



Republic of Armenia

Beijing +30 National Report

2024

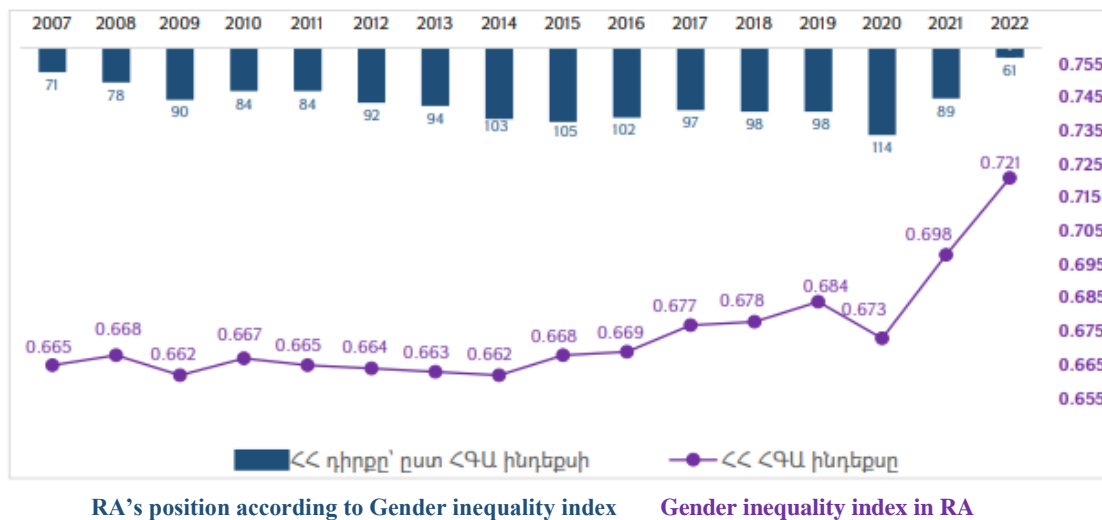
## Section One: Highlights

Over the past three decades since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Republic of Armenia has steadily worked towards honouring its commitments, striving to establish clear synergistic connections with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The principle of equality between women and men is extensively embedded in all legislation of the Republic of Armenia, including the Constitution, sectoral laws and by-laws. Armenia has ratified nearly all gender-focused international legal instruments. As a UN Member State, a Council of Europe Member State and an independent country dedicated to European integration, Armenia has committed not only to ratifying key international legal documents but also to aligning its national legislation with the provisions of these documents. In this context, the significant steps Armenia has taken to promote gender equality over the past five years have received positive feedback in both internal statistical assessments and analyses, as well as in various international ranking reports, including the following:

- The [Gender Gap Index study](#), conducted by the World Economic Forum since 2006, highlights the progress in narrowing the gender gap in Armenia in recent years. It indicates that, excluding 2020 due to COVID-19 and the war situation, Armenia's ranking in 2022 is the highest it has been since 2007. Specifically, the gender inequality index in Armenia in 2022 was 0.721, ranking the country in 61st position among 146 countries (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Gender inequality index in Armenia and Armenia's position according to the index, 2007–2022**



In 2022, Armenia surpassed the global average in both the “Economic Participation and Opportunities” and “Educational Attainment” sub-indices. In the same year, Armenia

also achieved a 95.5 per cent reduction in gender inequality in the “Health and Life Expectancy” sub-index, slightly lagging behind the world average by 0.5 percentage points. Regarding political participation, Armenia has notably advanced in overcoming gender inequality, with the “Political Participation” sub-index increasing by 0.045 compared to 2021. However, it still falls behind the world average by 0.6 percentage points. According to the gender inequality index, however, Armenia exceeds the world average by 3.7 percentage points.

- **At the 12 and 13 October 2022 sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, discussions were held on Armenia’s seventh periodic [report \(CEDAW/C/ARM/7\)](#). The Committee commended Armenia for its advancements and accomplishments across various sectors, while also offering several recommendations to the country. These recommendations were incorporated into the strategic plans and measures devised by the State. Moreover, in March 2019, the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the UN was appointed as the chairperson of the UN Commission on the Status of Women for the 2020–2021 term, covering the 64th and 65th sessions.
- **In May 2022, the Council of Europe’s Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)** released its [evaluation report](#) on Armenia, focusing on the accessibility of justice and the efficacy of remedies for victims of human trafficking. According to GRETA, from 2017 onward, Armenia continued to enhance its legislative and policy frameworks against trafficking, particularly with the introduction of the new Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code. Simultaneously, GRETA urged Armenia to persist in its endeavours to combat human trafficking and exploitation. The implementation of all recommendations provided to the country was incorporated into national strategic plans.

During the five-year period beginning in 2018, the Republic of Armenia aligned its state strategic documents with the priorities delineated in the Beijing Declaration and other pertinent international documents. This integration encompassed various areas, such as the following:

- In 2019, the Republic of Armenia adopted the 2019–2023 strategy and programme of measures to implement gender policy. As of May 2024, the country is in the process of developing the strategy and programme of activities for implementing gender policy for the years 2024–2028.
- In 2019, the Republic of Armenia adopted the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights, along with its corresponding 2020–2022 action plan. Later on, the country later formulated and approved the second iteration of the National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights, alongside the 2023–2025 action plan.

- In February 2019, the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved the initial National Action Plan covering 2019–2021 to enact the provisions of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security. Subsequently, in 2021, Armenia adopted its second National Action Plan for the period 2022–2024.
- In 2020, the Republic of Armenia implemented the sixth National Programme to combat human trafficking and exploitation, covering the period 2020–2022. Subsequently, in 2023, the country introduced its seventh National Programme for the years 2023–2025.
- The “2023–2027 Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities” comprehensive programme was approved by Decision No. 943-L on 8 June 2023. This programme also underwent an additional gender impact assessment by international experts.
- In the fight against gender inequality, domestic violence, human trafficking and exploitation, and sexual violence, numerous sub-legislative acts have been developed and amended. These acts have enhanced social support and protection mechanisms.

The Republic of Armenia has outlined its gender equality priorities based on the aforementioned documents within the following objectives:

1. Enhancing the national mechanism for women’s advancement, and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in political processes, various governance sectors, decision-making levels and negotiation processes, including security and defence.
2. In the socioeconomic sphere and labour market, promoting gender-sensitive approaches in work activities, reducing the gender gap in the workforce, and improving mechanisms for protecting labour rights across various economic sectors.
3. Promoting full and effective participation and equal opportunities for women and men in education and science, with a particular focus on implementing programmes that advance girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
4. Broadening equal opportunities for women and men in the health sector, particularly focusing on improving the quality, accessibility and availability of health services, including reproductive health care. Ensuring gender sensitivity, reducing maternal and child mortality rates, and safeguarding women’s sexual and reproductive rights, especially for vulnerable groups.
5. Preventing and addressing gender-based violence and discrimination, and providing protection and support for women and girls (including various vulnerable groups). This includes individuals experiencing domestic violence, human trafficking, exploitation and sexual abuse. This also includes preventing sex-selective abortions.
6. Developing gender-sensitive and gender-responsive strategies for addressing climate change, promoting inclusivity and increasing awareness.
7. Rolling out more proactive forms of social assistance and comprehensive social support programmes for individuals belonging to extremely impoverished and vulnerable groups as part of social protection initiatives.
8. Incorporating a gender-sensitive component into the state budget formulation process.

9. Ensuring the accurate collection of gender-disaggregated data and statistics for integration into policy development, and incorporating gender mainstreaming into sectoral policies and programmes.
10. Enhancing the gender sensitivity of politicians, public servants, members of the judiciary, representatives of law enforcement and investigative bodies, journalists and other target groups.

To achieve the desired outcomes within the aforementioned priorities, the State has significantly increased funding for gender-sensitive programmes from the state budget. Additionally, it has actively collaborated with various international organizations and NGOs, combining resources to pursue common goals.

\*\*\*\*\* The subsequent sections of this report will provide a more detailed overview of the initiatives and programmes undertaken by the country across various sectors in line with the aforementioned priorities.

### **Challenges and setbacks**

Alongside its efforts to ensure gender equality, the Republic of Armenia has encountered several challenges over the past five years that have affected the implementation of human rights, especially the rights of women and girls (discussed in particular in question 4 of section 2).

- The onset of COVID-19 posed fresh challenges for Armenia, with emergency measures enacted during the pandemic primarily affecting the country's socioeconomic landscape. Government actions, such as imposing population movement restrictions during the state of emergency, inevitably resulted in new socioeconomic issues. Numerous studies indicate that instances of domestic violence also surged during the pandemic.
- In addition to the pandemic, Armenia faced another challenge in the fall of 2020. The aggressive war initiated by Azerbaijan against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh led to massive forced displacements. Of the 94,000 people who sought refuge in Armenia, 88 per cent were women and children. Due to the military operations, they lost their homes and means of livelihood.
- On 13 and 14 September 2022, Azerbaijan attacked the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia, which led to massive violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Cases of sexual and gender-based violence against female soldiers were also recorded during that attack.
- On 19 and 20 September 2023, as a result of Azerbaijan's large-scale military attack on Nagorno-Karabakh, ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population took place. About 108,000 people, most of whom were women and children, were forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh within a few days.

## Section Two: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

### **1. Over the past five years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?**

Over the past five years, the Republic of Armenia has made significant strides in various aspects of public life despite facing notable challenges. Specifically, there has been a marked increase in the representation of women in political leadership roles, with the proportion of women elected to the National Assembly reaching a historic high of 36 per cent after the 2021 elections, indicating a positive shift towards greater female political engagement.

Additionally, in the socioeconomic sphere, Armenia has implemented extensive measures to promote gender equality in the labour market, particularly through substantial support for female entrepreneurs. This support encompasses various stages of business development, including idea generation, mentoring programmes and access to networks and markets. Financial and technical assistance has been extended to businesses led by women, facilitating their ability to overcome entrepreneurial barriers. These initiatives have been undertaken collaboratively with governmental, non-governmental and international entities.

Armenia has actively encouraged women's engagement in the workforce through a mix of targeted strategies and comprehensive legal changes aimed at fostering a healthier work-life balance for women. These reforms include provisions for parental leave, flexible work schedules and accessible childcare services. By implementing such policies, Armenia has enabled women to effectively balance their caregiving responsibilities with their professional pursuits, thus breaking down barriers to their participation in the labour market and fostering gender equality within the workplace. Moreover, Armenia has prioritized enhancing women's leadership roles and involvement in decision-making processes, particularly within the economic realm. Initiatives to boost female representation on corporate boards, in leadership positions and in entrepreneurship have empowered women to actively shape economic policies and practices while safeguarding their rights and interests.

Significant initiatives have been undertaken to introduce and expand targeted social support services catering to vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the elderly and individuals with disabilities. Detailed information on these projects will be provided in subsequent sections.

Armenia has broadened child and family benefits to aid families in nurturing children and addressing the requirements of vulnerable youngsters. The extended monetary aid was intended to diminish child poverty rates and enhance the overall well-being of children. Regarding the restructuring of the pension system, Armenia has undertaken extensive efforts to bolster the pension system and guarantee the financial stability of its elderly population. These reforms

encompass enhancements in pension coverage and adequacy, along with measures geared towards bolstering the long-term sustainability of the pension system.

Armenia has advanced in broadening the scope of health service provision and enhancing citizens' access to health care. The Government has enacted reforms aimed at elevating the quality and availability of healthcare services, such as mandating health insurance and extending primary healthcare services in rural regions.

Armenia has undertaken significant initiatives to advance the rights of individuals with disabilities and foster their inclusion in society. Substantial legislative reforms have been enacted to safeguard their rights, ensure accessibility and provide reasonable accommodations across various domains. These reforms have also entailed awareness-raising campaigns, vocational training initiatives and employment assistance services tailored to individuals with disabilities. Additionally, a comprehensive programme aimed at socially integrating individuals with disabilities has been established, prioritizing actions and measures to enhance the services available to them, reform the provision of care and facilitate independent living. Starting in 2024, Armenia introduced the Personal Assistant Service, which is available to individuals aged 15 and older with severe or profound disabilities affecting their mobility, vision, mental health or cognition. This service is accessible to those who are studying or employed.

Armenia has enacted legislative reforms to fortify protection and assistance for individuals facing domestic violence. Following the adoption of the law on “On Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity” in 2017, more than a dozen regulatory measures were developed to ensure the effective enforcement of its provisions. A significant accomplishment has been the establishment of new support services for those affected by domestic violence. Through collaboration with civil society organizations, the Government has established support centres across all regions and in Yerevan, offering immediate aid and assistance to survivors. Furthermore, since 2020, the Government has also contributed funding annually towards the operation of two shelters.

Awareness campaigns have been conducted to challenge societal norms and raise awareness regarding domestic violence. These initiatives seek to shift attitudes and behaviours surrounding domestic violence, promote reporting and foster a culture of zero tolerance for violence against women. The Government has invested in enhancing the capabilities of law enforcement personnel, healthcare professionals and social workers to improve their response to domestic violence cases. Training programmes equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively identify, address and support victims of domestic violence, ensuring a systematic and victim-centred approach. In the pursuit of implementing reforms aimed at preventing domestic violence, the Government has collaborated with various international organizations, particularly

within programmes facilitated by such entities as the United Nations Population Fund, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

An important milestone has been the implementation of mechanisms by the Armenian Government for identifying and guiding children who have been excluded from compulsory education. This effort includes the launch of the electronic subsystem “Identification of Children Excluded from Compulsory Education” in September 2021. This subsystem compares data from the state population register with information from the education management information system twice a year, in September and January. It identifies individuals aged 6–19 who are not enrolled in any educational institution, including pre-vocational, vocational or secondary vocational educational institutions.

Another significant achievement has been the implementation of gender-sensitive budgeting in Armenia. Beginning in 2020, the country has integrated gender considerations into its state budget planning processes to address the specific needs and priorities of women in economic development. Gender budgeting initiatives aim to allocate resources to programmes and services that promote women’s economic empowerment, such as skills training and childcare support.

In addition to the aforementioned achievements, it is crucial to acknowledge that the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and other geopolitical challenges have posed significant hurdles to the advancement of gender equality. Despite these obstacles, it is worth noting that progress towards establishing gender equality across various domains has been facilitated by cooperation between the State and civil society, as well as joint efforts. Stable collaboration with international organizations and the demonstrated political will of the Government have been key factors in driving this progress forward.

In summary, achieving and maintaining gender equality across various aspects of public life demands ongoing dedication from all segments of society and the implementation of comprehensive strategies. By leveraging past accomplishments and addressing persistent challenges, Armenia has the opportunity to advance gender equality and ensure the full realization of women’s rights.

## **2. Over the past five years, what have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?**

### **Increasing women’s participation in science**

As indicated in the 2022 Global Gender Gap report, Armenia surpasses the global average in the “Educational Attainment” sub-index.



Armenia has made significant strides in increasing the participation of women in science. Statistical data from 2020 and 2021 reveal that 53 per cent of employees in scientific and technical organizations in Armenia are women, compared to less than 30 per cent globally. Despite these positive figures, only about 25 per cent of heads of state-funded scientific groups or projects (overseen by the Higher Education and Science Committee) are women. Efforts to boost this number are ongoing, including the implementation of grant programmes to support female-led scientific groups.

In 2020, Armenia introduced a competition for grant applications aimed at promoting female leadership in scientific projects, as part of the thematic funding of scientific activities (according to the Order of the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture dated 2 July 2020). For these groups, a female leader is required to include at least one female researcher under 35 years old, with an additional year of age allowed for each child if the researcher has children. Out of 50 applications, 15 projects received funding, supporting 31 female researchers from December 2020 to November 2023. These grants were provided for 36 months to research groups consisting of four to five members.

The second competition, “Programme for the Promotion of Women Managers 2024”, received 47 applications, which are currently under review. This initiative is part of a continuous process to enhance women’s leadership in science (further details are presented in question 13 of section 3).

## **Healthcare sector**

According to the 2022 Global Gender Gap report, Armenia achieved a score of 95.5 per cent in the “Health and Life Expectancy” sub-index, indicating that gender inequality in this area was nearly eliminated, albeit 0.5 percentage points below the global average.

Over the past five years, the Republic of Armenia has prioritized women’s and maternal health. Despite shifts in health priorities and budget constraints due to the pandemic and war, funding for maternal and reproductive health care has steadily increased. In 2023, financial allocations reached 9.1 billion Armenian drams (AMD), up from AMD 6.7 billion in 2017, with further increases planned for 2024.

Medical care for women of reproductive age during pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period is entirely free in Armenia, regardless of social status or residence. Additionally, gynaecological hospital care, including abortion, is free for women from disadvantaged groups and is available nationwide, as obstetrics and gynaecology services are provided in both regional centres and all regional medical facilities.

Continuous efforts have been made to enhance the quality, availability and accessibility of reproductive health care in Armenia. The range of free services for women and girls has expanded, including improved reproductive health services for adolescent girls, extended prenatal care for pregnant women and greater number of increased examinations for high-risk pregnancies. Newly married couples now have access to additional examinations and counselling, and assisted reproductive technologies are available to certain groups, including people with disabilities and the residents of the 187 border communities.

The range of women receiving assisted reproductive technology has significantly increased, with a focus on improving access for women in regional areas. Free mammographic exams for women aged 50–69 in these areas are provided via a mobile unit, with follow-up treatment if needed. Cervical cancer screenings for women aged 30–60 have been conducted nationwide to promote early detection and prevention. Further reforms and programmes in this area are detailed in question 12 of section 3.

### **Discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes**

In recent years, Armenia has prioritized eliminating discriminatory social norms, changing gender stereotypes, improving the national mechanism for advancing women and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in decision-making roles. In this context, several initiatives have been undertaken, as follows:

- In 2019, the Council on Women’s Affairs and its associated working group were established as the national mechanism for the advancement of women. The Council comprises representatives from the executive, legislative and judicial branches (including ministers, deputy ministers and deputies), as well as the heads of non-governmental organizations. The RA Deputy Prime Minister chairs the Council. Its mandate is to coordinate processes related to the implementation of strategic and short-term gender equality programmes.
- At the regional level, gender policy implementation commissions attached to each governor’s office have continued to operate as mechanisms for developing and ensuring gender policy. These commissions are present in all regions and in Yerevan Municipality.
- The Gender Theme Group (GTG) has been actively collaborating with various partners to develop joint programmes and activities supporting gender equality. It includes UN agencies, government institutions and development partners such as national NGOs, think tanks, academia, research organizations and gender experts. Managed by the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in conjunction with the United Nations Population Fund and the Armenian Office of the European Union, the GTG provides a framework for supporting gender equality initiatives.

## **Political participation and representation**

Legislative reforms, particularly the implementation of gender-sensitive quotas outlined in the RA Electoral Code, have played a crucial role in enhancing the political representation of women. These reforms ensure that no more than 70 per cent of representatives from each gender are included in the electoral lists of parties participating in elections, effectively boosting female representation in legislative bodies.

