

*The Twenty-fifth anniversary of the  
Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the  
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)*

**THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

**THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION  
AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS**

*prepared by the National Commission for Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of Kazakhstan jointly with concerned government agencies, incorporating suggestions of non-governmental and international organizations, based on the Guidance note for comprehensive national-level reviews (September 2018) prepared by UN Women in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).*

*United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution 2018/9*

Kazakhstan holds itself to be a democratic, secular, rule-of-law and social state where supreme values are a human being and his/her life, rights and freedoms. Kazakhstan is a unitary state with a presidential form of governance. The Parliament is the country's highest representative body with legislative functions, including in the area of human rights.

As of 1 January 2019, the population of Kazakhstan has totaled 18.4 million, with women accounting for 9.5 million or 51.5%. The country is home to over 100 ethnicities and 18 denominations that co-exist in peace and concord.

Kazakhstan is a full-fledged actor of international law and a party to more than 60 multilateral universal human rights treaties, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and seven United Nations human rights conventions referred to as "international human rights instruments".

Our country remains committed to promoting gender equality and collaborates closely with the global community. Kazakhstan is a signatory to the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1998) and signed the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (2001).

In line with these commitments Kazakhstan formulated policies and legal frameworks to achieve gender equality as a national goal.

This comprehensive review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action implementation gives updates on key changes and progress by Kazakhstan in enforcing economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of women over the 2015–2019 reporting period.

The review will be presented by the National Commission on Women, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan in line with the Guideline Note prepared by UN Women.

This Kazakhstan's Review contains answers to 40 questions from the Guidance Note to present data for the last 5 years. The Review draws on analytical inputs from ministries and agencies.

On 27 March 2019 the UN Women Kazakhstan and the Asian Development Bank co-hosted the first meeting to discuss the draft review, which was also attended by the media. On 1 April 2019 the draft Comprehensive review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action implementation was endorsed by the National Commission on Women, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. On 10 April the draft was discussed via videoconference with all regions of the country as well as non-governmental organizations, regional executive authorities, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA.

## **Section one. Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks**

### **Question 1. What have been the most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years?**

Attainment of gender balance and creation of equal opportunities for women to participate actively in political, economic and social dimensions is one of critical areas under the social modernization in Kazakhstan. The wide-scale gender-mainstreaming of national policies and legislative improvements have been key enablers to balance men's and women's opportunities during the last five-year period.

The gender policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan is now evolving through the *2030 Concept of Gender and Family Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* which takes over from the completed *2006-2016 Gender Equality Strategy*.

Yet, despite some success of the country to engage women in political, economic and social areas, opportunities for women remain quite limited. WEF Gender Gap Index saw Kazakhstan sliding 17 spots compared to 2014, ranking it 60<sup>th</sup> among 149 countries in 2018. Improvements are found in “Economic Participation and Opportunities” (rise from the 33<sup>d</sup> to the 32<sup>nd</sup> rank) and “Educational Attainment” (from the 48<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>), while “Political Empowerment” ranking has plummeted (from the 66<sup>th</sup> to the 93<sup>d</sup>).

#### ***First. Public and political participation.***

The past five years have witnessed some progress in the women's political representation, especially in the Parliament.

Now the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan has 34 women or around 22% of the total number of Parliamentarians, which, compared to the previous convocation (2011), makes nearly a two-fold increase (*2011 - 13.7%, 2012 - 17.8%, 2013 - 20.1%, 2014 - 20.1%, 2015 - 20.4%, 2016 - 21.7%, 2017 - 22.2%*).

However, in local representative bodies (maslikhats) in Kazakhstan, the proportion of women is just 22% (*2013 - 18.1%, 2014 - 18.4%, 2015 - 18.8%, 2016 - 22.2%, 2017- 22.1%*). Only a few oblasts (Kostanay, Pavlodar, North Kazakhstan, Akmola, East Kazakhstan) have closed the 30% representation threshold.

Furthermore, *the proportion of women in political civil service positions also remains low*. At the beginning of 2019 women have accounted for 11.7% among political civil servants (*2013 - 9.2% or 39 persons, 2014 - 8.7% or 34 persons, 2015 - 9.7% or 40 persons, 2016 -10.1% or 43 persons, 2017 - 9.3% or 40 persons*).

The proportion of women civil servants in Corps A is 3.3%, Corps B - 55.7%. Women in senior public service positions account for 39.8%.

Representation of women in six political parties: “NurOtan” - 62.5%, the Communist People’s Party - 46%, “Auyl” - 41%, “Birlik” - 43.5%, USDP - 40.4%, “Ak Zhol” - 34.7%.

Among the fifteen ministries there is only one woman - the Minister of Education and Science, 12 - vice-ministers, and the Executive Secretary.

