

**FINAL Country Report on the Progress achieved and Challenges faced during implementation of the
Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action
Beijing + 25**

**The State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs
of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

Baku 2019

INTRODUCTION

This report provides brief overview of the progress achieved and challenges faced during implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action by the Government of Azerbaijan.

The Beijing+25 national-level review was commissioned by the State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for Family, Women and Children's Affairs and held in close cooperation and consultations with the line ministries, state committees, other related Government agencies, civil society, academia and expert community.

The Guidance note prepared by UN Women for comprehensive national-level reviews in collaboration with the five Regional Commissions (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)) was used for the purposes of the comprehensive national-level review for development of this report.

The information for the purposes of the national review was gathered using the secondary data sources and through consultations and meetings with the stakeholders and different beneficiary groups.

The report covers the period from 2014 to April 2019. The findings of the national review are presented in four chapters with the first section providing general overview of the main achievements and challenges faced during the reporting period, the second chapter elaborating in detail on 12 areas of Beijing Platform, the third part presenting the information on national institutions and related processes and the last chapter discussing the progress and challenges as regards data and statistics.

CHAPTER I

The achievement of equality between women and men has become an integral part of the development agenda in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Government of Azerbaijan reaffirms its commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action and recognizes that incorporating a gender perspective in different areas of development ensures effective achievement of other social and economic goals. Thus, the principle of gender equality is being used in all newly approved policies and programs for the country's development and achievement of the SDGs.

In 2017 appointment of the woman as the First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, second-highest constitutional post in the country, after the President, should be highlighted as one of the crucial achievements.

Moreover, the special parliamentary Committee on Family, Women, and Children's Affairs was established in November, 2015 in the National Parliament in order to promote gender sensitive legislation and assess gender implications of specific laws.

Several major legal measures were also introduced to ensure improved protection and support to the women victims of GBV. Establishment of the interagency online GBV database and regional monitoring groups, aimed at combating gender based violence and discrimination against women, is also one of the major achievements of the Government within the reporting period.

To boost the process of informed policy and decision-making, several important initiatives for producing data and evidence on gender based discrimination and violence were launched including regular production of sex disaggregated data, surveys on the dynamics of gender relations, child marriages, GBV prevalence rates and women's coping strategies as well as the economic costs of the GBV.

All these measures have ensured improved institutional GBV response capacity as well as internal accountability, enabling effective monitoring of the available violence prevention and response schemes.

Series of strategic interventions were undertaken to boost economic empowerment of women. The Government believes that economic independence of women facilitates poverty reduction, ensures advancement of women's economic and social performance and in many cases contributes to elimination of gender based discrimination in society. Within the framework of implementation of a number of state programs it has been possible to achieve significant progress in sustainable reduction of unemployment rate, strengthening the social protection of the unemployed and socially vulnerable groups of the women.

The Government has also taken measures to challenge prevalent gender stereotypes related to the choice of jobs and to encourage women to be involved in non-traditional fields and technology. Taking into account that using digital devices is crucial to ensure equal access to information and knowledge, as well as to foster innovation and entrepreneurial thinking, the Special Education Centers have been launched in the country. Newly created Technology Parks are actively used in the framework of awareness raising campaigns on importance of information technology, the crucial role of education in the fields of math, engineering, computing, sciences and telecommunications. A number of projects were implemented for increasing percentage of the women entrepreneurs and women in ICT.

Serious steps are taken in the country to digitize services for citizens to ensure the modern and flexible governance and facilitate women's access to these services. In this context, several additional measures are undertaken to transit fully to electronic public services in area of labor, employment, social protection and social allowances that helps to develop transparency and swift delivery of public services.

Since 3 February 2014, the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan has started to provide over 20 mobile services. This has created favorable conditions

for the population groups including the women residing in remote areas to benefit from the services offered. The State institutions provide e-services via ASAN Service centers. ASAN Service Centers also have special child care facilities where women can leave their children and benefit from the public services. During the reporting years, e-services are further improved by launching ASAN VISA, ASAN Payment, ASAN WiFi, E-license, e-agriculture and other services.

Starting from 16 March 2018, ASAN Service and ASAN Public Utilities Centers have started to provide the new service to receive applications from IDP population.

The major legal and policy documents developed in the reporting period are as follows:

Laws :

- ✓ The Law on “Unemployment Insurance” ,June 30, 2017
- ✓ The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Amendments to the Criminal Code, the sanctions were aggravated on the violation of the right of a pregnant woman or a woman who has children under the age of three, and man who grows up to three years of age alone, 31 May 2017
- ✓ The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on amendments to the Civil Procedure Code, resolutions on giving a long-term protection order to a victim of domestic violence , 30 December 2016
- ✓ the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan of on amendments to the Civil Procedure Code, on giving a long-term protection order to a victim of domestic violence,30 December 2016
- ✓ The law on mandatory premarital medical examination 2015
- ✓ Article 205 Code of Administrative Offenses adopted in 2015, aggravating sanctions for pressure on a worker exposed to sexual harassment sanction
- ✓ Amendments to the Criminal Code, which aggravated sanctions for the coercion into actions of sexual nature, sexual relations and other actions of sexual nature with the person who has not reached of age 14, depraving actions, carried out without application of force against the person who has not reached age of 16, involving of minor in prostitution, or commitment of immoral actions 2015

State Programs:

- ✓ State Program on the Improvement of Justice in Azerbaijan” 2019-2023
- ✓ “State Program for the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2018–2024
- ✓ Food Security Program of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2018-2015
- ✓ State Program on Compulsory Medical Examination of Children 2018-2022
- ✓ State Program on the Development of Demography and Population 2017-2030
- ✓ State Program “Azerbaijani Youth (2017-2021)
- ✓ State Program for Strengthening Social Protection of Older People 2017-2021
- ✓ Decent Work Country Program for the years 2016–2020

- ✓ “State Program on the Improvement of Environmental Situation and Efficient Use of Natural Resources in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2016-2020 draft
- ✓ National Action Plan Open for 2016-2018 on Promotion of Government Initiative
- ✓ State Program for Improving Mother and Child Health 2014-2020
- ✓ State Program on Socio-Economic Development of Regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2014-2018

Action Plans:

- ✓ National strategy on reproductive health (2019-2025)
- ✓ Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2017-2030
- ✓ Action Program on Immunoprophylaxis of Infectious Diseases Among Children in 2016-2020
- ✓ Action Program 2016-2020 for Combating HIV/AIDS
- ✓ The National Action Plan for years 2014-2018 on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- ✓ The Action Plan for the implementation of the “National Strategy for the Development of the Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan”
- ✓ National Program for Action to Raise Effectiveness of the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- ✓ Youth Development Strategy of Azerbaijan in 2015-2025
- ✓ Strategy for Combating Non-Infectious Diseases for 2015-2020 in the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- ✓ National Strategy for the Development of the Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- ✓ National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2014-2018)

Presidential decrees:

- ✓ Presidential decree “About creation of the legal entity of the public law "ABAD" in subordination of the State agency on rendering services to citizens and social innovations in case of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan” decree 1047 of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic 2016.
- ✓ “Financing of the Investment Projects for the Development of the Tourism Sector Presented by the Local Entrepreneurs through the Republic of Azerbaijan National Fund for Entrepreneurship Support for 2017-2020”
- ✓ The Decree of 28 December 2017 On Further Improvement of Management in Small and Medium Entrepreneurship and creation of the Agency for Development of Small and Medium Business in the

Republic of Azerbaijan (In accordance with the Statutes of the Agency, several measures are undertaken to promote women entrepreneurs),

- ✓ Presidential order on additional measures to improve governance in the field of employment, labor and social protection and establishment the Agency for Sustainable and Operational Social Security (DOST)

All abovementioned strategic interventions have significantly contributed to improved living standards and social welfare of the population including inter alia through the measures specifically targeting economic empowerment of women and eradication of poverty, enhancement of women's legal capacity, improvement of women's access to education and available employment opportunities as well as enhancing women's engagement in political decision making processes.

Though the Government is determined to continue progressive realization of its commitments, series of challenges impeding effective realization of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of the women do remain. The Government of Azerbaijan expresses regrets that due to continued occupation of almost 20% of Azerbaijani territory by Armenian military forces, the Government is not in a position to ensure implementation of gender equality policies in the occupied territories and thus series of challenges remain as regards full realization of the strategies aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

CHAPTER II

Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

○ *Women and poverty*

Azerbaijan has implemented comprehensive measures for eliminating poverty. As a result of the adoption and implementation of a number of state programs, including the State Program on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development and the State Program on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development, the absolute poverty rate has been significantly reduced, and social protection of socially vulnerable population groups has been strengthened. The Government has undertaken series of measures to systematically address the needs and vulnerabilities of the most vulnerable groups of women including those residing in rural areas, women with disabilities, elderly women, etc .Diversification of the economy and the direction towards ensuring the development of the regions, has been of particular importance for creating new job places and increasing employment opportunities that are essential in poverty reduction

As a result of adopted measures, the decrease of the poverty rate among women from 49 % to 5,9 % has been achieved in the country. Today 69 % of working women are involved in private sector and 31 % of them in public one.

Development of women's skills, reorganization of the professional development system and adaptation of personnel training to the labor market requirements, with the aim of increasing workforce competitiveness ,expand decent work opportunities for women These policies are intended to ensure inclusive employment and strengthen the integration of socially vulnerable population groups to the labor market.

In accordance with the implementation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan “on additional measures to ensure population’s self-employment “of April 7, 2016, the self-employment program is carried out to ensure self-employment of people, especially for self-employment of youth by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population. About 1400 family households have succeeded in implementing their business idea within the program. Only in 2017, 303 youth as participants in the program were supplied with assets in accordance with business plans. Since 2018, within the framework of the implementation of the “Decent Work Country Program for the years 2016–2020”, the implementation of “Pilot subsidy program aimed at expanding the opportunities for decent employment of young people” has been launched with the support of the International Labour Organization.

The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Insurance against Unemployment” adopted in 2017, is directed to strengthening the social protection of the unemployed and job seeking citizens in the country. This Law provides a wide range of opportunities for activities in the field of applied professional training, retraining and advanced training, the organization of public works, the labour exchange and fair, the wide application of self-employment projects, legalization of labor relations.

Formation of such unemployment insurance system and developing the labor market monitoring and forecasting system

Currently, numerous programs are being developed to increase employment and well-being of women.

A two-year jointly funded programme set to improve the livelihoods and well-being of up to 3,000 women with disabilities was signed i by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of Azerbaijan, UNDP and UNFPA. The programme, which was developed at the initiative of the First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, will help the Government produce gender and age-disaggregated data on disability and allow it to design inclusive policies for the employment of war veterans and women and girls living with disabilities. It will also foster positive attitudes and perceptions to eliminate stigma and discrimination towards vulnerable population groups. This new programme is expected to provide an accessible and inclusive environment for personal and professional growth of up to 3,000 vulnerable people, including those who lived through traumatic experiences of war. A new state-of the art Virtual Skills Development and Training Lab (V-Lab) will be launched for women with disabilities and war veterans offering them access to knowledge, information and employment opportunities through the use of modern ICT. A model art school will also be established in Baku to promote social inclusion and offer a wide range of innovation start-up and business development platforms to women and girls with and without disability.