Furthermore, significant positive changes have been observed in increasing women's representation at the local level. Previously, women's presence in councils of elders at the local self-government level was limited to 11 per cent. However, following the transition to a proportional electoral system and the application of quotas, this figure has risen to 28 per cent.

## **Eliminating violence against women and girls**

As a top priority, Armenia has undertaken significant efforts over the past five years to prevent and address gender-based violence and discrimination, and to provide support to women, girls and vulnerable groups. These efforts encompass legislative reforms, the establishment and expansion of new services, and awareness campaigns. Notably, starting from 2020, approximately AMD 125 million have been allocated from the state budget to implement three support programmes for victims of family violence. This includes the establishment of support centres in all cities and Yerevan, the co-financing of the activities of two shelters, and the implementation of a programme offering one-time financial assistance to victims of domestic violence. Further details on these reforms can be found in section 3.

## **Gender-responsive budgeting**

In 2020, Armenia prioritized the accurate collection of gender-disaggregated data and its integration into policy development. This included incorporating gender sensitivity into the state budget formulation process. Guidelines for gender-sensitive budgeting were introduced from the outset of budget development, aiming to include gender-sensitive activities within the state budget.

Gender-sensitive budgeting processes have been introduced at the local level in Armenia, including the methodology for drafting the five-year development plans of communities. This ensures that community development plans align with women's and men's rights and are gender-sensitive. Details of the efforts in this area are outlined in section 4 of the report.

### **3. Over the past five years, what specific actions have you taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls?**

#### **Women and girls living in remote and rural areas**

Over the past five years, Armenia has undertaken specific measures to prevent discrimination and uphold the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls, with a focus on those residing in rural areas and those with disabilities. Women's Resource Centres, operating in nine cities across five regions of Armenia through the WINNET Armenia network, have spearheaded targeted initiatives. These efforts aim to empower women, particularly in rural areas, to collectively advocate for positive changes in political, economic and social domains.

At the regional level, the Coalition of Family Violence Support Centres, comprising non-governmental organizations in each region (including Yerevan), has undertaken extensive efforts to prevent gender-based violence. Their aim is to instigate systemic changes to prevent domestic violence, ensure the safety of victims and empower women throughout Armenia. The Coalition implements various programmes to enhance the socioeconomic capacities of vulnerable women, particularly those who have experienced violence. Additionally, coalition members receive grants from the state budget to implement economic empowerment initiatives for vulnerable women in different regions.

#### **Women and girls with disabilities**

This topic was previously addressed in the preceding question.

#### **Women and girls living with HIV/AIDS**

This specific sub-topic is mentioned in question 12 of section 3.

#### **Older women**

The Armenian Government is dedicated to upholding the rights of the elderly, fostering their full participation in society, combating discrimination, promoting active and healthy ageing and ensuring their access to long-term care while supporting caregivers and families. Recognizing the significance of ensuring dignified, active and healthy ageing, discussions on elderly issues are incorporated into demographic considerations, given Armenia's status as an ageing nation. Currently, the draft Strategy for Demographics 2023–2040 is actively being discussed, addressing the role of the elderly, harnessing their potential, providing care services for both the elderly and disabled, and addressing other pertinent matters.

In 2021, the Prime Minister of the RA issued Resolution 535-A, establishing an interdepartmental commission tasked with addressing elderly issues, with the resolution defining the commission's responsibilities and members. This commission, comprising multiple government departments and non-governmental organizations, meets three times annually to discuss various elderly-related matters. It also reviews feedback from non-governmental organizations providing round-the-clock, home and day-care services for the elderly, based on surveys conducted among their beneficiaries.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is actively enhancing social services for the elderly and implementing programmes to foster their social inclusion. In accordance with Government Decision No. 1744-N dated 10 November 2022, standards for elderly care have been improved, resulting in a significant increase in the cost of home care per individual, from AMD 61,875 in 2020 to AMD 231,600. As of 2023, community services for the elderly are available in both the capital and all regions of the country, with 1,250 individuals receiving home-care services, an additional 1,200 accessing day-care services and 1,260 receiving round-the-clock care in Yerevan, Vardenis, Gyumri and Vanadzor through delegated service providers.

As part of efforts to combat discrimination against the elderly, significant changes were made to the Labour Code effective from 31 July 2023, as follows:

- Employers are prohibited from terminating employment contracts solely based on an employee reaching the age of 63 if they are entitled to an old-age pension, or the age of 65 if they are not entitled to an old-age pension.
- Employers cannot refuse to enter into a contract with an individual solely because they are entitled to an old-age pension and have reached the age of 63, or because they are not entitled to an old-age pension and have reached the age of 65.

### **Women and girls marginalized on account of race, ethnicity and/or caste**

The development of the Draft Law on Ensuring Equality before the Law (hereinafter the Draft) was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 44-day war of 2020, as well as the Azerbaijani armed attack on the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia in September 2022.

In 2023, the Ministry of Justice resumed work on the Draft and, in July 2023, requested the expert opinion of the Council of Europe (CoE) on the latest version of the Draft, which was provided in March 2024. Currently, the Draft is being revised based on the recommendations provided by the CoE experts. Afterwards, it is planned to hold a series of discussions with both the interested state bodies and civil society organizations (CSOs), based on the results of which the Draft will be finalized and presented to the Office of the Prime Minister of the RA.

It is also important to note that the 2023–2025 Action Plan deriving from the National Strategy for Human Rights (adopted by Government Decision No. 1674-L of 28 September 2023) envisages revising the Draft and submitting it to the National Assembly. The deadline for this action is the second half of 2024.

The main provisions of the Draft are the following:

1. It provides for the definition of discrimination and its types (including direct, indirect, associative discrimination, harassment, segregation, victimization and so on).
2. It envisages the judicial protection mechanisms of the right to not be discriminated (within the framework of administrative and civil proceedings).
3. It enshrines the rule of the shift of the burden of proof.
4. It defines the mandate and main powers of the Human Rights Defender of Armenia (Ombudsperson) as an equality body, as well as the establishment and the functions of the Equality Council adjunct to the Defender, among other parts of the national women's machinery.

#### **4. Over the past five years, how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what measures have you taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls?**

In the past five years, alongside efforts to promote gender equality, the Republic of Armenia encountered challenges, notably due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency measures implemented during the pandemic significantly impacted Armenia's socioeconomic landscape. Government actions, including population movement restrictions during states of emergency, resulted in new socioeconomic issues. Studies indicate a documented increase in domestic violence [reports](#) during the pandemic.

In addition to the pandemic, Armenia faced another significant challenge in the fall of 2020: the aggressive war initiated by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh's people, leading to massive forced displacements. Among the 94,000 individuals seeking refuge in Armenia, 88 per cent were women and children. Military operations resulted in the loss of homes and livelihoods for many. In response, the Government expanded its priorities to address the needs of those affected by the conflict, implementing mechanisms to support vulnerable groups, including sociopsychological programmes.

On 13 and 14 September 2022, Azerbaijan's attack on the Republic of Armenia's sovereign territory resulted in significant violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, including instances of sexual and gender-based violence against female soldiers.

The following year, on September 2023, a significant military attack by Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh resulted in the ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population. Approximately 108,000 individuals, predominantly women and children, were forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh within a brief period. The Government promptly responded by addressing the basic needs of these individuals. Presently, discussions are under way to implement medium-term and long-term programmes aimed at establishing stable living conditions for the refugees. The international community, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and numerous countries worldwide, has played a crucial role by providing aid and financial support to address the refugees' needs.

In response to the diverse challenges encountered over the past five years, the State has implemented several targeted programmes.

In particular, to mitigate the impacts of the coronavirus, the country developed and implemented approximately 20 programmes encompassing health, socioeconomic and educational measures. These programmes targeted specific social groups and employers. For instance, families with children under 14 years old, those where a parent lost their job due to the pandemic, or pregnant women in their twelfth week of pregnancy who were not employed during lockdown received benefits. Other beneficiaries included families with children under the age of 18 where one or both parents were unemployed or on childcare leave for children under the age of 3, or where both parents were laid off due to the pandemic.

In collaboration with both international and local partners, several social support initiatives were implemented for individuals forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh. It is worth mentioning that specific gender-sensitive programmes were put in place for women and girls forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh. These initiatives, particularly in various regions across Armenia and in Yerevan, included “Safe Spaces” where approximately 30,000 displaced women and girls received counselling, psychological and social support, and basic necessities and hygiene kits.

## **5. Over the next five years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?**

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has outlined its [programme](#) for 2022–2026, which underscores its commitment to promoting gender equality across various sectors of public life. This includes the development and implementation of targeted state programmes and measures aimed at bridging the gap between the opportunities available to women and men in different spheres of public life.

Implementing the provision outlined in the Government’s programme ensures the development of the strategic plan for 2024–2028 aimed at achieving gender equality. The mentioned strategy proposes six priorities for gender equality policy—management and decision-making levels, socioeconomic and labour sectors, education and science, health, gender-based violence prevention, and addressing women’s and girls’ domestic violence—as well as climate-related fields. Details of this strategy are outlined in the response to question 33 in section 4 of this report.

The 2024–2030 National Employment Strategy, currently in its finalization stage, will greatly influence the development of the Armenian labour market, as well as economic, educational and territorial development. One of its targets is middle-aged non-working women (aged 30–40), with the strategy proposing measures to enhance their employment opportunities.

It is worth mentioning that a Demographics Strategy is currently being developed with the goal of establishing a balanced and stable population structure, focused on enhancing long-term human capital development and improving the overall quality of life. The Strategy encompasses four strategic objectives:

- Establishing a supportive environment for family welfare, where each child’s birth enhances human capital development.
- Mitigating risk factors for mortality, and fostering healthy environments to preserve and enhance human capital across all life stages.
- Guaranteeing conditions for active, healthy and dignified ageing by engaging older generations in socioeconomic activities and enhancing their potential.
- Diminishing incentives for emigration, and enhancing competitiveness in acquiring, retaining and attracting highly skilled human capital.

In total, 44 programmes and 191 activities are set to be executed to attain the outcomes of the specified strategic goals. Two of these programmes directly focus on women and girls by aiding during pregnancy and childbirth:

- Programme 1.3.1 - Enhanced Maternal Healthcare Services
- Programme 1.3.3 - Flexible Educational and Employment Opportunities during Pregnancy

Nevertheless, women and girls might also be encompassed within target groups delineated by other programmes.

It is crucial to highlight that efforts have commenced towards fulfilling the provisions of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) within the new National Action Plan for 2025–2027.

Another significant document for the coming years is the 2023–2025 National Strategy for



Human Rights Protection. This action plan aims to enhance the structures safeguarding civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights as guaranteed by international treaties adopted by Armenia. It aligns with Armenia's international obligations and considers recommendations from bodies enforcing human rights-related treaties.

It is crucial to note that effective implementation of the legal documents mentioned above is vital for achieving positive outcomes in gender equality over the next five years. However, success in implementing provisions from various strategic documents depends on the presence of institutional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating efforts to address gender issues. Current and final evaluations of measures implemented under various strategic documents indicate that having an institutionalized monitoring and evaluation system would enhance effectiveness. Hence, most newly developed strategic documents have established institutionalized monitoring mechanisms, with some even incorporating digital systems to evaluate programme results. This will undoubtedly enhance the implementation outcomes of the listed strategic measures.

Furthermore, ensuring the active engagement of various interdepartmental commissions and groups is crucial. This can facilitate significant progress in strengthening gender equality across various sectors in the future. During the session of the Armenia-UN Joint Steering Committee established on 28 November 2023, the eight programme groups within the management structure of the Armenia-UN Cooperation Framework were identified. These groups are dedicated to mapping, designing, implementing and reviewing programmes aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and with the priorities of the Armenia-UN Cooperation Framework. Of particular importance is the "Gender Equality" programme group, consisting of representatives from various state and UN entities.

As part of the ongoing public administration reforms, integrating gender mainstreaming into all strategic programmes can be a significant achievement in addressing gender issues. Progress has already been made in this regard, notably with the support of an international expert from the UNDP Armenia Office, who helped develop methodologies for gender mainstreaming and social inclusion.

## **Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work**

### **6. Over the past five years, what actions has your country taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)?**

Over the past five years, labour regulations in Armenia have undergone continuous enhancement, considering legal precedents, evolving production and work conditions, advancements in organizational-technical structures, scientific progress and various socioeconomic factors. These improvements also draw from leading international practices, including standards set by the International Labour Organization and the Revised European Social Charter. Significant updates have been made to the Armenian Labour Code during this period. In particular:

- In September 2019, the Armenian Labour Code was amended to explicitly define and prohibit discrimination in labour relations. Following legislative changes in December 2019, effective from 1 July 2021, the Health and Labour Inspection Body of Armenia was granted authority to oversee compliance with labour laws, particularly regarding health and safety regulations, and protections for individuals under the age of 18, pregnant or breastfeeding women, and childcare workers. This body also has the power to enforce compliance and apply penalties where necessary.
- In April 2020, new guarantees were added for employees. It was established that employment contracts cannot be terminated if the employee is absent to care for a child under the age of 12 during emergency situations or unplanned closures of educational institutions. Additionally, employees are allowed to work part-time under these circumstances.
- The September 2020 amendments to the Labour Code protect the essential working conditions of a child's actual caregiver, preventing less favourable changes during the first year of the child's life, except for job title or category. Additionally, fathers are entitled to five days of paid leave within 30 days of the child's birth, with the employer paying the average daily salary.
- The October 2022 amendments to the Labour Code defined the term 'compulsory or forced labour'.

In May 2023, extensive amendments were made to the Labour Code to align it with international agreements, particularly the ILO fundamental conventions and the Revised European Social Charter. These changes aimed to eliminate legislative gaps, resolve internal contradictions,

clarify ambiguous provisions and address practical legal issues. Key changes related to women, mothers, fathers and children include the following:

- The principle of prohibiting violence against employees was expanded to explicitly include sexual harassment.
- Definitions and prohibitions of violence and harassment in labour relations were established.
- Employees subjected to workplace violence or sexual harassment are entitled to annual leave upon request, regardless of their length of service.
- Organizational internal disciplinary rules must address the prohibition of workplace violence and sexual harassment.
- Employees caring for a child can now request reduced working hours until the child is 2 years old.
- For a woman with a child under 2 years old, the regulation on additional breaks has been revised. Instead of breastfeeding-specific breaks, a half-hour break every three hours is provided in addition to regular rest and meal breaks. These breaks can be combined or adjusted to the beginning or end of the working day, with corresponding reductions in work hours. During these breaks, the employee is paid the average hourly wage.
- It was established that employees under the age of 18 can only work outside compulsory education hours. The work hours for employees aged 12–15 were set at up to four hours per day and no more than 12 hours per week. For those aged 15–16, the limit was set at 24 hours per week.

### **Introduced or strengthened gender-responsive job creation and active labour-market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies)**

To promote women’s employment, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs implemented various programmes, including training and work experience initiatives, such as the following:

- From 2018 to 2021, the programme “Organization of Professional Training at the Employer for Mothers Who Are Uncompetitive in the Labour Market and Do Not Have a Profession” was implemented. This initiative aimed to provide stable employment by offering opportunities for uncompetitive individuals to acquire job skills and abilities. During this period, 530 women participated in the programme.
- From 2018 to 2021, the programme “Providing Assistance to the Unemployed to Gain Professional Work Experience in the Acquired Profession” was executed. Throughout this period, 1,400 women participated in the programme.
- Between 2018 and 2021, the programme “Organization of Vocational Training for Unemployed Persons, Those at Risk of Dismissal, as well as Jobseekers with Six Months Left to Serve Their Prison Sentence” was carried out. During this time frame, 1,299 women participated in the programme.

- From 2018 to 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs implemented the programme “Supporting Small Business Activities of Individuals Uncompetitive in the Labour Market”. In 2018–2020, 102 female beneficiaries were included in this programme.
- During 2018–2021, the Ministry also ran the programme “Supporting Jobseekers on Leave to Care for Children Up to Three Years Old”. This initiative aimed to enhance the likelihood of those on care leave returning to work by assisting in organizing childcare alongside employment. A total of 1,805 individuals were enrolled in the programme during this period.
- From 2020 to 2021, courses for parents of children with disabilities were organized to enhance their children’s opportunities for inclusion in the job market. These courses, funded by the state budget and administered by a selected organization, aimed to equip parents with skills conducive to their children’s employment prospects.
- Since its launch in December 2023, a programme has provided state aid to the parents of military personnel declared missing or deceased to facilitate childcare for said personnel’s children under 3 years old. The aim is to assist these parents in efficiently arranging care for their young children. As of 1 April 2024, 57 women have benefited from this initiative.
- As of early 2024, the programme “Short-term Training Courses and Work Experience Support for Individuals Forcibly Displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023” was initiated. By 1 April 2024, 284 women had been enrolled as beneficiaries of this programme.
- From 2018 to 2024, a total of 13,939 women participated in the employment programmes administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, encompassing temporary employment assistance initiatives.

As per non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship, in 2022 the Government of Armenia and UNDP co-financed and piloted an innovative ecosystem-level support mechanism called Platform#5 to overcome the compound challenges facing women’s economic empowerment, with a focus on employability and entrepreneurship. The overall goal of Platform#5 is to boost women’s entrepreneurship and employability by creating a human-centric, SDG-aligned ecosystem and innovative support mechanisms. As a leader of the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality under the UN Women-led Generation Equality Forum, Armenia has embarked on an ambitious journey to develop bold, transformative action for women’s economic empowerment in high-labour productivity sectors of the economy. Question 9 provides a detailed presentation of the outcomes and further actions related to Platform#5.

### **Measures taken to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace**

As previously noted, the Labour Code, following the amendments in October 2022, provided clear definitions for ‘compulsory or forced labour’ and established regulations prohibiting violence or sexual harassment in the workplace.

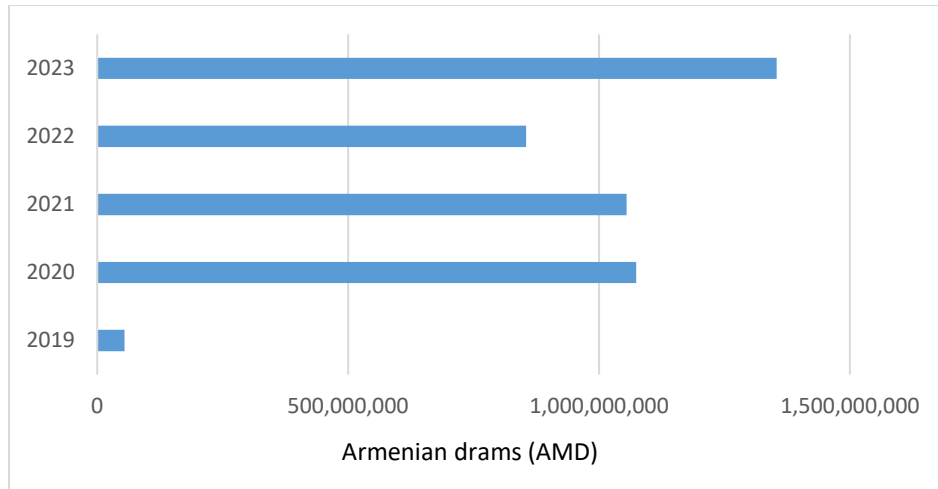
**7. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers?**

Since 2019, Armenia has bolstered its network of community-based care services, encompassing home-care aid and day-care centres catering to children, the elderly and individuals with disabilities. These services offer personalized assistance tailored to individuals’ specific requirements, facilitating their ability to remain in their homes and communities while receiving necessary care. State budget allocations fund these services, with annual increases in financial resources aiding service expansion. Certified non-governmental organizations, selected through grant tenders, are entrusted with service provision.

