

QUESTIONNAIRE TO GOVERNMENTS  
ON IMPLEMENTATION

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

1997



Part One

...ing gender equality and women's

Overview of trends in  
advancement

...mission on the Development of Gender  
...cision of the Prime Minister of Armenia.

...In August 1997 a  
...Policy was established by

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...Government officials, NGOs participate in the work of the Commission with an  
...independent status. The Chairperson of the Commission is the Minister of Social  
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...This action is a follow up to the 1994 decision on protection of women.

As has significantly increased, the society is becoming more conscious of the gender issue. Although the public perception of the gender roles has not changed much, there is more recognition of the necessity to change the existing situation to democracy and market economy has had adverse effects on women's positions and disproportionate effect of unemployment. Cultural stereotypes exist that stress the traditional role of women in a paternalistic way.

The transition from a traditional family structure to a modern one has traditionally been head of the household and the primary income earner, while the primary role of women was to bear children and raise the family. Although this tradition was strong, it began to change already under the Soviet system. Contributing to this change was the high level of women's participation of women in the economic and political activities. In the last decade the difficult economic situation in the country has further reinforced the role of women in the income generation at the household level.

Yet, the real challenge is changing the mentality, bringing women to the point when they realize that the place of woman is far from being limited to her household as a wife and a mother.

Under the Soviet system women in Armenia participated in the economy, this was due in part to the concentration of various jobs for women, such as in the so-called "pink collar" jobs, so far as to put women in high position making

After independence, Armenia began its economic and political reform. The economy is still in transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. This is true for any other ex-Soviet republic, which further aggravates the situation of women.

Transportation routes imposed by neighboring Turkey and Azerbaijan, severe economic crisis, and consequences of devaluing samnase of 1998, which only worsened the global economic crisis, exacerbated the

collapse of the Russian economy, has had indirect effect on the Armenian economy. The overall economic decline has resulted in a large-scale labor migration and men who had found jobs in Russia and were supporting their families, which had stayed in Armenia, because of the Russian crisis are unable to do so any more. This of course further worsens the situation of women who

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Despite certain inaccuracy in the data on unemployment in Armenia, even the existing figures of the registered unemployed show that women make up 71% of the unemployed. These figures, however, are more a reflection of the unemployment registration process than the actual true number of the unemployed.

The earthquake of 1988, the conflict in Nagorno Karabagh, collapse of the Soviet Union, and ensuing economic crisis have all contributed to massive migration movements both within the country and across the national borders.

The primary migratory trends during the 1989-1996 were labor migration, refugee flow, and internally displaced persons from the earthquake area border regions;

Official migration figures report that 61,700 people have left between 1992 and 1996. The period of outward migration coincided with the influx of an estimated 350,000 refugees from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Chechnya, and Nagorno Karabagh. A 1997 UNHCR survey found that there are about 286,000 refugees still living in Armenia.

GDP per capita in 1997 was USD 430.8. This figure, although low in comparison with the rest of the world, is comparable to the average in the Soviet Union. A poverty assessment survey conducted at the end of 1997 revealed that 54.7% of the population live in poverty.

The low rate of crimes against women is ascribed to under-reporting. Domestic violence is almost unreported for fear of public opinion, because of social dependence, desire to keep the family together for the sake of the children, or simple fear of public opinion.

## Part Two

### Financial and institutional measures

The issues under this title are covered in responses to Part One and Annex 1.



## Annex 1

### *1. Women and poverty*

Poverty survey is conducted by households and no gender-specific data is available at this stage.

The distribution of Armenia's population by poverty indicators is as follows:

Non-poor	45%
Poor	27%
Very poor	28%

There are several underlying causes for the current poverty levels. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the poverty, although existed, did not affect majority of the population. Health care, utilities, education were provided by the state and the state salary was sufficient to live decently.

economic transition brought about drastic changes. Many families lost their savings in early 1990s when banks collapsed and inflation was out of control.

Despite a growing economy and steady recovery on a macro-level, there are no effective mechanisms to assist families out of poverty.

### *II. Education and training of women*

The Armenian Constitution underscores the principle of equality of men and women for an and guarantees the rights to education, access to higher education. Women in Armenia have attained a very high level of education, not any surpassing them at certain levels of and fields of education.

number of female professors and assistant professors are no women university rectors, the number of deans is extremely small. This, however, is not an indication of a lower level of education but more of an

However, despite the high number of female professors at the Universities of deans is extremely small. This, however, is not an indication of a lower level of education but more of an

The ratio of male and female students in higher education institutions for 1996-1997 was respectively 19,028 and 16,689.

