

**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

**WORKING PAPER No. 8**

**ORIGINAL RUSSIAN  
ENGLISH**

**(Country translation, as received)**

**Joint ECE/UNDP Workshop on  
Gender Statistics for Policy Monitoring and Benchmarking  
(Orvieto, Italy, 9-10 October 2000)**

## **KAZAKHSTAN**

### **THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN AND IMPROVING OF GENDER STATISTICS**

Paper submitted by Mr. Yuri Shokamanov<sup>1</sup>

#### **Introduction**

On 19 July 1999 the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has adopted by a decree No.999 the National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women in the Republic of Kazakhstan and forwarded it to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in order to achieve goals of improving the status of women in Kazakhstan and implementing the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on the Status of Women (Beijing, 1995).

The National Action Plan is developed by the National Commission on Family and Women's Affairs under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan in co-operation with the relevant state bodies, with participation of NGOs and international organisations in accordance with a recommended UN model.

The strategic goal of the National Action Plan is to establish conditions and development of effective mechanisms for strengthening women's role in public and political life, improving women's status in accordance with the long-term development strategy «Kazakhstan -2030».

The National Action Plan consists of 12 priorities, identified by the Fourth World Conference on the Status of Women.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Yuri K. Shokamanov., First Deputy Chairperson of the Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Statistics, Ph.D in Economics

## **1. Individual aspects of the National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

Women and poverty. The main source of income for the people of the Republic of Kazakhstan is salary. The salary level in sectors that use predominantly women's labour (education, healthcare, service sector) is more than one third less than the average salary level in the republic. The main goal in the policy for population income is increasing the general level of payment for labour, including gradual increasing the minimum salary level to the subsistence level, legalisation of all incomes and increasing the salary level of employees of civil service agencies, where women predominate, and where salary level is lower than an average salary level in the republic.

Education and training of women. In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, all citizens are guaranteed access to secondary education in state academic institutions. Women are more educated. According to the results of the population census in 1999 among 1000 men in the age group of 15 years and older, only 117 men had higher education attainments, yet among 1000 women – 129, secondary specialised education – 197 men and 296 women accordingly. Yet at the same time, 994 men and only 982 women have received the minimum primary education. The main targets in the area of education are: rational distribution of financial resources, especially among rural schools, improving the teaching methodology, securing access to education for children from low-income families, integration of handicapped children into regular schools.

Women and health. Programmes on increasing maternal and prenatal mortality are implemented in the republic, as well as national programmes on reproductive health protection and others. Yet at the same time, the index of women's health constitutes only 30%. The strategy to protect women's health envisages development of standards for reproductive health for marginalised population groups, introduction of methods of safe motherhood, provision of modern contraceptives to the population, scientific and sociological research in the area of family planning.

Violence against women. The most wide spread form of violence against women is domestic violence (physical, psychological and sexual). In accordance to some experts' estimates over 60% of all women in Kazakhstan have been subjected to physical or sexual violence at least once in a lifetime. Following Kazakhstan's joining to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, a special department on eradication of violence against women was established in the Ministry of Interior. In the future, it is envisaged that new laws shall be adopted and existing legislation shall be amended in accordance with international standards; effective assistance in social rehabilitation to victims of violence shall be secured; special training and education of specialists dealing with women subjected to violence shall be organised, and other activities shall be secured.

Women and armed conflicts. Due to armed conflicts in some neighbouring state, the problem of refugees exists in Kazakhstan. There are refugees repatriates, formerly purged from Kazakhstan as in consequence to political, national, religious and other kind of oppression. Among refugees from Afghanistan there are many illiterate people, a significant part of them do not have any professional training or means for existence. Women constitute an especially vulnerable group. A special body for migration processes management – Agency for Migration and Demography - with responsibilities to address problems of refugees-repatriates and other migrants in Kazakhstan.

Women and economy. The labour force of Kazakhstan constituted 7,1 million people in 1999, out of which 46% are women. The majority of women is employed by the healthcare and social services sectors - 82% out of the total number of workers, 77% in hotels and restaurants, 75% in education, 66% in financial sector. Among registered unemployed women constitute 62%. Among women applying to employment agencies only every sixth woman receives employment. When enterprise personnel is being decreased, women constitute the majority of laid off workers. A microcrediting programme for lowest income population is implemented in order to provide self-employment to population and development of individual entrepreneurship. A majority of credit beneficiaries are women - 63%. In June of the current year, the Government of Kazakhstan has adopted a programme to combat poverty and unemployment.