The state budget allocations for these services have fluctuated from year to year (Figure 2):

<b>2019</b>	<b>AMD 543,630,400</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>AMD 1,073,996,083</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>AMD 1,054,712,816</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>AMD 854,557,998</b>
<b>2023</b>	<b>AMD 1,353,789,749</b>

**Figure 2. Annual state budget allocations, 2019–2023 (AMD)**



Overall services include the following:

- Day-care services for children aim to develop their sociopsychological and life skills, providing social-rehabilitation as well as psychological and legal counselling to uphold their fundamental right to be raised in a family.
- The Home-Care Services programme offers domestic, medical-social, sociopsychological and counselling support to elderly individuals and those with disabilities, tailored to their specific social needs. This includes assessing individual social needs, creating personalized social programmes and organizing leisure and employment activities according to preferences.
- For individuals with mental health issues, home care involves social counselling, psychiatrist consultations, psychological aid, medical assistance, household maintenance and skills training for independent living.
- Social-psychological rehabilitation for visually impaired individuals focuses on enabling independent living, mobility and transportation usage, including white cane mobility skills training.
- Round-the-clock care services offer accommodation, primary medical care, social-psychological support and basic necessities for persons with disabilities. The goal is to ensure their right to community and family living, social inclusion and participation in day-centre activities, aiming to prevent their reliance on round-the-clock care facilities.
- Starting in 2024, the Government offers a personal assistant service for individuals with disabilities, aiming to facilitate their independent living and integration within their communities, thereby reducing isolation. This service is available to individuals aged 15 and older who have severe or profound limitations in mobility, vision or mental health, including those with varying degrees of functional impairment. Funding for this service is provided by the state budget.
- From 2018 to 2021, the Government implemented a programme to assist jobseekers on childcare leave for children up to 3 years old. This programme aims to enhance

individuals' prospects of rejoining the workforce by offering support in arranging childcare while they work. A total of 1,805 individuals participated in the programme during this period.

Armenia's efforts to enhance childcare services and bolster assistance for marginalized groups align with its goal of fostering social inclusion, diminishing disparities and fostering a compassionate and equitable society for its citizens. These initiatives reflect Armenia's dedication to advancing the objectives outlined in the Beijing Declaration and supporting worldwide endeavours to tackle unpaid caregiving responsibilities while upholding human rights and dignity.

The 2020 amendments to the Labour Code introduced provisions for paternity/parental leave, granting fathers five working days of paid leave within 30 days after the birth of their child upon request, with the employer covering the average daily salary. Additionally, the Labour Code outlines conditions for childcare leave for children up to 3 years old, which can be requested by the mother (or stepmother), father (or stepfather) or guardian actively caring for the child until they reach 3 years of age. This leave can be taken in full or in parts, and employees with this entitlement can utilize it during emergencies.

It is noteworthy that, with support from the United Nations Population Fund, "Family Corner" resource centres have been established and are active in three regions of RA. These centres host various trainings, discussions and events focused on shifting gender stereotypes, enhancing male participation in childcare and parenting, and promoting awareness about the significance of increased male involvement in prenatal and postnatal care. Additionally, thematic meetings of the "School of Fathers" are conducted at these centres to address these issues.

## **8. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce the gender digital divide?**

Over the past five years, Armenia has made significant efforts to bridge the gender digital divide by enhancing digital literacy, providing greater access to technology and boosting the participation of women and girls in the ICT sector. Globally, women constitute about 13 per cent of the IT workforce, but in Armenia, data from the ICT register show that women accounted for 40 per cent of the IT sector in 2020, 43 per cent in 2021, 39.4 per cent in 2022 and 38.3 per cent in 2023.

To achieve these results, several measures were implemented. The Ministry of High-Tech Industry developed the "Private Sector Cooperation of Higher Education Institutions for the Training of Specialists" programme, which ensures equal education and job opportunities for

both men and women. This initiative supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals of quality education (SDG 4) and decent work (SDG 8). It aims to advance the tech sector by offering additional education and supplying skilled workers for Armenia’s labour market. The “University of Professional Training - Private Sector Cooperation” programme ensures Internet and technology access for all, promoting job opportunities. In 2022, co-financing privileges were extended to regional residents, broadening the programme’s reach and providing equal education and job opportunities across Armenia. In the 2021 “Specialist Training University - Private Sector Cooperation” programme, 2,896 graduates specialized in IT, with women making up 1,531 (52.8 per cent). Of these female graduates, 790 (51.6 per cent) were from Yerevan and 741 (48.4 per cent) from the regions. In 2022, out of 791 IT graduates, 312 (39.4 per cent) were women, with 148 (47.4 per cent) from Yerevan and 164 (52.6 per cent) from the regions. In 2023, the programme had 779 IT graduates, 324 (41.5 per cent) of whom were women. Among these women, 249 (76.8 per cent) were from Yerevan and 75 (23.1 per cent) from the regions. The ongoing programme, modified annually to align with various SDGs, such as poverty eradication, health, quality education, gender equality, decent work, industry and innovation, and reducing inequalities, provides affordable education. This initiative ensures equal opportunities for all Armenian citizens to secure decent employment, offering an equal start for everyone.

Recognizing that gender inequalities in professions often stem from labour-market demands and psychological stereotypes, the Armenian Government established a special [scholarship policy](#) in September 2023 to encourage enrolment in STEM teaching majors at RA universities. This policy offers a monthly scholarship of AMD 70,000, serving as a potential motivation for women to pursue these fields.

It is important to highlight that in public schools, to address the essence of the problem, a pilot training session was conducted in 2020 for grades 2–4 in elementary school, grades 5–9 in middle school and grades 10–12 in high school. Since 2023, “Digital Literacy and Computer Science” has been introduced as a separate subject across all regions and in Yerevan, starting in the second grade in elementary school and the fifth grade in middle school. The course is based on four main scientific ideas: computing and society; digital tools and collaboration; computer hardware and systems; and computational and algorithmic thinking. Each of these ideas includes sub-ideas and expected learning outcomes that are tailored to different educational levels and grades.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a digital literacy development course was launched for women in the regions. The goal was to enhance the digital literacy skills of around 1,000 regional women. Participants learned the basics of digital devices and software, information literacy, digital content creation, creative use of digital technologies and other relevant skills. The course was specifically targeted at women aged 16–63 living in the regions.



Additionally, the Armath Engineering Laboratories initiative is noteworthy for its efforts to promote STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education among school-aged children, with a particular emphasis on encouraging girls to pursue careers in technology and engineering. More detailed information on this initiative can be found in question 23 of section 3.

The TUMO creative technology centres, which offer free after-school programmes in technology and design, have significantly boosted the participation of girls in the sector's development. These centres aim to bridge the digital divide by equipping young people, particularly girls aged 12–18, with modern digital skills. More details can be found in question 23 of section 3.

## **9. In the past five years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what macroeconomic policies has your country implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy?**

**Economic growth:** Armenia has experienced steady economic growth over the past five years, which has provided opportunities for employment and income generation, including for women. A growing economy has contributed to expanding access to education, healthcare and social services, benefiting women and girls.

**Investment in social infrastructure:** Government investment in social infrastructure, such as healthcare, education and childcare facilities, has improved the well-being of women and families. This investment supports the BPfA's objectives of promoting women's health, education and work-life balance.

**Fiscal policies supporting social protection:** Fiscal policies aimed at enhancing social protection, such as cash transfer programmes and social insurance schemes, have provided a safety net for vulnerable groups, including women-headed households and marginalized communities. These policies align with the BPfA's goals of poverty eradication and social inclusion.

### **Macroeconomic policies in support of a more gender-equal economy**

**Gender-responsive budgeting:** Armenia has adopted gender-responsive budgeting practices to ensure that fiscal policies and expenditures address the specific needs and priorities of women and girls. This includes mainstreaming gender considerations into budget planning, allocation and monitoring processes across government departments and agencies.

**Investment in education and skills development:** Recognizing the importance of education and skills development for women's economic empowerment, Armenia has invested in initiatives to enhance women's access to quality education, vocational training and lifelong learning opportunities. By equipping women with relevant skills and qualifications, these policies aim to increase their participation in higher-paying and male-dominated sectors of the economy.

**Promotion of women's entrepreneurship:** Macroeconomic policies have focused on promoting women's entrepreneurship and access to finance, including through targeted training programmes. Supporting women-owned businesses contributes to economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction while also challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

As previously mentioned in question 7, in 2022, the Government of Armenia and UNDP jointly funded and initiated an innovative support mechanism known as Platform#5. This platform aims to address multiple challenges hindering women's economic empowerment, with a specific focus on enhancing employability and entrepreneurship. The overarching objective of Platform#5 is to enhance women's participation in entrepreneurship and employment by establishing a human-centred, SDG-aligned ecosystem and introducing innovative support structures. Armenia, as the leader of the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality within the UN Women-led Generation Equality Forum, has embarked on an ambitious endeavour to develop impactful actions to promote women's economic empowerment in sectors characterized by high labour productivity.

In Armenia, the development of women's entrepreneurship and productive employability faces ecosystem-level compound challenges, which require complex and non-traditional (innovative) support mechanisms to unlock women's entrepreneurial potential and enhance their economic empowerment. Around 49 per cent of working-age women do not participate in Armenia's labour market. Young women comprise 65 per cent of economically inactive youth: the skills and education they possess cannot guarantee them sustainable income. Gender gaps in the rates of those not in employment, education or training (NEET) are especially high in rural areas, where these gaps also begin to widen at an earlier age. Specifically, 45 per cent of women in rural areas were NEET versus only 19 per cent of rural males. Women in Armenia tend to operate ineffective businesses compared to men and often in non-capital-intensive sectors. This lowers women's potential for generating a high and sustainable income. Women-led/owned enterprises, because such businesses are less dynamic, have on average a far fewer number of full-time employees (3.3 persons) than male-led/owned enterprises (15.5 persons). Women-led/owned enterprises are predominantly micro and small (about 86 per cent of the total number of women-led/owned enterprises in the country).

In this respect, there is an urgent need for a concerted and sustained effort by multiple stakeholders to unleash the full potential of Armenian women through their increased economic participation. The development interventions aimed at enhancing productivity, employment and entrepreneurship across Armenia, provided that they are adequately resourced and implemented, can be instrumental in attaining both the national socioeconomic development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Platform#5 succeeds and scales up the UNDP-UNICEF collaboration around Accelerator#5, a venture acceleration programme that has benefited hundreds of young women and girls across Armenia. Platform#5 builds on an extensive need assessment, domain literature and donor learnings in women's entrepreneurship and employability development. Its service lines include pre-acceleration for idea-stage entrepreneurs, acceleration for growth-stage entrepreneurs, upskilling/reskilling programmes for unemployed women, public policy innovation support to address compound barriers constraining women's economic empowerment, and innovative financing schemes to support resource mobilization for women's economic empowerment.

Platform#5's core value is its role as an ecosystem-builder through leveraging ecosystem capacities and harmonizing donor efforts. It's greatest benefit's is Platform#5's use of design thinking and behavioural experimentation to build programmes and policies together with the end-users.

During its first year of operation, Platform#5 benefited more than 2,000 vulnerable rural women, women enrolled in the family or social benefits system, women who have been subjected to trafficking, domestic violence or exploitation, and women who are caretakers of adults with disabilities or have three or more children. Successful practices applied by Platform#5 contribute to the design of the National Employment Strategy—a joint effort between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and UNDP—which applies strategic innovation to boost women's economic empowerment.

Based on these experiences, the Government of Armenia and UNDP are considering the possibilities for scaling up women's entrepreneurship. As part of this vision, in 2024, Platform#5 envisions the launch of a National Skills Fund that will provide tuition and living cost assistance to unemployed women so that they can focus on upskilling and employment opportunities. The Government of Armenia and UNDP aim at mobilizing resources to scale up Platform#5 to about 100,000 unemployed women in the coming five years and proactively seek partnerships for realizing this bold vision.

In conclusion, while Armenia has made progress in integrating gender considerations into macroeconomic and fiscal policies, further efforts are needed to address persistent gender disparities and promote a more inclusive and gender-equal economy. By prioritizing gender-

responsive budgeting, supporting women’s entrepreneurship and investing in education and skills development, Armenia is committed to advancing the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and achieving sustainable development for all of its citizens.

## Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

### 10. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

#### **Promoted poor women’s access to decent work through active labour-market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures**

In alignment with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Armenia has pursued targeted programmes in the past five years to alleviate poverty among women and girls. These efforts have prioritized enhancing access to decent work, entrepreneurship, social protection and other vital resources. Detailed measures in the employment sector were outlined in question 6 of section 3 of this report, emphasizing initiatives aimed at tackling poverty through employment programmes. Additionally, a pilot programme called “Employment of the Unemployed” was launched in 2022 within state programmes. This programme targets individuals registered in the Unified Social Service who have been continuously unemployed for the past three months and are over the age of 35, as well as unemployed individuals receiving state social benefits. In 2022, 19 women participated in the programme, including five from families receiving state social benefits. In 2023, 151 women joined the programme, with 104 of them coming from families in the state social benefits system.

#### **Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services**

Armenia has implemented programmes to enhance housing accessibility, especially for marginalized groups in rural areas, as follows:

- The State Support Programme for Housing Security for Families with Children aims to improve housing conditions for such families, fostering sustainable development and easing mortgage burdens by allowing beneficiaries to manage their mortgage payments alongside childcare responsibilities, thereby encouraging family growth. As of 25 April 2024, under this programme, a total of 9,845 beneficiaries have received assistance. This includes 1,566 beneficiaries supported through one-time monetary assistance (amounting to AMD 1,379,935,739), 2,911 beneficiaries supported through the advance insurance programme (with payments totalling AMD 148,007,544) and 5,368 beneficiaries

supported through the childbirth support programme (with payments totalling AMD 5,366,834,041). Overall, a total of AMD 6,894,777,323 has been disbursed since the inception of the programme.

- The State Support Programme for Housing Affordability in Border Settlements aims to enhance housing conditions for families, fostering sustainable development in these areas. Eligible beneficiaries include married couples, with at least one spouse holding Armenian citizenship. Financial assistance within the programme covers repayment of up to AMD 16 million of the mortgage principal and accrued interest up to 13 per cent. As of April 2024, 841 beneficiary applications have been approved, with 505 already receiving credit.
- The State Support Programme for Housing Affordability for Displaced Families from Nagorno-Karabakh facilitates 4,308 families (comprising 15,338 individuals) displaced due to the conflict beginning on 27 September 2020 to acquire residential properties or construct individual homes in Armenia through mortgage loans. Additionally, the State subsidizes both the principal and interest amounts as per the established procedure.

**Introduced or strengthened social protection programmes for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working age, pensions for older women)**

Social protection programmes implemented and devised by the Government are geared towards poverty alleviation, including the alleviation of women's poverty, thereby directly contributing to poverty reduction. These initiatives include increasing pension amounts, childcare support for children up to 2 years old, elderly care, disability benefits, support for families in the event of the breadwinner's loss, and financial assistance for the birth of the third and subsequent children in families, as well as additional benefits for the elderly, disabled individuals and families facing the loss of a breadwinner. Earlier discussions have addressed the demographic relevance of these programmes.

Additionally, state social support programmes target impoverished families facing challenging life circumstances. In particular, the Government has implemented two key initiatives to bolster social protection:

- The establishment of a social emergency aid system, designed to swiftly respond to crisis situations and provide immediate assistance to those in need.
- The roll-out of a food card system, aimed at enhancing social protection measures, particularly in times of crisis, by providing access to essential food supplies.

Moreover, the "Promotion of Social Inclusion and Self-Sufficiency Livelihood Activities in Armenia" programme aims to empower beneficiary families receiving state social assistance,

particularly through the family benefits system. It provides grants to support their entrepreneurship skills development, fostering self-sufficiency and social inclusion. The programme targeted five regions of Armenia—Ararat, Armavir, Kotayk, Lori and Shirak—with approximately 650 beneficiaries completing the entrepreneurship training, of whom 305 received business grants.

Beginning in July 2024, Armenia will introduce a new system to assess the social security of families, targeting extreme poverty alleviation and enhancing the economic engagement of beneficiaries. This system, known as the Hybrid method, will ascertain benefit eligibility based on a family's disposable income and assets. Eligible families will receive assistance to bridge the gap in their food basket, determined by the World Bank's methodology, thus lifting them out of extreme poverty. Moreover, the system mandates certain activation criteria and conditions for non-working, able-bodied family members when seeking support.

## **11. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?**

Over the past half-decade, Armenia has implemented various strategies to enhance social protection, extending its reach to encompass diverse segments of society, with special emphasis on women and girls. These efforts encompass augmenting cash transfers, benefits and pensions. The forthcoming examples illustrate distinct initiatives and their aims, coverage, and targeted demographic and financial allocations. The following outlined state benefits are aligned with local laws:

- Family benefits
- Social benefits
- Emergency support, which is provided:
  - Upon the birth of a child in the family.
  - When a child in the family enters the first grade.
  - In the event of a family member's death.

In the past several years, there has been an expansion in the coverage and amount of the childcare benefit for children up to 2 years old:

- Starting from 1 July 2020, the benefit increased from AMD 18,000 to AMD 26,500.
- From 1 January 2022, it further rose to AMD 28,600.
- Beginning 1 January 2023, the allowance for childcare increased to AMD 31,600, and to AMD 37,500 if the parent is on childcare leave.
- Additionally, if the parent resides in a village and is on childcare leave simultaneously, the allowance amounts to AMD 69,100 in total (AMD 31,600 + AMD 37,500).

Starting from 1 July 2020, adjustments were made to the one-time allowance for the birth of a child based on the order of birth:

- For the first child, the allowance increased to AMD 300,000 (previously AMD 50,000).
- For the second child, it also rose to AMD 300,000 (previously AMD 150,000).
- For the third and fourth children, the allowance became AMD 1 million.
- For the fifth child and each subsequent child, the allowance increased to AMD 1.5 million.

Starting from 1 January 2022, a monthly monetary support of AMD 50,000 is provided for the third child and every subsequent child born in the family until the child reaches 6 years of age.

From 2019 to 2024, efforts in pension policy aimed to enhance legislation, streamline pension conditions, reduce risks in payment processes and simplify administrative procedures. This period witnessed increased online service provision, leading to a 17 per cent rise in average monthly labour pensions from 2020 to 2022.

To mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, Armenia devised a comprehensive intervention package encompassing health, socioeconomic and educational measures. Approximately 20 programmes were developed and executed, benefiting targeted social groups and employers. For instance, assistance was extended to families with children under the age of 14, to families where a parent lost employment due to the pandemic, or to pregnant women in their twelfth week without employment during lockdowns. Families with unemployed parents, those caring for children under the age of 3 and households where both parents lost their jobs due to the pandemic also received support. Numerous social assistance initiatives were rolled out for vulnerable groups, including for utilities and other payment assistance. Additionally, economic support programmes aided employers severely impacted by pandemic-induced lockdowns, addressing various aspects across this report's inquiries.

## **12. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?**

Despite shifting health priorities and constrained budgets due to the pandemic and conflict, Armenia has consistently increased funding for women's and maternal health care. Financial allocations for maternal and reproductive health care have risen annually, reaching AMD 9.1 billion in 2023 compared to AMD 6.7 billion in 2017. In 2024, the financial allocations continued to increase.

Medical services for women during pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period are provided at no cost, irrespective of women's social standing or location. Gynaecological hospital

services, including abortion, are also free for women from socially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, and are accessible nationwide. Obstetrics and gynaecology services are available not only in regional centres but also in all regional medical facilities.

Efforts persist in enhancing the quality, availability and accessibility of reproductive health care, including the implementation of a referral system based on the nature and severity of the patient's condition. Standardized guidelines are established, accessible via a mobile application. Maternal and neonatal service standards are developed and applied uniformly across healthcare facilities nationwide.

In recent years, there has been an expansion in the range of free services available to women and girls. Notably, in 2020, the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved Decision No. 258-L on 5 March, endorsing a programme aimed at enhancing birth rates through health-focused measures from 2020 to 2023. This initiative broadened research and services geared towards improving adolescent girls' reproductive health and prenatal care for pregnant women, and it extended the list of examinations for high-risk pregnancies. Additionally, it introduced a package of additional examinations and counselling for newly married couples, along with medical assistance utilizing assisted reproductive technologies for specific population groups, including individuals with disabilities and the residents of the 187 border communities. Based on the outcomes of the programme, a draft decision has been formulated and submitted to the Prime Minister's Office, seeking approval for the "Programme for Enhancing Birth Rates Through Health Initiatives and Measures for the Years 2024–2026". This initiative aims to enhance the sexual and reproductive health of both women and men, particularly focusing on improving the quality of prenatal care, with the aspiration of incorporating it into the universal mandatory insurance package.

In 2023, the scope of women eligible for medical assistance with assisted reproductive technologies underwent significant expansion. Starting from January, all infertile women aged 20–36 and single women without infertility aged 28–42 gained access to such medical care, encompassing intrauterine insemination and in vitro fertilization. Additionally, in border regions, secondary women aged 20–36 with one child and experiencing infertility were included among the beneficiaries.

A significant effort has been made to enhance healthcare accessibility for women residing in rural areas. Through the utilization of a mobile mammography unit, complimentary mammographic screenings are provided for women aged 50–69, facilitating prompt professional intervention upon detection of any issues. As part of breast cancer prevention measures, a total of 26,979 complimentary mammograms have been conducted since the inception of the initiative, with 9,681 screenings conducted in 2023 alone.



Furthermore, cervical cancer screenings targeting women aged 30–60 are conducted nationwide to enable early detection and prevent premature fatalities.

The breast cancer treatment programme remains in effect, offering free provision of the new-generation Swiss drug “Trastuzumab 600 mg” for the entire treatment duration to HER2-positive breast cancer patients in stages I–III.

Patients diagnosed with malignant neoplasms receive chemotherapy treatment under state-guaranteed preferential conditions.

Extensive efforts have been undertaken in the regions and rural areas to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, promote safe sexual behaviour and implement research programmes focused on HIV.

In 2021, the “Real World, Real People” social non-governmental organization conducted a [study](#) as part of the “Care and Support for People Living with HIV” programme to examine instances of discrimination against individuals with HIV. The study covered the period from 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021 and identified discriminatory practices in healthcare and social services, as well as within personal and familial relationships and by non-governmental organizations. The report also addressed challenges faced by individuals with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings from the study were discussed with the Ministry of Health and presented to the Coordinating Committee for Combating HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Armenia to address systemic discrimination issues. Additionally, the Ministry of Health has established a working group focused on community, law and gender, providing a platform for addressing discrimination and proposing solutions. The committee includes a permanent working group titled “Community, Law, Gender” that serves as a forum to address issues related to discrimination and propose systemic solutions. Discussions within this group have included considerations such as defining exceptions in government decisions for HIV and non-bacillus forms of tuberculosis, which currently hinder access to shelters and pose environmental threats. Additionally, targeted training sessions have been proposed for healthcare workers who have exhibited stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV. Measures have been taken accordingly to address these issues.

In 2021, amendments were introduced to the legal framework aimed at decriminalizing HIV transmission. Specifically, the criminal responsibility for exposing another person to an obvious risk of HIV infection was removed. Following these changes, the new Criminal Code, effective from 1 July 2022, only imposes criminal liability for intentionally or criminally infection of a person with the HIV virus. Moreover, committing the act against two or more persons is no longer considered an aggravating circumstance.

The Ministry of Health of Armenia, through the National Institute of Health, organized training courses to enhance the skills of healthcare professionals in addressing HIV/AIDS and reducing the stigma against women living with HIV. The courses covered such topics as HIV infection updates, counselling and research, with a focus on gender equality, stigma against vulnerable groups and combating discrimination.

The National Centre for Infectious Diseases of the RA Ministry of Health offers comprehensive HIV prevention, detection, treatment and ongoing care services. These services, provided under the national programme to combat HIV and AIDS, are accessible to all beneficiaries in Armenia, including women and children. Women involved in commercial sex work, a group at high risk of HIV transmission, have access to the services provided by the National Centre for Infectious Diseases. Commercial sex workers receive a range of preventive services, including peer-to-peer HIV/AIDS counselling and awareness sessions, distribution of condoms based on individual requirements, and pre-test counselling for HIV.

In 2023, among the 4,428 people in Armenia known to be living with HIV, 1 per cent (44) were children aged 0–14, and 33 per cent (1,454) were females aged 15 and older. Additionally, of the 3,398 individuals receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV, 1.1 per cent (39) were children aged 0–14, and 34 per cent (1,164) were females aged 15 and older. During this period, 41,113 pregnant women were screened for HIV, with 18 testing positive, all of whom received preventive treatment to reduce mother-to-child transmission. Moreover, 40 pregnant women living with HIV received similar preventive treatment. To enhance access to health services for pregnant women living with HIV, the list of third-level maternity hospitals authorized to provide care and services to these individuals was expanded according to the 4 December Order No. 5798-L of the Ministry of Health.

To enhance accessibility to vulnerable groups, the National Centre for Infectious Diseases collaborates with the humanitarian NGO “New Generation” as part of the “Support to the National Programme to Combat HIV/AIDS in the Republic of Armenia” initiative. This partnership involves targeted outreach among the commercial sex worker community, facilitating access to preventive measures and early HIV detection. If an individual tests positive for HIV, the NGO provides referral and accompaniment to the Infectious Diseases Centre for further evaluation. Subsequently, those diagnosed with HIV are referred to a clinic for ongoing surveillance and treatment.

In 2023, a total of 3,565 commercial sex workers were enrolled in HIV prevention programmes, with 3,500 undergoing HIV testing. Among them, 3,618 received condoms, while 3,398 were provided with lubricants. Additionally, 352 sex workers were screened for sexually transmitted infections, and 65 of them received treatment.

To prevent and effectively treat non-communicable diseases, the Ministry of Health administers various programmes targeting the entire population, with a special focus on women. These initiatives include screening programmes aimed at early detection, such as:

- Screening for high blood pressure among individuals aged 35–68
- Screening for diabetes among individuals aged 35–68
- Colorectal cancer screening for individuals aged 50–75, selected randomly
- Breast cancer screening for women aged 50–69
- Cervical cancer screening for women aged 30–59

Efforts have been made to address gender-based discrimination concerning fetus sex selection. A joint ministerial order (between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) approved the “2020–2023 Programme for Preventing Discriminatory Fetus Sex Selection and Implementation Measures”. Within this framework, training manuals such as “Preventing Discriminatory Fetus Sex Selection and Improving Counselling Skills” were developed and taught in Yerevan and four regions of Armenia. The results of these ongoing activities are evident. For instance, between 2008 and 2012, the girl-to-boy ratio was 100 to 115, but by 2023, it had improved to 100 to 110.7.

To ensure that pregnant women and mothers receive comprehensive information about health and social services regarding pregnancy planning, childbirth and childcare, the Ministry of Health and UNDP collaborated to create the “Hello Baby” online platform. This platform includes a version tailored for individuals with vision and attention difficulties, featuring adjustments such as font size and line height.

With support from the United Nations Population Fund, resource centres called the “Family Corner” have been set up and are now active in Shirak, Lori and Tavush marzes. These centres host a range of activities like courses, meetings and discussions geared towards challenging traditional views on gender roles, encouraging men’s participation in childcare and parenting, and educating healthcare professionals about the importance of male involvement in prenatal and postnatal care. The centres also facilitate “School of Fathers” sessions and discussions. This programme is ongoing and will eventually expand to cover all marzes.

Concurrently, efforts were made to enhance gender sensitivity among healthcare professionals, promote awareness regarding the protection of women’s sexual and reproductive rights, particularly for those with disabilities, and deliver training programmes on abortion prevention, including sex-selective abortions. These initiatives were integrated into the ongoing professional development training programmes conducted by the National Institute of Health under the Ministry of Health.

In conclusion, it is evident that the reforms undertaken in the health sector align with the objectives outlined in both the Beijing Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals.

**13. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented?**

Article 38 of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia guarantees the right to education for everyone. It emphasizes the significance of ensuring the accessibility, availability and inclusion of education for both girls and boys in Armenia.

Based on the Global Gender Gap report, gender equality indicators in education at all levels in Armenia are notably high, suggesting the absence of gender discrimination in realizing the right to education within the country.

In Armenia, the gender equality indicator is notably high, particularly in general education, as evidenced by the following statistics:

- Literacy level: 0.999 points (with 1 being the optimal score in the range of 0–1)
- Enrolment in primary education: 0.998 points
- Enrolment in secondary education: 1.000 points
- Enrolment in higher education: 1.000 points

In 2021, a significant reform was introduced with the approval of the “Procedure for the Identification and Referral of Children Excluded from Compulsory Education”. This initiative was included in the launch of an electronic subsystem called “Identification of Children Excluded from Compulsory Education”. This system operates biannually, in September and January of each academic year. It compares data from the state population register with the education management information system, identifying individuals between the ages of 6 and 19 who are not enrolled in any educational institution, whether it be pre-vocational, vocational or secondary vocational.

To address concerns about children, including girls, from national minorities being withdrawn from educational institutions under false pretences of relocating abroad, the RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport has enacted changes to the relevant legal regulations. These amendments outline specific cases in which a student may be transferred within the compulsory education system. Such transfers require the submission of supporting documents to the Ministry, and approval is granted based on a positive assessment.

In 2021, the Armenian Government approved a new Standard of General Education via Decision No. 136-N on 4 February 2021. During the revision of the state standard of general education and subject programmes, the gender component was integrated into the secondary education curriculum. Specifically, it was included in the “Self-Cognitive and Social Competence” curriculum, where students are expected to demonstrate respect, honesty and responsibility towards themselves and others, irrespective of age, gender, nationality, socioeconomic status, appearance, abilities, profession, beliefs and other characteristics. Additionally, the gender component has been incorporated into the expected learning outcomes of all graduates of general education programmes. Naturally, certain competencies and overlapping concepts necessitate the inclusion and reflection of this component in educational materials.

Furthermore, the revised social studies curriculum and standards (grades 7–12) encompass various critical topics, including:

- Fundamental human rights and freedoms
- Core values of democracy
- Equality, encompassing social and legal aspects
- Tolerance
- Rights of specific groups
- Women’s rights
- Children’s rights
- Rights of individuals with disabilities

The integration of the gender component extends to various educational materials beyond social studies. For instance:

- The “Self and the Surrounding World” curriculum features a dedicated section on gender stereotypes.
- In the “Literature” subject programme, there is an increase in the representation of female writers.

Under the new Standard of General Education, Tavush region schools have implemented the compulsory “Healthy Lifestyle” study group in grades 5–11. Teacher’s manuals accompany this group, delineating specific topics that integrate the gender aspect across all classes.

The National Centre for Education Development and Innovation (which operates under the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport) has devised a project to be executed by student councils in schools titled “My Voice Against Violence”. Its objectives are as follows:

- Identify gender-related challenges within education that may impede inclusive, comprehensive and efficient educational processes.

- Implement educational and communicative strategies tailored to the fundamental principles and competencies of gender-sensitive and gender-responsive education.
- Understand the local and global legal frameworks for gender mainstreaming in education and their interconnectedness.

Primary and secondary vocational educational institutions have organized training sessions covering human rights and gender equality topics. Discussions have also been held on the RA Law “On Ensuring Equal Rights of Women and Men”.

At RA state universities, courses such as “Law”, “Political Science”, “Physical Education”, “Healthy Lifestyle”, “Management and Communication Skills” and others are offered. These courses include topics like “Contemporary Legal System and Human Rights”, “Fundamentals of Human Rights” and “Gender Issues in Social Work”.

Annually, the RA Police organizes meetings and discussions on “Gender Equality” in public schools. These sessions cover various topics including gender equality, family violence and common criminal issues among minors.

As part of the “Ensuring the development of inclusive teaching skills of public school teachers and teacher assistants” programme conducted by the Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Centre, training sessions are conducted. One module focuses on integrating the gender component into teachers’ inclusive teaching abilities, emphasizing gender-sensitive and gender-responsive pedagogy.

### **Professional orientation: Combating stereotypes in professional choices**

Testing the introduction of professional orientation clubs in Tavush marz schools is currently under way, with plans to expand this initiative to all public schools across Armenia’s regions by 2026, as outlined in the government programme. These clubs aim to educate students on career options, combat gender stereotypes and motivate them towards non-traditional professions. Career centres in 12 regional colleges organize events to address professional orientation issues, highlight in-demand professions and tackle gender stereotypes. Additionally, 95 vocational education and training institutions are working on establishing career units, with designated staff overseeing these efforts. The annual “Education and Career” exhibition in Yerevan attracts numerous young participants seeking information on suitable professions, featuring educational institutions from Armenia and abroad, along with international donor organizations.

### **ICT and digital technology**

The “Implementation of robotics development for STEM education in schools” initiative, funded by the RA state budget, supports various groups across engineering laboratories in general education schools throughout RA marzes. These include 1,044 general groups, 31 groups specifically focusing on drones and 35 educational programme groups also targeting drones, all associated with these laboratories.

This collaborative effort with the NGO “Union of Leading Technologies Enterprises” aims to offer free engineering education and foster the robotics skills of students aged 10–18 in Armath Engineering Laboratories. These labs provide interactive extracurricular courses, dynamic competitions and innovation camps for both genders, offering a platform for career exploration.

Additionally, the “AI (Artificial Intelligence) Generation” experimental school programme, approved by the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the RA, will be implemented in 16 educational institutions from 1 September 2023 to August 2026. Developed by the Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology and supported by the mentioned Ministry, this initiative targets students in grades 10–12, aiming to integrate artificial intelligence education into the curriculum. Moreover, universities like Yerevan State University and the National Polytechnic University of Armenia have introduced AI educational programmes, covering machine learning and data analysis aspects.

### **Promoting awareness of gender equality, including issues such as domestic violence, among educators/teachers**

To enhance awareness of gender equality issues and cultivate gender sensitivity among educators, the programme “Ensuring the development of inclusive teaching skills of public-school teachers and teacher assistants” introduced the modular course “Inclusion of the gender component in the context of continuous development of teachers’ inclusive teaching abilities” in 2021. This course covers various topics, including the concept of ‘gender’, critical thinking in addressing gender-sensitive education, gendered learning, gender-responsive education and the intersection of gender issues with education within the legislative framework. Since 2021, these courses have been regularly conducted, attended by specialists and educators from schools across all regions of the Republic of Armenia and the city of Yerevan. Additionally, Ministerial Order No. 367-A/2, dated 4 March 2022, updated the teacher training programme and standard to include subjects related to democracy, human rights and values formation.

Furthermore, the United Nations Population Fund collaborated with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport to develop a manual titled “For Educators and Psychologists in Educational Institutions on Responding to and Referral to Cases of Domestic Violence”. By Ministerial Order No. 852-A/2 dated 8 June 2023, this manual was officially endorsed for use as educational material. Subsequently, a two-day training course was conducted, involving 20

training-psychologists from the Republican Pedagogical-Psychological and Territorial Pedagogical-Psychological Support Centres. This training initiative was organized under the “Accountable Institutions and Human Rights Protection in Armenia” project, which receives co-financing from the European Union.

### **Addressing prevailing gender stereotypes in career selection and promoting equal representation in the job market**

Starting from 1 September 2023, a 25 per cent bonus has been implemented for educators instructing STEM subjects (excluding mathematics) across all public educational institutions in the Republic of Armenia. This initiative, outlined in Order No. 108-N dated 16 August 2023 by the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia, aims to incentivize teachers of science disciplines, particularly those with fewer class hours, while addressing any shortage issues regarding mathematics teachers.

In the academic year 2023/24, universities introduced new scholarship programmes. Professions deemed crucial to the State now receive a monthly scholarship ranging from AMD 70,000 to AMD 77,000, a significant increase from the previous range of AMD 5,000 to AMD 6,500. Additionally, a fresh scholarship model was implemented for students enrolled in STEM programmes, leading to nearly double the number of postgraduate students and potentially serving as an incentive for female students as well. In the same academic year, the allocation of state-funded positions for admission to bachelor’s programmes in STEM fields has been augmented by an extra 100 slots, constituting more than 55 per cent of the total state-funded positions available.

In 2023, under the programme “Initial (vocational) and secondary professional education” funded by the RA state budget, the initiative “Enhancing gender equality in employment at the local self-government level” was carried out. This initiative targets the eradication of gender-based professional perceptions and stereotypes prevalent within the educational system, particularly within the realm of secondary professional education (colleges). Its objectives include identifying instances of discrimination and implementing capacity-building programmes. In 2023, a total of 79 trainees participated in the programme.

### **14. What actions has your country taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated?**

Question 11 in section 3 outlines the social support and protection measures put in place to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.



Additionally, the country has devised a comprehensive range of interventions to mitigate the economic consequences of the pandemic on women. These interventions include direct financial assistance, job placement services and entrepreneurial support tailored specifically for women.