○ *Women and the economy*

Since last report in 2014, Azerbaijan has made considerable improvements and achievements in the sphere of economic empowerment of women. Economic independence of women is one of the components of their active participation in political and public life. It facilitates poverty reduction, ensure advance in women’s economic and social performance and in many cases eliminates gender based discrimination in society.

Government pays significant attention to the activities of business entities and creation of favorable conditions for the development of private enterprise. The loans provided by the state and the work carried out by the National Fund on Assistance for Entrepreneurship provide extensive support to the development of women businesses, especially in rural areas.

The development of Strategic Roadmaps on main economic sectors in 2017, adoption of several steps towards the liberalization of business environment including the elimination of licenses for various fields of activity, improvement of tax, as well as the establishment of «ASAN Support for Family Business» center (ABAD) facilitates the creation of new job positions and development of small and medium entrepreneurship . The

aim of creation of ABAD is supporting development and formation of family business in the country, stimulating development of small and medium entrepreneurship in rural areas, creating additional employment opportunities for population. ABAD achieves these goals by working directly with rural local communities to create and strengthen market-linkages, improve technical and business skills. The program delivers assistance primarily through rural Marketing Centers staffed by business advisors who live and work in the regions. They help to access market and business information, provide consultation and advice from local and international experts on obtaining credit, equipment and machinery leases. Within pilot project ABAD service provides support to families engaged in production of food and handicrafts. This includes production by women of sausages, jam, pickles, and dairy products. For craftsmanship service has assessed applications of families involved in weaving, carving, jewelry, pottery and other handicrafts. ABAD negotiates with trade centers where its products will be sold and first selling points have already been determined.

In 2018 share of women entrepreneurs in small and medium business reached 30 %, in 2015 –27 %, while earlier their share was only 4 percent.

In 2016 «Special Economic Mapping and Labour Market Assessment» to review the context of local economic development and state regional development and employment strategies was done. In the framework of the projects on «Enabling civil society to play greater role in advancing gender equality and women's rights» we conduct the assessment of employment opportunities for women in the local labor market and business development trainings. Special competition was launched among 4 groups of women graduated from the «Start and improve your Business» Program. In result best micro project proposals were identified and provided by in-kind contribution to start businesses.

Alongside with the Business development trainings special awareness raising and sensitization campaigns to change gender stereotyping related to the choice of jobs and gender-based distribution of family duties are conducted regularly. Government holds meetings with the private sector and banks to sensitize them to gender specific needs and initiate dialogue between the businesses and civil society activists to promote women's rights. Special trainings on the «Development of policies and programmatic interventions in the area of economic empowerment and community-based activism of young women» and «Gender-sensitive policies and programmatic interventions for economic participation of rural women» are conducted for the staff of local executive authorities and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, representatives of trade unions, private sector enterprises, and public officials from other relevant agencies.

Due to the State Program on Social-Economic Development of Regions, the special attention is paid to to establish child and family centers, including, dedicated leisure facilities and specialized services centers for children in all region of Azerbaijan. The president of Azerbaijan gave assignment during the meeting on the results of the socioeconomic development of the first quarter of 2017 to open new kindergartens on the first floor of the newly built buildings , in order to solve the kindergarten problem in Azerbaijan. 19, 577 million AZN (11,510 million \$) was allocated by the government for the construction of the new kindergartens' in 15 cities and villages during 2018.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs jointly with international organizations cooperates on the projects to help women in rural areas to create their own businesses. During 2017-2018 more than 500 rural women have been provided with capacity development support. As a result, women improved their professional skills in the field of accounting, financial literacy, computer science, fundraising, proposal writing and organizational development.

As another example of the support to the rural women willing to increase the level of their economic activity should be mentioned the Project on «Promoting Rural Women's participation in the Social and Economic Life». The project aimed at creating the mechanism for disseminating knowledge, teaching skills and facilitating information exchange in the area of rural women's economic empowerment. It also supports network building among economically active women residing in rural and sub-urban settlements. The Project

envisioned this mechanism as a regional Women's Resource Centers focusing on economic and social empowerment of rural women. The Centers function as a part of the regional branch of State Committee and strengthen efforts in addressing the needs and concerns of rural women in the area of economic and social participation. 8 Women Resource Center were opened as a result of the project. They offer women and girls free access to library resources, internet, computers, trainings and etc. An impressive network of more than 3000 rural women was created through these centers. Totally, 5500 rural women benefited from the project, 102 women started the entrepreneurship activity, and 100 women were provided with jobs in 2017. During 2018, 904 women participated in trainings, 28 women joined business activity, 17 women found new jobs.

Agriculture is an important part of the country's economy, therefore it is considered in the context of overall development. Government pays special attention to the implementation of agrarian reforms, The Ministry of Agriculture of Azerbaijan has presented AMAL - a new project aimed to increase agricultural employment. The project defines three main priorities – employment, use of green technology innovations and improvement of entrepreneurial and professional skills. The goal of the new project is to increase interest in agriculture and prevent the flow to the city, food security, and environmental protection. At the first stage, workshops on the formation of business ideas, agriculture and innovation, development of a business plan, development of a financial model ,marketing and sales, creating small production facilities and greenhouses for women are being conducted for a group of future entrepreneurs. By strengthening training and extension services for rural women in Azerbaijan, FAO has launched a new project with the aim of improving women's socio-economic empowerment and their inclusion in the paid employment sector. Within the scope of the project «Capacity Development Support to Rural Women on the Socio-economic and Gender Aspects of Sustainable Rural Development», FAO supported the development of a need analysis and training strategy in three pilot provinces in Azerbaijan. The provinces have been selected based on the regional differences, agricultural production patterns and capacity of women's organizations in those cities. FAO shared its experiences with national extension service staff in undertaking gender-sensitive needs assessment, giving support for designing and providing training that targets the specific needs and priorities of rural women, especially on promoting empowerment of rural women, food security and livelihoods. The project was closely related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which advocates the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

In the framework of the Azerbaijani Rural Investment Project (ARIP) implemented by the State Agency for Agricultural Projects and Loans Management under the Ministry of Agriculture, almost 100 women have participated at the project in 2018 and new businesses were established. They are allocated five year long loans in the amount of 5,000 AZN (2940\$). This project has organized zonal gender workshops in districts, and each event has attracted 100 women from 44 communities into training on the role of women in community development. According to the information provided by the State Service for Management of Agricultural Projects and Loans, the Azerbaijani Rural Investment Project has used the funds in the amount of 140 million USD and such projects serve to better the life of rural population . 200 micro projects, including restoration of auxiliary rural roads, potable water supply, exhibition centers, renovation projects and creation of business incubators have been implemented successfully.

According to agricultural census data for 2015, the share of women in the total number of people engaged in agricultural work was 48.6%, and 50% in 2018 According to agricultural census data of 2015, the share of female farm managers in the total number of farm managers that owned and/or used lands as individual entrepreneur, family-peasant and household farms was 9.4%. Now this number has increased to 101860 women .The Ministry of Agriculture, the State Agro Trade Company, together with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization have started to implement “AFAQ – Agro Action of Azerbaijani Women” project to increase women's employment in agro sphere, their access to information, resources and markets, and thus improve their socio-economic wellbeing. The main objective of the project is to facilitate the access of women to the sales markets, forming women entrepreneurs in the field of agriculture, increasing their knowledge in

Azerbaijan within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals carries out reforms in leading sectors of the economy, and especially in the field of agriculture.

Joint project with UNDP, Swiss Cooperation Office and local NGOs entitled «Gender Assessment: Analyzing barriers to economic and social participation of women and girls, and producing action oriented Recommendations» helps to analyze reasons, preventing women and girls from accessing economic and employment opportunities in the private sector both in rural and urban areas. The study assessments were conducted in Baku and 6 regions. The report with recommendations to the private sector and a wide range of other stakeholders for advocacy and action was produced and disseminated.

Special training manual, a booklet and educational materials have been developed in collaboration with UNDP and used for the advancement young rural women in community development and economic participation. A number of trainings on «Plan your future» and «Family Budget Management» are conducted on the regular basis in the regions to teach family members how to sum up their incomes and their management, create household budget.

The Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Azerbaijan was established in October 2017. The Association has concluded memorandums of cooperation with the foreign associations of women entrepreneurs in order to learn and share experience and best practices. Azerbaijan's Trade Houses have been opened by the Ministry of Economy in different part of the world and women entrepreneurs of Azerbaijan are actively involved by the government in this activity.

- *Human rights of women*

In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 29 October 2013 On Making Changes to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan On Social Allowances, the allowance shall be provided 'to the women that have over five children'.

The Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan applies quotas in vacant positions for single parents that have minor children, parents with many children and parents that have children with disabilities. The administrative liability of employers not respecting this requirement of the legislation became more serious, and the sanction to be applied against employers has increased from 1500AZN (883\$) to 2500AZN (1470\$) in accordance with Article 195 of the Code of Administrative Offences.

In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 31 May 2017 On Making Changes to the Criminal Code, the sanctions for violating the equality rights of a pregnant woman or a woman that cares a child minor than three years or violating the labor rights of a single father caring a child minor than three years have become tougher. For instance, the sanctions envisaged in Article 154.1 of the Criminal Code have replaced from 100 AZN to 2000 AZN (1180 \$) while the sanctions of Article 164 have also replaced the previous wording of 'from 500 AZN to 1000 AZN, to 2000 AZN(1176\$) to 3000 AZN(1764\$).

The sanctions in relation to the intimidation of an employee who is the victim of the sexual harassment have become tougher in Article 205 of the new Code of Administrative Offences adopted in 2015. Thus, Article 205 of the new Code of Administrative Offences has substituted the sanction against the ranking official.

- *The girl child*

Government believes that creating possibilities for young girls helps them to realize their potential and believe in their abilities,

The country is working to ensure more girls pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. To encourage girls in rural communities to shape their future in the tech industry, the young girls are offered the special programming courses for coding novices. As part of numerous campaign, training workshops were also organized for young girls offering a number of sessions covering a broad range of topics about global trends in the ICT sector, digital entrepreneurship and social networks, the robotics industry and what it has to offer to women job-seekers, opportunities of the tech industry and development perspectives in Azerbaijan

Special STEM camps are being organized for girls to inspire them to become generation of girl leaders and help them to reach their own potential. Local office of Microsoft has taken long lasting initiative to address the impact of Artificial Intelligence in the present, and prepare the next generation for a better digital future. The core purpose was to inspire girls aged 15-17 to pursue their interest in science and technology, dispelling the myths that surround careers in STEM and inspiring them to take control of their future careers and realize their dreams.. As a result young creators - from primary school children to post graduate students - have access to the latest technology and develop a vision for a better tomorrow. Students are being empowered and get an opportunity to build the right skills for their future. It should be mentioned that A group of 3 female students from Azerbaijan led by their role model teacher participated at a four-day seminar that took place in Greece with the theme «How Artificial Intelligence can impact the way we see the world» organized by Microsoft.

