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Ministry of Family, inclusion and social development of Cabo Verde

Cape Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity

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I. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAI	High Authority for Immigration
APIMUD	Association of Women with Disabilities
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIGEF	Center for Research on Gender and Family
CNDHC	National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship
ECA	Child and Adolescent Statute
EHTCV	Cabo Verde Hotel and Tourism School
ICCA	Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents
ICIEG	Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity
IDSR	Demographic and Reproductive Health Survey
IEFP	Institute of Employment and Professional Training
IGT	General Labor Inspectorate
INE / INECV	National Institute of Statistics
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people
MFDIS	Ministry of Family, Social Inclusion and Development
MORABI	Support Association for the Self-promotion of Women in Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ILO	International Labor Organization
OMCV	Cabo Verde Women's Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
PEDS	Strategic Sustainable Development Plan
PJ	Judicial Police
PN	National Police
PNIG	National Gender Equality Plan
PNVBG	National Plan to Combat Gender-based Violence
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IOMS	Integrated Operational Management System
SSR	Sexual and Reproductive Health
GBV	Gender-based Violence
VERDEFAM	Cabo Verdean Association for the Protection of the Family
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus

II. INTRODUCTION

This report aims to present, in summary form, the main advances and gains achieved by Cape Verde in terms of gender equality and equity since the original Beijing declaration of 1995, the challenges that the country still faces in this matter, what is being made to be overcome, as well as the new challenges that arise, as a result of social and demographic dynamics, as well as technological advances

It was prepared by the Cape Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity, the public entity responsible, together with its ministerial supervision, the Ministry of Family, Inclusion and Social Development, for public gender policies.

For Cape Verde, gender equality and women's empowerment is a key and unavoidable element for its development that cannot be achieved without considering the specific needs, experiences and expectations of women and men and without ensuring that both have the same opportunities of participation, access and benefit in the development process.

The year 1975 was declared “International Year of Women” by the United Nations, and the following ten years were declared the United Nations Decade for Women. With these initiatives, issues relating to the status and situation of women gradually entered the international political agenda, but it was in the 90s that gender issues took on new contours at a global and regional level. Cape Verde could not be an exception and after the democratic opening that took place in 1991, the country was determined to create structures that addressed the different social challenges of the time.

In this sense, the Cape Verdean Institute of Gender Equality and Equity emerged on January 10, 1994, and was then called the Institute of Feminine Status_ ICF.

But its “gestation” began in 1992, with the creation of an Installation Committee.

In 1994, ICF emerged as the public institute whose mission was to ensure the creation of conditions and institutional mechanisms that ensured women's rights, with the aim of integrating them into the domains of life, was created. social, economic, political and self-sustained development of the country, areas identified as those where the greatest difficulties in integrating women persisted.

The existence of a state institution with a specific focus on women allowed Cape Verde to participate in the 1994 Population and Development Conference (Cairo) and the Beijing World Conference (1995), which constituted a turning point in the approach to the gender issue. and, in a special way, women in Cape Verdean society.

Based on the Beijing guidelines, the ICF prepared the then First National Action Plan for Women (1996-2000), which defined the following priority areas: “strengthening institutional capacity; rural and fisheries development; education, training/employment; reproductive health and rights; women and information/communication; women and emigration”.

The plan proposed actions to eliminate legal, economic and social obstacles that conditioned the active participation of Cape Verdean women in public and private spaces, through a strategy based on gender relations, based on a partnership between men and women.

On July 10, 2006, the then ICF was renamed the Cape Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity_ ICIEG and expanded its scope of action, recognizing, even more, the importance of addressing the challenges that gender imposes , both for women and men, however, it is necessary to have different approaches, due to the different challenges.

As of 2016, ICIEG will have a fixed authority, the Ministry responsible for family issues, in this current case, the Ministry of Family, Inclusion and Social Development.

The existence of a government structure, with relative autonomy, and dedicated exclusively to promoting gender equality and equity in the country is one of the first, largest and best consolidated gains in this matter, as it has allowed continuous and consistent action in this matter

Public policies relating to gender equality are established in the main national and local political agendas and in planning instruments such as the National Gender Equality Plans, operationalized by the Strategic Plans for Sustainable Development. Cape Verde was, in February 2021, considered by UN Women as a reference in Africa in terms of Gender Equality. Under Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cape Verde, the elimination of factors of discrimination against women is considered a task of the State. In this context, legal diplomas were approved such as the Gender-Based Violence Law, the Parity Law, the Legal Regime for the Prevention and Fight Against HIV, the 2019 State Budget Basic Law, which institutionalized the obligation to prepare and execute budgets gender sensitive.

The Gender Equality and Equity Program, one of the 28 Sectoral Programs that make up PEDS II, arises as a result of an alignment and synchronization between PEDS II and the Government Program. Thus, gender equality gains prominence in Cabo Verde's vision for the 2030 period - "Cabo Verde Ambition 2030" - and is fundamental to the effective operationalization of this first cycle of Ambition 2030, particularly in this context of post-pandemic economic and social recovery. Therefore, gender equality, in addition to appearing as a specific program, is at the same time a crosscutting axis of all PEDS II programs.

Diplomas were also approved that grant positive discrimination against women in access to social tariffs for water and electricity and housing to the Social Inclusion Income of the Cabo Verde Digital Program. In the education sector, practices and mechanisms that excluded pregnant girls and mothers from the education system were removed.

PROGRESS IN KEY AREAS

AREA 1: Women and poverty

The Ministry of Family, Inclusion, and Social Development is the government department whose mission is to define, conduct and implement policies for social development, combating poverty and social exclusion, protecting and supporting the family, children, and adolescents, as well as the elderly and disabled persons. Furthermore, its mission is to promote social security, labor relations, and working

conditions, as well as to contribute effectively to gender equality and to the development and implementation of policies for the integration of immigrants.

Recognizing that poverty affects women in particular, taking into account the constitution of the social fabric of Cape Verdean society, which has many single mothers, heads of families and those responsible for supporting their families, created a series of legislative measures, with practical and direct applications, directly supporting families, such as the Decree-Law 41/ 2020, which establishes the Social Inclusion Income, thus instituting a new social benefit, aimed at guaranteeing a minimum income for households in extreme poverty, which meets positive discrimination criteria for households headed by women, together with legal instruments supporting social protection, such as the regulation of access to social tariffs for water and electricity, and housing (2018 and 2019), as well as the adoption of positive discrimination criteria in favor of women heads of household.

To address the impacts of Covid-19, the Emergency Social Inclusion Income Program was established by Decree-Law No. 33/2022, which establishes a temporary cash benefit, granted to households suffering from poverty and/or social vulnerability, for 3 to 12 months, with special attention to mothers who are heads of household. To date, around 29,000 families have benefited from this allowance.

In addition, the Productive Inclusion Program was launched to promote opportunities through income-generating activities, strengthening technical and professional skills, entrepreneurship, financial education, and life skills, especially for women representing households with children up to 15 years old.