Institutional mechanisms for advancement of women. The National Commission on Family and Women's Affairs under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is established to protect family interests and provision of the necessary conditions for women's participation in political, social, economic and cultural life in Kazakhstan. The commission's chairperson has a rank of a minister. Similar commissions are established under akims of all regions, headed by deputy akims. The priority area for intervention of the National Commission is participation of women in politics, institutions of power, economics, their employment promotion, issues of women and protection from violence.

Women human rights. Women in Kazakhstan have equal rights to access to education and professional training, in public, political, and cultural life, to labour, to equal pay, rest and social provision. Conditions to allow women to combine employment with motherhood are being established, legal guarantee as well as material and moral support for family and fatherhood, motherhood and childhood are being provided. Kazakhstan has joined the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Kazakhstan envisages to address the issue of joining the Convention on Political Rights of Women, on Protection of Motherhood, Nationality of Married Women, on Agreement to Marriage, Marriage Age and Registration of Marriage as well as other conventions relevant to family, women and children.

Women and Mass Media. In mass media there are many programmes that address women's issues. Yet at the same time, a number of problems that need to be addressed by the long-term state strategy exist. There is not enough attention given to gender issues. Mass media has a goal to facilitate formation of a non-stereotypical image of a woman, to present her as a creative personality, an active participant of public processes of country's development. Towards this goal, it is envisaged to widen women's access to means of defending their interests through mass media, as well as to ensure objective and non-stereotypical presentation of women in mass media.

Women and environment. Environment is an important condition for human life and human health. Factors such as raw-material direction of the economy as well as difficult natural and climatic conditions affect the environmental situation in Kazakhstan. There are two large zones of environmental disaster in the country: the Aral Sea Basin (caused by drying out of the Aral Sea) and Semipalatinsk (around the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site). The National Environmental Action Plan has been adopted; a Republican Centre for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development has been established. 26 special programmes to improve the environmental situation, including those relevant to women's health.

Girls. The existing legislation provides girls equal rights to education, access to medical services and to other services in all spheres of life. Kazakhstan has joined the UN Convention on Child's Rights. The following disciplines are planned by the educational curricula: sexual education, personal hygiene, and healthy lifestyle promotion. As a rule, girls have better educational attainments than boys have. Yet, in the academic year of 1997/1998 girls constituted only 33% of the total number of students in universities. The legislation ensures criminal punishment for exercising of violence against women. However, around two thousand cases of rape or attempts of rape of girls and registered annually.

## **2. To improve gender statistics within the framework of the National action Plan on Improving the Status of Women in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

The National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women envisages activities to improve the gender statistics.

In accordance with the plan, the Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan is providing a set of gender indicators to be used in the development of economic and social programmes. The indicators are as follows:

- in demographic statistics – size of population by age and sex, life expectancy, mortality of population by causes of death, maternal and child mortality;
- in healthcare statistics – infectious diseases by age and sex, narcological and psychological diseases by age and sex, abortions, number of medical personnel by sex, number of maternity houses, women's consultation clinics, number of obstetric-gynaecological services, hospital beds for pregnant and recently confined women, number of ill women with a first-time diagnosed illness, number of abortions by age group, number of women using contraceptives, number of pregnant women, separate diseases during pregnancy;
- in educational statistics: by pre-school institutions - number of children by sex, number of pedagogical personnel; in secondary schools - number of students by sex and age, in professional specialised colleges, in post-university education – number of students, graduates, and applicants; by colleges and universities – number of students, graduates, and applicants by sex, distribution of students by courses, specialisations, age and languages of instruction, number and composition of pedagogical personnel by sex; in science – the composition of age and qualifications and movements of specialists-researchers that conduct research and scientific developments, distribution of specialists-researchers by different sciences and by sex;
- in labour conditions – the list number of employees, number of injured by main accidents and main causes of injuries, professional diseases by sex;
- in pay and employment statistics – number of hired employees (paid) by types of economy and by sex, average monthly minimum salary per one employee by sex;

- in crime statistics – rapes, violent actions of sexual character, sexual intercourse and other sexual activities with a legal minor, involving into prostitution, organisation and maintenance of brothels for prostitution and pimping, illegal abortions.