In summer 2017, the «Development and Empowerment Program for Teen girls and Young women» was implemented to increase education, leadership and organizational skills of young and teenage girls in Azerbaijan. The program, realized by Human Foundation in cooperation with AIESEC in Azerbaijan and support of ASAN Volunteers, Baku Business Factory continued 6 weeks simultaneously in cities and regions. Various short and long-term projects like «You Can», «Life Guide» mentorship program are successfully arranged in different regions of the country.

In 2017- 2018, the Women Empowerment Platform «WoWoman» conducted several five-week intensive leadership and mentoring programs for young girls. This program works to support and enable young women to identify career goals and develop resources to build the skills they need to achieve them. Along with 60 girls from Baku, 20 girls from the regions practiced teamwork, leadership, communication and public speaking skills, explored entrepreneurial mindsets and created their own social projects. On 21st April 2019 with the support of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies; Ministry of Education; local municipalities, a traditional regional «Girls in ICT» conference was organized by the «Femmes Digitales» Club, aiming to attract Azerbaijani girls to the field of information and communication technologies. This event was held by mentors from Azerbaijani Women in IT Club, who are heads of and leading ICT women specialists of well-known companies. Barama Innovation Center and STEP IT Academy were partners of this event.

Totally, Women Empowerment Platform has organized and managed more than 200 events, trainings, seminars and master classes, and over 40 different programs starting from IT school and entrepreneurship programs for girls and young women.

The Fund on Development of Science under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan organized several conferences in collaboration with the Child's and Youth Center of the Ministry of Education on occasion of International Women's and Girls' Day. The main goals of these conferences were to discuss serious changes in process of involving women and girls into scientific research work, develop action plans to ensure gender equality and enable women and girls to participate in such activities.

Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

- *Education and training of women*

Gender equality is defined as one of the fundamental principles of the State policy in the area of education. The Law on Education stipulates that the State guarantees each citizen to get education without any discrimination notwithstanding sex, race, language, religion, political convictions, nationality, and social status and health opportunities. The State guarantees to right of every citizen for free secondary education and free one time education in higher, secondary and vocational education institutions. Bearing in the mind that education is the key to the advancement of women, government tries to improve the access of women to quality higher education. During the reporting period two main policy documents on education were adopted: National Strategy for the Development of the Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2013-2018) and the Action Plan for implementation of the «National Strategy for the Development of the Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan», The Action Plan for the implementation of the State Program for the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in 2018. As the outcome of the measures undertaken in the area of quality education, last five years are marked by consistently increasing quality parameters of students' enrollment into education institutions.

In accordance with the statistical data on students of bachelor degree in higher educational institutions of last five years, there are also an increasing number of young girls. Thus, during the academic years of 2013-2014, young girls consisted 50,0% (16940) of students; 51,4% (16530) in 2014-2015, 51,6% (15725) in 2015-2016, 50,2% (18898) in 2016-2017, 49,6% (20768) in 2017-2018. The number of young girls enrolled to the master degree studies is as follows: 2937 (60,4%) in 2013-2014 academic years, 2885 (59,8%) in 2014-2015 academic years, 3123 (64,5%) in 2015-2016 academic years, 3492 (55,6%) in 2016-2017 academic years and 3547 (55,5%) in 2017-2018 academic years.

Women are also broadly presented in the area of science in Azerbaijan. 51% of PhDs lecturing at higher educational institutions and 46% of Doctors of science are women. Currently, 1215 (56%) out of 2168 doctoral candidates are women.

Every year The State Exam Center conducts gender review of entrance examination. Government strengthens work in those regions where the decrease of girls' entering the universities.

The educational policies of the Government of Azerbaijan sees the active participation of women on each pillar and level and their career opportunities as one of principal priorities. It is the outcome of these policies that the number of women is increasing among leaders of educational institutions, students and teachers. Currently, the data are as follows: 6 women rectors of the universities (13%), 37 University vice chancellors (21%), 15 college principals (28%), 36 deputy principals (31%), 11 principals of vocational education organizations (13%), 40 deputy principals (45%), 1244 principals of the secondary schools (33%), 3965 deputy principals (54%) are women. Today, women are more numerous both among teachers and students at the national educational institutions. Thus, 79% of all teachers at secondary education are women while the number of young girls reaches 47% among students. These figures in vocational education are 69% and 33%, in colleges it is equal to 78% and 65, 6%, and in higher education are 53,5% and 49,5% accordingly. The total number of students sent for studying abroad on the basis of the State Program for Studying Abroad is 3558. 30% of that number is girls. Though these figures show low representation of women in managerial positions in the educational institutions, there is gradual increase over the years following introduction of the measures to address this issue.

The Government has implemented a wide range of activities, state programs, strategies and concepts to address challenges in development of modern vocational education. In addition, a Vocational Education Agency under the Ministry of Education was established in 2016 to increase the efficiency and relevance of vocational education and training system in Azerbaijan and to produce qualified workforce for the

labour market. The Government of Azerbaijan has recognized the importance of developing the VET system in a number of policy documents, and emphasized the importance of reforming the VET system for achieving high results through an improvement in the infrastructures, the content of education, the professional capacity, the establishment of recognition of prior leaning, internal quality assurance and social partnership. The focus is being put on developing human capital as a necessary prerequisite for a diversified, competitive and knowledge-based economy. It will ensure that the most vulnerable sections of the workforce, including young people, women and persons with disabilities, have access to skills and resources that match labour market demand. Also in association with NGOs, the project of Support to the Development of Vocational Education of Women in regions is underway. The main objective of this project is to assist the development of vocational education of women in rural areas.

The number of students studying in bachelor degree at higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
140414	49,7%	144023	49,7%	146131	48,8%	149319	49,6%	157662	49,5%

The number of students enrolled to the bachelor degree at higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
33884	50,0%	32156	51,4%	34773	50,8%	37679	50,2%	41537	49,6%

The number of students graduated with bachelor degree from higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
27681	49,9%	27878	48,5%	30457	51,6%	31003	51,1%	31197	50,9%

The number of students studying in master degree at higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
12651	53,9%	12253	54,8%	11444	54,3%	12541	53,8%	13442	54,0%

The number of students enrolled to the master degree at higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
4863	60,4%	4822	59,8%	4839	64,5%	6276	55,6%	6386	55,5%

The number of students graduated with master degree from higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
3832	58,8%	4691	62,0%	5575	66,0%	4822	56,9%	5141	58,3%

COLLEGES

The number of students studying in colleges:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
60511	67,7%	56420	67,2%	51958	66,3%	48067	65,5%	51819	65,6%

The number of students enrolled in colleges:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
14156	68,7%	13887	66,4%	14876	65,1%	16016	66,5%	17987	66,2%

The number of students graduated from colleges:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
14825	67,2%	16488	70,4%	17025	70,6%	16894	73,1%	12471	68,2%

Pedagogical staff:

The number of pedagogical staff at higher educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women

14533	47,3%	13961	53,3%	13843	53,8%	13795	53,8%	14015	53,5%
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

The number of pedagogical staff at colleges:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
6042	74,0%	6210	78,3%	6189	75,7%	5724	77,3%	5802	78,0%

Secondary schools:

The number of schoolchildren studying at secondary educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1325634	45,6%	1359173	45,8%	1473189	46,0%	1522487	46,1%	1533487	47,0%

The number of teachers at secondary educational institutions:

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
149602	79,6%	145596	81,6%	145720	80,9%	144464	82,4%	144464	79,0%

The number of researchers by area of science in early 2018 (total number, sex, by persons and %)

Area of science	Total by %		Sex disaggregated data	
	women	men	women	men
Humanitarian sciences	21,8	12,7	71,3	28,7
Medical science	13,6	15,6	55,8	44,2
Natural sciences	33,6	33,8	58,8	41,2
Agricultural sciences	3,8	7,8	41,2	58,8
Technical sciences	11,3	14,4	53,1	46,9
Social sciences	15,9	15,7	59,3	40,7
Total, in %	100	100	59,0	41,0
By persons	8698	6034	x	x

Scientific title of academic advisers that lead candidates to obtain PhD				
	By persons		Sex disaggregation, in %	
	women	men	women	men
2013				
Doctors of science	176	898	16,4	83,6
PhD holders	63	165	27,6	72,4
2014				
Doctors of science	208	1195	14,8	85,2
PhD holders	96	179	34,9	65,1
2015				
Doctors of science	230	1163	16,5	83,5
PhD holders	108	480	18,4	81,6
2016				
Doctors of science	224	1256	15,1	84,9
PhD holders	102	470	17,8	82,2
2017				
Doctors of science	209	1125	15,7	84,3
PhD holders	74	295	20,1	79,9
2018				
Doctors of science	223	1106	16,8	83,2
PhD holders	109	299	26,7	73,3

Age group classification of persons studying on the basis of doctoral programs in early 2018 (total number, sex, by persons and %)

Age groups	Total in %		By sex	
	women	men	women	men
Under 30	7,4	5,3	52,9	47,1
30-34	8,6	11,3	38,2	61,8
35-39	21,3	16,2	51,5	48,5
40 +	62,7	67,2	43,0	57,0
Total, in %	100	100	44,7	55,3
By persons	244	302	x	x

Distribution of students studying on PhD program
by age groups at the beginning of 2018
(Numbers and sex distribution, as % to total)

Age groups	Percentage distribution		Sex distribution	
	women	men	women	men
under 25	7,7	7,6	56,3	43,7
25-29	44,0	38,3	59,4	40,6
30-34	22,7	24,8	53,9	46,1
35-39	12,6	14,3	52,9	47,1
40+	13,0	15,0	52,3	47,7
Total, %	100,0	100,0	56,0	44,0
number	1215	953	x	x

Number of students on PhD program by fields of science at the beginning of 2018
(Number and sex distribution, as % to total)

	Percentage distribution		Sex distribution	
	women	men	women	men
Pedagogies	6,0	3,0	71,6	28,4
Philology	21,2	4,6	85,4	14,6
Chemistry	6,8	6,4	57,6	42,4
Medicine	5,8	4,7	60,9	39,1
Biology	6,9	1,5	85,7	14,3

Psychology	2,0	1,0	70,6	29,4
Physics and mathematics	5,1	4,8	57,4	42,6
Knowledge of arts	4,3	3,1	63,4	36,6
History	7,7	4,1	70,7	29,3
Architecture	0,7	0,4	66,7	33,3
Philosophy	0,5	2,1	23,1	76,9
Politics	4,2	5,5	49,5	50,5
Technics	7,3	17,6	34,6	65,4
Mechanical	0,3	1,0	30,8	69,2
Law	3,0	4,1	48,0	52,0
Economics	8,8	18,6	37,7	62,3
Geography	2,6	1,4	71,1	28,9
Earth sciences	2,1	6,1	30,1	69,9
Other	4,7	10,0	37,9	62,1
Total, %	100	100	56,0	44,0
number	1215	953	x	x

To boost advancement of the women in educational settings, the Government has undertaken series of important measures including through application of best international practices: The 'Build Your Future' project has been launched since September 2016 to support local secondary school students from disadvantaged families with high intellectual capacity and a strong desire to study at university. The project covered tutorial services in order to prepare for university the students residing in communities. An academic component of the project aimed to ensure entrance to local universities. A non-academic component was to achieve personal development and social integration of the beneficiaries through the provision of psychological support, trainings and participation at various events, exhibitions and study visits. Thanks to the project activities mostly girls have successfully completed the preparatory courses and passed the university entrance exams with impressive results. Based on the successful results the social investment team expanded the geography of the project, in the academic year of 2017-2018 and covered 130 secondary school students from the projects-affected communities in 5 regions of Azerbaijan. Since 2017 the "Development and Empowerment Program for Teen girls and Young women" has been implemented to increase education, leadership and organizational skills of young and teenage girls in Azerbaijan. During the workshops more than 75 girls had a chance to meet local and international trainers from Germany, Canada, Turkey, Georgia, China and Sweden.