In 2015, according to data from the Family Expenditure and Income Survey (IDRF) , the extreme poverty threshold in Cabo Verde was 49,699 and 49,205 escudos per year in urban and rural areas, equivalent to 136 escudos per day or less than 135 escudos per day in rural areas and less than 452 and 447 dollars per year, respectively. Some 54,395 people (10.6% of the population) lived in extremely poor households, i.e. with consumption levels below these thresholds. Extreme poverty is an essentially rural phenomenon and particularly affects women. About 68.1% of the population in extreme poverty lives in rural areas where this situation of deprivation affects 20.3% of the population, compared to 5.3% of the urban population.

In most municipalities, women made up the majority (53.6%) of the population in extreme poverty. In addition, about 42% of the very poor population were children, under 15 years of age, with 14.5% under 5 years of age, and about 5% of the population in this situation were elderly, aged 65 or over.

The eradication of extreme poverty is a priority and a challenge for the country, and it is necessary to build more flexible mechanisms that respond to the demands of the reality of the different groups/profiles of the poor population. The focus on the poorest as priority segments of the attention of the non-contributory social protection policy has been a bet, especially with the operationalization of the Single Social Registry.

The Government has set as a major challenge the fight against impoverishment and the eradication of extreme poverty by 2026, through the 2022–2026 Compact for the Transition of Families in Extreme Poverty, operationalized, at the central level, by the

Social Protection Program of PEDS II; at the sectoral level, by the Strategic Plan for Social Protection 2022–2026 and at local level, by the Municipal Strategic Plans for Sustainable Development (PEMDS). The compact for the transition of households in extreme poverty 2022–2026 will be a territorially based mechanism targeting households, as very poor people live in households in extreme poverty.

In this context, the government prepared the ENEPE — National Strategy for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty in Cabo Verde, a document that defines the strategic actions necessary to fight extreme poverty to be implemented within the scope of the new PEDS 2022–2026, bringing new evidence on data on extreme poverty in Cabo Verde. This document assumes as a baseline scenario the most recent INE data in which extreme poverty was 13.1% in 2020, corresponding to about 12,184 households and 63,355 individuals. In this context and from the analysis of the tables of the Single Social Registry, it appears that, among adults, there are more women affected by poverty conditions because they represent 85% of Group 1 households. These women usually have informal jobs, which constitute the only source of income for the family. In particular, they often engage in unpaid and unappreciated domestic work, rainfed agriculture, or informal trade, especially in rural areas. The 2022–2026 ENEPE, has a very well-identified focus on this group 1 target of the Single Social Registry, namely children, people with disabilities, the elderly, and unemployed young people, neither in the education system nor in vocational training. The intervention proposed by this Strategy identifies three axes of intervention, namely, the Expansion of Income Transfer Programs with a focus on combating extreme poverty, Institutional Articulation and Integrated Intervention of the Different Social Protection Measures and finally, Strengthening institutional, technical and financial capacity to enable, monitor and evaluate ENEPE. It must also ensure two indispensable factors: a) Extension of social protection measures to all families in extreme poverty; and b) Increase in the income level of these families - either through employment, informal activities, and/or social benefits ensuring that they are above the defined poverty line. The Government believes that the integrated intervention between the three axes described should have results that will translate into the gradual reduction of extreme poverty as the income and living conditions of these families improve and reiterates the commitment to eradicate extreme poverty by 2026. Furthermore, in the context of the fight against rural poverty, the Program for the Promotion of Rural Socio-economic Opportunities - POSER signed a cooperation protocol with ICIEG, to deepen the fight against gender stereotypes and promote greater and better participation of women in decision-making and income-generating activities.

AREA 2: Education and training of women

The vision of “Cabo Verde Ambition 2030” points out that the development of human capital is one of the main accelerators of sustainable development, focusing on **Education of Excellence**.

Education stands out as one of the major pillars of human capital development and an important tool for fighting poverty, promoting healthy living, strengthening democracy and citizen participation in the development process. In fact, in these 45

years of independence, education has been one of the most successful sectors and one of the greatest vectors of human development.

The National Education System consists of an important public network of establishments, comprising 398 Primary Schools and 44 Secondary Schools, distributed across Cabo Verde and 10 Higher Education Institutions. The majority of primary and secondary schools (78.7%) are connected to the public electricity network, which facilitates access to and use of ICT, ensuring access in 46% of schools, mainly for educational purposes.

As a result of this remarkable journey, the country has today a coverage of about 80.2% of children in preschool, a literacy rate of over 90%, a net enrollment rate of 92.3% in compulsory basic education, and 53.7% in secondary education.

“Free education and exemption from tuition fees in Secondary Education respond directly to one of the most commonly reported causes of dropout, which is financial difficulties. The curricular reform of basic education and the ongoing curricular reform process for secondary education has contributed to the reduction of school failure, another cause of school dropout.”¹

The Social Support Plan for Education and Training of Adolescents and Young People (2023-2026), aims to contribute to the enrollment, attendance, and completion of secondary and vocational education of adolescents and young people belonging to households in poverty, in its axis 2 entitled “specific measures to support pregnant students states that, “...it must ensure that girls who are in secondary education do not drop out due to pregnancy”. And to ensure the implementation of social and school support measures for pregnant adolescents and mothers under the Decree-Law (Decree-Law 47/2017), the Plan elects the following actions, namely: i) Establish a system of signaling and monitoring of pregnant students, according to the procedures established by law and the recommendations of the study "she studies for two. "; ii) Prepare a plan for the recovery/replacement of classes for students who have gone on maternity leave; iii) Ensure access to care facilities (nurseries and kindergartens) for adolescent mothers and fathers and their children; Sensitize adolescents and their families on the importance of education and completion of education to ensure access to decent employment;iv) Inform and refer pregnant adolescents to the sexual and reproductive health care service and adolescent care for follow-up.

The inclusion of children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) has gained greater prominence in the education policy framework, with the implementation of the policy measure for free access and retention in education for students with disabilities at all levels of education, the mapping of students with signs and implementation of resource centers in delegations and the creation of multidisciplinary teams to support inclusive education in the headquarters of school groupings.

¹ Social Support Plan for the Education and Training of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (2023-2026)

In the formal education sector, in preschool and primary schools, there is gender parity and the country is very close to achieving the universality of compulsory basic education. In secondary education, there is a gap to the disadvantage of boys and the trend continues in higher education, where the gross rate favors girls. There are disparities in technical and vocational training, as can be seen from the data described below.

In 2020/2021, in Preschool Education (4-5 years old), the total intake rate was 90.8%, (92% for females and 90% for males). In Compulsory Primary School (1st - 8th grade), the net enrollment rate (6 -13 years) was 91.5%, (91.5% for females and 91.5% for males). That year, the success rates were 90.9%, (93.8% among girls, and 88.2% among boys). The dropout rate was 2.2%, (1.5% female and 2.8% male);

In secondary education, including technical education, the net enrollment rate in the population 14-17 years old 60%, indicates a gender gap unfavorable for boys (67.8% for girls and 52.6% for boys). Regarding success, 75.2% of the enrolled youth passed, (77.9% were girls and 71.9% were boys). The gross enrollment rate is 72.2% (78.8% for females and 65.6% for males). The dropout percentage represented 6.8%, corresponding 6.4% girls and 7.2% boys.