Non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”) have a major role to play in the social and political life of the country. Kazakhstan is home to 22,398 NGOs, including more than 500 that focus on family and gender policy matters and are important contributors into the female community empowerment.

Women run 8,220 NGOs (36.7%). There is an active national network of women's leadership schools that brings together nearly 70 NGOs. All 17 regions of the country have robust “Clubs of women-politicians”.

### **Second. Role of women in business sector**

The activity of women in the small and medium business (“SMB”) has grown strongly in the past 5 years. As of 1 January 2019, women-entrepreneurs have accounted for 43.2% of the total registered 536,3 th. active entrepreneurs. Moreover, in Kostanay and Karaganda Oblasts, for example, the proportion of small and medium businesses run by women is as high as 48%.

At the registration of business the majority of women prefer the ‘individual entrepreneur’ option. Women make up 52.6% of Kazakhstani individual entrepreneurs (47.7% in 2014). In 12 oblasts as well as in Nur-Sultan and Almaty, women-entrepreneurs outnumber men.

### **Small and medium businesses headed by women, 2014 -2018**

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Proportion of active SMBs headed by women	40.9% (378,9 th.)	44.2% (570,5 th.)	43.2% (513,2 th.)	43% (492,2 th.)	43.2% (536,3 th.)
Proportion of SMBs headed by women (active individual entrepreneurs)	47,7%	52,4%	52,3%	53%	52,6%
Proportion of SMBs headed by women, acting as a legal entity	29,2%	26,5%	26,7%	30%	27,8%

However, gender gaps in business remain persistent. Over 2014-2018, the proportion of businesses headed by women, that acted as legal entities, fell from 29.2% to 27.8%. Women are still poorly represented in large business. As of 2018, women ran only 17.2% of large companies, 27.9% of small and 32.4% of medium businesses out of the total number of legal entities, branches and representative offices registered in Kazakhstan.

**Proportion of registered businesses  
(legal entities, branches and representative offices)  
headed by women, 2014-2018**

<b>Proportion of businesses headed by women</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Small	27.1	27.6	27.4	27.6	27.9
Medium	33.0	29.9	30.8	31.7	32.4
Large	13.9	14.2	15.3	17.0	17.2

Women's business tends to concentrate in low value-added industries. More than half of active SMBs in education, real estate, accommodation and catering services, wholesale and retail trade, healthcare and social services are run by women. Women-run SMBs are found to a lesser extent in such sectors as transport and warehousing (16%), construction (19%).

As many as 65% of all SMBs headed by women are in the wholesale and retail trade (their proportion is 45.7% of the total number of such companies), agriculture (9.7%), real estate (9.2%).

The State is putting in place measures to empower economically women-entrepreneurs through national programmes, and, specifically, "Damu" Entrepreneurship Development Fund" JSC facilitates delivery of the program to support women's entrepreneurship with the funds of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Likewise, additional support-oriented measures will be put in place and enhanced to empower economically socially vulnerable and rural women.

***Third. Women's status in labour market***

Kazakhstan maintains a steady level of female employment and is on par here with many countries, including highly developed economies. Women account for 49% of the total labor force. In terms of gender split, in 2018 men were 4.5 ml and women - 4.2 ml of the total employed population.

Remarkably, the women's level of education is significantly higher than that of men: 36.0% of employed men have a university degree while for women this indicator is as high as 44.5%.

By and large, over the past 5 years, female unemployment has edged down. It has been at the level of 5.9-5.4% vs. 4.6-4.3% among men. Yet, it should be underlined that unemployment is most prevalent among rural women (5.6% vs. 5.3% in the city). Moreover, high unemployment is found among women *aged 29-34* - 8.4%, and comes from urban unemployed women (8.5%, or 46,000) and rural unemployed women (8.1% or 30,200).

### Key labour market indicators in the Republic of Kazakhstan<sup>1</sup>

	Population aged 15+				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Labour force, th.	8,962.0	8,887.6	8,998.8	9,027.4	9,138.6
Proportion of women, %	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8
Employed population, th.	8,510.1	8,433.3	8,553.3	8,585.2	8,695.0
Men	4,389.3	4,371.2	4,440.4	4,458.9	4,474.7
Women	4,120.7	4,062.1	4,113.0	4,126.3	4,220.3
Unemployment, total, %	5.0	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9
Urban	4.6	4.5	4.1	4.0	4.9
Men	4.0	4.2	4.0	3.9	4.6
Women	5.1	4.8	4.3	4.1	5.3
Rural	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.5	4.8
Men	2.7	3.1	3.0	3.4	4.0
Women	3.8	4.8	4.2	3.7	5.6

<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter, the data of the random employment survey.