Gender issues are also reflected in training programs approved by the Institute of Professional Development of Educational Workers. In 2013-2018, 90,263 teachers were involved in trainings on gender equality and women rights. At the same time, before publication, textbooks are evaluated by such criteria as 'a sensitive approach to gender, race, ethnicity and religion'. Special consultants are involved in these activities.

«The Introduction to Gender» discipline is lectured at all departments (for example, Law, Political Science, Journalism, History and etc.), to increase knowledge on gender issues among students of higher educational institutions. One state and two private universities have the departments on Gender and Applied Psychology. Besides, 5 universities have Gender Centers, equipped with the library and training facilities. Meetings and workshops on different topics on gender issues are held here for the students and teachers.

Furthermore, the topics related to the elimination of gender stereotypes in teaching standards in forming the important living skills of schoolchildren are inserted into the curriculum of 'the Life Learning' discipline taught at schools.

Government systematically engages nongovernmental organizations in the work in educational institutions and reforming of education sphere. In line with these measures, government, state educational facilities and NGOs conduct awareness campaigns and projects among school children and students. For example, starting from 2014, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and 'the Promising Future' Public Union are implementing the project of 'Reproductive Health Learning at Secondary Schools for women and young girls in 11 districts. Training materials are developed in the framework of the mentioned project jointly with additional trainings done for trainers. The training materials provide information about early marriages, dropouts and its consequences.

- *Women and health*

The protection of health status of the population is one of priority tasks in front of the Government of Azerbaijan. During recent years, important steps are made to develop the national healthcare, ensure technical support and capacity building in this area and renovate its infrastructure. The State programs adopted in priority areas of public healthcare are playing the essential role in protecting the health of women and improving the quality of medical services.

The following state programmes were adopted during the reporting period:

State Program for Improving Mother and Child Health

State Program on Compulsory Medical Examination of Children;

Action Program 2016-2020 for Combating Non-infectious Diseases for 2015-2020

Action Program immunoprophylaxis of infectious diseases among children 2016-2020

The National Action Plan for Early Prevention and Treatment of Disability specific to the Childhood Period for 2018-2020

The protection of reproductive health, including the health of mother and newborns, is under close attention of the state. The mass prophylactic examination and clinical check-up are implemented on the basis of these State Programs. They envisage early diagnostics, prophylactics and strengthening of timely response measures in relation to a disability specific for the childhood period, improving technical support and capacity building for medical institutions in this area, supplying equipment and reagents to the medical organizations for screening and genetic analysis, forming the specialists and conducting wide scale public awareness campaigns.

The obstetrics and prenatal care are organized according to the three-level principle within the framework of the regionalization of prenatal care. During 2016-2017, seven prenatal centers were established in the country: six in the regions and one in Baku (the Republican Prenatal Center). National clinical protocols and standards based on the principles of evidence-based medicine for the provision of services during pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum period and care of newborns have been developed; regular monitoring are carried out on the quality of services (antenatal, midwifery and neonatal care) in the regions. Pregnant women of high risk groups are provided with the consultancy and diagnostics services in those centers. It also has the most modern conditions to perform biochemical and genetic analysis. In the case of pregnant women taken into the care of the delivery service, they are examined for HIV. Similarly, when HIV-infected reproductive elderly women are transferred to the dispensary, they are questioned by us on the grounds of their pregnancy and are referred to the delivery service in accordance with the relevant recommendations. Pregnant women who are out of sight-of-service care should be exposed to expressive testing at the time of admission for birth, and when positive results are obtained, they accept a premature antiretroviral drug. For this purpose, regional antiretroviral drugs reserve has been created at the Regional Prenatal Centers and the Republican Prenatal Center. In the case of immediate delivery and HIV positive results, the antiretroviral drug is delivered to the woman, regardless of the site of delivery. As a result of this approach, HIV-infected babies born from pregnant women who have been observing for the past 3 years have not been found.

In relation to the starting week of «Breastfeeding» of 1 – 7 October, 2018 in Azerbaijan and the promotion of initiative of «Clinics as Friends of Babies», the round tables were organized at the Public Health and Reforms Center (PHRC) of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan with participation of head doctors of Maternity Centers and Child's Polyclinics.

On 25 January 2019, 120 midwives and gynecologists from all cities and districts of the country together with international and local partners representing various institutions have participated at the seminar – conference on mothers' and children's health organized by the National Prenatal Center and World Health Organization (WHO).

As the outcome of consistent policies, important achievements are gained in this area. First of all, this is seen in demographic indicators. The child mortality has declined in the country. The life expectancy has gone up. According to the outcome of 2017, the natural growth of the population is 8.9 persons per each 1000 persons. Since January 2017, the pilot implementation of compulsory health insurance has been launched in two regions. Since 2018-2019 years it is planned to introduce compulsory health insurance in the whole country has been started. The basic package of compulsory health insurance includes also services on reproductive health, including antenatal care and obstetrics, prenatal care.

Mother's mortality

Years	Persons	Live newly born for each 100,000 persons
2013	25	14,5
2014	25	14,6
2015	24	14,4
2016	22	13,8
2017	21	14,6

Use of contraceptives

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
The number of women with IUD – total, <i>thousands of persons</i>	23,7	23,5	22,4	20,7	19,2
Age of 15 - 49					
Per each 1,000 women	8,8	8,8	8,4	7,8	7,2
The number of women using hormonal contraception – total, <i>thousands of persons</i>	22,1	22,5	22,4	16,8	17,8
Age of 15 – 49					
Per each 1,000 women	8,2	8,4	8,4	6,3	6,7
The number of women using barrier contraception means (such as condoms, diaphragms, cervical caps) – total, <i>thousands of persons</i>	24,3	24,5	23,1	21,3	22,7
Age of 15 - 49					
Per each 1,000 women	9,0	9,1	8,6	8,0	8,6
The number of women using chemical contraception – total, <i>thousands of persons</i>	7,5	6,9	6,4	6,1	7,0
Age of 15 - 49					
Per each 1,000 women	2,8	2,6	2,4	2,3	2,6

The number of surgeon operations for women's sterilization - total	117	271	74	53	42
Age of 15 - 49					
Per each 1,000 women	4,3	10,1	2,8	2,0	1,6

The significant projects are implemented to protect mother's and child's health.

"Reproductive Health Portal" was created to educate the population at www.isim.az (Public Health and Reform Center of the Ministry of Health). In 2017-2018, various events with participation of experts in relevant areas took place in colleges to promote healthy lifestyle among youth and teenagers, prepare them for family life and tell them about reproductive health and family planning. Training curriculum on "reproductive health of adolescents" has been developed jointly with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. Trainers were trained on reproductive health and family planning by reproductive health experts at the Public Health and Reform Center of the Ministry of Health. The training was attended by teachers of biology and life skills subject of secondary schools.

Noting the significance of raising public awareness, the Government organizes various informative events dedicated to the prevention of HIV/AIDS, family planning, reproductive health and others in various districts of the country. In 2015, UNFPA and Office of Human Rights Commissioner have elaborated and distributed the publication on «Assessment of Implementation of Recommendations of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights».

The conferences «Healthy Family – Healthy Society – Stronger Nation» are organized to promote the Law of 2014 'On Changes to the Family Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan' to conduct additional medical checkup before marriage for the persons of wedlock.

The project of «Say NO to Early Marriage for the sake of Healthy Life» was implemented in 2014-2017.

Stage meetings (bringing together parents and schoolchildren of upper classes) were organized at secondary schools at national level in the framework of the awareness project of 'I Choose Life' in 2016-2017 to promote healthy lifestyle among population and particularly, youth, increasing fight against bad habits (drug addiction, alcoholism, smoking) and boosting the public control to implement. These events were accompanied by discussions of consequences created by bad habits.

The Public Health and Reforms Center of the Ministry of Health implements the project of «Increasing National Potential for Coordination and Implementation of the Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings» funded by UNFPA. Five main objectives of this project aimed at reducing the number of diseases, disabilities and fatality cases among the population suffered from emergencies envisage preventing sexual violence and assisting victims, as well as the prevention of excessive morbidity and mortality cases among mothers and newly borns. Practical exercises have been organized in 24 districts for medical staff to further stimulate their activities in emergency situations. Trainings dedicated to the protection of reproductive health of the population that suffered from emergency cases are organized for physicians of emergency medical aid points and midwives/gynecologists in 4 frontline districts in September 2018. In 2016-2018, the awareness events were organized for refugees and IDPs to promote the healthy lifestyle and medical examination before marriage, and particularly, informing youth about reproductive health, family planning, early marriage and consequences of bad habits (such as drug addiction, alcoholism, smoking and AIDS). At the same time, mobile medical examination was provided for IDP and refugee women and children and this has resulted by the checkup of 532 persons.

During November – December 2018, the State Committee in collaboration with the Public Health and Reforms Center (PHRC) of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan organized the meetings on 'Reproductive Health and Family Planning, Consequences of Early Marriages' and distributed promotional materials at the colleges and universities.

Several methodical guidebooks are developed and distributed by the Public Health and Reforms Center. They are listed below:

- Guidelines on How to Organize Child Delivery Support Services in Maternity Houses (Departments) .
- Individual Recommendations related to Specialized Medical and Psychological Assistance to Minor Victims of Domestic Violence.
- Guidelines on How to Organize Antenatal Services in Antenatal Clinics and Outpatient Medical Settings and Polyclinics.
- Methodical Guidelines for Professionals of Medical Service to the Victims of Domestic Violence.
- Methodical Guidelines on Prevention of Violence against Children and Adolescents.
- Methodical Guidebook for Medical Staff of Urgent and Emergency Medical and Psychological Aid for Victims of Gender Based Violence.