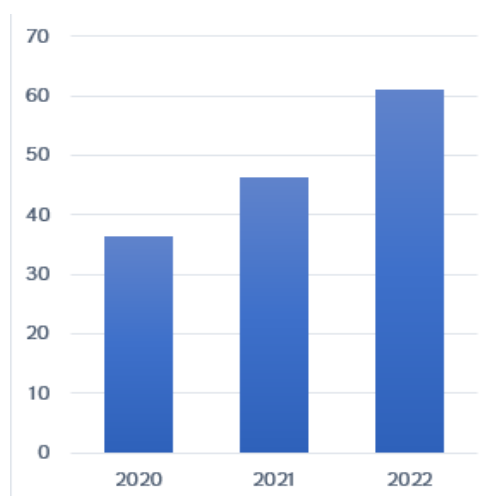
Referring to one of these initiatives, the goal of the event described below was to foster the development of entrepreneurial skills and enhance access to financing for individuals aiming to establish businesses from scratch. Furthermore, it aimed to broaden the scope of activities for start-up entrepreneurs in the regions of the Republic of Armenia. Support offered through the event comprised:

- Participation in a one-month online course aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial abilities
- Provision of credit guarantees under favourable conditions, including:
  - Maximum amount: AMD 10 million
  - Annual interest rates: 9 per cent for men, 7 per cent for women
  - Maximum term: 60 months
  - Grace period: 6 months

During the event period, from its inception until 31 December 2022:

- A total of 55 Entrepreneurial Skills Development Courses were conducted, with 10 of them held in 2022.
- A total of 601 individuals participated in these courses. Participant breakdown by year is as follows (Figure 4):
  - In 2020, there were 194 participants, including 70 women (36.4 per cent).
  - In 2021, there were 298 participants, including 138 women (46.3 per cent).
  - In 2022, there were 109 participants, including 64 women (58.7 per cent).

**Figure 4. Share of women participants in the courses (percentage)**



## Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

### 15. Over the past five years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has your country prioritized for action?

#### Improvement of the legal field

The RA Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity”, enacted in December 2017 and effective from 2018, includes the following main provisions and directions:

- Enhancement of the legal framework, including the creation of new regulations derived from the law.
- Establishment of structures dedicated to providing and safeguarding social support.
- Execution of public awareness campaigns and training programmes.

Each of the aforementioned sections will be discussed in detail below.

Improving the legal framework and developing new by-laws stemming from the RA Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity” marks significant progress. In April 2024, amendments and additions were made to this law, which are discussed in detail in subsequent questions. Additionally, about a dozen sub-legislative acts have been adopted to facilitate its implementation.

Notably, following Armenia’s signing of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (also known as the Istanbul Convention), substantial efforts are being made towards its ratification.

There has also been progress in criminal proceedings: all domestic violence cases are now investigated openly.

With the support of the United Nations Population Fund, an electronic database for centralized registration of domestic violence cases will be launched in 2024. This database aims to manage domestic violence cases, enhance oversight and efficiently collect and process data. It will allow for the development of targeted prevention, support and protection measures and policies by analysing the prevalence of domestic violence cases, the proportion of different types of abuse, the relationships between perpetrators and victims, and factors such as gender, age and the

provision and process of protection and support measures, along with other relevant circumstances.

### **Establishment of systems designed to ensure and safeguard social support**

The foundation for supporting individuals experiencing domestic violence was established by legislation, enabling the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia to allocate funds from the state budget to assist those affected by domestic violence (including women, men, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other marginalized groups). In 2020, three new support programmes were introduced, including the following:

- Support centres for individuals affected by domestic violence have been established and are located in all regions of Armenia and in the city of Yerevan. They offer essential assistance to domestic violence victims, including psychological, social, legal and other necessary services. Additionally, each regional support centre provides a telephone hotline service.
- Shelter services for individuals experiencing family violence offer safe and secure accommodation, along with provisions such as food, hygiene supplies, essential items for children's education, and social, psychological and legal support. Currently, there are two shelters available in the Republic of Armenia.
- Persons who have experienced domestic violence are entitled to receive a one-time monetary compensation of up to AMD 150,000. This financial assistance serves various purposes for those affected by domestic violence. In the past three years, the utilization of this service has been as follows: 15 individuals received one-time monetary support in 2020, 77 in 2021, 117 in 2022 and 114 in 2023. It is noteworthy that the legal regulations governing this support are currently being reassessed to enhance its specificity and alignment with individual needs.

The funding allocated from the Republic of Armenia's state budget for the execution of the aforementioned three social services has seen a gradual increase annually. In 2020, it stood at approximately AMD 71 million, while in 2024, it has risen to AMD 125 million.

It is important to highlight that the Government is actively taking steps to guarantee the presence and functioning of shelters. According to Decision No. 364-N issued by the Government of the Republic of Armenia on 29 March 2019, shelters for individuals affected by domestic violence must fulfil various criteria, including being adapted to cater to the needs of persons with disabilities and ensuring accessibility.

Support centres and shelters for individuals experiencing domestic violence are operated by qualified/certified non-governmental organizations selected through a competitive grant process.

These organizations are recognized as awardees and receive funding from the Republic of Armenia's state budget for their operations.

To facilitate women's active involvement in all aspects of public life, the Government implements programmes for women's economic empowerment, particularly targeting vulnerable groups. Support centres for victims of family violence also offer services geared towards women's economic empowerment and self-sufficiency. These services include vocational training and the provision of necessary tools tailored to the beneficiary's preferences and assessed needs. The objective is to educate and retrain women, enhancing their professional skills and equipping them for stable employment, thus helping them acquire economic independence. Notably, 98 per cent of programme participants secure employment and generate their own income upon programme completion.

This support aspect is carried out using both official budget funds and through collaboration with local and international partners.

### **Public awareness initiatives and training sessions**

Following the enactment of the RA Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity", the Government initiated extensive public awareness campaigns. These campaigns aimed to highlight the significance of women's roles in both family and society; raise awareness about domestic violence, violence against women and girls, and gender-based violence; combat discrimination and inequality; and educate about the risks and adverse effects of sex-selective abortions. To ensure effectiveness, these efforts involved creating relevant content and employing targeted approaches tailored to various regions and social demographics across the Republic of Armenia.

Recognizing the significant influence of the media in addressing issues like domestic violence, violence against women and girls, gender-based violence, discrimination and inequality, the Government has invested in enhancing the capabilities and expertise of media professionals in tackling these issues.

It is worth mentioning that Armenia is actively working towards the acceptance and ratification of the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190). Substantial preparatory work has already commenced, including a thorough legal analysis of Armenia's regulatory framework in comparison to the provisions of the Convention, conducted by an external consultant. This analysis was conducted as part of the "Promoting Implementation of Labour Rights in Armenia Together" project, supported by the United States Department of Labour. The findings of the research indicate that Armenia has made significant strides in combating workplace violence and harassment in recent years, through legislative amendments and the enhancement of the mandate

and capacity of relevant state institutions. Ratifying ILO Convention No. 190 will signify Armenia's commitment to fostering a work environment free from violence and harassment, ensuring protection for all workers irrespective of their contractual status. The ongoing legal analysis aims to assess the alignment of domestic legislation with the provisions of ILO Convention No. 190, pinpointing areas of compliance and identifying opportunities for further enhancement.

### **Trafficking in women and girls**

To enhance the fight against human trafficking and exploitation in the Republic of Armenia, successive three-year national programmes have been devised. The most recent, spanning from 2020 to 2022, was succeeded by the seventh programme, approved by RA Government Resolution No. 31-L on 5 January 2023, extending until 2025. This programme outlines actions geared towards effectively organizing efforts against human trafficking and exploitation, divided into seven main sections:

1. Enhancing legislation pertaining to human trafficking or exploitation
2. Preventing human trafficking or exploitation
3. Preventing the trafficking or exploitation of children
4. Identifying, protecting and supporting individuals subjected to human trafficking or exploitation
5. Promoting international cooperation
6. Conducting research
7. Monitoring and evaluation

In the realm of combating human trafficking, the Government prioritized enhancing the legal framework, conducting awareness campaigns and delivering training sessions, along with offering social-rehabilitation services for individuals affected by human trafficking and exploitation. As part of the efforts against human trafficking and exploitation, the following reforms were executed within the scope of legal framework enhancement:

- In 2022, amendments were introduced to the RA Law “On Identification and Support of Persons Affected by Human Trafficking and Exploitation”.
- Additionally, in the same year, RA Government Resolution No. 1534-N, dated 10 June 2022, was issued, approving the criteria for identifying individuals as human trafficking victims or as victims of a special category by the Commission for the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation.
- Furthermore, in 2022, Decision No. 1538-N of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, dated 6 October 2022, was adopted, setting minimum quality standards for the provision of accommodation, material support, psychological counselling, legal assistance and care to victims of human trafficking and exploitation, as well as to victims of special categories, including within relevant institutions.

- Additionally, in the second quarter of 2024, Decision No. 851-N, concerning the procedure for selecting partner public organizations and representatives of public organizations in the Commission for the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation, will undergo amendment.

As part of awareness-raising initiatives, training sessions were held for the following groups: employees of day-care centres, childcare and protection institutions, as well as 24-hour care centres for the elderly or disabled individuals; primary healthcare workers, social workers, nurses, and students in hospitals, colleges and schools, including law students; and criminal lawyers, public defenders and law enforcement agencies, such as police officers, investigators, prosecutors and judges.

Furthermore, an e-module titled “Social Work with Individuals Affected by Human Trafficking: Prevention, Intervention, Rehabilitation” was introduced by the Distance Learning Laboratory of the Faculty of Sociology at Yerevan State University. Guidelines on “Trauma Awareness and Victim-Centred Approaches in Working with Individuals Affected by Human Trafficking or Exploitation” have been formulated for various professionals, including police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges, public defenders, criminal lawyers, social workers, inspectors, immigration service workers, nurses and the staff of diplomatic and consular systems. These guidelines are actively utilized in practice.

Annually, the Republic of Armenia conducts a tender to provide financial support in the form of grants for the “Provision of Sociopsychological Rehabilitation Services for Individuals Affected by Trafficking, Exploitation, and Sexual Violence” programme. Through this tender, the State selects a non-governmental organization to receive funding and provide comprehensive social support services as mandated by legislation. These services, outlined in the RA Law “On Identification and Support of Persons Affected by Human Trafficking and Exploitation”, include accommodation, sociopsychological counselling, legal aid, advocacy, economic assistance and other forms of support for individuals affected by human trafficking and exploitation. In 2024, the state allocates approximately AMD 40 million from the budget for services rendered to individuals affected by human trafficking, exploitation and sexual violence. This marks a significant increase from the AMD 19 million allocated in 2019.

Statistics from recent years indicate the effectiveness of efforts to prevent human trafficking and exploitation. From 2020 to 2023, the number of identified cases has shown an increase:

- 9 cases identified in 2020
- 31 cases identified in 2021
- 6 cases identified in 2022
- 25 cases identified in 2023

In addition to the mentioned initiatives, Armenia has been conducting annual “Blue Heart” awareness campaigns against human trafficking across all regions for the past three years, from 30 July to 2 December.

It is worth mentioning that the website <http://antitrafficking.am/> has been active in Armenia since 2003. It serves as a platform where diverse informational materials regarding human trafficking, exploitation and their prevention are accessible.

## **16. In the past five years, what actions has your country prioritized to address gender-based violence?**

In 2024, amendments and supplements were introduced to the 2017 RA Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity”. Notably, 11 out of 23 articles were revised, incorporating several key changes:

- The law’s title was updated to the “Law on Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and Protection of Persons Exposed to Family and Domestic Violence”.
- Definitions and key concepts were clarified and aligned with those in the RA Criminal Code, including the addition of the term ‘partner’.
- Children who witnessed violence or suffered its consequences (indirect victims) are now recognized as victims of violence.
- Procedures for emergency intervention and protective orders were modified, including changes to their implementation timelines, entry into force and notification processes.
- The definition of the conciliation procedure was removed.
- The law now stipulates free and preferential medical care and services for victims of domestic violence to address health issues resulting from violent incidents.
- Accessibility requirements for shelters accommodating victims of violence were established, ensuring accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

Legislative amendments aim to enhance the effectiveness of combating violence, raise public awareness and improve social-psychological support services for victims. Specifically, aggravating circumstances in 20 articles of the Criminal Code of Armenia were revised. These include factors related to gender and the perpetrator’s relationship to the victim, such as close relatives, partners or ex-partners. Offences covered by these changes include murder, suicide, attempted suicide, aiding suicide, causing harm to health (serious, moderate or minor), human trafficking or exploitation, illegal deprivation of liberty, mental or physical influence, causing severe physical or mental suffering, violating personal or family privacy, kidnapping, extortion, and causing property damage through threats or violence.

The proposed addition to the Criminal Code of Armenia addresses ‘stalking’, defined as persistently following a person, using information or communication technologies, engaging in unwanted communication, visiting their residence, workplace or school, or leaving traces on personal belongings. This behaviour, if performed regularly and causing fear, anxiety or significant lifestyle changes, would be considered a criminal offence.

Higher fines for intentional non-compliance with urgent intervention or protective decisions outlined in the RA Law “On Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity” have been established. Previously set at 80 to 100 times the minimum wage, fines are now set at 200 to 400 times the minimum wage.

It is noteworthy that this law was enacted in 2017, and this comprehensive project is the first to address the challenges and gaps arising from its implementation.

The package of changes will take effect on 1 July 2024. Further details on priority areas, including service provision and awareness campaigns, have been provided in previous and subsequent discussion.

## **17. In the past five years, what strategies has your country used to prevent gender-based violence?**

The challenges and issues regarding domestic violence have been addressed in various strategic documents, including the 2020–2022 Action Plan derived from the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and the 2019–2023 Strategy for Implementing the RA Gender Policy. These documents outline measures aimed at preventing domestic violence, enhancing regulations stemming from the Law on “Prevention of Domestic Violence, Protection of Persons Exposed to Family Violence, and Restoration of Family Solidarity”, expanding social services under the legal framework (such as establishing support centres and shelters for domestic violence victims), retraining primary/social workers, police and nurses, capacity-building, and conducting awareness campaigns. Financial resources for these endeavours have been allocated from both the state budget and with the assistance of international partners.

### **Mobilizing community/faith/traditional leaders, politicians, opinion influencers, journalists or media influencers (such as sport athletes or celebrities) to influence positive norms**

With the support of the United Nations Population Fund in 2022, 30 celebrities and songwriters have enhanced their knowledge and capacities in the area of gender equality, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and harmful practices within two-day training sessions. It is



important that people who have a voice and are trusted by society understand the importance of their involvement in the fight against gender stereotypes and GBV. Topics covered GBV prevention, messaging through songs and concrete examples from best practices. This will support unambiguous messaging and information-sharing with the public in general.

### **Raising public awareness to change attitudes and behaviours**

In cooperation with the Council of Europe, the large-scale, multi-channel awareness-raising campaign “[Violence in Silence](#)“, implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Justice of Armenia, achieved more than 3 million engagements through public street advertising, public television and on social media. The campaign products ([videos](#), posters, social media posts, social experiments, etc.) have more than 2.5 million views in total. The target audience included women and men aged 20–50 who witnessed or were subjected to domestic violence (DV) and violence against women (VAW). The campaign addressed the root causes of DV, challenges and behaviours to promote change in the social perceptions of DV.

The campaign included social experiment methods to reveal problematic attitudes to DV in Armenia and was adjusted to the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, where increasing calls to CSO domestic violence helplines were reported.

The advertising company created two television social advertisements; three street posters; one social experiment with a video; guerrilla marketing ads through the installation of doors, with voices of fighting and arguing coming from them, to be set up in popular walking pathways; three annotated videos for YouTube; and a campaign website.

The campaign was planned to be launched first in spring/early summer 2020, but it was postponed due to COVID-19 as well as the armed conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh in the autumn of 2020, as the general public’s interest focused on COVID-19 and the armed conflict-related news and information. The campaign was launched on a significant date to increase visibility—International Women’s Day on 8 March 2021—and lasted for three months. The social ads/commercials framing domestic violence in the pandemic context were aired on public television. The social advertisement was shown three times a day for 10 days between 11am and 6pm.

### **Producing feature stories and articles**

Feature stories and articles portrayed the consequences and effects of violence, what support services can provide, what should be done differently by state authorities, friends and society, and how to refer to the international standards (e.g. the International Criminal Court and the European Court of Human Rights). Two long-form feature stories were published on the

[Kalemon.am](#) online media platform in Armenian, Russian and English and reached 1,150 reads. The articles were shared on the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan Facebook page, with 184 likes, a total of 29,071 reaches, 1,173 engagements and 5 shares.

Three articles illustrating the role and work of Armenian police officers related to combating domestic violence were produced and promoted on [Media Lab platform](#). The articles in total had 9,085 views and 2,126 shares.

### **TEDx salon talks**

A TEDx salon talk event was organized with the participation of four prominent legal and social professionals to raise awareness among the general public on gender equality and the prevention of gender-based VAW, as well as on the relevant international standards. The event created a unique opportunity for storytelling, idea sharing, inspiring and informing about gender equality, and alerting on gender-based violence against women and on its prevention and protection mechanisms. Posts on social media regarding these four videos reached 66 per cent women, 33 per cent men. The highest reach was among women in the 25–34 age group. Total posts on Facebook were 15; total impressions, 55,332; total reach, 39,216; total engagements, 4,827; and the average engagement rate, 7.4 per cent.

### **18. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?**

Armenia recognizes the growing prevalence and harmful impact of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, including online sexual harassment, online stalking and non-consensual sharing of intimate images. Over the past five years, Armenia has implemented various measures to prevent and respond to these forms of violence, aiming to create a safer and more inclusive online environment for all individuals, particularly women and girls.

The innovative solution Safe YOU, developed in Armenia, stands as a remarkable initiative to combat GBV and foster women's empowerment through a comprehensive mobile app and AI-based web platform. The mobile application is free, multilingual, disability friendly and context adaptive, and it provides immediate emergency help to women and girls at risk of violence, as well as acts as a bridge between women and pre-existing services (i.e. shelters, NGOs, legal and medical professionals, social workers) that struggle to reach their beneficiaries, due to geographical or financial constraints.

The Safe YOU platform allows stakeholders access to case management and awareness-raising tools, as well as a data analysis system designed to collect non-personally identifiable data and provide evidence-based policy recommendations.

The Safe YOU platform also offers one consolidated space for stakeholders on all levels to work together to tackle the issue of GBV, including civil society organizations, individual professionals, governments, international organizations and state authorities.

Safe YOU is currently active in three countries: Armenia, Georgia and Iraq.

Within Armenia, Safe YOU works with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the RA Police to ensure that women and girls have access to life-saving solutions and that service providers are well trained to respond to emergency cases.

The Safe YOU mobile app has impacted more than 35,000 women, addressed around 15,000 cases, carried out more than 8,000 consultations and has more than 65 stakeholders. Moreover, Safe YOU is recognized as a Digital Public Good by the UN Secretary-General and is officially committed to the attainment of SDG 5.

After three years of collaboration with UN offices worldwide, Safe YOU has become an official UNFPA-implementing partner through UNFPA Armenia, thereby allowing the initiative to expand to many more different countries through UN offices. This includes upcoming expansions into Poland, Romania and Slovakia through the UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office.