Technical education enrollment, on the other hand, reflects a marked imbalance, (38.1% girls and 61.9% boys).

Vocational training courses were attended in 2020 by 3,241 young people, of which 1,366 (42.1%) were male and 1,875 (57.8%) were female. Young women are the majority in the courses offered by the EHTCV (70%) (Cape Verde hotel and tourism school) and in some areas of the courses offered by the IFP (57.2%) (Institute for professional training). At CERMI, (removable energy training center) the enrollment is mostly male, 74%.

In this context, the government has in progress and under development, the "Program of Technical and Vocational Education for Young People and Adults" which in addition to the National Strategy for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty (ENEPE), aims to enable young people and adults, who have not completed a certain training cycle, to have access to technical education, thus creating basic conditions for insertion into the job market. The program aims to be a means of professional reintegration of young people who, under certain circumstances, have been in conflict with the law, as well as to cover young people who have dropped out of school for various reasons, including teenage pregnancy. Participation in the program gives young people and adults a diploma or certificate equivalent to those awarded in formal, school, and vocational education.²

² Social Support Plan for the Education and Training of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (2023-2026)

AREA 3: Women and health

Cape Verde, since its existence as a Nation, has experienced serious public health situations, resulting from poverty, lack of infrastructure, human and financial resources, but managed to overcome much of them, over the last decades, with the effort national campaign with vaccination campaigns, investments in infrastructure with the opening of health centers and regional hospitals, as well as in the training of human resources.

As a guarantee of access to healthcare, a system of exemption from user fees was introduced, with priority given to vulnerable populations, in particular women.

Since the 1980s, a free maternal and child planning program has been developed, which has helped reduce maternal and child mortality rates, in 2022 was 36,8 for 100 000 life birth, and births attended by health professionals reached 98.4% in 2022 and the prevalence of contraceptive methods stood at 42%.

Pharmaceutical policy was improved and three new vaccines were introduced into the routine vaccination schedule: inactivated polio, yellow fever and HPV

The National Directorate of Health, through the Adolescent Health Program, has been working to expand specific spaces for comprehensive adolescent health care, including Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) care, to all municipalities in the Country (20 spaces/34 health centers, in most municipalities), and where there are no specific spaces, SRH services guarantee care for adolescents.

Several trainings have been carried out for health professionals on comprehensive adolescent health care, with emphasis on: a) ensuring adolescents' access to information on SRH rights and care, with distribution of information materials and training actions for adolescent peers, lectures in schools for teachers and adolescents on contraception and prevention of unwanted teenage pregnancy, prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), GBV, dating violence, promotion of mental health, healthy lifestyles, assertive and safe choices, etc.; b) Access to post-abortion care provided free of charge in health facilities. However, the service of voluntary interruption of pregnancy is still not free and continues to be carried out in central and regional hospitals in order to safeguard its safe performance and treat complications that may occur eventually, c) ensuring access of women living in rural areas to SRH care, modern and free contraceptives, through decentralization of care by health centers and health posts, including women with disabilities.

Similarly, the reinforcement of STI-HIV/AIDS prevention actions by health structures is ensured, with the distribution of male and female condoms, with partner institutions that work in this field, namely VERDEFAM, MORABI, community associations, among others; the country's effort to continue the response to obtain certification of vertical elimination of HIV; diagnose and treat all people living with

HIV; strengthen psychosocial support to eligible people living with HIV (PLHIV); strengthen the social skills of children and adolescents in Cabo Verde in health promotion versus HIV; increase interventions that mitigate stigma and discrimination and promote human rights in the care of PLHIV and key populations;

The approval and dissemination of Law No. 7/X/22 on comprehensive HIV care, which removes barriers to access to services for key and vulnerable populations;

The Ministry of Health has made efforts to make the National Health System (SNS) more inclusive and accessible to women with disabilities in terms of SRH health and rights. There has been investment in access to information for the population with disabilities, through the production and dissemination of audiovisual spots with sign language and graphic materials in the *Braille* System. On Gender-Based Violence (GBV), the Ministry of Health has ensured the training of gender equality technicians, the dissemination of the Law on GBV, the prevention of GBV and the care of victims, safeguarding the protection of the rights of women and girls. Sterilization procedures for women, especially those with disabilities, are carried out with free, informed and signed consent and are a standard procedure in health institutions.

AREA 4: Gender-based Violence Against Women

The elimination of gender-based violence is one of the main pillars of gender equality in the country.

That is why attempts were made to make changes to the penal framework in order to eliminate discrimination and inequalities in the exercise of power between men and women. One of the first measures came in 1997, in Civil Code, Family Book, which gave both spouses equal rights and duties in the family and integrates the judicial separation of people and property. It enshrines the *facto union*, the legal equality of children born within or outside of marriage and stipulates that parental authority is exercised jointly by the parents;

Other important legal measure was in the Penal Code where was defined domestic violence as “the act of inflicting physical or psychological abuse or cruel treatment on a spouse or person with whom one is in a civil union”. It was considered a semi-public crime.

Then, the data illustrated by the 2005 Demographic Survey on Sexual and Reproductive Health, which introduced questions on domestic violence for the first time, allowed, also for the first time, the analysis of concrete data based on a population sample. The results were not encouraging and showed, among other data, that 1 in 5 women in Cape Verde, over the age of 15, had already suffered domestic violence.

Therefore, the need to do more and specifically on this issue was felt, and the initial mobilizations to combat this phenomenon in Cape Verde led the country to ratify

several international instruments, such as the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, among others, which quickly gave way to the formulation of the National Plan to Combat Gender-Based Violence (PNVBG), approved by the Council of Ministers in 2007 and implemented in the period 2007-2009.

The Plan operationalized one of the strategic axes of the National Plan for Gender Equality and Equity (PNIEG 2005-2011), that of combating gender-based violence, and its implementation, in close partnership with civil society organizations, culminated in the drafting and approval of the Special Law against Gender-Based Violence in 2010, its publication on January 10, 2011 and entry into force on March 11 of the same year.

This special law against GBV, whose implementation is the responsibility of ICIEg, is considered one of the most progressive in the world, as it determines prevention and awareness actions, defines the main responsible parties and partners in this fight, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Administration Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the media, civil society organizations, as well as support structures for victims and even the rehabilitation of aggressors. The law not only works on the main concepts, establishing what gender, violence and others are, but also determined that this crime became public, that is, anyone can report it, and does not allow the complaint to be withdrawn.

It also includes the need for continuous training, with permanent coordination between the parties, establishing procedure manuals, service flowcharts and reporting tools, such as telephone lines and others.

Before the special law against GBV, a coordination network was created between the main entities that deal with this issue, called Rede Sol, which remains active to this day, providing support in communities.