### Employed population by educational attainment

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Men</b>					
Employed population, total	4,389.3	4,371.2	4,440.4	4,458.9	4,474.7
With higher education (including incomplete), %	33.3	33.3	33.1	35.2	36.0

<b>Women</b>					
Employed population, total	4,120.7	4,062.1	4,113.0	4,126.3	4,220.3
With higher education (including incomplete), %	41.4	43.1	42.4	43.5	44.5

### **Female unemployment by age groups**

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Women</b>					
Unemployment, total	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.4	5.4
Including at the age of, years:					
29-34	8.8	9.1	8.3	8.1	8.4

#### ***Fourth. Women's income and living standards***

Female manpower prices remain one of the critical female labor issues in Kazakhstan. The average wages of working women grow annually; however, the gap between the average male wage and female wage is still at 35%.

The ratio of women's wages to men increased up to 65% in 2018.

Substantial industry wage differences persist to date. Just like in previous years, high wages continue to be seen in predominantly male sectors – a factor of 1.44 higher than average mean wages, construction (1.33 times higher). Predominantly female sectors tend to have the lowest pay: education (0.64 of the average national level), health care and social services (0.69).

Across key families of positions and occupations, the wages of women average lower than those of men. Statistics show that in 2018 average wages of men working as heads at all levels of an entity were KZT 608,500, a translator – KZT 300,500, an economist – KZT 295,200. It is 1.4 - 2.1 times higher than average wages of women in similar positions and occupations.

The gap in wages between women and men cannot be triggered by one factor and is driven by a variety of reasons. More women are employed in administrative and support services, education and healthcare which usually offer lower wages. The pay gap is partially explained by women's less available time for paid work since they have got more domestic work to do.

Women preoccupied with domestic work, for example, care of children or the elderly family members, are categorized as unemployed, although they contribute to their households and help their spouses or other family members to be economically active. The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has implemented measures

to ensure family life-work balance. The Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan stipulates provisions concerning the paid maternity leave for 126 calendar days, including 70 days before and 56 days post childbirth; the paid adoption leave for a newborn baby of 56 days, and the unpaid leave to care for a child (the parental leave) for women or men until the child turns three. Employers are required to provide the unpaid leave to parents or allow them to work part-time upon a written request. Both the paid and unpaid leaves are accounted for in the work experience.

**Average monthly wages of employees, by economic activity,  
2013-2017**

	2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Female/male wage ratios									
	%	By a factor of	%	By a factor of	%	By a factor of	%	By a factor of	%	By a factor of
<b>The Republic of Kazakhstan</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>1.48</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>65.9</b>	<b>1.52</b>	<b>68.6</b>	<b>1.46</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>1.47</b>
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	74.7	1.34	75.1	1.33	77.1	1.30	75.5	1.32	74.5	1.34
Industry	68.9	1.45	68.7	1.45	69.5	1.44	71.3	1.40	71.1	1.41
Construction	87.4	1.14	89.3	1.12	88.8	1.13	90.8	1.10	93.1	1.07
Wholesale and retail trade; car and motorcycle repair	78.4	1.28	80.7	1.24	83.4	1.20	83.2	1.20	83.4	1.20
Transportation and warehousing	77.6	1.29	75.2	1.33	76.5	1.31	78.0	1.28	80.1	1.25
Accommodation and catering services	67.9	1.47	64.9	1.54	67.0	1.49	59.8	1.67	64.8	1.54
Information and communications	89.7	1.11	94.2	1.06	92.6	1.08	92.0	1.09	92.8	1.08
Finance and insurance	62.1	1.61	64.9	1.54	65.2	1.53	62.8	1.59	64.6	1.55
Real estate	87.3	1.15	86.3	1.16	89.8	1.11	88.2	1.13	87.0	1.15
Professional, scientific and technical activities	60.3	1.66	59.5	1.68	59.5	1.68	54.1	1.85	67.9	1.47
Administrative and support services	91.2	1.10	118.5	0.84	111.6	0.90	117.2	0.85	87.4	1.14



Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	77.5	1.29	76.2	1.31	77.1	1.30	88.6	1.13	86.1	1.16
Education	94.8	1.06	94.9	1.05	92.4	1.08	94.8	1.05	99.5	1.01
Healthcare and social services	92.6	1.08	90.1	1.11	90.0	1.11	89.6	1.12	93.6	1.07
Arts, leisure and recreation	55.9	1.79	50.6	1.97	49.1	2.04	54.1	1.85	50.7	1.97
Other services	62.1	1.61	70.5	1.42	61.5	1.63	71.3	1.40	69.0	1.45