### **Celebrating the impact of Safe YOU**

In 2023, the CEO of Safe YOU was recognized as one of the top three entrepreneurs in Europe at the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards Ceremony in Paris. In the same year, out of 30 applicants, the Safe YOU team was the winner of the [European Young Innovators Award](#) at the World Summit Awards Festival in Graz, Austria. Moreover, out of 2,000 applications from 120 countries, Safe YOU was chosen as one of 15 winners of the [UNWTO's Awake Tourism Challenge](#). In 2023, Safe YOU joined the Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) network, and the team attended their yearly conference, held in Madrid.

In 2024, Safe YOU recently won the WSA Award (World Summit Award). Out of 40 standout projects from 31 countries, Safe YOU has been chosen by the jury as the 2024 Global Champion in the Inclusion and Empowerment category. Being part of WSA means joining a global movement for digital solutions that drive the SDGs forward.

## Case study

Her story begins like many other women. She was beaten and mocked by her husband, but she struggled to seek help for more than 20 years. She learned about the Safe YOU mobile app and used it during what could have been a fatal case of violence, but thanks to the SOS button, the police arrived on time to save her. A few days later, she visited the Safe YOU office, bringing the wife of her brother-in-law with her (another survivor) to help her download the Safe YOU app to her phone. She shared positive feedback about the forums and free counselling available in the app, thanks to which her mental state has stabilized. Not only did Safe YOU help her grow from a victim to a survivor, empowering her to escape a long-term severely abusive relationship, it also empowered her to become an agent of change, and bring more women into Safe YOU's community.

## Technical developments

- Open Survey Tool: Within the Safe YOU app, users can now give their feedback, and NGOs can learn more about the needs and demographics of their beneficiaries.
- Accessibility: In 2024, the Safe YOU solution has become more accessible than ever. The development team met with communities of women with disabilities to get their feedback on the app and integrate as many of their needs as possible.

Please visit the links for a [short demo video](#) and an [intro animated video](#) about Safe YOU. Additionally, articles written about the mobile app can also be found in various publications: most recently, a feature article written by [Cartier Women's Initiative](#), [UNDP](#) as well as other highlights in [Forbes](#), [UNFPA news](#), [World Bank](#) and [UNICEF news](#).

In summary, Safe YOU's innovative approach to addressing GBV through technology and collaboration demonstrates Armenia's commitment to advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls. With its proven impact, recognition as a Digital Public Good and strategic partnerships with UN agencies, Safe YOU is poised to make a significant difference in the lives of vulnerable individuals worldwide.

## **19. In the past five years, what measures has your country taken to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV?**

Armenia recognizes the critical role of women's organizations in preventing and responding to GBV and is committed to providing them with the necessary resources and support. Over the past five years, Armenia has implemented various measures to fund women's organizations and empower them to effectively address GBV and support survivors.

The Government has allocated funding to support women's organizations in building their capacity to prevent and respond to GBV, as well as to provide essential services to survivors. This funding enables organizations to enhance their staff's skills, expand their outreach efforts and strengthen their advocacy initiatives to combat GBV effectively.

In the past five years, Armenia has annually allocated up to AMD 125 million from the state budget to finance women's organizations dedicated to preventing and combating gender-based violence. This funding encompasses various activities, including training workshops, awareness campaigns, hotline services, social and psychological support, legal assistance, counselling, financial empowerment services for women, and the provision of accommodation for survivor.

As part of state grant allocation, Armenia collaborates with local CSOs to maintain support centres situated across all regions of the RA and in Yerevan, serving as centres for individuals experiencing domestic violence. Additionally, in partnership with local CSOs, the Government is establishing two shelters for those affected by family violence and one shelter for individuals subjected to human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Detailed information regarding this matter can be found in question 15 of section 3.

It is significant to highlight that the foundation of this collaboration stemmed from the bilateral memorandum signed between the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Women's Support Centre in 2019. This memorandum aims to foster private sector development, establish robust partnership relations and combat domestic violence. In addition to collaboration through state budget-funded programmes, the Ministry highlights the cooperation with all NGOs engaged in gender equality initiatives in diverse formats. This includes engagement with the Council on Women's Affairs and its attached working group, efforts to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence within the Council's framework, and participation in the Gender Theme Group, aspects of which are addressed in detail in question 26 of section 3.

**20. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?**

Armenia recognizes the importance of combating gender bias and promoting gender equality in the media, including social media platforms. Over the past five years, Armenia has implemented various measures to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and gender bias in media content, aiming to create a more inclusive and diverse media landscape.

The enactment of the Law on Broadcasting in 2020 marked a significant stride towards enhancing women's participation in the media sector and combating discrimination within it.

Notably, Article 9, paragraph 7, of the law explicitly prohibits audio-visual content that promotes discrimination based on various factors, including gender, race, religion, age, disability and other social characteristics. Moreover, Article 22, paragraph 6, mandates broadcasters to offer programmes aimed at dismantling stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination based on these same factors. The law fosters a more inclusive media landscape, ensuring that content aligns with principles of equality and diversity. By addressing these issues at their root, the law serves as a catalyst for fostering a more equitable and representative media environment, thereby empowering women and marginalized communities while fostering social cohesion.

The Law on Broadcasting also outlines the process for the establishment and functioning of the Council of the Public Broadcaster, tasked with managing and overseeing the Public Broadcaster. This Council comprises seven members, including a chairman and six other members. Notably, the law stipulates that the Council must include a minimum of three representatives from each gender.

Furthermore, the aforementioned Council is responsible for reviewing and addressing complaints, recommendations and inquiries regarding the operations of broadcasters, audio-visual programme operators and distributors. Additionally, the law establishes the Regulatory State Body, known as the Television and Radio Commission, comprising seven members, with a requirement that each gender be represented by no fewer than three members.

As highlighted earlier in question 17, there has been significant visibility of the issue of domestic violence and violence against women (DV/VAW) in various online and offline public forums through collaboration with the Council of Europe. This visibility has been achieved through efforts to promote domestic institutional ownership and engage the public via campaigning tools with significant outreach. A large-scale, multi-channel awareness-raising campaign targeting especially witnesses and victims/survivors of DV was developed and run by the Council of Europe project (website development, social experiments, street posters, two television social advertisements, three annotated videos) in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. The campaign addressed the root causes of DV and challenged behaviours to promote change in the social perceptions of DV and VAW and achieved more than 4 million engagements through public street advertising, public television and on social media. In addition, more than 30 printed, audio and video products (i.e. publications related to VAW/DV, podcasts, TEDx talks, articles) were produced and shared on social media. These resources are now available to many professionals and to the general public and provide knowledge about the international standards on preventing and combating VAW/DV and on gender equality. In addition, 51 journalists (42 women, 9 men) and media representatives increased their knowledge on gender-sensitive reporting based on the media guideline on gender equality and VAW developed with the help of the Council of Europe (CoE).

The following publications have been translated into Armenian and distributed to the professional community (the full list of publications can be found on the [website of the CoE Office in Yerevan](#)):

1. Encouraging the participation of the private sector and the media in the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence: Article 17 of the Istanbul Convention
2. Factsheet on combating gender stereotypes and sexism in and through education
3. Ensuring data collection and research on violence against women and domestic violence: Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention
4. Implementing Article 10 of the CoE Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – establishing national coordinating bodies
5. A Collection of papers on the CoE Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence: Article 17
6. A Collection of papers on the CoE Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence: Article 52
7. A Handbook for Parliamentarians on the CoE Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
8. The European Convention on Human Rights: A living instrument
9. The [Action page](#), the [Quiz](#) and the [Video](#) on preventing sexism
10. Infographics and brochure on the four pillars of the Istanbul Convention
11. ECHR Factsheets about DV cases (for the years 2018 and 2022)

**21. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls?**

### **Women living in remote and rural areas**

With support from UNFPA, more than 500 people from rural communities have been sensitized on gender equality via interactive the theatre performance “100 Years Later” performance on “Prominent Armenian Women for Women Empowerment” in partnership with the [Mughdusyan Art Centre](#) and the [Nairyan Vocal Ensemble](#).

### **Women with disabilities**

The book *50 Women with Disabilities that Changed the World* was developed and launched on 3 December 2023, the International Day of People with Disabilities, in public libraries across

Armenia. Currently, the book is available in printed, audio and video versions alongside a sign language translation.

### **Women living with HIV/AIDS**

Detailed information is presented in question 12 of section 3.

### **People with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, or sex characteristics**

Lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals receive legal assistance in cases of discrimination and violence based on gender, gender identity or gender expression from the human rights NGO “Pink”, which is a member of the Coalition to Stop Violence against Women.

### **Older women**

In recent years, social workers and psychologists at both daytime and 24-hour care centres for the elderly have undergone ongoing training funded by the state budget. This training focuses on combating discrimination against the elderly and addressing family violence.

### **Migrant women, refugee and internally displaced women, and women in humanitarian settings**

In 2023, to assist women and girls forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh, domestic violence support centres overseen by the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in all regions of Armenia and in Yerevan have been rebranded as “Safe Spaces”. These centres now offer primary counselling, psychological, social, legal and economic empowerment services tailored specifically for forcibly displaced women and girls from Nagorno-Karabakh. Further details are provided in question 29 of section 3.

## **Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions**

### **22. In the past five years, what actions and measures has your country taken to promote women’s participation in public life and decision-making?**

**Introduced temporary special measures, such as quotas, reserved seats, benchmarks and targets that promote women’s participation in politics, especially at the decision-making level**



Over the past five years, Armenia has taken significant strides to enhance women's involvement in public life and decision-making processes. The implementation of gender-sensitive quotas outlined in the RA Electoral Code, including the requirement that each party's electoral list not exceed 70 per cent of representatives from either gender, has notably bolstered women's political representation. These measures aim to increase female representation in legislative bodies. Following the 2021 elections, Armenia witnessed a historic high, with women comprising 36 per cent of the National Assembly, marking a significant milestone.

**Provided opportunities for capacity-building and skills development, such as mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion and/or political campaigning for women candidates, elected or appointed politicians, parliamentary caucuses and/or gender equality advocates**

Among the numerous programmes implemented, it is crucial to highlight the “Women in Politics” project, a collaborative effort between the RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, the OxYGen Foundation and the United Nations Development Programme. The project involved several activities, including the following:

- Training sessions were conducted for 3,700 women, with pre-election support provided to 756 beneficiaries from 142 communities.
- Women's leadership schools were organized for women affiliated with local government units.
- Tailored leadership schools were held for 115 participants from various professional backgrounds, such as IT specialists, scientists, economists and social sciences representatives.
- A mentoring programme was implemented, involving 39 mentees and 20 mentors.

Since 2020, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Armenia has recruited and trained around 140 politically interested women of diverse ages and from all regions of Armenia as part of the USAID-funded “Katarine Women's Political Leadership Programme”. This programme has supported women to enter or advance their political participation and careers. Katarine Zalyan-Manukyan, after whom the programme was named, was one of the first three women Members of Parliament in Armenia in 1919. Programme graduates consist of a network of women from all walks of life, including local council members from the remote settlements of Armenia, heads of CSOs and business community representatives.

Each iteration of the programme lasts for 10 months and consists of an intense course on professional and political development. Training topics include public speaking, leadership, political campaigning, gender sensitivity, policy development, political debates, confidence-building and navigating political parties and candidate recruitment processes. In total, 95 per cent

of the participating women have reported an increase in their confidence as a result of the programme. These women were exposed to exceptional networking opportunities with local and international political leaders. NDI has also developed a targeted assistance programme for women candidates who ran in local and parliamentary elections.

In the framework of the “Promoting More Gender-Sensitive Legislation in Armenia” project, implemented by NDI and the OxYGen Foundation with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), important data were collected and analysed to address women’s political participation in Armenia and contribute to gender mainstreaming processes for political parties. The research pieces include “[Women’s Political Participation in the Republic of Armenia](#)” (2020), “[Gender Policy Concept Paper for Political Parties](#)” (2021), “[Analysis of Armenia Political Party Platforms from Gender Equality Perspectives](#)” (2022) and “[Manual on Gender Mainstreaming of Legislation](#)” (2021).

### **23. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase women’s access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

It is noteworthy that Armenia has seen a surge in enthusiasm for STEM disciplines, robotics, programming and other cutting-edge technologies in recent years. This trend has been accompanied by the establishment of technological hubs and engineering labs in Yerevan and various regions of Armenia. These centres serve as destinations for teenagers and young adults from both Yerevan and other regions, offering them opportunities to enhance their knowledge and gain contemporary skills in these areas.

In particular, the establishment of the TUMO Centre for Creative Technologies began in Yerevan and later expanded to other cities, totalling 13 centres and 20 TUMO Boxes operating in neighbouring towns. This initiative offers a cost-free educational programme aimed at empowering teenagers to take charge of their learning journey. The curriculum comprises self-paced learning tasks, workshops and project labs focusing on 14 educational objectives, such as web development, game development, filmmaking, graphic design, animation, robotics, programming and new media, among others. To ensure widespread accessibility, numerous TUMO centres are strategically situated across Armenia. These centres are linked to TUMO Boxes in smaller or rural communities nearby, forming a network that enables local youth to benefit from the TUMO experience. Around 28,000 teenagers and young adults are enrolled in various TUMO educational programmes.

Armath Engineering Laboratories in Armenia play a significant role in enhancing STEM education and fostering innovation, particularly among youth. Armath Labs operate across Armenia, establishing a widespread network of educational hubs accessible to students in both

urban and rural areas. This ensures equitable access to STEM education and opportunities for youth from diverse backgrounds. Armath Labs encourage innovation and entrepreneurship by providing students with the tools, resources and mentorship necessary to develop their ideas into tangible projects and prototypes. This fosters a culture of innovation and empowers young Armenians to become future leaders in technology and engineering fields. Armath Labs have made a significant impact on STEM education in Armenia, with numerous success stories of students developing innovative solutions to real-world problems. The programme has received recognition both nationally and internationally for its contributions to education, innovation and youth empowerment.

Overall, Armath Engineering Laboratories in Armenia serve as catalysts for STEM education, innovation and youth empowerment, nurturing the next generation of scientists, engineers and innovators who will contribute to Armenia's socioeconomic development and technological advancement.

**24. Please describe your country's current national women's machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that your country has taken over the past five years to establish and/or strengthen it.**

In Armenia, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs functions as the national focal point for women's issues through its Human Trafficking and Women's Issues Division within the Department of Provision of Equal Opportunities. According to its charter, the mentioned division determines the state gender policy priorities, formulates policy documents and coordinates efforts between state and public institutions in this regard. Additionally, it supports endeavours to integrate gender equality principles into all strategies and sectoral policies.

In addition to coordinating the development and implementation of policies for equal rights and opportunities for women and men, this division also oversees the formulation of state policies for preventing domestic violence and providing support to its victims. It coordinates the implementation of measures stemming from these policies, as well as efforts related to individuals affected by human trafficking and exploitation. Furthermore, it oversees the development and implementation of policies for the social reintegration of sexually abused individuals.

**25. In the past five years, what other mechanisms and tools has your country used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the Executive, Legislature or Judiciary; interministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits, consultations with women’s organizations)**

Armenia is committed to mainstreaming gender equality across sectors as a fundamental component of its national development agenda. Over the past five years, Armenia has implemented various mechanisms and tools to institutionalize gender mainstreaming, promote women’s empowerment and address gender disparities in all aspects of governance and policymaking.

**Aims and scope:** Armenia has established interministerial coordination mechanisms under the Deputy Prime Minister to facilitate collaboration and coordination among government ministries and agencies on gender mainstreaming initiatives. These mechanisms provide a platform for exchanging knowledge, sharing best practices and aligning policies and programmes to advance gender equality goals. Armenia also actively engages with women’s organizations, civil society groups and grass-roots movements to consult on gender mainstreaming initiatives, policy development and implementation processes. These consultations provide opportunities for women’s voices to be heard, priorities to be identified and recommendations to be incorporated into government policies and programmes.

**Budget:** Government funds have been allocated to support the operation and activities of interministerial coordination mechanisms, including meetings, workshops and capacity-building initiatives. Additionally, technical assistance and support from international partners have enhanced the effectiveness and sustainability of these mechanisms.

**Lesson learned:** One lesson learned is the importance of ensuring strong leadership and political commitment to sustain gender mainstreaming efforts within government institutions. Building a culture of accountability and transparency is essential for mainstreaming gender equality effectively.

**Mechanisms:** Listed below are all of the existing mechanisms whose activities contribute to the promotion of gender equality in Armenia:

- At the state level, the Council on Women’s Affairs and its attached working group were established in 2019 as mechanisms to advance women. Comprising representatives from executive, legislative and judicial authorities, as well as leaders of non-governmental organizations, the Council is chaired by the RA Deputy Prime Minister. Its primary responsibility is to coordinate any initiatives related to the implementation of strategic and short-term programmes concerning gender equality.

- At the regional level, gender policy implementation commissions affiliated with each governor's office remain active. These commissions are established in all regions as well as in Yerevan Municipality.
- At the community level, consultative bodies for women and youth operate under the leadership of the community head.
- In 2018, as part of the efforts to combat domestic violence, Armenia established a council dedicated to preventing and addressing violence against women and family violence. The council consists of representatives from various state institutions, including ministries, the police, the investigative committee, and the Human Rights Defender's Office. Additionally, it includes representatives from non-governmental organizations active in the field, as well as from support centres and shelters for GBV victims.
- The fight against human trafficking and exploitation is supported by the ongoing operation of the Council for the Fight against Human Trafficking and Exploitation, along with its attached working group. This working group comprises representatives from both state and public institutions.
- The Commission for the Implementation of the National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 is tasked with overseeing the execution of this action plan.
- The Gender Theme Group (GTG) remains active, focusing on collaborative programme and activity development with partners to provide framework support for gender equality. Comprising UN agencies, government institutions and development partners, including national NGOs, think tanks, academia, research organizations and gender experts, the GTG is committed to advancing gender equality through coordinated efforts.
- As part of the "Civil Society-National Assembly Cooperation" initiative, civil society members established the "Cooperation Platform for Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men" in 2019. This platform is dedicated to addressing issues pertaining to gender equality in Armenia, gathering recommendations and taking actionable steps to overcome challenges in this regard.
- In 2022, the Public Council on Women's Rights was established under the Human Rights Defender.
- More than 75 locally registered NGOs in Armenia have identified gender equality and women's rights as integral to their mission, as indicated by the National Register. Additionally, several platforms and coalitions have emerged within this sector. Notable examples include the Coalition to Stop Violence against Women, the Network of Women Entrepreneurs, the "WINNET Armenia" Network of Women's Resource Centres, the Coalition against Discrimination and Equality, and the Coalition of Women's Support Centres.
- Several think tanks in Armenia focus on women's economic empowerment and gender equality. These include organizations like the Caucasus Research Resource Center –

Armenia (CRRC), the International Center for Human Development (ICHD) and the Yerevan State University Center for Gender and Leadership Studies.