In 2023, the Council of Ministers approved and published in the Official Gazette, the Statute of the Support Fund for Victims of GBV to guarantee, in the shortest period, a pecuniary amount that allows the victim of GBV to cover urgent expenses resulting from the aggression, in addition to financing the maintenance of Victim Support Centers and Shelter Homes, as well as the implementation of recovery programs, psychological and psychiatric support, education and prevention of GBV. The approval of the Fund will: i) Guarantee material, social, psychological, psychiatric, and legal assistance to victims of gender-based violence crime and their dependents; ii) Guarantee medical and medication support to victims; iii) Guarantee a pecuniary amount to cover urgent expenses incurred by victims and their dependents as a result of aggression; iv) Guarantee the implementation and maintenance of Shelter Houses, Victim Support Centers and the technicians assigned to them; v) Cover the costs of publishing notices in newspapers of procedural acts arising from civil proceedings that are directly or indirectly related to the situation of GBV; vi) Finance education and awareness programs for aggressors; vii) Finance programs for the prevention, training and early detection of gender-based violence; viii) Ensure the production/updating of support materials on this issue.

Through institutional partnerships was created a computerized reporting system in the National Police called IOMS - Integrated Reporting System, which was developed to provide a timely response to the processes related to the cases and consequent statistical results, has a specific questionnaire directed to the cases involving reports of GBV, allowing to assess the level of danger that the victims are in and to take immediate action, according to the information obtained. The platform also allows to enter and check the cases in the centralized system, as well as view updated statistical data, in real-time and anywhere, through controlled access. The system promotes greater and better information sharing between all police stations and Regional Commands in the country, regardless of geographical location.

In terms of complaints, the numbers have gradually increased, reaching just over 2 thousand complaints in 2023, which shows an increase in awareness of the need to make a complaint and an increase in the credibility of institutions

Concerning GBV-related deaths, from the 2000s onwards, the fatal victims began to be mostly female, and the aggressors were male. 20018 was the year in which the most deaths occurred, 8, and another phenomenon began to occur, which were the suicides of alleged murderers, usually companions or, for the most part, ex-companions. after this peak, the average number of deaths is 5.

In this context, at the national level, awareness-raising workshops were held in partnership with the City Councils, local NGOs, and other State institutions, such as the UGPE, the National Directorate of Education, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where topics such as GBV, dating violence, the GBV Law, reporting mechanisms, sexual crimes (Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), Moral and Sexual Harassment are addressed.

Currently, the country has shelter houses in the municipalities where there is a higher incidence of cases of GBV, (4) and protocols for the implementation of transitional facilities with hotel units, as foreseen in the GBV Law, and victims of GBV are ensured full rights on all islands. The law also requires the implementation of victim support centers, one on each island, but the government has committed to installing a center in each municipality, to ensure greater proximity to the communities. These centers provide all types of support and act as focal points with the main partners on the ground. Although there are 16 technicians assigned to these centers (there are 22 municipalities), the conditions to ensure national coverage are guaranteed, with technicians who, due to their proximity, work in more than one municipality.

In addition, the protection measures and inter-institutional protocols signed stand out as alternative partnership instruments, which aim to ensure reinforced responses to victims. In this context, many protocols were established to provide psychotherapeutic, psychiatric, and neurological care for victims of GBV and their children at the national level; to ensure legal assistance and the implementation of shelter houses.

Regarding LGBTIQ+ people, although Cape Verde, to date, has no records of cases of homophobia or hate crimes, a framework of actions is being worked on promoting awareness and prevention actions aimed at contributing to the reduction of prejudices

and stigmas and to the construction of an inclusive world, where all people who are born free and equal can effectively be free and equal in dignity and rights, regardless of who they are.

To combat the economic and emotional dependencies that perpetuate toxic and violent relationships, specific economic empowerment and self-esteem development projects are also developed, aimed exclusively at victims of gender-based violence.

AREA 5: Women and armed conflict

In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly approved resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, binding on all member states, and Cape Verde, despite historically being a country free from armed conflicts, having ratified the resolution, can use it in different ways, mainly with regard to promoting the presence of women in decision-making positions and as mediators in situations of international conflicts.

In this sense, the country, through the Ministry of Defense, which is currently supervised by a woman, Minister Janine Lélis, has an action plan underway to implement the aforementioned resolution.

In partnership with the ICIEG, gender awareness actions have already been provided to fifty military personnel, as well as training of gender trainers, with there currently being fifty specialist gender trainers in the country, whose mission is to disseminate knowledge to national level.

On the other hand, and thanks to the implementation of the parity law in 2019, the conditions are gradually being created for more and more women to occupy decision-making positions and be present in all areas of society. The Law No. 68/IX/2019, of November 28, commonly known as the Parity Law, covers both parity in political representation in eligible positions and leadership positions in the Public Administration.

At the level of public administration, parity has already been achieved, at the level of entry of new employees, and even at the level of intermediate managers, as a result of the gradual investment in education, which has allowed women to study increasingly more and for longer, acquiring more academic knowledge.

However, problems persist in appointment positions, where men continue to be preferred over women

AREA 6: Women and Economy

The employment situation in the country, and in general and women's employment in particular, despite the negative effects of the droughts and COVID-19 improved between 2016 and 2023 – unemployment rose from 15% in 2016 to 10.3% (11,4% female and 9,4% male) in 2023. Despite women studying more and more and for longer, they still continue to be the most inactive (155 thousand compared to 91

thousand men). Among the factors that contribute to these values are also the social and cultural functions that still fall to women and that limit their participation in active life, such as unpaid work, whether caring for others or domestic.

Concerning this situation, the National Gender Equality Plan (PNIG) 2022–2026 assigns specific responsibilities to the different sectors and prioritizes the design and implementation of actions that directly contribute to the promotion of gender equality.

The Women’s Economic Empowerment Axis includes: a) the sectors outlined in the Government Program and introduces the need to strengthen efforts in innovative and strategic areas for the country’s development — energy transition, environmental preservation, and rural development, ICTs, and Tourism; b) It also considers it necessary to continue the extension of the mandatory social protection system; c) Implementation of the care system and promotion of shared responsibility in family care.

The Government has taken a number of initiatives to promote the empowerment of women as:

- i) the project “Economic Empowerment — Promotion of Women” which aims to: contribute to increasing the social and economic empowerment of women and youth in rural areas and create the conditions for changing gender relations and power relations within communities, as well as strengthening the capacity of the Delegations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, POSER Technical Units and beneficiaries in the field of gender equality and equity.
- ii) The implementation of the Project “Promoting Empowerment and Economic Autonomy of Women” promoted by ICIEG, which aims to contribute to increasing the access of women in vulnerable situations to decent employment, promoting income-generating activities and favoring access to the formal economy.
- iii) The implementation of the project “Reconversion of the Mining Activity of Ribeira da Barca Women”, implemented by the Municipality of Santa Catarina and ICIEG, which aimed to promote alternatives to women heads of household to help them change their “line of life” (sand harvesting).
- iv) The implementation of the project “50 million women have their say”, implemented by ICIEG and aimed at providing crucial information on business creation and management to Cabo Verdean women entrepreneurs by enrolling them in a digital platform, which is specifically targeted at women from the African continent.
- v) The implementation of the project “Contributing to the creation and access to decent work for women”, implemented by ICIEG with the aim of creating and improving access to work in the area of care services;

In 2022, a protocol was established to support the implementation of the Gender Strategy in Fisheries (2022-2026), implemented by ICIEG in partnership with FAO and the Ministry of the Sea, with the aim of developing and implementing at least one gender equality plan in companies in the sector, promote the formalization of work

and social protection in the small-scale fisheries subsector and the production of knowledge and information management of the gender-sensitive fisheries sector, through the elaboration of an awareness campaign for the visibility and professional recognition of women in the value chain of small-scale fishery products to ensure food and nutritional security in Cabo Verde.