**Gender-disaggregated average monthly wages (AMW) by specific positions and occupations, 2014-2018**

	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Male AMW by specific positions, KZT	Male/female AMW ratios, a factor of	Male AMW by specific positions, KZT	Male/female AMW ratios, a factor of	Male AMW by specific positions, KZT	Male/female AMW ratios, a factor of	Male AMW by specific positions, KZT	Male/female AMW ratios, a factor of	Male AMW by specific positions, KZT	Male/female AMW ratios, a factor of
<b>Head of an entity</b>	331,562	1.94	437,706	2.00	540,521	2.19	575,001	2.03	608,491	2.08
<b>Economist</b>	178,274	1.30	193,189	1.35	202,401	1.22	238,790	1.26	295,222	1.38
<b>Translator</b>	208,268	2.08	228,531	1.90	282,219	1.79	312,158	1.99	300,529	1.86

**Question 2. Top priorities of state policies for women empowerment**

Gender equality as a provision prohibiting gender-based discrimination is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The State has effective gender-sensitive laws: “*On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men*”, “*On Domestic Violence Prevention*”.

To achieve gender equality and empower women in political, economic and social domains, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has elaborated strategies and action plans. In 2005, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan endorsed the *2006-2016 Gender Equality Strategy*. The Strategy describes comprehensive goals related to gender equality in order to change the existing paradigm with one dominant gender to the paradigm that asserts “partnership and cooperation of both genders”. It outlines seven areas to strengthen gender equality: political and social domains, the economy, gender education, reproductive healthcare, prevention of gender-based violence, family and public awareness.

Within the framework of another policy document - *the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy* - critical gender gaps are anticipated to be further addressed. *The 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy* is under a phased implementation in line with priority national interests and strategic planning.

The following objectives should be highlighted that are to be pursued under legislative and programming measures in place:

***Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises***

Boosting women's entrepreneurship has been addressed in *the Action Plan for Implementation of the 2006-2016 Gender Equality Strategy in the Republic of Kazakhstan*. The adoption of *the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* encouraged expanded funding for women's entrepreneurship through involvement of the corporate, quasi-public and business communities.

To deliver on the objective of women's involvement in entrepreneurship gender-responsive programs have been designed: *the Employment Program - 2020* (subsequently *the Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship Development Program*) and *the Business Road Map - 2020*.

*The Business Roadmap - 2020* has been supporting new business projects of entrepreneurs, including women's. Since the inception of the *National Business Support and Development Program* in 2010, over 12,000 projects have been subsidized, with 4,000 being women's projects. In 2018, 451 out of 1,432 projects were implemented by women (31%).

Under *the 2017–2021 National Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship Development Program*, since 2017 as many as 1,532 individuals have benefited from microcredits worth of KZT16.3 bln., with women's projects accounting for 432 (or 35.2%) totaling KZT 4.8 bln.

Damu EDF JSC programs on conditional placement of funds supported financially 32,235 private entrepreneurs and 20,794 (65%) of them were women-individual entrepreneurs.

Damu EDF JSC has been implementing programs since 2011 to fund small and medium-scale businesses through the Asian Development Bank loan which stipulates financial support of women entrepreneurs. This program has benefited 2,128 borrowers to the total amount of KZT 238,440.1M, and 723 (34%) of them are female entrepreneurs.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has set up credit lines for women-entrepreneurs with second-tier banks under the *Women in Business Program*. Furthermore, Damu EDF JSC subsidizes nearly half of the loan interest rate. As per conditions of the *Women in Business Program* at least 60% of all funds are to be spent in the regions of Kazakhstan, outside the cities of Nur-Sultan and

Almaty. Additionally, it envisages engagement of a consultant for a business project and 60% recovery of the project cost through the EBRD program.

The UN Women's review of rural women's access to available loans and credits demonstrates, however, that access to existing resources and loans continues to be limited. Therefore, special measures will be elaborated to support rural women entrepreneurship

### ***Quality education and training***

Kazakhstan places great emphasis on the high level of education among the country's population. The laws governing the education system were aligned with the *Kazakhstan Strategy – 2050* that stipulates the education quality enhancement as one of its objectives. To achieve this goal and increase access to education, *the 2016-2019 National Program for the Development of Education and Science in the Republic of Kazakhstan* was put in place in 2016

Pursuant to the *Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Gender and Family Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the “Self-cognition” school subject was integrated into the curriculum to inoculate skills in school children essential for their self-fulfillment. That said, following the “*start with yourself*” principle, 2017 saw 799 teachers from various regions complete self-cognition trainings, where they explored universal human values, including gender equality. In 2018 girls accounted for 49.5% of 3,105,334 pupils. 776 technical and vocational education establishments have 489,818 students and women's proportion is 47%.

Kazakhstan has 128 higher education institutions (including branches): public - 45, private - 83.