○ *The girl child*

For the last few years, the government has adopted a number of legislative acts providing youth with opportunity to get higher education. The government policy of giving grants to the best students has been continued. Tuition fees of university, college and vocational school students, whose parents has fallen, become handicapped or missed in action while protecting territorial integrity, independence and Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, are paid by the government of Azerbaijan (March 18, 2014 decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan). In 2015, on the initiative of the Ministry of Education, “Maarifchi” (Enlightener”) credit fund was established to give grants and issue long-term loans to indigent families enabling them to pay for higher education of their children. Higher and vocational tuition fees of orphan students under the age of 18 and students under age of 23, who live without parental custody, are paid by the government (amendment to the law on “Orphan Children and Children Who Have No Parent Custody”). A few amendments have been adapted to the “Law on Education” to make education more accessible to people. Amendments to the “Law on Education” give university entrants an opportunity to be enrolled to a pre-entrance course of a university they try to enter.

Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

○ *Violence against women*

Within the reporting period several important developments have been accomplished in the field of preventing violence against women including inter alia with support from and in close cooperation with UNFPA and other international development agencies. To contribute to improved institutional response capacity as well as ensure availability of an adequate tool for internal accountability and performance monitoring the inter-agency online GBV database was developed. The database not only routinely collects data on GBV incidents throughout the country, but also facilitates evidence based decision making on the subject matter.

To address the pervasive gaps in understanding GBV as well as types and costs of the phenomenon the Government initiated two major studies: nationally representative survey on GBV prevalence rates and research on economic costs of GBV. It is important to underline that the results of the study on GBV cost share expected to reflect, the value of lost economic productivity as a result of violence, the amount of

medical, social and legal support provided to the victim, as well as the factors and figures that would prevent the victim from gaining further benefits. Though, both studies are still in progress, it is expected that the evidence generated will ensure that the policies and services to prevent and respond to violence are well-designed and appropriate to the local context where these cases are taking place.

Several major legal measures were introduced to ensure improved protection and support to the women victims of GBV. The article 205 of the new Code of Administrative Offenses adopted in 2015, imposes more sanctions for pressure on a worker exposed to sexual harassment. Thus, the respective financial penalties were increased from 70(41\$) to 99AZN(60\$), and from 2000AZN (1180\$) to 2500 AZN(1500\$).According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Amendments to the Criminal Code of 31 May 2017, the sanctions were aggravated on the violation of the right of a pregnant woman or a woman who has children under the age of three, and a man who is a main care-taker of a child below the three years of age. Thus, the sanction of Article 154.1 of the Criminal Code has been increased from “100(59\$) to 500 AZN (294\$)” to “1000(588\$) to 2000 AZN (1180\$), sanction of Article 164 from “500 to 1000 AZN” to “2000(1180\$) to 3000(1765\$) AZN”. In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 30 December 2016 on amendments to the Civil Procedure Code, resolutions on giving a long-term protection order to a victim of domestic violence are immediately implemented.

To improve legal and policy framework for GBV prevention and response an in-depth analysis of legal and policy framework for effective prevention, protection and accountability mechanisms to reduce GBV was held with support from the international experts. In line with the respective methodology a desk review of all relevant legal and policy documents (criminal, administrative offence, civil and family code, prevention of domestic violence, gender laws, housing rules and regulations, employment and other relevant laws) was held to ensure that the provisions on women’s human rights and the elimination of violence against women are consistently incorporated. The findings from the desk review have been complemented by the information collected during the interviews with key stakeholders. The study recommendations alongside the information on overall implications of the findings for the respective laws, regulations and policies was officially submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers and the Parliament for follow-up and further action.

The Government also benefitted from partnership with UNFPA for producing the guideline document for establishment of the Inter-agency mechanism on GBV prevention and response. In addition, the draft National Action Plan on GBV prevention and response was also revised and updated. Both documents are currently pending approval.

Since the provision of high quality services for the survivors of GBV constitutes an integral component of necessary minimum essential services, the Government also capitalized attention on adaptation of essential service packages on GBV prevention and response developed by UNFPA in partnership with UN Women, WHO, and UNDP. The essential service packages for women and girls survivors of violence consist of five modules that provide guidance to health, justice and police and social service sectors, including introduction to and coordination and governance of service provision. The packages have been translated into Azerbaijani language, adapted to the local context and shared with the stakeholders as an additional resource document aimed at ensuring effective coordination for GBV prevention and response in the country.

Establishment of district level monitoring groups as part of the measures aimed at combating gender based violence and discrimination against women is yet another major achievement of the Government within the reporting period. The groups are composed of representatives of different state bodies(Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population, Azerbaijan Attorney General) and executive powers.

Within the framework of the project on Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender Violence among Internally Displaced Persons implemented jointly by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, Operative Working Groups were set up

within Monitoring Groups for gender-based violence and violence against children under the Executive Powers in 2018.

The Government also prioritized institutional capacity building initiatives. It should be mentioned that in 2013-2018, 10 non-governmental assistance centers have received the accreditation from the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population. 6 of these centers are located in Baku, 3 – in Ganja, and 1 center is located in Sumgayit city. In addition, there are 11 Family Support Centers functioning under the auspices of the SCFWCA and offering support and referral services to the GBV survivors. Thus, within the reporting period the Government also prioritized the measures aimed at strengthening knowledge and skills of the staff of 11 Family Support Centers and local NGOs accredited to provide assistance and shelter services for the victims of domestic violence on the service procedures – main work principles and standards of support centers including the guidelines for the provision of social and psychological support to the clients and children accompanying them. The main topics covered during the sessions were as follows: interviewing skills, risk assessment and safety planning, information on the short-term and long-term protection orders, identification of the victim/survivor's needs and development of an adequate individual plan encompassing the needs of both the client and her children, coordination and collaboration with other agencies, building victim's trust and the issues of confidentiality, working with children of the victims, interviewing and listening to the children accompanying victims, the major principles of referral. The series of similar capacity building trainings were also held for the members of the abovementioned district level monitoring groups.

Alongside the measures on institutional capacity building it was also important to ensure effective utilization of the services to be offered through extensive awareness raising campaigns. The economic regions with the highest prevalence rates of GBV were identified based on the findings of the previous research on GBV (SCFWCA/UNFPA, National Survey Report on VAW, 2008). Given the geographical extent as well as the scope of activities planned, the responsibility for conducting the info sessions was imposed upon several different NGOs. Given the rigid situation in regards to the gender roles in the country, separate series of info sessions were organized for male community members to increase their awareness of gender based violence, and available GBV prevention mechanisms.

Apart from the community based information sessions, partnership with Azerbaijan Football Federation was established as part of the strategies to engage men and boys in violence prevention. During the football game in 2017, the players of the football team raised red cards to tribunes and TV cameras to urge male audience to say No to gender based violence. Symbolizing penalty for offense in various sporting codes and seeking suspension from game, red cards were shown to all batterers and abusers. The message was clear: "if you commit gender based violence, then you get a red card and you are out of the game". More than 88,000 people watched the game online and on TV with 14,000 watching the game from the tribunes during the performance.

Annual conferences "Leave no one behind: stop violence against women and girls!" are held in November by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs in close partnership with UN agencies and other development partners.

To emphasize the linkages between the GBV and human rights the special performance took place on the International Human Rights Day, December 10th, 2018. Flash mobs were organized in the shopping malls of Baku to reach out to young population with message in more engaging and entertaining way. The flash mobs brought attention to education problems of women and girls as a basic prerequisite for elimination of gender based violence. The main message delivered to the audience was: sustainable development is possible with the educated and empowered women that are provided with all necessary resources and opportunities to realize their potential and contribute to the wellbeing of their respective societies and their country.

Taking into account the importance of women's legal awareness two-day training seminars were held among women living in the regions in September-November 2017. The "Women's Rights Guide", a joint publication by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the GIZ, publication of "Legislation on

Prevention of Domestic Violence in the Republic of Azerbaijan", as well as the State Committee's Family, Women's Journal was distributed to the participants.

Special seminars were organized in 9 regions in 2017. During the two-day workshops, 270 women and men were educated on domestic violence and women's rights and women's rights in family relationships and the book "Legislation Collection on Prevention of Domestic Violence" was distributed as an educational material to the seminar participants.

With the purpose of preventing domestic violence the Council for State Support to Non Governmental Organizations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan allocates funds to the accredited NGOs, registered at the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population as "Non-governmental assistance centre" in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Social Services", and to NGOs implementing educating projects in this field. The Council allocated 505,000 AZN (373 thousand 670.44 US Dollars) for 60 projects in this field of "Carrying out of campaigns against domestic violence and awareness-building activities, and initiatives to provide psychological and legal assistance to the victims of violence" in 2014–2017.

As the result of these measures we can observe changing dynamic in implementation of the Law on domestic violence:

2014 – 3 long term orders in relation to domestic violence;

2015 – 6 long term orders in relation to domestic violence;

2016 – 3 long term and 7 short terms orders in relation to domestic violence;

2017 – 24 long term and 10 short term orders.

- ***Human rights of women***

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs has developed the State Supervision Rule to ensure the gender equality. While agreeing the draft of this Rule with relevant State institutions, the Committee was recommended to adopt it not as a Supervision Rule, but as a provision to be reflected in the Law. Therefore, the Committee has elaborated the draft law "Making Changes to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Ensuring the Gender Equality (of men and women)". The draft provides such definitions as 'gender expertise', 'special measures' and 'gender stereotypes'. Besides that, a special Article on 'gender statistics' was added to the draft that also included the norms on approval of the new rule of supervision in ensuring the gender equality and conduct of gender expertise of advertising and mass media.

Paragraph 7.4 on ensuring gender equality and family development of the Concept " Azerbaijan 2020: Look to the Future" provides that the gender equality issue will be in the focus of attention and relevant measures will be undertaken in this area. In this regard, the National Action Plan on Gender Equality was elaborated. It has passed the consultations with civil society and state agencies and sent to the Cabinet of Ministers for adoption

The National Action Plan on prevention and elimination of skewed sex ratio in Azerbaijan was elaborated by a team of international and local experts with the support of UNFPA. It was officially presented in October 2018. Following the approval of this document, it will serve as a comprehensive roadmap for effective response measures strategy aimed at reducing skewed sex ratio. In this respect, the State Program on "Population and Demographic Development in the Republic of Azerbaijan for years of 2017 – 2030" has included the provisions on necessity of elimination of skewed sex ratio among newly borns, undertaking relevant response measures and monitoring the trends.

Starting from 2014, "Support for Law and Justice Reforms" project are being implemented by the State Statistical Committee and The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the German Society for Cooperation (GIZ) to improve implementation of adopted laws.

The new project "Support to justice sector reform initiatives in Azerbaijan" which involved the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, Presidential Administration, Ministry of Justice, General Prosecutor Office, Parliament, Justice Academy of the Ministry of Justice, Collegium of Advocates, civil society organizations started in 2018.

