

QUESTIONNAIRE TO GOVERNMENTS
ON IMPLEMENTATION

RELEVANCE OF ACTION

LEOCTUR DELTINC DE L'EDUCATION ACTION

OF 1997/98



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

...Members of the ... Cabinet Ministers, their Deputies,
...Government officials, NGOs participate in the work of the Commission with an
...The Chairman of the Commission is the Minister of Social
...Security.

... 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 improved, the public is more cognizant 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.

On cultural stereotypes exist that stress the traditional role of women in a paternalistic way.

The high-level government on women. In the of women as in

Armenian family has traditionally been head of the household and primary income earner, while the primary role of women was to bear children and raise the family.

When the household and to bear children and raise the family began to change already under the

the past decade the

participation of women in the economic and political activities. The difficult economic situation in the country has further reduced women's role in the income generation at the household level.

men and society is

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 noble roles as a wife and a mother.

over high level of demand of labor

Under the Soviet system women in Armenia participated in the economy. This was due in part to the conversion of factories for women's work, not to go so far as to discuss men in high decision making

leading a fundamental change in the economy but Armenia had some

After independence, Armenia began economic and political reform. The economy of Armenia has been shaped by the Soviet Union economy. This is true for any other ex-

transportation routes imposed by neighboring Turkey and Azerbaijan, severe economic crisis, and consequences of devastating earthquake of 1988, which destroyed 10% of the country's infrastructure.

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

in an easy one given the scale of unemployment in today's Armenia.

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 cover decent

economic transition brought about drastic changes. Many families lost 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

II. Education and training of women

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

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 number of male and female students in higher education institutions for 1996-1997 was respectively 19,028 and 16,989.

During the recent years school enrollment rates have fallen as compared with previous ones. A 1996 survey showed that 4.6% of children aged 6-7 years were not enrolled in school.

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

The reasons for grades 8-10 are diverse, however the major causes are

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

necessity to help the family to generate

nc. inability of the parents

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.

shed in 1992 and the recently
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, Ganja, 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 their 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. Left behind are women, elderly and very young. This has devastating social impact on women. A study is currently underway to assess the impact of migration on refugee women.

The other major problem for refugee women is that many of them have fled from urban areas and have no access to land and labor. Yet, many of them have found shelter in rural areas 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... are 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...

conditions for p... adverse effect... if it results i... provision of sp...

Unemp... 70% of the... unregistered r... register. Volu... women prefer...

Women... 1991-1992 du...

|| ||

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 bo...

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... based on...

IX. Human rights of women

Armenia ratified the CEDAW on June 9, 1993 and presented its initial report in 1997.

More than 40 registered NGOs deal specifically with the rights of women and different "women and different rights" in their titles but they concentrate on various issues affecting women and gender issues.

The Armenian Constitution provides the necessary legal framework to guarantee the equal rights of men and women. However, cultural stereotypes exist which stress the traditional role of women in society and hence impede the promotion of their rights.

The number of female journalists is very high, but most of them do not specialize on gender issues.

Gender issues and specifically women's rights are not sufficiently covered in the media, be it printed or broadcast one.

XXXIII. The girl child

There is no specific policy targeted at girl children. The activities of the Government and civil society are aimed at children as a whole, without gender restrictions. This regards also access to health care and social facilities for children.

Boys and girls are brought up in most of the families in such a way as to realize the gender identity. Which does not suppose that girl child is discriminated against in the family, girls are brought up to be the foundation of the family and boys are prepared for the public life. There is difference in the education of girls in urban and rural areas. The girls in the cities have better and more than the girls in towns, equally with other members of the family.

The Armenian Constitution underscores the principle of equal rights to education. In 1997, the girls composed around 80% of school students. (See also Point II of the present Annex)