According to the Statistical Bulletin of the Social Protection System 2016-2020 of Cabo Verde, since 2014 there has been a significant increase in Social Protection coverage, which is also due to the integration of domestic workers from the REMPE regime, through the formalization of their activity and access to the social security system of vulnerable workers. In 2020, more than 50% of Cabo Verdeans were covered by at least one social protection scheme — in the Public Administration, 50% are men and 50% are women; among workers in the REMPE scheme, 51% are men and 49% are women; among employees, 57% are men and 43% are women; among domestic workers, 95% are women and 5% are men.

The contributory social security system has expanded significantly in recent years, from 39.5% coverage in 2015 to 58.9% in 2022 (+19.4 p.p.). The existing legal and institutional framework is favorable in that it covers the main segments considered difficult to cover, in particular Micro and Small Enterprises, domestic workers, and the self-employed. Social benefits, especially at the level of the safety net, play an important role in fighting poverty, but also in extending it to groups that do not have the contributory capacity to be in the contributory system. Complementary social protection schemes play an important role in covering a poorer layer and can be transitional mechanisms, complementing conventional social security schemes (Micro-Finance and Micro-Insurance; Mutuals and Private Insurance).

The current institutional framework on gender allows for the combination of policy measures, such as the budget legal framework linking national, sectoral and local planning processes, the use of a gender approach and Gender Sensitive Budgeting (GSB). The actions it promotes are guided by the promotion of women's autonomy and aligned with the policy measures defined by the 2021-2025 Government Program. The general legal framework is favorable to the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women and the instruments defining national policy measures make extensive reference to the promotion of gender equality.

According to data from INE's Continuous Multi-Objective Survey 2022, the labor market in Cabo Verde is essentially characterized by informality. At the time of the survey, there were 95,708 people in Cabo Verde working in the informal sector (including agriculture and fisheries), representing 53.8% of jobs nationally (57.2% male and 49.6% female).

Informal economic activity is still the largest employment niche in the rural sector, where it hosts 73.3% of employees (67.6% female and 76.8% male). The urban environment, however, hosts 48.7% (45.9% female and 51.3% male) of the employed population.

The data on informality show that women are the majority in informal activities, which they carry out independently and without people at their service, which

makes them extremely vulnerable — their income depends solely and exclusively on their initiative and constant activity — precisely because they are not registered with social security and when they are registered, the costs are higher due to the “self-employed” modality, which attributes a contribution of 19.5%.

The branches of activity with the highest representation of female workers are Trade, Hotels and Restaurants, Public Administration and Defense, Social security, Education and Domestic Employment, which together represent 69.3% of the female employed population. Trade is the sector that provides the most employment in Cabo Verde and absorbs 16.5% of the employed workforce, representing 22.3% of the female employed population and only 11.6% male. Domestic Employment, on the other hand, covers 12.9% of women and only 0.3% of men. Education employs 10.4% of female workers and only 4.2% of male workers. In the 2019/20 school year, the Ministry of Education Yearbook indicates that there were 2,834 female and 1,353 male teachers in Primary Education and 964 female and 1,057 male teachers in Secondary Education. In Higher Education, there were 571 female and 890 male teachers.

This information indicates that the labor market reproduces gender occupational stereotypes — women have a greater presence in areas of activity linked to social reproduction — domestic care, education and health. It also shows that trade also represents an important niche in the labor market for women, and that this trade is generally informal.

AREA 7: Women in Power and leadership

Aware of the importance of equal representation and the presence of women in decision-making bodies, actions are being taken to promote this presence. The first measures were in 1999, when the Electoral Code established that the lists proposed for elections must contain a balanced representation between both sexes;

In 2019, Cabo Verde adopted the principle of parity democracy in the exercise of formal political power, which assumes the need for a balanced representation of both genders in the decision-making functions of politics as a precondition for the full and equal enjoyment of citizenship.

In November 2019, the Parity Law was approved, which “aims to guarantee effective equal rights and duties between men and women, with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination and providing the same opportunities, namely for political participation and the holding of decision-making positions, in order to achieve a more fairer, and balanced society.”

The law established a minimum representation of 40% for each of the sexes on the lists of candidates for the collegiate bodies of political power, thus pointing to a new scenario in the political arena in Cabo Verde. Article 4 of the respective law, states the following: i) “(...) a minimum representation of 40% of each sex on the lists of

candidates for collegiate bodies of political power, namely, the National Assembly, the City Council, the Municipal Assembly, and other supra-municipal or infra-municipal bodies"; ii) To comply with the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the first two positions on the lists of nominees submitted shall be occupied by candidates of different sexes, and no more than two candidates of the same sex may be placed consecutively in the list of the remaining positions";

With the elections held in 2020, parity was achieved both in the executive bodies, of which 56 women (41%) and 82 men (59%) were elected and in the Legislative Power, which comprise 143 women (42%) and 199 men (58%). For the Presidency of the Municipal Assemblies, 9 (40.9%) women and 13 men (59.1%) were elected. No woman has ever been elected to the presidency of the City Councils, although one holds this position due to the death of the incumbent.

In the 2021 legislative elections, the results were positive, but the target was not achieved. 27 female deputies (37.5%) and 45 male deputies (62.5%) were elected to the National Assembly. However, the current government composition is not gender balanced (0.563) - it is composed of 9 women (5 Ministers and 4 Secretaries of State) and 16 men (11 Ministers and 5 Secretaries of State).

Article 7, on the other hand, provides that the Boards of Directors and other appointment positions at Public Administration, Public Enterprises, State-owned Enterprises, and Public Institutes shall have equal representation. Article 9 of the law elects a follow-up committee with the task of evaluating and reviewing the impact of the law in promoting gender parity.

In this context, and as stipulated in Article 8, it was essential to carry out training and continuous awareness-raising actions aimed at stakeholders with responsibilities in the context of the implementation of the Parity Law (political parties, women's associations of political parties, youth parties, CSOs promoting gender equality, universities), in order to ensure a good understanding of the importance of women's participation in political life and decision-making. In this context, awareness-raising actions were carried out with various target audiences to better understand the law and the intricacies of its applicability, like immigrant women, local authorities, political parties members and women with disabilities.

It should also be noted that the Parity Law was translated into the Braille system to ensure the inclusion of people with visual impairments, allowing their access and better use of the document;

AREA 8: Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

The existence of a specific institution to address gender issues, in this case the Cape Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity, created in 1994, has allowed the institutionalization of these themes and the effective mainstreaming of gender across all sectors. government sectors, not only at central but also local levels

Since 2016, a ministry, currently the Ministry of State, Family, Inclusion and Social Development, has been assigned the specific responsibility for coordinating efforts to implement policies aimed at achieving gender equality.