During the recent years school enrollment rates have fallen as compared with previous ones. A 1996 survey showed that 4.6% of children did not attend school.

school. This data is mostly true for the upper non-compulsory grades (8,10).

The reasons for grades 8 are around 100%.

of interest in the curriculum. | | | | | | | | | |

diverse, however the major causes are

nc. inability of the parents

necessity to help the family to generate

Although women traditionally prefer to study medicine (90% of medical students are females), paedagogics, or arts, their number tend to significantly increase at the economy, finance, communication, political science and other 'non-traditional' departments. About 90% of Linguistics and 50% of Middle East students are females.

### III. 3. Women and health

Assessment of women's health in Armenia is often centered around reproductive health issues. This is partially because many of health problems encountered by women between ages 15 and 49 are in fact related to

reproductive health.

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ngues, international requirements  
but the region as a whole. The  
payment waiver for women from

The reproductive health center  
over the main reproductive health  
and standards and serve not only Ar  
services in these centers are costly but t  
socially vulnerable groups.

en often see the doctor when the  
ublic health education for women

Cancer is a dreaded disease but  
tumor is well advanced. There is no ge

ing the importance of breast self-exam and yearly gynecological check

number of female personnel in the legal and judiciary system, and no psychosocial and health services available for male or female victims of violence.

Below are some figures for 1998

Rape	13
Rape of minor	11
Marriage to minor	37

As a result of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict about 350,000 refugees fled Armenia, which is roughly equivalent to 10% of the population. These are the Armenian population of major Azerbaijani cities, mostly Baku, Kirovabad, and Sumgait who fled after violent massacres. In addition, some of the population of the Armenian regions bordering Azerbaijan had fled to other parts of the country to escape shelling and bombing.

Women, as always, were most victimized during the mass violence. They suffered both physical violence and psychological stress.

In 1996, the National Assembly passed the Law on refugees, which allows refugees to acquire Armenian citizenship. However, a large number of refugees fear that the loss of refugee status will deprive them of some privileges, including the dwelling, since many still live in collective centers.

At present, refugees are afforded full access to basic education services and have equal employment opportunities with the citizens of Armenia. The ones that have not applied for citizenship restrictions, they have no right to vote or to be elected to public offices.

The economic and social hardship affected 65,000 refugees to leave the country for better living and employment opportunities. Many of them are women, elderly and very young children. This has devastating social impact on women. A study is currently underway to assess the impact of male migration on refugee women.

One of the major problems for rural life and labor is the fact that most of them have fled from urban areas and have no skills and had to acquire appropriate skills and overcome the difficult transition.

Women and the economy

The Government has enacted legislation aimed at achieving gender equity and protection of women within the work setting. Laws regarding gender equality include guarantees for equal consideration for promotion, equal pay, and equal choice of profession without discrimination. Protection measures for pregnant women, mothers and families include paid maternity

employment, 0.11 earnings, creation of special work conditions for pregnant and breast-feeding women. These measure may have... employees are bound to resist hiring or promoting women... additional expenses, housing allowances, paid leave, facilities...

it is difficult to measure in Armenia. Women comprise... unemployed, although there are possibly more... unemployed but apparently women are more willing to... unemployment has become widespread in the recent years... quit the job and engage in business and petty trade...

men enjoy equal rights for real estate and other property. In... the land reform, land was distributed between households... Regardless the gender of the head of the household, Family and Marriage Code... guarantees equal rights for spouses for jointly earned property.

Specific information... Solid-legislative basis is encouraging, however actual practice is... difficult to assess because of the paucity of...

stitution, provides equal rights... decision-making. Yet, at this... of the extent desired... king positions at the Office of... (city is as low as... that in the... % of the total...

ment of Gender... ster of Armenia... their Deputies... mission with an... Minister of Social... and does not have... on making power...

VII. Women in power and decision making

Armenian legislation, including the... for the participation in the public life and... moment women are not involved in the...

The percentage of women in decis... the President, the staff of the Cabinet, and the ruling... 12.5. The situation in the judiciary and the legislative... executives - women comprise 13% of judges and... administration officials...

VIII. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of

In August 1997, a State Commission on the... Policy was established by the decision of the Prime... Members of the Commission are Cabinet Min... Government officials. NGOs participate in the work of... observer status. The Chairperson of the Commission is... Secretary. The Commission is... based... initiative...

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Family and Marriage Code

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