The main aim is to support justice reforms and improve human rights implementation in Azerbaijan through assisting the Government of Azerbaijan in developing and implementing national action plans related to protection of human rights, supporting and training legal professionals and institutions in improving their capacity to address crimes in compliance with international human rights standards including gender equality and women rights.

The International Men and Gender Equality Survey was conducted in Azerbaijan from April to July 2016, aimed to understand men's practices and attitudes as they relate to gender equality, roles and dynamics, parenting and caregiving, household relationship dynamics, health (including sexual and reproductive health and rights), and son preference. Special meetings and trainings on changing male's attitudes were done in almost all regions.

As a result in cooperation with the Trade Union Confederation a project called "The role of the modern family in the development of society" has been launched carried out in all regions of the republic. It focuses on awareness rising among members of confederation in the field of solving family problems, researching the influence of family issues on the work process.

Government conducts advocacy and awareness raising seminars for women living in urban and remote areas of the country about gender equality, human trafficking, and early marriages. Consequently, thousands of women become to understand and know better their rights, which pave the way for increasing their participation in the society SCFWCA has organized a series of awareness events dedicated to the equality in front of law.

During the years of 2013-2018, 16 training courses are organized in the capital with the participation of 380 persons, including also 16 awareness events that took place in districts involving 736 persons.

The Child and Family Support Centers have realized the human rights awareness events and various activities aimed at the protection of rights and freedoms of various groups of population with a particular focus on ensuring women's rights. During the reporting period, 135 training courses with participation of 650 persons were organized in area of promotion of human rights. Furthermore, 372 events have taken place in the same area that attracted 16,552 participants in total. 6097 information booklets and 6510 information sheets on human rights were printed out and distributed. 29 articles have appeared on pages of local media. 760 persons have applied for the protection of their rights, and they have been provided with relevant support and directed to various State agencies. 2222 individual cases were launched to investigate different social problems that limit the rights, and 1441 out of that number have found its resolution.

- *Women and the media*

The media plays a significant role in shaping opinions, attitudes and stereotypes. Integrating a gender equality perspective in this area is therefore a powerful tool to induce social changes. However, the presence of sexism and degrading images, and the way the media cover and treat issues of violence against women can also

hinder change. The media sector is therefore a vital partner in promotion of gender equality. The Government professionally highlighted family, women's and children's issues in the media, as well as studies and analyses in these areas.

Every year regularly the State Committee for Women, Family and Children Affairs holds conferences "The role of the media in prevention of domestic violence and early marriages" in connection with the International Day on Violence Against Women,

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs is organizing discussions on "Women and Violence" by experts on regular bases, once a month on Public Television on "Talk Time" program.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs signed a memorandum with the ASAN Radio in order to prepare social video shots and radio programs which cover the socially sensitive areas for the issues regarding families, women and children.

Under the National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2014-2018-years), enlightening TV program on prevention of trafficking in human beings (trafficking of women) are broadcasted on TV channels.

Traditionally, every year in April, the Committee held competition for journalists "Women are our state, our independence, our future".

On 20 July 2016 the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs together with the Azerbaijan Press Council organized a conference on "The role of media in family and women's issues, highlighting: achievements and perspectives" in the International Press Center.

A number of projects connected to gender issues in media are being conducted. For example, special workshops on promoting gender equality in and through mass media took place in 2017.

On 1 November 2018 the Azerbaijan Press Council – the journalists' self-regulatory body adopted amendments to its Code of Professional Ethics. A new principle titled «Protection of the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination» was introduced. It should be noted that only two out of the 22 members of the Board of the Azerbaijan Press Council, which approved the revised Code of Ethics from a gender equality perspective, are women.

The joint project with the Council of Europe "Gender equality and media freedom in Azerbaijan"(2018-2019) aims to raise awareness on the Council of Europe standards on gender equality and media among journalists, media professionals as well as the general public.

This project organized a number of round tables on "Gender equality and media" in 2018 in Baku. The first goal of the events was to present the newly printed Code of Professional Ethics for Azerbaijani Journalists revised from a gender equality perspective to the national stakeholders. It should be emphasized that it is first time in the Council of Europe member states that Code of Ethics for journalists introduces such a comprehensive and detailed provision on protection of the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination.

The Project also presented the draft curriculum on "Gender equality and media freedom" in the round table and opened the floor for its discussion. The curriculum introduces a new course for Journalism faculties at master's level with the aim to address gender equality and women issues and the media. The expected results of the course entail getting students familiar with the concept of gender equality, its historical development path in Azerbaijan, the international community's approach to the issue and with legal regulation of media content according to national and international (European) standards. A new curriculum on "Gender equality and media freedom" has now found its way into the programme of studies for future Azerbaijani journalists. After an in-depth discussion by the Department of Journalism Theory and Practice, the curriculum has been approved by the Scientific Council of the Journalism Faculty and submitted as teaching materials at Baku State University.

About 40 representatives of the state authorities (Presidential Administration, Ombudsman Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs), academia, members of the Press Council, media professionals, civil society as well as representatives of international organizations and embassies participated in the round table and took an active part in discussions.

Information sessions on “Gender equality and media” were organized in close cooperation with Council of Europe, the Ombudsman Office and Azerbaijan Press Council in the beginning of 2019 in regions. The main aim of the information sessions was to present the new Code of professional ethics for Azerbaijani journalists and to promote the new rules among journalists from the regions. The information sessions also raised awareness on the Council of Europe standards on gender equality and media freedom. These sessions brought together over 300 journalists and representatives of civil society (including 70 women) from the regions.

- *The girl child*

The Government has taken measures and awareness raising campaigns to challenge prevalent gender stereotypes related to the choice of jobs and to encourage girls and women to seek education and training in non-traditional fields, which may give them access to employment in flourishing areas of the economy.

A three-year project has been launched in Azerbaijan to combat selective abortions of the child, to give value to girls in the family and society, and to combat gender-based violence. The project is being coordinated by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Within the framework of the project a number of trainings were held for media representatives, young boys, young fathers, men and women. Special PSAs were prepared, “Fathers and Girls” photography exhibition was held and «Girl child burden» performance was presented on “International Day of Protection of Girls”. Moreover, to mark the International Day of the Girl Child, project strove to increase the efficiency of message dissemination among wider audience via advocacy events. UNFPA in cooperation with state and non-government partners organized “Fathers and Daughters Festival” in the cities and regions of Azerbaijan. The aim of the open-air festival was to reinforce the father’s crucial role in empowering a girl child. Festival’s agenda included a number of activities for fathers and daughters to spend time together, to take care of each other. Project holders filmed PSA with the participation of famous male athletes who cited one after another an empowering poem to support and inspire girl children. In addition, to complement the strategic interventions aimed at addressing the issue of the gender-biased sex selection (GBSS) a grassroots advocacy campaign in the regions was initiated to engage faith-based groups and local community leaders in the efforts to address the phenomenon. Highlighting the advancement of women rights and covering about 1700 beneficiaries, information sessions were organized in 40 mosques of various cities of Azerbaijan. During the first week of July, last year capacity building workshop for the journalist writing about gender-biased sex selection was organized. Besides, the competition for best journalistic work covering gender-biased sex selection and consequences was announced

The special place took the campaigns and events which involves young males and fathers. The project on “Enlightenment of Young People in Promoting the Values of Girls in Azerbaijan”, was implemented in 2017/2018, During the project lifetime through information sessions and public events, implementing partners capitalized on raising awareness on gender equality, promoting the value of girl child and enhancing emotional ties between fathers and daughters. Special educated young trainers reached about 1400 young males in 29 cities and regions of Azerbaijan. The topics such as exploring gender roles, combating gender stereotypes, work share in a family were presented to target audience.

In order to promote the value and the role of the girls in society the conference of “Preventing Sex Selection Abortions: Men Are Here Too for Gender Equality!” was held on June 2018 and attended by state partners, civil society members, media and diplomats.

Youth Forum “Girls Can” was held jointly by UNICEF and the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) in November 2018. The Forum brought together key decision-makers officials and young people to discuss girls’ empowerment and how the country can do more to give adolescents the opportunities to succeed and flourish in society.

Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

o ***Women in power and decision-making***

Women are more and more involved in the decision making process and state bodies. The number of women in the parliament has increased to 16% in the last elections in 2015(20 women out of 125 deputies) and the representation of women at municipal level has increased from 4% (to 35% in the elections of 2014. At the same time, one of deputy speakers of the Parliament is woman; 3 of 8 members of human rights committee are women, including 1 of them as chair; 3 of 10 members of the labor and social policy committee; 4 of 10 members of the healthcare committee; 1 of 9 members of public unions and religious institutions committee; 4 of 6 members of the committee for family, women and children’s issues, including 1 of them is chair; 5 of 13 members of the committee on science and education; 6 of 15 members of the committee on culture; 3 of 16 members of the committee on international relations and antiparliamentary ties.

	2016	2017	2018
The First Vice president of Azerbaijan		1	1
The Commissioner for Human Rights (including Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic)	2	2	2
The number of women minister (Minister of Culture and Tourism of Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic)	1	1	1
The number of deputy ministers	3	3	5
Women head of the executive powers	1	1	1
Women deputy head of the executive powers	79	77	77
The number of women judges	61	57	86
Women rectors	6	6	6
Women director of school	1223	1234	1244

The vice president of the State Oil Company of Azrbaijan is a woman.The number of women judges has increased in the country. If only 65 (12,3%) out of 529 judges were women, as of December of 2018, this number has reached 86 (almost 15%) out of total number of judges as 578. Among women judges, 60 are judges of courts of first instance, 17 women judges are working at the courts of appeal, while 7 of them are members of the Supreme Court. The Constitutional Court has 2 women judges out of 9.1 woman member of Parliament is elected the Vice President of the PACE Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media.

Furthermore, another woman MP is acting as the deputy chair of the PACE Sub-Committee on the European Social Charter and General Rapporteur on Children Rights.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has 2 women ambassadors representing the country in foreign countries. From 348 diplomats that work in the diplomatic missions of the Republic of Azerbaijan abroad 52 are women. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has 130 women as a part of its staff. 4 of them are high ranking officials.

Women are represented actively in trade unions. From 1.5 million members 52,3 % are women .

The National Council of Youth Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan that unites 128 youth organizations has a chairwoman.

Number of women holding managerial positions, by persons:

4.15. Sex and age aggregated data of civil servants as of the 1 st of January 2018						
(Total number in %, by persons)						
Age groups	Administrative positions according to the supreme third classification		Administrative positions for 4 th – 7 th classifications		Supporting positions in civil service	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Under 30	16,2	8,0	21,2	16,0	22,8	16,9
30–34	17,2	17,5	16,1	15,5	15,4	16,1
35–44	33,8	28,0	20,3	23,8	19,7	24,1
45–54	19,1	19,3	23,2	21,1	25,5	21,7
55–64	12,7	20,6	18,4	22,4	16,2	19,6
65+	1,0	6,6	0,8	1,2	0,4	1,6
Total in %	100	100	100	100	100	100
By persons	402	911	4 925	17 342	3 107	2 615
The main part of civil servants is aged between 35 - 64.						