The Social Services of this ministry, which are in the municipalization phase, contribute with specific programs and services to achieve gender equality. At a local level, municipal planning is a fundamental piece - 9 of the 22 municipalities had, in 2020, Municipal Strategic Plans for Sustainable Development (PMEDS), which integrate gender diagnoses and specific responses to identified challenges.

ICIEG's work is based on efforts to mainstream the gender approach at sectoral level and on work with a wide network of partnerships, with civil society organizations engaged in promoting equality (OMCV, MORABI), including those representing specific groups (women with disabilities, immigrant women, women with HIV/AIDS, Association of LGBTI people, etc.), men (Rede Laço Branco) or specific professional groups (women lawyers, women entrepreneurs, women domestic workers, women parliamentarians); institutional development partners (ICCA, CIGEF, CNDHC), including bilateral and multilateral cooperation; trade unions, in particular those representing female workers, such as the Domestic Workers Unions.

ICIEG manages the Support Centers for GBV Victims (CAV), which operate in all municipalities. These Centres, in addition to being responsible for coordinating specific action in terms of care and protection of victims, are also responsible for actions to promote gender equality.

In addition to all the structures mentioned above, support for ICIEG's intersectoral coordination work was created in 2018, the Interministerial Commission for the Transversalization of the Gender Approach (Gender Commission), which is directly responsible for monitoring the transversalization of the gender approach in public policies and, in particular, by following the measures outlined in the PEDS by the sectors. Its members are gender focal points and among their duties is reinforcing the use of the gender approach in their respective areas of activity.

The Commission is chaired by ICIEG and is made up of representatives from the General Directorates of Planning, Budget and Management (DGPOG) from the various sectors, as well as representatives from academia, the Cape Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents, NGOs and the Network of Parliamentary Women . They have responsibilities, together with the PEDS Program Managers, in terms of physical and financial management, planning and sectoral monitoring and evaluation instruments.

It is this commission that is responsible for monitoring the implementation of sectoral projects and evaluating their gender focus, as well as the commitments made by the Government of Cape Verde in terms of gender in its strategic plan for sustainable development.

AREA 9: Women's Human Rights

The National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship (CNDHC) was established in 2004, through Decree-Law No. 38/2004, of October 11. Since its

inception, it has been able to respond favorably to its mandate, with the support of national, international, and regional partners. To this end, the CNDHC has promoted human rights education at the national level, through training, awareness-raising sessions in schools, in communities, publications on its social network and website, and in various contexts, through the production of videos and information spots, in various formats.

In addition, it receives complaints of alleged human rights violations and plays the role of handling and forwarding such complaints; it also addresses recommendations to the Government and participates in the definition and implementation of public policies on human rights, including gender equity and women's rights.

The National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship (CNDHC) submitted to the National Assembly a Special Anti-Discrimination Draft Bill, which proposes a general legal framework to prevent, prohibit and combat all forms of discrimination, namely based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability, to be considered as a legislative initiative. The proposal, which was submitted in March 2022, addresses the development of guidelines and actions that promote equal and effective protection against all forms of discrimination, especially based on sexual orientation or gender identity, for entities operating in the justice sector. According to the proposal, these issues should be included in training plans for all law enforcement personnel or in social reintegration policies.

It is also worth mentioning that, along with the CNDHC, the Ombudsman, an independent constitutional body, elected by a two-thirds majority by Parliament, has strong attributions in the field of fundamental rights, especially in the prevention and redress of illegalities and injustices against public authorities, which particularly affect minorities (social, economic, religious and gender) and the most vulnerable citizens.

AREA 10: Women and the media

Contrary to what happens in most other African countries, women represent 70% of journalists in Cape Verde. However, the way women are portrayed or the way women have access to the media is not always the same as men.

It was with the aim of working on gender stereotypes perpetuated by the media that they were considered, and the special law against gender-based violence, as one of the main partners in this fight. In this sense, a manual of good journalistic practices was developed in 2014, made in a participatory manner by journalists from all media outlets in the country, where stereotypes, concepts, neutral language and correct approaches to sensitive matters are worked on.

The country has regulatory bodies, in this case the high authority for social communication, which is resorted to whenever it is considered that the approach and representation of women or children is poorly addressed.

At the same time, every year, since the implementation of the law in 2011, awareness and refresher courses are offered to communication professionals, starting in 2022 to work with universities in order to address the issue. from an early age, with students in this area.

Several awareness campaigns were also developed on the deconstruction of gender stereotypes, broadcast in various media outlets, as well as ensuring, whenever possible, the presence of technicians specialized in gender in the information programs of the various television and radio channels, in order to enlighten society on gender issues.

AREA 11: Women and the Environment

The Republic of Cabo Verde ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on March 29, 1995. The Convention entered into force on June 22, 1995.

The Government is aware of the state of climate emergency in which the world finds itself and advocates a responsible and respectful attitude towards current and future generations. Cabo Verde must continue to prepare itself, building resilience to cope with the phenomena associated with these changes (Government Program of the 10th legislature). The Government also establishes the powers, composition and mode of operation of the National Council for the Environment and Climate Action, hereinafter referred to as CNAAC.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAA) is tasked with coordinating climate change issues and activities and is the Focal Point of the UNFCCC and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Since then, considerable efforts have been made to promote the fight against climate change, with the aim of meeting the requirements of the Convention and improving cross-sectoral cooperation in order to ensure the integration of climate change issues into sector strategy documents and national development objectives.

Regarding the Gender and climate change nexus, in Cabo Verde, similar to other SIDS, climate change is more likely to impact women and men differently, namely for biological reasons, social and behavioral norms and the lack of basic resources after a disaster. Cabo Verdean women, especially those living in rural areas, are more likely to be overexposed to climate change risks due to multiple factors linked to cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality, including: (1) Disparities in income and productivity; (2) Disparities in access to policy formulation and decision-making processes; (3) Limited access to information and capacity building, including activities that can enable the substitution of unsustainable practices (e.g. sand collection, firewood collection); (4) Non-recognition or underestimation of women's traditional knowledge and practices about their surroundings and natural resource management; and (5) Lack of disaggregated data and related underestimation of women's role and contributions in mitigating and adapting to climate change hazards (REFLOR).

Regarding Participation, women are still disadvantaged in terms of participation in influential positions and decision-making processes. Only 11% of NGOs and community-based associations are headed by women, while women in ministerial positions represent only 14.3% (DSG-REFLOR).