The composition of students in the 2018-2019 academic year is as follows: bachelor's programmes - 542,458 persons out of whom 292,231 or 53.9% are women; master's programmes – 38,594 persons, out of whom 22,807 or 59.1% are women; PhD students – 5,609 persons, out of whom 3,625 or 64.6% are women.

120,272 students (31.3% of them - women) are in engineering disciplines. The proportion of female students majoring in education was 73.1%; medicine and pharmaceuticals - 76.8%; agriculture and veterinary - 23.5%. Women are largely enrolled in teacher training universities, study culture and the humanities, medicine and social sciences. They also constitute the majority of students in natural sciences, mathematics and statistics – the fact that is worthy of consideration.

State interventions in the education sector contributed to improved educational attainment indicators. The 2017 results, for example, show that early childhood (3-6 years) education enrollment (regardless of gender) grew up to 90.5%, primary education - 99.13%, gross secondary education enrollment - 105.94%, higher education - 54.29%. Kazakhstan is ranked the 30th under the 2018 WEF ‘Educational Attainment’.

## Education enrollment in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2013-2017

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Early childhood education and care enrollment	40.2	78.6	81.6	81.7	90.5
Net primary education enrolment	99.31	99.88	99.65	99.22	99.13
Gross secondary education enrollment	103.47	103.55	103.78	105.76	105.94
Gross higher education enrollment	50.90	48.37	48.44	51.14	54.29

It is worth mentioning that as part of *the Employment Roadmap – 2020*, rural women are offered vocational training in high-demand occupations with subsequent employment and funding. At the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year, women accounted for 229,044 or 47% of the total students enrolled in vocational and post-secondary education. Moreover, under this program Damu EDF JSC launched *the Entrepreneurial Skills Development for Disabled Women Program* with support of the *Shyrak Association of Disabled Women*. 231 women benefited from trainings under this program in 2016.

*The Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship Development Program* is designed to create jobs and community works that are in demand among working-age youth and women. Likewise, this program also delivers a project to train caregivers and professional child-minders for pre-school children to engage pre-retirement women in productive employment, with an opportunity to set up mini-kindergartens at home.

### ***Social security (maternity leave, childcare leave, etc.)***

Enactment of new labor laws has been a positive change in terms of gender-sensitive social security. As stipulated in the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for example, job loss risks by pregnant women have been taken into account. An employer cannot initiate termination of the employment agreement with a pregnant woman, a woman with children under the age of three, single mothers with a dependent child under 14. Increase of average social transfers in 2018 against 2014 should be also highlighted.

Overall, the national model of social support for families with children represents a system of state benefits and payments designed to:

#### 1) Incentivize birth rate:

- Childbirth benefit has been put in place since 2013, the amount is KZT 95,950,

- For the fourth and subsequent child the amount is KZT 159,075.

- The childcare benefit until the child turns one has been in effect since 2006. The amount in 2018 was KZT 14,544, for the second child – KZT 17,195, for the third child - KZT19,821, for the fourth and subsequent child – KZT 22,473.

- Social transfers from the State Social Insurance Fund have been effected since 2008 in the event of social risks in cases of income loss due to pregnancy and childbirth; adoption of a newborn child (children); child care until the child turns one.

Since 2014 subsidies for compulsory pension contributions by working women have been put in place in effect to cover their maternity leave until children turn one.

In 2018 the one-off pregnancy and childbirth benefit grew by 34% and totaled KZT 391,170, childcare benefits increased by 73% and were KZT 32,361.4.

#### *2) Support mothers with many children*

- Monthly governmental transfers of KZT 16,160 to multiple-child mothers awarded with “Altyn Alka”, “Kymisalka” pendants or who have previously been granted the title “Hero Mother”, awarded with the Honor of Motherhood I, II.

#### *3) Support families with disabled children*

- Parents, guardians and adoptive parents raising a disabled child, until the child turns 18, since 2010, have been receiving a benefit in the amount of the minimum wage; in 2018 it was KZT 29,699.

- In July 2018, the First group disabled adult care benefit was introduced for a disabled person since childhood in the amount of 1.05 subsistence minimum or KZT 29,699. In 2019, the amount is KZT 31,183.

#### *4) Support low-income families*

- In cases when the average per capita income of families is below the poverty line (50% of the subsistence minimum), targeted social transfer is paid, the amount of which is calculated as the difference between the average per capita income and the poverty line.

Given that the minimum calculated indicator and the minimum wage drive calculation of benefits, in 2018 these indicators got higher. Pursuant to the *Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev to the Nation* dated 5 October 2018, the minimum wage in 2019 has been raised 1.5 times, up to KZT 42,000.