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

By Decree of the president on public participation in 2014, which considers the participation of citizens and civil society institutions in decision-making and organization of public control over the activity of central-executive authority bodies, public councils has been established at all state agencies. The Public Councils play an essential role in developing and improving draft laws in various areas, ensuring public supervision, adopting decisions to protect women's and children's rights and organizing more effectively relevant issues. The members of the Public Council study action plans of the state agencies and submit their proposals. It can retrieve any information about financial expenditures. In this regard, the elections to the Public Council under SCFWCA took place in May 2017 (a woman was elected the chair of the said Council). 9 NGOs (6 of them are headed by women) were also elected to the Council as members.

Government raises public awareness regarding the benefits of women's community activism, develop the capacity of rural women to engage in decision making and support network building among socially active

rural women in the area. During 2016/2017 special projects on “Women Leadership in Self-Governance”, “Increasing women participation in municipal election” were implemented for the promotion women leadership and encouragement women’s participation in political processes in the regions. Aiming to strengthen the role and mandate of the local female politicians, German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) has been implementing “Dayaq” mentoring program in Azerbaijan .The DAYAQ approach is powerful and innovative so as it combines technical knowledge with psychological counseling and support. DAYAQ builds on the courage and experience of local women and uses these qualities to mobilize and strengthen other women.

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies jointly with The E-Government Training and Education Center have opened special training centers in 15 regions of Azerbaijan in order to enhance the level of knowledge of the population, civil servants and employees of state-owned enterprises in the field of information technologies and develop their skills in electronic governance. Women are active participants of the trainings at these centers.

- *Human rights of women*

In the framework of increasing effectiveness in justice administration of Azerbaijan, the measures are undertaken to form the corps of judges at expense of trained lawyers. A candidate that successfully passes the test, including written and oral exams during selection, is sent to one year long theoretical and practical training course at the Academy of Justice. At these training courses, a particular attention is paid to their ability to get necessary knowledge and professional formation as well as to learn international practice. Such topics as CEDAW Convention, human rights protection, fighting corruption, judicial ethics and gender equality, women’s rights are taught with the participation of international experts.

In the field of women’s rights protection, the book entitled “Protection of Women’s Rights: international and local aspects” was prepared and distributed among young researchers, law specialists, lawyers and judges.

In 2015-2016 the project “Improving Women’s Access to Justice” as co-operative regional initiative between the Council of Europe and the European Union under the framework of the Partnership for Good Governance was implemented in Azerbaijan. The project aimed to identify and support the removal of obstacles to women’s access to justice while also strengthening the capacity of the country to design measures to ensure that the justice chain is gender-responsive, with a focus on training for legal practitioners. Special training Manual for Judges and Prosecutors on Ensuring Women’s Access to Justice was developed by a group of national and international experts. As part of this regional project, the Justice Academy of Azerbaijan organized training seminars for judges on “Ensuring Access to Justice for Women” in 2016-2017. The training seminars were part of efforts to address some of the prevailing obstacles to women’s pursuit of justice, such as gender stereotypes in the justice system, fear and shame of women victims of gender-based violence to report and/ or provide testimony, or lack of adequate legal aid or legal representation..

Starting from 2014, the Government of Azerbaijan the World Bank sponsored project of Justice Services and Smart Infrastructure Project. The project envisages the measures aimed at building new courthouses and compounds, forming the E-justice information system and wider use of other leading ICT means, increasing the professional skills of justice workers and judges, raising public awareness about various fields of law etc.

- *The girl child*

The idea of the children's, especially girls' participation in the life of the country is very important, so every two years annual Republican Children Forum takes place. Government introduced the tradition to include all proposals, suggestion and new initiatives of the children in the working plans of all state bodies and their consideration during adoption of new state programs and laws related to the children's issues. The Special Program "From Child to Child" are being held in a period between Forums. Thus, children themselves arrange meetings and discussion on the topic as stereotype, early marriages, leadership and etc.

In the course of 2018, SCFWCA has organized the Women Leaders' Meetings with upper classes schoolchildren (X – XI years) at secondary schools. The aim of these meetings was to enable women to share their experiences of participating in public, political, social, cultural and scientific areas of the country and provide valuable recommendations.

'Girls Can' Youth Forum was held in 2018 by the Azerbaijani Football Federations Association (AFFA), UNICEF, the Dutch Embassy in Azerbaijan, the Ministry of Youth and Tourism and the Ministry of Education, Participants of the Forum discussed issues on how to make young girls more active in public life and what else can be done to enable teenagers to get success opportunities within the society.

Peaceful and inclusive societies

o *Women and armed conflict*

The problems faced by refugees and IDPs are always in the focus of attention of the Government of Azerbaijan. During past years, 72 decrees and orders were signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan; the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan have adopted 220 decisions and decrees; and, 11 laws were passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Only in 2018, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan has signed 6 decrees and orders while the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan has adopted 7 decisions and decrees.

The work is also going on to improve the wellbeing of refugees and IDPs. During last 10 years, the poverty threshold among IDPs has dropped from 75% to 12%. In 2018, the amount spend per one IDP was 937AZN(551\$).

During previous years, 102 modern settlements and a living compound consisted of multi floored buildings with total area of 3,5 million square meters and all social and technical infrastructure were created for refugees and IDPs in over 30 cities and districts of the country. These new settlements have 156 schools, 6 musical and 1 art schools, 1 Recreation Palace, 62 cultural and 63 medical centers, 65 kindergartens, 2 Olympic compounds. 775 km of roads, 985 km of water pipelines, 1,800 km of overhead electric lines, 655 km of gas pipeline, 78 km of communication lines, 62 km of heating and 102 km of sewerage lines, 193 km of drainage network, and 866 power transformers of different output capacity are built in this period.

Women have also benefited from these conditions provided for refugees and IDPs in the country. Needs of women refugees and IDPs are always considered in adoption of documents.

№	Indicators	Number of IDPs
1	Number of IDP families provided with a house in new settlements	58203
2	Number of IDPs provided with a house in new settlements	300000
3	Number of women that moved to new settlements	156000

4	Number of working women, including:	66177
	State-owned enterprises	30281
	Private enterprises	35896
5	Members of Parliament	2

In order to develop the entrepreneurship, 24 thousand IDPs were given microloans in the amount of AZN14,8 million (2,35 mln. \$) by the IDP Social Development Fund. Furthermore, the National Fund on Entrepreneurs' Assistance has provided privileged loans in the amount of 47,7 million AZN(28 mln \$) to 2116 IDP entrepreneurs. 4025 new jobs were created for IDPs. The large part of these microloans is used for various agricultural projects: plant cultivation, cattle breeding, soil cultivation, and beekeeping.

Stemming out from requirements of the reforms implemented by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2018 in the area of work with refugees and IDPs, 2 new structural sections – Organizational, Supervision and Analytical Section – 1657 Call Center are created within the State Committee for Refugees and IDPs.

Following free medical checkup services are extended to refugees and IDPs to protect their health status:

In 2018, a team of 34 doctors of various profiles has provided medical services to over 1500 settlement residents in total. Almost 850 of them were women; Around 500 IDPs have had the ophthalmology checkup. 300 out of that number were women.

Utilities expenses of IDPs and refugees are paid by the government directly to service providers. IDPs have the right to hold their positions during the reduction of staff and employees in departments and enterprises.

"Mobile ASAN service", the Department of Information Support of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan are permanently working in refugee and IDPs settlements. Notably, main objectives of the mobile ASAN service are to provide public services to the citizens through more comfortable, new and innovative ways, to provide access to the citizens and achieve citizen satisfaction.

o *Human rights of women*

During the years of 2017-2018, SCFWCA and UNHCR have jointly implemented the project 'Prevention of sexual and gender violence in IDP communities and response measures'. Almost 500 women IDPs have benefited from the project. Besides that, during these years, 16 events were organized for women refugee and IDPs in frontline districts bringing together 215 persons in general. 5 leadership events were also organized with participation of 191 persons.

During the years of 2013-2018, 6 events have taken place with participation of 245 IDPs in frontline districts to ensure the safety of women and girls among IDPs and in particular, protect them in cases of violence. Also, 178 persons have taken part at 7 training courses.

On 20 – 21 April 2017, the training was organized for the Working Group (composed of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the State Committee of Refugees and IDPs' Affairs, SCFWCA and civil society institutions) to elaborate the National Action Plan for Azerbaijan in line with Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council.

Azerbaijan was also represented at training courses related to the Elimination of Gender Stereotypes and Fulfillment of Resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council and held by the Georgian Association of Women IDPs in Tbilisi in November 2017.

- *The girl child*

IDP and refugee youth who study at state-funded institutions of higher education and public schools paying tuition, are free to pay tuition and provided with free medical examination and treatment at state-owned medical institutions.

Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

- *Women and the environment*

Women play a critical role in managing natural resources on family and community levels and are most affected by environmental degradation. In communities around the world, women manage water, sources for fuel, and food, as well as both forests and agricultural terrain.

Special trainings on how to survive natural disasters and how manage natural resources in in efficient and sustainable way have been conducted in Regional Family and Children Support Centers. Recently government jointly with NGOs raise awareness and building capacity relating to gender and environment issues (such as climate change and natural disasters) among representatives of private entities and youth Special programs for educating and building the capacity of women (and men) as well as youth and children have been launched.

Organic agriculture and certified organic agro-food production bring advantages to Azerbaijan's agriculture .The FAO-implemented Project on Development of Organic Agriculture and Institutional Capacity Building in Azerbaijan during 2015-2017 has promoted important developments. As a result the official institutional system, certification activities, legislative framework on organic agriculture new domestic and export markets are being formed and changed, education and training are being conducted, the marketing of organic products has been started. Women play an important role in the development of organic agriculture in Azerbaijan.

Gender component are being necessarily incorporated in all new environmental projects. For example inn 2014-2016, the Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources in Azerbaijan and Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection in Georgia signed the Strategic Action Plan for the Kura River Basin – based on shared nationally priorities and critical needs for improved harmonization of integrated water resources management. Gender mainstreaming was among the cross-cutting themes in this project; including climate change adaptation and pollution abatement;

- *The girl child*

The Ministry of Education has initiated special training at Child and youth development centres, This initiative is part of the project on “Environmental Education for Sustainable Development” implemented by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan. It is aligned with the National Strategy for the Protection and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity in Azerbaijan for 2017-2020.

School environmental education curriculum has been developed based on the modern standards and sustainable development goals since September 2015. An advocacy and communication campaign will be held in Baku to draw attention of society to environmental problems.

