevention of domestic violence.” The staff of the Human Rights Defender’s Office initiated a new campaign to protect women’s rights and raise awareness on these issues in various marzes of the Republic of Armenia. Parallel to the discussions on equality, the issues of domestic violence and the efforts of the national legislation and international standards to combat it are being discussed.

In 2018, jointly with WINNET Armenia organization, regular meetings were held with a group of women from Noyemberyan community on the issues related to the fulfilment of labour and economic rights, economic development and sustainable opportunities, risks of human trafficking and other forms of exploitation. A training session dedicated to the issues of the state registration and taxation procedures of a legal entity, pricing methodology and other issues were discussed. As a result of all the above-mentioned programs, all the issues that have been voiced for years by the HRD are presented below.¹⁹.

26. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?

In addition to the response to the question N23, by the Decision of the Prime Minister dated September 13, 2017 (N 1014-A) an interagency commission was established to develop a national action plan for the implementation of the provisions of the 1325 Resolution. The following bodies are represented in the interagency commission:

- 1) Staff of the Prime Minister;

¹⁹ HRoD Annual report, 2018, <http://pashtpan.am/resources/ombudsman/uploads/files/publications/0e3f463c0e6c42f12cb497d483739dec.pdf#page=543&zoom=100,0,120, 543>

- 2) Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- 3) Ministry of Defence;
- 4) Ministry of Justice;
- 5) Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs;
- 6) Ministry of Economic Development and Investments;
- 7) Ministry of Emergency Situations;
- 8) Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development;
- 9) Police;
- 10) National Institute of Education of the Ministry of Education and Science;
- 11) Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development;
- 12) Armenian Red Cross Society.

The NAP on 1325 is based on four major pillars: prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery, as well as it has monitoring part.

27. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

Cooperation between the Ministry of Defence and UNFPA commenced in 2014²⁰, in the framework of which a number of initiatives of women engagement in various units of the armed forces (including units participating in peacekeeping missions) were implemented, as well as programmes aimed at women's rights protection and formation of a culture of equal opportunities, promotion of women's participation in decision making in policy development in defence system. Specifically:

1. In November 2017, a women's unit was formed in the framework of the peacekeeping brigade of the Ministry of Defence. The first group of the female peacekeepers (4 persons) was engaged in the Armenian group that implements peacekeeping mission in Kosovo in 2018 (Kosovo forces).

The Ministry of Defence plans to achieve the enhancement of women's engagement in peacekeeping missions, raising the number up to 15%, a target set by the UN, and female peacekeepers will engage in the Armenian group of UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) mission.

2. According to the requirements of the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, as well as the Clause 1.4.1 of the RA-NATO IPAP, the Minister of Defence on May 20, 2013 by the N128 Decision approved, the Guidelines and Action Plan for ensuring the protection of women's rights and equal opportunities in the defence system²¹. The Guidelines define that one of the important preconditions for the reform of the RA defence system is the proportional and interconnected development of quantitative and qualitative indicators of the personnel, which can be achieved only by creating opportunities for women engagement and meaningful participation in the defence system.

Even though implementation of the action plan approved by the Decision N128 of the RoA Minister of Defence dated February 16, 2016 completed in 2018 as per the timetable, the provisions set therein remain at the core of the current reforms of the Ministry of Defence, and continue taking place within various national and international programmes, including in the frameworks of the cooperation between the MoD and UNFPA signed in 2019.

²⁰ <http://mil.am/hy/news/6261>

²¹ <http://mil.am/hy/libraries/39>

3. A series of meetings, discussions and seminars were organized with the participation of various groups of the society, including civil society organizations, the aim of which was to promote women's equal participation in decision making and highlight the important role of female military servants in the defence system.

4. Capacity building on topics related to women's rights, impacts of armed conflicts on women, women's engagement in prevention, regulation of armed conflicts and peacebuilding for the personnel engaged in peacekeeping mission of the RA armed forces was conducted²².

5. Training sessions and discussions on leadership, social and psychological adaptation were conducted with female graduates of military education institutions²³. During these meetings needs assessment of female military servants, as well as the identification of types of gender-based discrimination was conducted. The cooperation programme of 2019 between the Ministry of Defence and UNFPA envisages a comprehensive needs assessment among female military servants of the RA armed forces.

6. A number of studies on ensuring women's rights protection and equal opportunities in the RA armed forces were carried out, the results of which were assessed and compiled to serve as grounds for further reforms.

28. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and nonjudicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

Armenia has drawn attention of various international organizations, including UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, to the periodical shootings at the borderline by Azerbaijan targeting the nearby villages, as well as targeting civilians during the four-day offensive operation in April 2016 and incidents of torture of women and elderly. As a result of the aggression over 2000 individuals fled to Armenia from the Nagorno Karabakh villages of Talish, Mardakert, Martuni and Hadrut.

29. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?

See the responses to the questions N 1, 2, 9, 12-15.

Ecology, Protection and Restoration

30. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?

Within the framework of Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and Minamata Convention on Mercury, regular training sessions and seminars were organized to raise awareness on unfavourable impacts of hazardous chemicals on ecology and human health, including vulnerable groups of the population, such as women and children.

²² <http://mil.am/hy/news/4848>

²³ <http://mil.am/hy/news/5440>

Within the framework of the “Climate Box of the Climate Change Education and Awareness-Raising” project implemented by the UNDP in Armenia, working meeting was organized, where many school teachers and methodologists participated.

As a result of the announced competition, 15 initiatives on topics of “Climate Change and Water Resource” and “Reducing the Carbon Trace” were submitted, of which 12 were introduced to the National Commission of the Competition. The winning projects will be presented to the international competition, which will take place on April 24-27 in Almaty City of Kazakhstan.

Leaders of 25 NGOs active in Armenia are women, who actively participate in the organization of Eco education events in various educational institutions, covering themes such as air, water, climate, solid waste management, biodiversity, etc.

They actively engage in public hearings and discussions on various ecological issues, and have a critical role in the formation of civil society.

Women’s Engagement in Ecological Sector is presented below:

	2 014	2 018
Total number of personnel of the Ministry of Ecology ²⁴ , including:	3 81	2 06
-Female staff	1 78	1 25
-Proportion of female staff, %	4 8	6 1
Number of staff of the Ministry of Ecology occupying senior positions, including:	8 1	6 3
-Female staff	1 9	2 3
- Proportion of female staff, %	2 3	3 6.5

31. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?

The Ministry of Emergency Situations developed Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Response Plan for Educational Institutions, also the Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Response Sample Plan for Preschool Educational Institutions as well as the Community Disaster Risk Management Sample Plan and Development Guidelines, which provide information on women, including those suffered from disasters, participating in disaster risks reduction planning, as well as special provisions on women as of a specific vulnerable group.

Chapter 3. National Institutions and Processes

32. What is your country’s current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government.

²⁴ Reduction of the staff is conditioned by the fact that the State Inspection of Environmental Issues acting as part of the Ministry of Ecology was terminated as of 09.04.2018 based on Part 3 of the Article 19 of the RA Law on Inspection Bodies.

By the Decree of the RA Prime Minister dated November 19, 2014 (N1152-A) the Council on Issues of Equality between Women and Men in the Republic of Armenia was reorganized, and the composition of the new Council was approved on March 9, 2015. According to the provision of the UN CEDAW, the above-mentioned Council was established as a national mechanism, which coordinates fulfilment of equal rights and equal opportunities of women and men in all aspects of public life.

In November 2017 by the joint initiative of the Government and the UN, the Armenia National SDG Innovation Lab was established, which is granted a mandate to promote the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Armenia. This is the first time when the state jointly with the UN creates an innovation platform aiming at promoting the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the national level.

33. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)?

No.

34. Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Yes.

There are two main institutions/coordination mechanisms in Armenia established for effective coordination and facilitation of SDG related processes: data collection and analysis, stakeholders dialogue, identification and design of possible solutions and reforms, etc.

- National Council on Sustainable Development chaired by the Prime Minister of Armenia and the Inter-Agency Task Force for SDG Nationalization (according to the 167-A Decree of the Prime Minister (March 9, 2015) on “Establishing a National Council of the Republic of Armenia on Sustainable Development, its Composition and Working Order”);
- National SDG Innovation Lab, which is under reconsideration for the moment due to the recent political transformations and structural changes of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

35. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?

The Government Programme, which is focused on the enhancement of economic opportunities for women, as well as the creation of conditions favourable for fulfilment of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men, was approved by the National Assembly on February 14, 2019. Currently, the five-year Action plan on gender equality and the empowerment of all women deriving from the above-mentioned programme is in the process of development.

Chapter 4. Statistics and Data

36. What are the top three areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

At the time of submitting this report, statistics have not yet been summarized.

37. Out of the following which are your country's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?

At the time of submitting this report, statistics have not yet been summarized.

38. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

Yes.

The national indicators defined for assessing the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals are available on the website of the National Accountability Platform (<https://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=655>), which are developed by the National Statistical Committee in close collaboration with the UNFPA. The platform is some kind of an instrument for the statistics, met a data and other information for SDG indicators. The platform contains official statistics and met a data (compliant to the approved standard methodology requirements), and it is a publicly accessible and free of charge source and offers a feedback mechanism for the users.

39. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?

At the time of submitting this report, statistics have not yet been summarized.

40. Which of the following disaggregations¹⁰ is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

At the time of submitting this report, statistics have not yet been summarized.