#### ***Social protection (healthcare coverage, pensions)***

To ensure the social protection of women in Kazakhstan, the State makes mandatory governmental contributions for medical insurance of unemployed pregnant women and “persons on leave due to pregnancy and childbirth”. This provision is stipulated in the *Republic of Kazakhstan (RoK) Law on Compulsory Social Medical Insurance*. In addition to this law, the social protection of women is

also secured by the *Law on State Targeted Social Assistance* that envisages allocation of unconditional transfers to single women of the retirement age.

That said, Kazakhstan has embarked on pension system reforming, including a phased increase of the women's retirement age from 2019. Relevant changes are found in the *Law on Pension in the Republic of Kazakhstan*. Nonetheless, pursuant to the law, some groups of women have privileges of early retirement: "women living in emergency zones ..." (the RoK *Law on Social Protection of Citizens Affected by Nuclear Tests at The Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site*) - at the age of 45 years; "women who gave birth to (adopted) five and more children and brought them up to the age of eight" – at the age of 53.

### ***Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health***

Reproductive healthcare, maintaining health, reducing morbidity and mortality among mothers, children and adolescents, as well as preventing sexually transmitted infections are systematically addressed in national healthcare development programs.

The Republic of Kazakhstan has an advanced infrastructure of medical facilities, a robust geographical access to services, and a state-guaranteed free package of primary and basic specialist medical care for mothers, children and adolescents. The 2015 multi-indicator cluster study showed that 99.4% of births take place in obstetric care facilities in attendance of qualified medical personnel. 99.3% of pregnant women are covered by antenatal care, with early antenatal care at 85% and 95% of 4+ antenatal visits to healthcare facilities.

Improving the access of pregnant women and infants, especially in rural and remote areas, to medically assisted reproduction services based on the risk of complicated births and obstetric complications is ensured through devolving perinatal care in all 17 regions of the country. Most of childbirth takes place now in Level 3 specialist obstetric care facilities (65%) and Level 2 perinatal care facilities (20%).

The ongoing 2016-2019 *National Healthcare Development Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Densaulyk"* has facilitated stabilization of maternal and infant mortality indicators that reached 14.0 (per 100,000 live births) and 7.9 (per 1,000 live births) in 2018 respectively, following a major, nearly five-fold, drop in 2015. The country, however, hasn't utilized all its capacities to bring down maternal and neonatal mortality. Official data state that every sixth pregnancy in Kazakhstan is terminated by abortion despite recent declined indicators. The multi-indicator cluster study in Kazakhstan demonstrates that only 53% of the reproductive age women resort to modern contraceptives.

Efforts to meet the public demand for family planning and expand access to services and contraceptives are carried out under the *2017–2021 National Framework Program and Action Plan for Strengthening Family Planning Service*

that is delivered as part of the *Public Health Development Roadmap* of the RoK Ministry of Health.

Mother and child healthcare are one of the State's priorities. These rights have been realized through the *Salamatty Kazakhstan* Program and are further secured with the new *National Healthcare Program "Densaulyk"*. Owing to introduction of cutting-edge technologies in obstetrics and pediatrics, maternal and infant mortality has been on the downward trend.

Systematic measures are put in place to reduce maternal and infant mortality under the referenced national program.

The government endorsed the roadmap to improve performance and implement an integrated model of the maternity and childcare services. Similar road maps were designed and approved in each region with involvement of oblast akimats. In addition, oblast akimats also approved operational plans for 2018 to curtail maternal and infant mortality.

Confidential maternal mortality audits are now in place; and confidential audits of perinatal mortality, critical conditions in obstetrics care are currently put into practice to enable timely management decisions.

Daily monitoring is imbedded at all levels of healthcare facilities over the pregnant woman "itinerary/route" subject to her risk group. The *National Taskforce for Emergency Measures to Reduce Maternal and Infant Mortality* holds regular sessions and scrutinizes each case of maternal and infant mortality.

Kazakhstan offers free medical assistance to women during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period that includes required care and nutrition, and breastfeeding mothers as well until the child is one year old, for the entire stay in a medical childcare facility. Furthermore, the national screening program is now in effect to detect early illnesses; it covers fully the targeted population groups and is designed to improve diagnosis of congenital and hereditary disorders in the fetus and newborn children.

Cost-effective, affordable and efficient perinatal technologies recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) (management of safe childbirth, demedicalization of delivery, childbirth with the partner, timely and high-quality primary resuscitation of the newborn child, the newborn warm chain, etc.) have been put into practice. The register of pregnant women has been set up to keep records of every pregnant woman from the registration throughout the pregnancy outcome. WHO-recommended up-to-date criteria of evaluations and audit are now under implementation. Telemedicine, mobile healthcare stations and air ambulance services have been expanded to make medical assistance available in remote regions of the country.