**Conclusion:** Armenia remains committed to mainstreaming gender equality across sectors through the implementation of effective mechanisms and tools that promote women's empowerment, enhance policy coherence and address gender disparities. By establishing gender focal points, promoting interministerial coordination and engaging with women's organizations and civil society groups, Armenia seeks to create an enabling environment for advancing gender equality and sustainable development for all of its citizens.

## **26. If there is a national human rights institution in your country, what measures has it taken to address violations of women's rights and promote gender equality?**

### **Violence against women and domestic violence**

Protecting women's rights and eradicating all forms of discrimination against them, as well as safeguarding the rights of victims of domestic violence, represent crucial priorities in the Human Rights Defender's mission.

For this purpose, the Research, Expertise and Educational Centre of the Human Rights Defender's Office is tasked with conducting research and analysis on issues related to gender equality, fostering the development and advancement of women's capabilities, and protecting the rights of domestic violence victims. Within this mandate, the Centre engages in advocacy for gender equality and the rights of domestic violence victims, works towards enhancing relevant legislation and coordinates the activities of the Public Council on Women's Rights, which operates under the auspices of the Human Rights Defender.

The members of the Research, Expertise and Educational Centre also serve on the Council on Women's Affairs in the Republic of Armenia and are part of the working group responsible for coordinating the ongoing activities of the Council. In this capacity, throughout 2023, a representative from the Research, Expertise and Educational Centre consistently contributed to the efforts of the working group, which focused, among other objectives, on the implementation of the national gender policy for 2024–2028 and the drafting of the strategy and action plan.

In order to strengthen the women's agenda within the framework of her mandate, the Human Rights Defender created the Public Council on Women's Rights on 25 August 2022, which is a consultative body and is composed of representatives of CSOs in the field. Serving as an advisory body, the Council endeavors to bolster the Defender's initiatives in safeguarding women's rights. The Council targets such issues as the legal and economic empowerment of

women, ensuring legal equality, stimulation of political participation, prevention of VAW and GBV, their recording and provision of support, and the inclusion and advancement of women in the law enforcement system and the armed forces; the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of strategies and programmes; awareness-raising campaigns about the rights of women and girls; and educational and professional training programmes, among others. The Council holds a meeting at least every six months. The first session of the Public Council on Women's Rights took place on 9 September 2022. During the session, the Human Rights Defender presented the Concept and Action Plan on promoting the involvement of women in the law enforcement system.

The Human Rights Defender joined the annual international campaign “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence”, which is held every year from 25 November to 10 December.

As part of advocacy efforts, the Human Rights Defender organized the preparation of a series of publications aimed at raising public awareness about the intolerability of gender-based violence and sexual abuse.

### **Women's participation in political and public life**

Under the auspices of the Public Council on Women's Rights, the Human Rights Defender's Office has crafted the concept project “A Brief Overview on Promoting Women's Engagement in Armenia's Law Enforcement System”. This initiative, amended on 13 December 2022, in collaboration with the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, stems from the Memorandum of Cooperation established by its Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

The project aims to enhance women's participation in the law enforcement sector by integrating gender-sensitive methodologies into the recruitment of police personnel and establishing support mechanisms for female officers throughout their service tenure.

As part of the project, a comprehensive analysis of sectoral legislation and a review of international best practices have been planned, focusing on promoting gender equality within the law enforcement system and exploring avenues for establishing financial support structures for female officers. Additionally, initiatives to enhance public awareness, such as creating and distributing informational materials and conducting capacity-building courses for personnel in relevant institutions, will be implemented.

## Peaceful and inclusive societies

### **27. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?**

UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has critical implications for the protection of women in armed conflict; it addresses the impact of war on women and underlines the importance of women's participation in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. Armenia addresses the challenges and opportunities for women's participation in the mentioned processes and their contribution to peacebuilding; raises the problems of women and girls who have found themselves in emergency situations, with reference to the human security component; and specifies the issues of forcibly displaced women and security-related challenges.

The second National Action Plan (NAP) of Armenia on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) is under implementation. The NAP covers a timeline of three years (2022–2024) and, being a living document, responds to new challenges and emergency situations. Among these challenges have been the forcible displacement of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh as a result of ethnic cleansing committed by Azerbaijan. In particular, during the last week of September 2023, an average of 15,000 people from Nagorno-Karabakh arrived in Armenia per day, with some 115,217 registered in total as of December 2023. The substantial influx of the entire forcibly displaced population of Nagorno-Karabakh comprises 60,000 women.

### **28. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken 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?**

The Government and civil society are working with refugee women through the implementation of various programmes, including within the framework of the NAP, aimed at empowering refugee women and girls and fostering self-reliance in cooperation with various donor organizations dealing with the protection of women's rights.

One of the most significant actions in 2023 was the localization of the second NAP—that is, the development and implementation of local national action plans in various border communities of Armenia. The second NAP underlines the necessity of involving local self-governing bodies in order to ensure the effective implementation of the provisions of the NAP locally.



As a country fighting against atrocity crimes, Armenia highly prioritizes the role of women and girls in the context of genocide and other atrocity crimes prevention. UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) “emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions” (paragraph 11).

The tragic events of recent years, including the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh, show that even when risk factors of genocide and other atrocity crimes are identified, international mechanisms are often lacking or unable to provide a timely and adequate response. The cycle of violence and inhumane acts includes, but is not limited to, the denial of international humanitarian access and presence on the ground, the imposition of blockades, sieges and starvation as a method of warfare, forced displacement and other gross human rights violations. Women and children are the first to suffer from war, and the international community, global and regional organizations must unite in the fight against atrocity crimes.

The second NAP of Armenia is in line with other national strategies on women’s promotion and gender equality, as designed and implemented in Armenia, which enables an accurate calculation and use of potential human and financial resources. The NAP has taken into account Armenia’s international commitments on the rights of women and gender equality issues, including those in the framework of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Universal Periodic Review and others.

Armenia’s second NAP on WPS reaffirms the necessity of cooperation among various domestic bodies as well as that of international cooperation. Based on the original pillars of participation, protection, prevention, recovery and relief in UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), a new and separate direction of cooperation was added to the 2022–2024 NAP. The NAP defines a new strategy of monitoring and proposes a mechanism which can best describe the effectiveness of its implementation.

In 2022, a rifle battalion composed solely of female service members was established in the N military unit under the RA Defense Ministry.

2023 during the RA laws "On Military Service and the Status of Servicemen" and "On Defense" and a number of Government decisions (N 1132-2018, N 405-2018, N 1269-2018, N 160-2023), 2018 In the order of the Ministry of Defense 8-N, additions and amendments were made and the institution of compulsory military service by female citizens on a voluntary basis was introduced.

**29. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial 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?**

With the adoption of the new Criminal Code in 2022, the general legislative framework related to criminal liability for violations of international humanitarian law, war crimes and crimes against humanity has significantly improved in Armenia. Thus, based on the international standards—in particular, the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court—the scope of offences that are criminally liable was expanded; and, among others, conflict-related sexual violence was explicitly introduced into the Criminal Code.

In particular, the following actions have been criminalized:

1. Sexual acts of a violent nature, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy or sterilization or coercion to sexual acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population.
2. The same acts committed during an international or non-international armed conflict against a protected person or any other person who enjoys protection under international law.

In October 2020, a Protection Working Group was established in response to the events in Nagorno-Karabakh, in collaboration with international and public institutions. Among its various sub-groups is the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Sub-Working Group, co-chaired by UNHCR and UNFPA in close partnership with the RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. This sub-group comprises 33 member organizations and 44 sub-sector members. In December 2023, the sub-group approved its sub-sectoral strategy, workplan and capacity development plan, ensuring timely operational mapping, technical support and quality service delivery for GBV prevention.

As part of the sub-working group's efforts, it was decided to transform the support centres for persons subjected to domestic violence, overseen by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, into "Safe Spaces" and primary counselling facilities. These centres will now provide essential psychological, social, legal and economic empowerment services specifically tailored for women and girls forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh.

In collaboration with international humanitarian and development partners, efforts were made to address the needs of people forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh. More than 30,000 women and girls from this group were provided with informational booklets detailing support

services for those affected by gender-based violence, along with the distribution of hygiene kits. Additionally, approximately 1,062 women and girls received social and psychological support.

Under the purview of the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Sub-Working Group, a [qualitative assessment of security and vulnerability issues among refugee women and girls in Armenia](#) was conducted. The study aimed to evaluate trends and risks of gender-based violence among refugees in Armenia after the arrival of more than 100,000 individuals from Nagorno-Karabakh. The assessment involved 142 participants, including refugee women and teenage girls, as well as representatives from support structures for those affected by gender-based violence across Yerevan and all regions of Armenia.

### **30. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls?**

Armenia recognizes the importance of eliminating discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls, and is committed to taking concrete actions to address these challenges. Over the past five years, Armenia has implemented various measures aimed at promoting gender equality, ensuring access to education and health care, combating harmful practices and empowering girls to reach their full potential.

Armenia has implemented policies and programmes to reduce and eradicate child, early and forced marriage, recognizing it as a harmful practice that violates the rights of girls and perpetuates gender inequality. This includes legal reforms, awareness-raising campaigns, community mobilization efforts and support services for girls at risk of or affected by child marriage.

The current legislation in Armenia allows individuals to marry at the age of 18. However, those aged 17 can also marry with parental or guardian consent. Moreover, individuals aged 16 can marry with consent if the other party is at least 18 years of age. To address concerns about early marriages, legislative reforms are under way to raise the minimum age of marriage to 18 for both parties. This change aims to prevent early marriages and align with efforts to safeguard children's education and health. Ultimately, it seeks to uphold the constitutional right to marry for mature and informed citizens.

It is noteworthy to highlight the preventive initiatives aimed at combating sex-selective practices in Armenia. These efforts have led to a notable improvement in the sex ratio at birth over a short period of time, despite limited resources. Prevention strategies involve legislative measures prohibiting sex determination and selection for non-medical purposes. Additionally, awareness

campaigns, financial support and legal reforms promoting women's rights and mitigating child gender preferences are integral components of these policies.

The outcomes of the collaborative efforts initiated several years ago and continuing today are evident. Between 2008 and 2012, the girl-to-boy ratio stood at 100 to 115, whereas by 2023, it had improved to approximately 100 to 110.7, according to available data.

The Government implemented a plan from 2020 to 2023 to prevent discriminatory fetal sex selection, focusing on three main areas: developing policies based on evidence, building capacity and raising public awareness. The evidence-based policy component aims to create a factual and scientifically sound basis for policies aimed at reducing abortions based on fetal sex, as well as enhancing women's competitiveness in the job market and increasing their role in family financial support.

The goal of capacity-building is to establish a network of specialized political journalists focusing on abortions based on fetal sex, emphasizing the importance of this issue. It also aims to engage social support networks in preventing discriminatory sex selection, promote the value of girl children in various societal groups through tailored approaches, and enhance the skills of government and NGO representatives involved. This includes improving their understanding of population and development issues, communication skills and the effective use of social advertising to convey targeted messages.

Significant efforts have been made, particularly at the regional level, to address these issues through awareness and prevention initiatives, as well as by enhancing the skills of social and medical professionals. Notably, several medical facilities in Yerevan and the regions host Motherhood Schools that regularly organize informative sessions and round-table discussions involving pregnant women and mothers. Collaborating with the United Nations Population Fund and other relevant organizations, extensive training sessions have been conducted for healthcare workers on preventing abortions based on fetal sex. Furthermore, family doctors in medical institutions routinely include discussions on this topic during daily consultations.

In addition to the mentioned efforts, annual regional awareness campaigns are conducted to mark the International Day of the Girl Child, aiming to combat various forms of gender discrimination. In 2021, a "Fearless Girl" statue was erected in front of [Government Building 3](#), aiming to combat gender-based discrimination and encourage girls' involvement in governance and decision-making processes.

\*\*\*\*\* Further details regarding efforts to combat gender discrimination in other areas are provided in the other questions within section 3.

## Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

**31. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation?**

### Gender mainstreaming in climate

Armenia has an “Inter-Agency Coordination Council on implementation of requirements and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement”. In all, 53 per cent of its members are women, including the Deputy Minister of Environment.

There are three permanent working groups adjacent the Council, with women’s representation accounting for the following shares of each:

- 77 per cent of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
- 85 per cent of Transparency
- 86 per cent of Financing

A key requirement for the composition of the working groups is that women represent at least 30 per cent of the members, in line with Article 7 of the Paris Agreement.

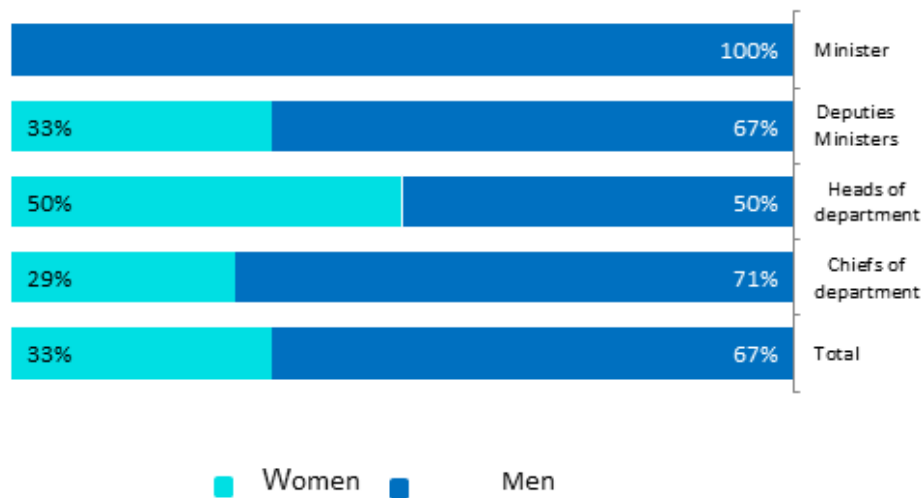
The importance of **gender-sensitive and gender-responsive approaches** to climate change was introduced by UNDP through gap and needs assessments, including broad consultations with national stakeholders and civil society.

This resulted in recognition inclusion of gender-sensitive and gender-responsive approaches to climate change in the National Strategy for Gender Equality of Armenia and its respective Action Plan for 2024–2026. Actions related to climate change are marked under Priority 6 of the Action Plan. Eight distinct measures are included and range from building a solid evidence base on gender and the social impacts of climate change, to raising awareness and education and encouraging the participation of women in programmes aimed at climate change adaptation in the field of agriculture.





The **Gender Strategy Action Plan** features the following **climate change-related measures**:

- Implement thematic studies of gender issues caused by climate change in the most affected sectors.
- Define gender indicators related to climate change, develop data collection methodology, and collect relevant data.
- Prepare materials for thematic courses on climate change, including gender and social impacts, and incorporate the materials into training programmes for public servants.
- Introduce and implement a framework for encouraging women’s participation in professional (vocational, training) programmes and job opportunities in the fields of energy saving and alternative energy.
- Ensure the participation of women in mitigation and adaptation programmes, as well as inter-agency committees related to climate change at the regional and community level.
- Develop and publicize social ads on gender and social impacts of climate change.
- Encourage the participation of women in projects aimed at adapting to climate change in the agricultural sector, particularly in agricultural insurance programmes.
- Organize public awareness events on the negative impact of climate change on public health and relevant gender specificities.

**Figure 5. Gender distribution of managerial positions within the Ministry of Environment of the RA, 2023**



**Figure 6. Gender distribution of climate change decision makers in Armenia**

	<i>Persons</i>		<i>% by sex</i>	
				
<i>Climate policy decision-makers</i> <sup>1</sup>	6	1	86	14
<i>Interagency Council on Climate Change</i> <sup>2</sup>	36	13	73	27

**32. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience?**

**Gender aspects in national reporting under the UNFCCC**

- Armenia’s [Third Biennial Update Report](#) featured gender aspects of mitigation actions in the energy sector, showcasing that women can be considered as beneficiaries of ‘clean’ energy consumption and energy efficiency, particularly in terms of reducing ‘time poverty’, contributing to better health and safety and improving overall living conditions of the households.
- Under the [CBIT Armenia](#) project:
  - The [Guidance on Consideration of Gender-Related Requirements in Armenia’s Biennial Transparency Reports and National Communications](#) has been developed.
  - Gender disaggregation of climate change vulnerability and adaptation monitoring and evaluation indicators are currently in process.

Eight local CSOs led by women were selected to conduct sociological research in regional cities and villages of Armenia. These CSOs, which have more than 90 per cent female members, received training on household surveys, data verification and database creation. Their involvement increased women’s economic activity and ensured that gender-sensitive methods were used during the surveys. Additionally, women conducted public awareness activities about climate change programmes and their gender impact. The findings from the collected data were presented at a conference in November 2021 to the RA Council on Women’s Affairs and its working group. The discussion covered the gender impact of climate change on such sectors as

energy, water resources, tourism and health, highlighting energy poverty and the need for support in addressing gender issues. These insights informed the draft action plan for the 2024–2028 gender strategy.

Through collaboration with the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia (ARMSTAT), the subsections “Environment and Gender” and “Climate Change and Gender” were included for the first time in the “[Women and Men in Armenia, 2023](#)” publication.



## Section Four: National institutions and processes

### **33. Please describe your country's national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.**

In 2019, Armenia adopted the strategy and action plan for implementing gender policy for the period 2019–2023. The strategy outlines the key focus areas of gender policy and aims to establish conducive environments for the realization of rights and opportunities for both women and men across all aspects of public life, in alignment with the international commitments made by Armenia.

Within the strategy, the following five priority directions have been emphasized:

- Enhancing the national mechanism for advancing women and promoting the equal participation of women and men at management and decision-making levels.
- Addressing gender discrimination in the socioeconomic sphere and broadening women's economic opportunities.
- Promoting the full and equitable participation of women and men in the fields of education and science.
- Increasing equitable opportunities for women and men in health care.
- Preventing gender discrimination.

The strategy for 2019–2023 underwent evaluation by an independent expert group from UN Women.

As of May 2024, the development of the strategy and action plan for implementing the RA Gender Policy for the period 2024–2028 is ongoing. The draft strategy was developed with the assistance of both international and national experts, involving input from public institutions and the broader professional community. This is the first time that a financial assessment has been conducted for the measures outlined in the gender strategy. Specifically, the financial implications of implementing each activity have been evaluated.

The draft suggests establishing six key priorities to ensure gender equality policies across management and decision-making levels, socioeconomic and labour sectors, education and science, health, prevention of gender-based violence, and domestic violence against women and girls, as well as climate issues. These priorities aim to foster a supportive and conducive environment for upholding the rights of both women and men, and for realizing opportunities in the specified areas, in line with the commitments made by the Republic of Armenia. For each priority, specific goals and expected outcomes have been identified to address sectoral challenges effectively. The sectoral priorities are presented below.

**Priority 1: Eliminating gender discrimination in all management areas and decision-making levels. Enhancing the national mechanism for women’s advancement, and ensuring expanded opportunities for equal and full participation of both women and men.**

Under this priority, the focus will be on achieving gender equality across all aspects of public policy and governance. This includes establishing a participatory, inclusive and accessible political environment where both women and men, including representatives of various vulnerable groups, can actively participate and equally influence management and decision-making processes.