Several projects, plans and programs have been implemented to address climate change and have contributed to the implementation of measures that contribute to gender equality. It should be noted that there is a greater sensitivity to gender issues and many projects have internalized the concern for gender mainstreaming. Below, we list some results or proposals for measures suggested by these projects: it should be noted that with the implementation of the Project to Strengthen the Adaptation and Mitigation Capacity of the Forestry Sector in Cabo Verde (REFLOR), a Social and Gender Diagnosis (DSG) was prepared, and important social and gender biases were identified in the beneficiary communities. In addition, it is important to underline that the project intervened in a context of extreme water shortage, derived from the effects of 4 cumulative years of drought, since 2017, aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Although Cabo Verde's population compared to other African countries is well positioned in terms of access to energy, water and education, the pandemic has shown that economic and health emergencies have been exacerbated further and deeper by the triple crisis of resource scarcity, climate change and biodiversity loss, particularly for Cabo Verde's rural society. This project had as one of its objectives a better understanding of (i) women's and men's roles as users of forest resources, (ii) gendered social dynamics in access to productive resources, services (in particular forestry) and local institutions, the ability of men/women to influence decision-making (voice) and benefit from natural resources and economic opportunities to improve their individual and household well-being (agency), and (iii) the needs, rights and interests of men/women and all stakeholders in forest management. Through the aforementioned DSG, important social and gender biases were identified in the beneficiary communities, particularly in terms of access to water, access to and control over land. They are biases which have a significant gender dimension, especially in the documentation of ownership, including by the State (Long-Term Agreements), which tends to be attributed to men who are considered heads of household. Tenure issues have been found to impact the investments that women and men can make, but particularly women, who are less likely to be holders than men. Gender biases in participation and decision-making were also identified. An aspect that should continue to deserve the attention of the different institutions of the country, despite the publication of Law No. 68/IX/2019 on Parity, is the issue of participation, especially participation at the community level, constituting a challenge that conditions greater autonomy for women.

AREA 12: Girl's Rights

The Cape Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents (ICCA) is the public institute responsible for implementing the Program "Guarantee of the rights and protection of children and adolescents - promoting a happy and healthy childhood" which aims to promote and protect the rights of children and adolescents. Its implementation is linked to all programs, especially with activities related to improving access to education and promoting gender equality.

Is responsible for implementing the:

- i) National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combat of Sexual Abuse of Children and Adolescents 2022-2024;
- ii) National Communication Plan: Cape Verde for Childhood and Adolescence;
- iii) Communication strategies for child protection with emphasis on preventing and combating sexual violence against children and adolescents.

It is also responsible for welcoming and monitoring children and adolescents and their families in situations of socio-economic vulnerability, through integrated responses with the collaboration of several institutions to resolve problems (MFIS, Municipal Chambers, DNE, DNS, PN, PJ, Public Ministry, others.).

The internal programs carried out by ICCA play a key role in risk and social vulnerability interventions. Awareness-raising, guidance and communication actions, carried out by the institution's social workers and psychologists with children and adolescents and their families, are the primary function in this protection sector.

It should be noted that under the Community Proactive Outreach and Intervention Project, during the year 2022, 2766 awareness-raising actions were carried out involving about 9326 children and adolescents, 1360 families, and several partners, namely the Ministry of Education (schools), the Ministry of Health, National Police, City Councils, Media, NGOs, and local Associations. The development of these intervention initiatives focused on preventing and combating children's and adolescents' risk and vulnerability situations at the national level.

Has under its supervision two emergency centers that welcome children and adolescents who are victims of abuse, the majority of whom are girls, as well as coordinated day centers in most of the national municipalities, structures that function as places of support for children from vulnerable families and that in these spaces they receive the social, psychological and educational support they need.

It also carries out various actions to raise awareness and prevent sexual abuse and situations that constitute a violation of children's rights, combating child labor and sexual exploitation, and together with ICIEG and other partners works to eliminate all harmful practices such as early, forced and child marriages and female genital mutilation, even if it is not a cultural practice practiced in the country. In Cape Verde, child marriage is illegal, and harmful practices are not practiced, particularly against girls, such as breast ablation or female genital mutilation, however the country receives many emigrants from countries where these practices are common.

Female genital mutilation in Cabo Verde was criminalized (introduced in the Penal Code Law No. 117/IX/2021 of 11 February) in 2021, punishable by a sentence of 4 to 10 years in prison, and its preparation is also punishable. Aware that criminalization alone is not enough to eliminate this practice, the High Authority for Immigration, (AAI) I.P. has been developing awareness-raising activities against female genital mutilation among immigrant communities, with emphasis on the lecture held in August 2022 on the theme “Immigration, Gender, and Harmful Practices”: Why talk about Female Genital Mutilation in Cabo Verde?”.

In 2021, AAI, I.P. promoted a series of conversations around Immigration in Cabo Verde to discuss the topic of Female Genital Mutilation, aiming to be an information and/or awareness-raising strategy for civil society and to promote reflections and debates on the subject.

In addition, as part of information dissemination, AAI created monthly information spaces on Community Radios, to inform immigrants about their rights, duties, and relevant services for their stay and integration into Cabo Verdean society, to promote intercultural dialog, mutual respect and prevent discrimination. In February 2022 and February 2023, the programs developed in Praia focused on the impact of female genital mutilation on women's health and the framework of genital mutilation in Cabo Verdean legislation, respectively, as a way to inform and raise awareness about this practice.

Furthermore, the Activity Plan of the High Authority for Immigration, I.P in order to continue raising awareness about female genital mutilation during the year 2023, sets among the main objectives, to promote a culture of equality and gender equity within the immigrant communities residing in Cabo Verde, in which it foresees the completion of the elaboration of the project on female genital mutilation and mobilization of partnerships for its implementation.

It is also foreseen, during 2023, the elaboration of a study on Gender, Immigration, and Harmful Practices (especially Female Genital Mutilation) in Cabo Verde, inserted into a larger Project, which, in addition to improving knowledge about this phenomenon, it is foreseen the information, sensitization, and training of representatives of institutions, from various areas, especially in the health area.

NEW CHALLENGES

Although Cape Verde has achieved considerable progress in guaranteeing gender equality and equity, there are still challenges that, being aware of them, efforts are being made to overcome them:

1. Improving the working conditions of female domestic workers, which in general fall on: i) strengthening their skills and professional qualification; ii) regulating the work practice of female domestic workers; iii) designing the profile of female domestic workers, which are embodied in the following activities; iv) awareness-raising actions on the rights and duties of female domestic workers, as well as measures for access and permanence to social security (in progress). In this context, political measures have already been taken, which we will now point out: a) The exclusive creation of the Domestic Service Scheme by the National Institute of Social Security, whose monthly contribution is set at 23% which must be distributed: 15% is the employers' share (contributors); 8% is the employees' share (insured). Thus, with the right of retirement; b) Increase of the Minimum Wage to 14 thousand Cabo Verdean escudos, ensured in article 13 of Law No. 16/X/2022, which approves the State budget, amending Article 4 on the value of the guaranteed minimum monthly wage of Decree-Law No. 6 /2014, January 29, which creates and regulates the minimum monthly wage for employees, subject to the Labor Code

regime; c) Revision of the Labor Code (ongoing). d) Ongoing discussion to extend the national coverage of the social security contribution system itself and, consequently, unemployment benefits for female domestic workers; e) Declaration and political commitment of the Government to extend the extension of maternity leave from 60 days to 90 days and introduction of paternity leave to 10 working days upon the birth of the child to the private sector and self-employed, including coverage for female domestic workers.