Kazakhstan has made strides in preventing mother-to-child HIV infection. In 2017, 98.7% of HIV-positive pregnant women were covered with preventive

therapy. Perinatal mother-to-child HIV transmission has dropped five times over the last 10 years (from 7.4% to 2.7%). All children born to HIV-positive mothers are provided with free adapted infant formula until they are one year old. In 2019, to reinforce positive outcomes of preventive programs to counter HIV transmission, the Republic of Kazakhstan submitted a report for validation and award of the WHO certificate on elimination of the mother-to-child HIV transmission.

***Eliminating violence against women and girls.***

Joint efforts of governmental agencies and NGOs in Kazakhstan made elimination of violence against women and children the cornerstone of national policies. The Republic of Kazakhstan is putting in effect measures to safeguard rights of women and children to be free from domestic violence.

December 2009 saw the adoption of the *RoK Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence*. The Law sets legal, economic, social and organizational frameworks for governmental agencies, local authorities, organizations and the public at large to prevent domestic violence, and it is also designed to reduce offenses in family and domestic relations.

It should be highlighted that the Law introduced new effective mechanisms against offenders, i.e. restraining orders and specific requirements for behavior.

*The RoK Code on Administrative Violations* (“CoAV”) is supplemented with provisions to prosecute offenses involving family and domestic relations (*Article 79-5*), health impairment (*Article 79-3*) and battery (*Article 79-1*). To date, these measures have yielded positive outcomes.

17 regions of the country have up and running 30 crisis centers and 17 of them offer shelters. Helplines are in place to support women-victims of domestic violence. The RoK Ministry of Internal Affairs has special units for the protection of women against violence.

“*Kazakhstan free from domestic violence*” is a multisectoral pilot project that has been ongoing in the country since 2016. It is designed to step up prevention and inter-agency cooperation and reinforce support for violence victims, including legal counseling, psychological and informational services, as well as setting up shelters. Under the project, in the Turkestan Oblast and with support of UNFPA Country Office, they piloted inter-agency response to domestic violence and tested international standard operating procedures (SOPs) to support domestic violence victims with healthcare, social service and police interventions. These sectors play a crucial role in this system to enable efficient identification of survivors, first aid, coordination of facilities rendering medical, psychological, social assistance, and access to justice and security.

Local experts from referenced sectors of the Turkestan Oblast have been trained to apply SOPs in their work to identify and support domestic violence victims with services at the primary level. Under the project, Shymkent and the Turkestan



Oblast have now operational *Public Social and Psychological Support Services*. These services are mandated to reveal family disturbances and prevent domestic violence.

Given the outcomes of inter-agency response piloting, SOPs are used by the Socio-Psychological Support Services for Violence Victims that have been put in action in the Turkestan Oblast. SOPs tested in the Turkestan Oblast were adapted and discussed in the ministries of health, labor and social protection, internal affairs for use at the national level. During a study tour of the government delegation and Turkestan Oblast authorities to Romania, UNFPA presented to the RoK government officials a successful experience of Romania in utilizing the best practices of a comprehensive approach in response to gender-based/domestic violence, the development process and mechanisms for the system implementation with a view of subsequent adaptation in Kazakhstan.

The pilot project performs well which is testified by growing reports from violence victims. Upon completion of the project, it is anticipated to replicate it in other regions of the country.

To gather evidence on the incidence of violence against women and draft robust programs and policies on prevention and response to gender-based violence, in 2015 Kazakhstan had its first national survey on the incidence of violence against women implemented by the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy in collaboration with the World Health Organization, UNFPA and UN Women. National data collected during the survey were reviewed and presented to the government. The survey showed that nearly 17% of women in Kazakhstan, aged 18-75, that ever had a partner suffered from physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner.

In 2017 UN Women and the Statistics Committee under the RoK Ministry of National Economy made a comprehensive assessment of economic costs and damage to the society caused by domestic violence, and also furnished recommendations to set up a robust system to use and disseminate gender statistics, statistical analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the domestic violence situation.

**Question 3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination? What measures have been taken by your country over the past five years to eliminate discrimination and violation of girls' rights?**

Pursuant to the *Plan of the Nation - 100 Concrete Steps* to deliver on five institutional reforms, actions are now underway to reform the law enforcement system that should be focused on quality prevention of offences, including domestic violence offences.

*The 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in Kazakhstan* makes central the elimination of domestic violence central in its social policy.

Kazakhstan has already, ahead of the schedule, achieved the UN Millennium Development Goals and embarked on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals as set by the Partnership Framework for Development between the United Nations and the Government of Kazakhstan.

In 2017, the RoK Governmental Resolution endorsed the detailed *Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* (Phase I in 2017–2019)”, which focused on key areas, including elimination of violence.