Gender statistics is produced in separate publications of the Agency on Statistics. In 1999 a special statistical brochure “Women and Men of Kazakhstan”. A similar brochure is planned to be published annually. When the new structure of the Agency was endorsed in 2000, a special unit dealing with social and gender statistics was opened.

### **3. Some indicators of gender statistics in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

The results of the population census in 1999 indicated that as of 25 February 1999, the total size of population was 14 953,1 thousand people, including 7 201,8 thousand men and 7 751,3 thousand women. The share of men decreased by 0,2% in comparison with the results of the Census of 1989, which consisted 48,2%. This relates to the higher rate of men’s mortality in 1990s in comparison to women’s mortality. The share of urban population decreased by 0,6% and consisted 56%. The share of urban men decreased by 1%, consisting 47%, yet in rural areas it remained the same - 50%.

In the age group of up to thirty years old, men constitute a lesser number than women, however, starting from the age group thirty and older, the share of men constitute less than 50% and in the older groups the share continues decreasing. In cities men constitute less than half of the population starting from the age of 15 years old, whereas, in villages, they constitute less than 50% starting from the age of 45 years old.

The number of people that have higher education has increased over the last ten years from 97 persons per 1000 population to 124 per 1000 population in the age group of fifteen years and older, those with secondary specialised education from 184 to 223. The number of men with higher education increased from 98 to 117, and women from 96 to 129. The number of women with secondary specialised education increased from 159 to 197 persons, women – from 207 to 246. In other words, the results of the census demonstrate not only the total increased in the educational level of the population, but also a significant increase of this indicator for women over men.

The life expected at birth for men and women differs significantly: in 1996 the gap represented 11,7 years (for men – 58 years, for women – 69,7 years). For men, the mortality indicator in 1998 was 1184,7 (per 100 000 men), for women – 874,1.

The primary cause of death is diseases of blood circulation: for men – 485,1, for women – 511,1. For men, the secondary cause of death is accidents, intoxication and injuries – 224,5, and the third is tumours – 154,1 per 100 000 men. For women the secondary cause of death is tumours – 115,3, the third cause of death (if not taking into consideration other diseases) – accidents, intoxication and injuries – 58,9 per 100 000 women.

For men the most common mortality is at the able-bodied age (in 1998 - from 16 to 61) – 1020,3 per 100 000 men, for women it is slightly less – 295,2 (in the age group 16-56 years old).

In Kazakhstan in the 1990s the maternal mortality decreased from 55 (per 100 000 live childbirths in 1990) to 48,4 (in 1994), then there was an increase again up to 59 (in 1997). There is a gradual decrease of child mortality (number of deaths per children in the age group up to one year old per 1000 births) both for boys (from 30,6 in 1994 to 24,4 in 1998), and for girls (from 23,8 to 18,6, accordingly).

On average there is a decrease in the share of women in the total labour paid force by different sectors of economy. If in 1995 women constituted 46,6% of the paid labour force, yet, in 1997 they constituted only 45,6%. In specific sectors of economy the share of women decreased more dramatically: in industry – from 42,2% to 37,2%, in rural sector and forestry – from 29,4% to 25,2%, in trade, public catering, material and technical provision and sales, processing – from 63,2% to 54,5%.

In 1998 the highest number of women in paid employment concentrated in education (27,3%), in industry (18,1%), in healthcare and social services (18,2%), as well as in the rural sector of economy (8,7%). The majority of men in paid employment are concentrated in industry (30,1%), in rural sectors of economy (22,3%), transport and communications (13,7%) and education (7,6%).

In 1998 the average ratio of women's salary to men's salary in 1998 constituted 75,7%. This ratio is calculated not only by the fact that working women are concentrated in sectors of economy with lower salaries, but also with the fact that their salaries are less than those of men are by all sectors of economic activity. For example, in industry this ratio equals to 76,6%, in rural sectors of economy – 91,1%, in transport and communications – 88%, in education– 96,2%, in healthcare and social services = 82,1%.

In 1998 the share of women in the civil service constituted 40,1%. In central bodies of power, the share of women constituted on average 50% (in 1997), yet among departments heads and their deputies women constituted only 15%, and among top management position in state bodies and their deputies - only 8%.