**Priority 2: In the socioeconomic sphere, within the labour market and across various economic sectors, promoting gender-sensitive practices in work activities, narrowing the gender gap in the workforce, and enhancing labour protection mechanisms.**

Efforts under this priority will focus on promoting gender-sensitive practices in employment, the labour market and the economy, while also reducing the gender gap in the workforce. Additionally, initiatives will aim to bolster women’s socioeconomic participation and enhance labour protection structures, including safeguarding care work within work activities. Within this priority, it is crucial to promote equal participation and advancement opportunities for both young women and men in socioeconomic activities.

**Priority 3: Addressing gender discrimination in education and science, fostering the full participation of both women and men, expanding equal opportunities, and bolstering an enabling environment.**

Efforts under this priority will focus on ensuring balanced representation and active participation of girls and boys, women and men in the field, with the aim of uncovering and nurturing individual potential, and advancing society and the nation.

**Priority 4: Ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in the health sector.**

Under this priority, the focus will be on enhancing women’s access to essential healthcare and reproductive health services, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women in rural areas, women with disabilities, and women from ethnic minority backgrounds. This includes increasing allocations from the state budget and the compulsory health insurance system.

**Priority 5: Addressing gender-based violence and discrimination, preventing and mitigating violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, and providing protection and support to those affected.**

The primary objective of this priority is to establish a safer and more secure environment for all women and girls, while also preventing all types of violence and providing support to individuals, particularly women and girls, who have experienced any form of violence. This includes addressing discriminatory practices based on the sex of the fetus.

**Priority 6: Developing gender-sensitive and gender-responsive strategies to address climate change, promoting inclusivity, and enhancing awareness.**

The focus of this priority is to highlight gender and social impacts resulting from climate change and implement gender-responsive approaches to address them.

**The expected results**

The anticipated outcome of implementing the strategy includes achieving the equal participation of women across all aspects of public life (including in management and decision-making roles), promoting equal engagement and advancement opportunities for both women and men in socioeconomic activities, implementing programmes to ensure equitable access in education and health care, combating gender-based violence through comprehensive measures, addressing gender and social impacts of climate change, and integrating gender-responsive approaches.

**Entities and individuals engaged in the drafting process of the strategy**

The draft strategy was developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, with assistance from the Council of Europe, the United Nations Population Fund and the expert group of the European Union. It was devised based on participatory and evidence-driven principles, guaranteeing engagement of diverse stakeholders. This process involved collecting primary data, conducting meetings with various sectoral and cross-sectoral groups, and organizing focus group discussions and expert interviews.

**34. Please describe your country's system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.**

Over time, there has been a notable improvement in the perception of gender equality, particularly at the governmental level. This is attributed to the adoption of the 2019–2023 strategy and action plan for implementing gender policy in the Republic of Armenia, as well as the introduction of gender-sensitive budgeting approaches to ensure that gender equality is

reflected in government programmes. Additionally, there has been a focus on obtaining gender-sensitive and gender-disaggregated data in recruitment processes.

The gender strategy for 2019–2023 explicitly outlined the introduction of a gender-sensitive state budgeting system in Armenia by the year 2020. In line with this, as part of the European Commission’s technical support, a manual on gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) was created, and a brief training course was conducted for relevant staff across all ministries. The implementation of the process began in the pilot phase in 2019. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was the first ministry to adopt gender-sensitive budgeting, with the assistance of external experts, for the preparation of annual budgets and midterm expenditure plans. Since 2020, the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Armenia has consistently distributed the GRB manual and related guidelines to all sectoral departments at the start of each budget fiscal year, thereby initiating the gender budgeting process.

It is worth mentioning that the gender-sensitive budgeting process is also undertaken at the local level, including through the incorporation of gender-sensitive methodologies in developing the five-year development plans of communities in the Republic of Armenia. This ensures that the community development plans align with the rights of both women and men and are gender-sensitive.

### **35. What formal mechanisms are 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?**

The following formal mechanisms are currently in place:

- The Council for Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia, along with the Council on Women’s Affairs and its associated working group, comprise representatives from regional CSOs and international organizations. These representatives play an active role in the development and implementation of gender policies aligned with international obligations. The representatives of the working group consistently conduct independent research and analysis to evaluate the Government’s efforts regarding the implementation of initiatives stemming from international commitments. As an example, the [Havasar \(Equal\) infohub](#) was established by members of the political community and features a dedicated section that thoroughly examines the implementation of measures derived from the Beijing Declaration and SDG 5, alongside monitoring and evaluating state-implemented programmes.
- The Gender Theme Group (GTG) actively collaborates with partners to develop joint programmes and activities, providing framework support for gender equality initiatives.

The GTG consists of United Nations agencies, governmental bodies and development partners like local non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, research organizations and experts in gender issues. During these meetings, which are held annually at least four times a year, participants discuss initiatives aimed at achieving full gender equality by both the Government and various organizations. They evaluate the outcomes of these efforts and assess their alignment with international commitments.

- Under the “Civil Society-National Assembly Cooperation” framework, the “Cooperation Platform for Gender Equality” was established in 2019 through the efforts of civil society representatives. This platform focuses on addressing gender equality issues in Armenia, gathering recommendations and implementing actions to address them.
- In 2022, the Public Council on Women’s Rights was established under the Human Rights Defender. Comprised solely of representatives from the Human Rights Council and civil society organizations, this Council discusses and addresses the country’s gender policy directions.
- Several think tanks assert their involvement in women’s economic empowerment and gender equality, such as the Caucasus Research Resource Center – Armenia (CRRRC), the International Center for Human Development (ICHD) and the Yerevan State University Center for Gender and Leadership Studies. The mentioned organizations frequently publishes independent reports and studies evaluating the Government’s progress in fulfilling the obligations outlined in SDG 5, the Beijing Declaration and other related documents.

### **36. Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.**

The report was created based on participatory and factual principles, ensuring the engagement of all relevant stakeholders to gather primary data. This process included meeting with various sectoral and intersectoral groups and conducting focus group discussions.

Specifically, the development of this national report was supported by UN Women with the involvement of a field expert. The Council on Women’s Affairs and its associated working group played a direct role in the information-gathering process, with contributions from the responsible employees of nearly all ministries and the representatives of CSOs who are members of the council or working group. The draft report was reviewed during an [extended session](#) of the Council on Women’s Affairs.

It was also deliberated with two coalitions actively engaged in promoting gender equality in the Republic of Armenia: the Coalition against Violence against Women and the Coalition of Women’s Support Centres.

The draft report was reviewed by members of the Gender Theme Group (GTG) as well. The GTG, established under the framework of SDG 5, is managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund and the Armenian Office of the European Union. Specifically, the draft report was discussed by the eighth session of the GTG.

During the above-mentioned discussions on various platforms, the State's sectoral achievements, existing challenges, collaborative efforts within the framework of state-civil society cooperation and their impacts, as well as the joint priorities for the coming years, were reviewed.

**37. Please describe your country's 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.**

During the 1913th and 1915th meetings of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) held on 12 and 13 October 2022 (CEDAW/C/SR.1913 and CEDAW/C/SR.1915), Armenia's seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/ARM/7) was discussed. The Committee highly appreciated the progress and successes achieved by Armenia in various fields. At the same time, it presented several recommendations, which were incorporated into the strategic plans and measures developed by the State. It is also noteworthy that in March 2019, Armenia's Permanent Representative to the UN was elected as the chair of the UN Commission on the Status of Women for the 2020–2021 term, covering the 64th and 65th sessions. The recommendations provided by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women have been incorporated into the newly developed 2024–2028 strategic document, addressing various established priorities. Armenia has made a political commitment to ensure the implementation of these crucial directives. Actions stemming from the recommendations are outlined in the 2024–2028 strategic plan, where the responsible state bodies and other relevant stakeholders for implementation and the budget/financial estimates for each action are clearly delineated.

\*\*\*\*\* Additionally, under the initiative to accelerate progress on gender equality by 2030, Armenia was chosen as the lead country for the Generation Equality Forum's Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality. Armenia coordinated one of six global thematic groups in collaboration with Norway and Tunisia.

## Section Five: Data and statistics

### **38. What are the most important areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?**

ARMSTAT prioritizes the creation and distribution of gender-sensitive statistical indicators. Since the late 1990s, it has annually published the [Women and Men in Armenia Statistical Booklet](#), which comprehensively incorporates the [UN Statistical Commission’s Minimum Set of Gender Indicators](#). These indicators are quantitatively presented across various thematic areas such as demography, health care, education, the labour market, political participation (governance) and environmental aspects. The statistical booklet plays a key role in increasing awareness of gender inequalities and disparities in the country by showcasing gender-based variations across different aspects of life. Consequently, the consistent generation of gender-sensitive statistical indicators helps to raise public awareness and garner support for gender equality efforts. As a result of enhancing existing information sources and methodologies, as well as introducing new statistical observations or tools, gender statistics in the Republic of Armenia have shown gradual improvement year by year. This improvement is evident in the expansion of thematic areas covered and the increased breadth and depth of published indicators.

#### **In the framework of international cooperation**

In 2020, as part of the “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus” (WEESC) programme by UN Women, a comprehensive analysis was conducted on the gender pay gap and gender inequality in the labour market in Armenia. This analysis utilized data from the [2018 Labour Force Survey](#), focusing on microdata to calculate both unadjusted and adjusted indicators of the hourly wage gender gap. Additionally, multivariate regression analysis was performed considering the individual and work characteristics of employees. A bilingual report titled “[Analysis of the Gender Pay Gap and Gender Inequality in the Labour Market in Armenia](#)” was subsequently prepared based on these findings.

In 2021, ARMSTAT, in collaboration with UN Women’s WEESC programme and the EU’s “Statistics through the Eastern Partnership” regional programme, conducted a pilot study on the Time Use Survey. This initiative aimed to adapt the methodology and toolkit from the [HETUS-2018](#) manual by Eurostat and the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics ([ICATUS-2016](#)) proposed by the United Nations. The study also tested the standard business process for Time Use Survey statistics localization. Continuing the ongoing process, a Partnership Agreement was signed between ARMSTAT and UN Women on 18 July 2023. This agreement marked the commencement of multi-stage efforts for a national, large-scale Time Use Study (TUS) starting in September 2023. The completion of the TUS is slated for July 2024. In collaboration with UN Women, bilingual press releases and online infographics were created to

announce and explain the purpose of the TUS. These materials were disseminated across multiple platforms.

The Time Use Survey will enable the calculation of SDG target 5.4.1, which focuses on the “Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex, age, and location”. By ensuring the calculation of this indicator, it will enhance the Government’s capacity to effectively inform, monitor and report both locally and internationally on the progress of SDG target 5.4. This will facilitate the identification and measurement of unpaid domestic and care work.

As part of the “Gender Statistics” component of the World Bank’s ECASTAT grant programme, a survey on domestic violence against women was carried out in 2021 under the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for Strengthening the National Statistical System. The survey involved 2,872 women aged 15–59 from 4,185 households, utilizing the methodology endorsed by the World Health Organization. Subsequently, a bilingual analytical report based on the [survey findings](#) was published. As a result of the survey findings, indicators for [SDG 5.2.1](#) and [SDG 5.2.2](#) were incorporated, aligning with their inclusion in Armenia’s seventh periodic report on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The listed measures have enhanced gender statistical methodologies, expanded calculation capabilities for missing indicators, improved dialogue between data producers and users, and fostered cooperation. Through ongoing analysis of user needs, the statistical indicator system has significantly enriched and improved presentation formats within existing resources.

### **39. Over the next five years, what are your country’s priorities for strengthening national gender statistics?**

Gender statistics have been designated as a priority area for ARMSTAT’s activities over the next five years. The prospects for enhancing gender statistics are delineated within the overarching framework of the [Republic of Armenia’s statistical programme for 2024–2028](#).

Accordingly, it is planned:

- To enlarge the collection of gender-specific statistical indicators and align them closely with international statistical norms. This involves standardizing indicator calculation methods, data sources, tools and classifications to enhance the international comparability of Armenia’s gender statistics.
- To achieve a comprehensive compilation of gender-sensitive SDG monitoring indicators, extending beyond Sustainable Development Goal 5. These indicators will be detailed and



disaggregated to ensure that no one is left behind concerning issues of gender inequality, thereby facilitating effective monitoring of progress in this regard.

- Within the framework of international cooperation, to enhance the design of the primary gender statistics collection, the [Women and Men in Armenia booklet](#). Additionally, platforms for gender indicators (e.g. the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX)) and/or infographics will be established on the ARMSTAT website. These initiatives aim to broaden the utility of gender statistics, foster cooperation with data consumers and increase engagement.

#### **40. What gender-specific indicators<sup>1</sup> has your country prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs?**

In 2017, with support from the Armenian Office of the United Nations Population Fund, ARMSTAT launched the Trilingual National Accountability Platform for SDG statistical indicators. This platform serves as a continuously updated information system for disseminating global and national SDG progress indicators, their information sources and the accompanying metadata. In 2019, with support from the Armenian offices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Population Fund and the International Organization for Migration, the platform was enhanced and relaunched to be more accessible and user-friendly for the public. Continuous improvement in the level of detail of published SDG indicators is crucial. The collection of gender-disaggregated SDG indicators is increasing annually, not only due to the inclusion of gender variables in existing statistical information sources and tools or the use of gender-disaggregated data from current sources but also through the addition of new research. The implementation and operation of the platform have played a vital role in ensuring accountability and have significantly enhanced the professional knowledge and skills of ARMSTAT staff, particularly in producing and interpreting gender-sensitive indicators.

As a result of these activities, a significant portion of the gender-sensitive SDG indicators have now been achieved. Below are some of the 2023 regulations related to this subject, highlighting certain achievements and upcoming events. The gender breakdown of the following indicators has been improved:

- [SDG 1.4.1](#) – Enhanced by gender and poverty status (source: Comprehensive Household Living Standards Survey)

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘gender-specific indicators’ is used to refer to indicators that explicitly call for disaggregation by sex and/or refer to gender equality as the underlying objective. For example, SDG indicator 5.c.1 captures the percentage of countries with systems to track public allocations that are directed towards policies and programmes that promote gender equality—the underlying objective is the promotion of gender equality. The term is also used for indicators where women and girls are specified within the indicator as the targeted population (see UN Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York).

- [SDG 16.6.2](#) – Enhanced by sex, age, location, disability status and quintiles (source: Comprehensive Household Living Standards Survey)

According to the Government of the Republic of Armenia’s Decision No. 1514 dated 29 September 2022, ARMSTAT will conduct a comprehensive agricultural census from 11 to 31 October 2024. The results of the comprehensive agricultural census will enable the calculation/estimation of [SDG 1.4.2](#) and [SDG 5.a.1](#).

However, producing gender-disaggregated SDG indicators requires financial, human and technological resources for data collection, analysis and dissemination. Challenges in this process include the need for thematic surveys (e.g. Time Use Survey, Gender-Based Domestic Violence Survey) to calculate certain indicators. Due to resource constraints, such statistical surveys fall outside the scope of regular statistical work and are typically conducted within international cooperation programmes, often with long intervals between them. For example, the Time Use Survey was last conducted in 2008, and the Gender-Based Domestic Violence Survey in 2021, with the previous one in 2010. Additionally, if not conducted regularly, changes in methodologies can lead to non-comparable data.

A significant portion of the SDG gender-sensitive indicators is derived from household sample surveys. However, due to the limited sample size, the detailed indicators often lack sufficient representativeness and, consequently, lack a high level of reliability.

#### **41. Which data disaggregations<sup>2</sup> are routinely provided by major surveys in your country?**

ARMSTAT’s indicators, generated through regularly conducted research, may vary in scope and level of detail based on the research purpose, data source and sample size. However, they are primarily categorized according to

- Administrative division (regions, Yerevan city)
- Gender (female, male)
- Age groups (detailed or broader categories)
- Educational level (detailed or broader categories)
- Marital status (detailed or broader categories)
- Disability status
- Other factors (e.g. employment status, career sector, migration status, etc.)

In instances primarily involving census data, disaggregation by ethnicity or similar characteristics is also implemented.

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<sup>2</sup> As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education, marital status, religion and sexual orientation.

In 2022, the census provided demographic information categorized by various factors such as gender, age, education level, marital status, place of birth, ethnicity, religion and migration status. These findings are accessible on the ARMSTAT website under the publication titled “[Main Results of the Census](#)”.

## Section Six: Conclusion and next steps

**A review of Armenia’s implementation of the Beijing Declaration** has offered valuable insights into advancing gender equality. Reflecting on the lessons learned over the past five years, it is clear that:

- Gender-sensitive policies and ongoing legal framework improvements are fundamental to advancing gender equality in Armenia. The reviews have underscored the progress achieved in various areas as a result of these legislative reform.
- Ongoing and comprehensive data collection on gender equality indicators is essential, as detailed gender data are crucial for monitoring progress, identifying gaps and informing policy decisions.
- Raising public awareness and fostering cultural change have been crucial for achieving sustainable gender equality. Educational campaigns and public discussions have effectively challenged stereotypes and promoted gender-sensitive attitudes.
- The ongoing collaboration between international organizations and public sector CSOs has positively impacted the resolution of gender issues across various fields and expanded access to social services for vulnerable groups.

### **Actions to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the 2030 Agenda, especially within the Decade of Action for sustainable development**

Priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly as part of the Decade of Action for sustainable development, will focus on increasing efforts towards building an inclusive society where all women and girls can realize their full potential. To achieve this, the country will remain committed to the following objectives:

- Developing strategic documents fully embedded in the gender mainstreaming process, preventing existing inequalities, and promoting inclusive development.
- Strengthening the gender-sensitive budgeting process.
- Expanding women’s economic opportunities by implementing targeted programmes, including vocational training and initiatives promoting work-life balance, which will contribute to reducing the gender gap in the labour market.

- Expanding social protection and support systems, focusing on health, education and social services, with special attention to the needs of forcibly displaced women and girls from Nagorno-Karabakh.
- Improving women’s health by expanding access to quality health services, focusing on maternal health, reproductive rights and mental health services, as well as eliminating HIV and other infectious diseases.
- Promoting gender-sensitive policymaking in education and science, emphasizing the enrolment of women and girls in STEM fields.
- Ensuring the continuity of legal reforms to contribute to strengthening gender equality in various decisions in public life.
- Raising public awareness to combat stereotypes and promote gender equality.
- Continuing cross-sectoral collaboration to leverage the strengths of different stakeholders for comprehensive and effective results.
- Continuing the ongoing struggle against gender violence.
- Increasing involvement in specific decision-making processes.

These efforts exemplify the country’s steadfast commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusivity across every facet of society. Integrating gender mainstreaming into strategic frameworks is pivotal as it addresses current disparities and prevents the perpetuation of inequalities. This ensures that governmental policies and initiatives are designed to benefit all individuals fairly. Through these intentional measures, all stakeholders in the Republic of Armenia are working towards cultivating a society where every person, regardless of gender, has an equal opportunity to prosper and contribute meaningfully to their community and country.