20 Azerbaijani schools joined the World's Largest Lesson (WLL) global initiative in 2018 bringing global issues with focus on environment and climate change into children's daily lives and making the Sustainable Development Goals more relevant and meaningful to over 2,400 school children; Series of trainings were conducted for 40 teachers of geography and biology from the 20 schools

World Environment Day is marked every year in Azerbaijan to raise awareness on environmental issues and action for the protection of nature. The theme for 2018 was “Connecting People to Nature». The United Nations System in the country in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and ‘IDEA’ Public Union launched an initiative “Let’s reduce the negative impacts of domestic waste on the environment and human health” to mark this Day. The main aim to help children, teachers and parents think about the relation between irresponsible production and consumption, and its hazards to nature and human health.

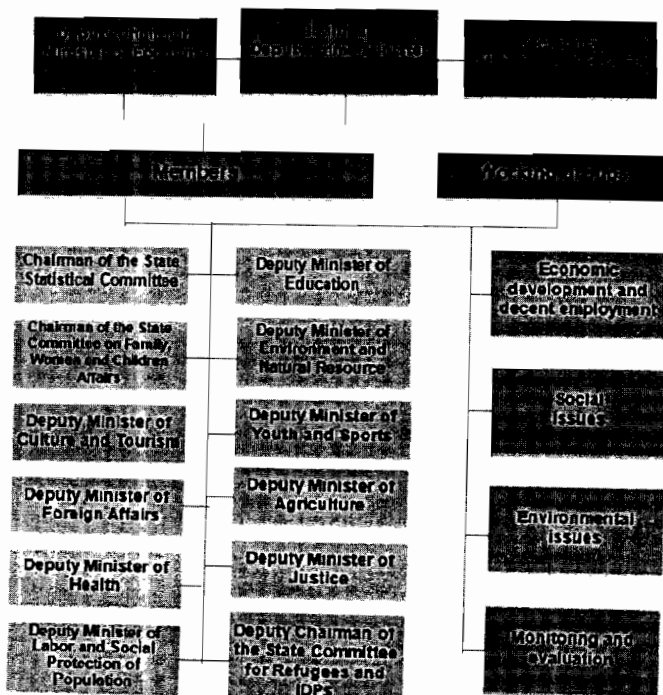
A national youth forum on environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which brought together over 200 young Azerbaijani activists (90 girls) to discuss the role of youth in environmental protection took place on June 5, 2018. This forum included three panel discussions with presentations from national and international experts on the role of youth in tackling climate change, preserving biodiversity and ensuring the use of sustainable energy.

CHAPTER III

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan is governmental body responsible for formulating and pursuing state policy on all aspects of the promotion and protection of children and women’s rights and their empowerment. 11 regional Child and Family Support Centers under the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs was a very important achievement in strengthening the institutional framework to address the key gender issues in the rural areas, identify children and women in need of special care in community, provide juridical consultations, psychological aid to the women and children from vulnerable groups.

Also there is Special Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs under the National Assembly.

In order to coordinate the implementation of tasks entrusted to each government agency under the commitments undertaken from "2030 Agenda", the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan issued the Decree on October 6, 2016, to establish the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Deputy Prime Minister was appointed as the chairman of the Council. The Secretariat of the Council was established under the Ministry of Economy, of the Republic of Azerbaijan.



The main objectives and areas of activity of the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development consist of the following:

- Identification of the national priorities of Azerbaijan until 2030 and related indicators that correspond with the global goals and targets;
- Ensuring alignment of the state programs and strategies in country's national priorities in line with SDGs;
- Preparation and submission of national annual progress reports to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- Involvement of local and foreign experts, international organizations and scientific circles;
- Establish working groups on different areas under SDGs

With the purpose of efficient organization of the Council the following 4 working groups with representatives of the competent state bodies were established:

Economic growths and decent employment;

- Social issues;
- Environmental issues
- Monitoring and evaluation

Except the Chairman, 3 representatives of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs are members of the working groups, which hold meetings every two months.

Azerbaijan chose an approach that encourages coordination of activities and policies between state bodies, preserving the responsibilities of each body, for strengthening coordination across sectors by establishing a single approach Leaving no-one behind. Another interesting aspect is effective co-operation established between public and private institutions, civil society, Academia and research institutions, and other stakeholders and mobilization of their capacities for achieving the SDG targets. The government, while acting as coordinator for the attainment of nationalized SDGs, is facilitating and supporting SDG-focused initiatives of civil society institutions, academia, business and professional associations, other stakeholders and partners. Driven by the principle of "leaving no one behind", and determined to engage all stakeholders in achieving the SDGs, the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development conducted panel discussions on SDG implementation which brought together representatives of the different groups of society (academia, civil society, women, youth, parliament). In this regard, the events on the theme of "The role of science and research in achieving SDGs in Azerbaijan," "The Role of the Civil Society in achieving the SDGs in Azerbaijan" should be noted. Special lessons on the theme of "SDGs: Education can change the world" were conducted in the Educational Complexes for children aged 11 to 14. A panel discussion on the theme was conducted in partnership with the civil society. On 9 June 2017, a panel discussion on the theme "Sustainable Development Goals: Women and Progress" was conducted with the support of the Council and UN Office in Azerbaijan.

In a whole the following work on SDGs has been done:

- Baku Forum on Sustainable Development was organized on 25 and 26 October 2018, the first such meeting in the sub-region, It was attended by more than 580 representatives from 86 countries and 24 international organizations. Interactive discussion on gender as key priority of SDG's implementation were held at two main sessions: "The role of youth, women, parliament, civil society and other stakeholders on the way of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals" and "Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all";
- "Baku Principles" document for nationalization and effective implementation of SDGs were adopted;
- SDGs Nationalization and Prioritization Workshop organized;
- 2 rounds of National Innovation Contest on SDGs was organized;

- Partnership with relevant stakeholders including line ministries and National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development (NCCSD) has been enhanced;
- 17 young leaders were selected as ambassadors of SDG to promote SDG agenda among youth throughout the country 9 out of the 17 Young Ambassadors are women, who are engaged for the Goal 1, Goal 3, Goal 4, Goal 5, Goal 6, Goal 7, Goal 10, Goal 13, and Goal 15. ;
- Two online platforms on SDGs were established, the first provides a general overview and serves as an online information platform for coordination around SDGs in the country, the later serves as statistical dashboard and provides national statistical data on SDGs;
- Customized capacity building was provided to 38 CSOs on how to design their projects in response to the sustainable development agenda with a focus on gender equality;
- Analysis of the alignment of the different national policy and strategic documents with SDG-targets under the mandate of FAO carried out;
- Series of awareness raising events were organized;
- 20 private companies and over 100 senior business executives were sensitized about the SDGs ;
- First-in-Azerbaijan communication workshop was organized for journalists, writers, bloggers and bloggers on how to report about the SDGs;
- A multi-stakeholder National workshop on accelerating the contribution of sustainable food and agriculture to the achievement of the SDGs in Azerbaijan was organized ;
- A conference on the Role of the Parliament in the Implementation of the SDGs in Azerbaijan was organized for the Milli Majlis (Parliament);
- Two regional seminars on Local Public-Private-People Partnerships for the implementation of SDGs in Azerbaijan ;
- Various visibility materials were produced , including promotional materials (posters, info-sheets, nationalized icons); SDG song; SDG stands in the cities; a short film on food waste, broadcast on popular TV channels for six months as well as shared across the social media platforms;
- SDG Women Soccer Cup was organized;

Furthermore, progress on SDG 5 was included in the First Voluntary National Report of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the first steps in implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (namely SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17) in July 2017.

To support engagement of the civil society in the SDGs implementation, EU and UNDP, National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development, State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs, developed and launched the project “Promoting the role of civil society organizations in gender-sensitive SDGs implementation”. The main objective of the project is to promote greater participation of CSOs in the gender-sensitive implementation of the national SDG agenda.

CHAPTER IV

The Government acknowledges the crucial role of accurate data and evidence on the situation of women and their position in all relevant areas, necessary for the purposes of assessing the impact of different legal and policy frameworks adopted and implemented.

The most recent adoption of the State Program on development of official statistics in Azerbaijan 2018-2025 signed by the President of Azerbaijan in February 2018 is reflective of the importance attached to the issue. The program is aimed at ensuring the development of official statistics in the country in accordance with international standards, modernizing the information support for assessing the achievement of the goals and objectives reflected in the strategic roadmaps, expanding the use of administrative information sources, and accelerating the reforms in the national statistics system. It also envisages relevant measures on conducting different surveys in households and collection of data disaggregated on SDG achievement indicators, including gender. Responsibility for the process of collecting processing and disseminating data has been assigned to the State Committee (SSC). For this purpose, the Department for Sustainable Development Statistics has been established within the SSC.

The following responsibilities have been assigned to central and local executive power agencies and legal entities:

-provide statistical data on indicators of achievement of SDG's to the state Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan

-present a progress report to the National Council on SDGs. Statistical observation (official statistical reports, studies, surveys) have been identified as the main sources of information for monitoring indicators identified in accordance with SDG's.

It should be mentioned that this is the sixth state program on the development of official statistics in Azerbaijan. In the previous State program (2015-2017) particular attention was paid to the improvement of the system of national accounts, the development of the statistical observations and methodology and programs of statistical figures in accordance with the international statistical standards, the development of the integrated information system of the state statistical agencies as well as the "E-statistics. Required information for the observations on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights are being obtained and published through the organized thematic statistical surveys (about 10 including gender statistics), and posted on the website of the Statistics Committee The statistical publication on gender aspects "Women and men" has been publishing regularly in the country.

As a result of the measures introduced, the main sources of data on women and girls can be described as follows:

- Census: 1999, 2009, 2019 (forthcoming)
- National online inter-agency GBV databank (created in 2017)
- National gender statistics database as a part of the national system for official statistics
- Household surveys on prevalence rates of GBV (2008, 2017)
- Household surveys on child marriages (???)
- Household surveys on violence against the person (2014, 2017)
- Qualitative assessment of GBV costs (2017)
- Survey on the dynamics of gender relations in Azerbaijan (2017)

It should be emphasized that the national official statistics provides the data disaggregated by location, income, sex, age, education, marital status, race/ethnicity, and migration status. The Government also attaches importance to availability of data on the situation of specific vulnerable groups of women (IDP and refugee

population, persons with disabilities, etc.) and this work is in progress including *inter alia* through the measures to ensure better visibility of specific vulnerabilities of these people.

The Government also strives to ensure that the data and evidence are produced with the use, to the extent possible, of international methodologies to ensure comparability of data across countries and regions. For instance, all studies on violence against women include the indicators endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

The Government is determined to continue producing sex disaggregated indicators on a routine basis for continued monitoring and evaluation. Further improvement of national institutional capacities for generation of quantitative and qualitative evidence including the population projections by economic regions for the purposes of informed policy making is also among the priorities for the next five years. These priorities are in line with the Government's obligations for implementation of SDGs. The Baku Principles on integration of the SDGs at the national level and the acceleration of their implementation was adopted by 200 high-level participants from some 30 countries attending the Baku Regional SDG Forum, on October 24-25, 2018. It should be particularly stressed that the Government has pledged full support for the SDG 5 and the related targets and indicators.