2. Development of a representative civil society, through associations and organizations, were, women are still disadvantaged in terms of participation in influential positions and decision-making processes, were only 11% of NGOs and community-based associations are headed by women.
3. According to data from the 2021 Census of the National Institute of Statistics of Cabo Verde (INE-CV), the majority of the population aged 5 and over with disabilities are women (of the total 10.6% of the population with disabilities, about 62.5% against 37.5% in urban areas and 60.1% against 39.9 in rural areas). Women with disabilities, face multiple discrimination - due to gender, the social stigma associated with disability, and the consequences of this condition - low educational level and low income. Been aware, ICIEG's work is based on efforts to mainstream the gender approach at the sectoral level and on working with a wide network of partnerships, with civil society organizations engaged in promoting equality (OMCV, MORABI), including those representing specific groups (women with disabilities, immigrant women, women with HIV/AIDS, LGBTI people's association, etc.), men (White Ribbon Network) or specific professional groups (women lawyers, women entrepreneurs, women domestic workers, women parliamentarians); institutional development partners (ICCA, CIGEF, CIGEF, and CNDHC), including bilateral and multilateral cooperation; trade union groups, in particular those representing women workers, such as the Domestic Workers' Union.
4. Taking into account the difficulties faced by immigrants, in particular immigrant women in regularization, which falls on proving the economic conditions of subsistence in the country and the fact that many do not have a stable employment relationship, an Exceptional Regime of Extraordinary Regularization of foreigners was established in 2021 by Decree-Law No. 72/2021 of 18 October, which allowed the submission of an application for regularization in a household, dispensing with the presentation of proof of the economic situation for household members.
5. In relation to polygamy itself, changing attitudes and practices is a long-term effort, which implies continued attention to equality education initiatives, whether in the educational context or at the community level, efforts that are underway, including with immigrant communities, as already mentioned. Although there are no studies quantifying the extent of polygamy, it is clear that it has been decreasing over the years in the country. It is important to note that the progress Cabo Verde has made in terms of women's empowerment (educational levels, access to information about their rights, economic autonomy, etc.) has led to changing attitudes towards polygamy, reducing its social acceptability.

6. The National Institute of Statistics, in all its operations, collects and publishes data disaggregated by sex, age, municipality, and area of residence (urban and rural). However, periodic data collection with a gender focus as a prerogative is still deficient. To fill these gaps, the National System of Gender Indicators is being developed, and the updating and autonomy of the Gender Observatory, through ICIEG
7. Cabo Verde, over the years, has excelled in strengthening national technical capacities and, in recent years, has drawn on these skills for the design of national strategies and policies concerning gender equality and, of course, concerning the implementation of the Conventions. However, in parallel and as part of the implementation of a range of actions, the State has also resorted to international technical assistance that works together with national expertise.
8. To guarantee the right of access to justice for those who do not have the necessary economic resources, the Government of Cabo Verde, through the Ministry of Justice, has ensured the benefit of Legal Aid, which includes a total or partial waiver payment of legal fees, as well as legal aid consisting of the provision of professionals who can technically assist their constituents in court. In this context, the issue of vulnerability of women victims of GBV deserved the Government's particular attention, and to this end, Decree-Law No. 8/2014, of January 27, was approved, with provisions that specifically regulate the legal assistance to be provided to victims of GBV crime. Several measures were adopted to speed up the prosecution of crimes of violence against women, including the prioritization of GBV cases and the setting of a 180-day deadline for their completion. However, access to justice, particularly in terms of trials and serving sentences, still falls short of what is desired, especially with regard to the typification of GBV cases, which still raises doubts, even with regular training, provided to various institutions on the care of victims of GBV, with the participation of Magistrates and National Police Officers.
9. Despite the Basic Law on the State Budget, which since 2019 instituted the use of public assets and resources in an equal manner for both sexes, through the mandatory preparation and execution of gender-sensitive budgets, its implementation still falls short of what was desired, mainly due to the lack of gender indicators that allow its effective monitoring.
10. The Government, through MFIDS/ICIEG, in partnership with the local office of the International Labor Organization (ILO), inaugurated awareness-raising workshops on ILO Convention No. 156 on workers with family responsibilities, bringing together social partners, members of parliament, members of the government, members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Cabo Verde, representatives of public and private entities with intervention in this matter, artists, and activists. Among the aspects addressed, the objective is the ratification of Convention No. 156 as well as fostering shared responsibility in care and greater engagement of men, and also, in a pilot phase, the choice by parents for the enjoyment of parental leave, allowing men to also participate in this experience. This is an issue that still greatly limits women's participation in the job market and in decision-making positions.
11. Social dynamics created a new vulnerable group, which was previously dependent on family support networks; the elderly. Aiming this target, the country approved, through Law No. 26/X/2023, of May 8 - the Statute of the Elderly Person, which aims

to promote the rights and protection of the elderly, in order to guarantee their autonomy, integration, and effective participation in society. It is now necessary to implement.

12. In Cabo Verde, legal marriage is not allowed for children under 18, and its practice is “recognized institutionally and internationally as an attack on childhood and adolescence and an obstacle to the empowerment of girls”. According to the Cabo Verdean Civil Code (Decree-Law No. 31 - A/199), the rule is that marriage must be contracted from the age of majority, which is set at 18 years and follows strict criteria in terms of validity, namely, the preliminary verification of legal capacity, so that it can be registered in the civil services, under the terms of 1561 et seq. of the Civil Code. In this sense, the Civil Code itself provides for an exception to the rule, which is the emancipation by marriage of minors, aged between 16 and 17 years, with parental consent, with the effect of giving the minor the full capacity to exercise rights, enabling him/her to freely govern and expose his/her person and property, as established in Articles 141 and 142. Civil partnership is also one of the sources of family legal relations, recognized by the Cabo Verdean legal system, to which certain legal requirements must be respected for its effectiveness, namely the age of majority, since the civil partnership is equivalent to a marriage, under the terms of Articles 1560 and 1710 in conjunction with article 1562 paragraph 5 of the Civil Code.

However, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics of Cabo Verde (INECV) Census 2021 - V general census of population and housing - Children and adolescents, it was found that 1.4% of children aged 15 and over lived in a civil partnership. However, in the legal sense, this civil partnership does not meet the legally required conditions. The practice is a concern for the Government at all levels, not only because of the growing trend but especially because of the strong impact they have on children, especially girls, who are the most affected. This practice constitutes a factor of gender inequality and places them in a situation of even greater vulnerability.

13. The Country has his 1st National Plan Against Trafficking in Persons was the creation of the Observatory on Trafficking in Persons comprised of State institutions and organized civil society with intervention in the matter (see below). The Directorate General for Justice Policy, under the Ministry of Justice, is the body responsible for coordinating the Observatory, as well as guiding, evaluating and implementing the National Plans against Trafficking in Persons.
14. Technologies bring new forms of violence, with young people being more vulnerable to these practices, with cyberbullying practices being recorded in the country, in its most varied forms. Cases of suicide, as well as self-mutilation, depression, drug and alcohol consumption, are often associated with these practices. Institutions must be urged to make the necessary updates. The country already has a 2020 cybercrime law in this regard, but it is necessary to raise society's awareness of its dangers.
15. Engagement of men and boys, taking into account their own challenges.
16. Constant vigilance and defense of the advances already made in terms of gender equality and equity, as setbacks exist and can appear when least expected.