Actions are underway to implement policy documents designed to strengthen the family, inoculate family and spiritual values, and eliminate discrimination and domestic violence.

Legal settings are in place to enable women realize their right to work. Equal pay for equal work is guaranteed, and specifics of women’s employment, including employment of pregnant women and women with a child (children), as well as caring for a disabled child, are also regulated.

As part of action items under the *Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy* and the ILO recommendations, Order No. 348 dated 13 August 2018, of the RoK Minister of Labor and Social Protection amended and supplemented Order No. 944 dated 8 December 2015 of the RoK Minister of Health and Social Development "*On approving the list of jobs in which the employment of minors is prohibited, and maximum rates for carrying or moving heavy items by minor workers, and the list of jobs in which employment of women is prohibited, as well as maximum rates for carrying or moving manually heavy items by women*".

To ensure a holistic and objective approach to the List update, the Ministry with the assistance of the National Scientific and Research Institute for Labor Protection ran earlier an analytical study which the update List builds on.

The findings of the analytical study served as basis for the updated with 96 less prohibited occupations and jobs. The updated list now contains 191 occupations and professions compared to 287 that it had before.

*For reference: Russia Federation prohibits 456 occupations for women, Kyrgyzstan – 402, Belarus – 181, and Kazakhstan has now under prohibition 191 compared to 287 it used to prohibit.*

The update of the List prohibiting jobs for women and providing them access to jobs that are not harmful for their health since they are automated, technology-intensive and IT-based will ensure women's access to high-paying jobs and address social and economic inequalities.

The laws confer same rights and duties to men and women, and they have equal rights to access to justice and guaranteed judicial remedies. Administrative liability has proved to be efficient in countering domestic violence.

To reinforce prevention of domestic violence offenses the *RoK Law on Introducing Amendments and Supplements to Some Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Improve the Law Enforcement System*, dated 3 July 2017, removed from the RoK Criminal Code Article 108 (*Intentional infliction of minor bodily injury*) and Article 109 (*battery*) - placing them under the administrative violations category.

The legal frameworks have also been improved to prevent family and domestic offences. The police is now equipped with effective leverages against violent family offenders, which enable them to exercise individual preventive measures. Police officers, for example, are now entitled to impose bans restricting offenders contact with the victim up to one month. Upon setting specific requirements for the behavior of offenders, courts also make restrictions in the form of a ban to use alcohol, drugs and psychotropic substances.

Practice has proven that prevention of domestic crimes is inefficient without involvement of NGOs.

At present akimats have the mandate to set up specific entities to assist domestic violence victims and to fund, through the state social order, non-governmental organizations participating in implementation of social programs. In 2017, the national budget made specific allocations to render special social services to domestic violence victims, amounting to KZT 57,075,000 (USD 172,343) in 2017 and KZT 75,691,810 (USD 201,845) in 2018. This budget was tailor-made for grants to local NGOs in order to roll out new standards of services for domestic violence victims.

Pursuant to the *RoK Law on Special Social Services*, a person (family) who is in adverse circumstances and has suffered from domestic violence has the opportunity to receive these services under the budget funds.

The *Standard for Special Social Services to Domestic Violence Victims* has been put into effect (Order No. 1079 of the RoK Minister of Health and Social Development, dated 21 December 2016), that defines the quality, scope and conditions related to these services.

The Standard identifies domestic violence victims based on the criteria for assessment of abuse resulting in social exclusion and social deprivation.

The violence victim support centers have engaged over 200 experts to render services over the reporting period. Crisis centers have also got hotlines.

There is a countrywide round-the-clock hotline "150" and a 24-hour call-center "111" of the Ombudsman for Children's Rights in the Republic of Kazakhstan

to offer emergency legal and psychological assistance to children in difficult circumstances.

Under the *16 Days without Violence against Women* campaign, persons registered with departments of internal affairs, including those who commit family and domestic offenses, and dysfunctional/disadvantaged families get checked with subsequent adoption of appropriate legal response.

Higher education establishments under the Ministry of Internal Affairs research prevention of domestic violence, trafficking in persons, prostitution and minors' involvement in it.

In 2017, under the OSCE aegis, the country's regions in collaboration with the *Podrugi Crisis* Center hosted workshops to enhance professional capacities of local police officers in district and rural areas.

Likewise, over 2014–2016, Kyzylorda and Mangystau oblasts implemented the joint UN/RoK program to draft the methodology to assess needs and requirements pertaining to the robust enforcement of the *Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence*.

Under the project with UN Women, amendments and supplements to the *RoK Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence* were drafted; on 6-7 December 2018, Nur-Sultan hosted the *International Conference on Prevention of Domestic Violence through Efficient Cooperation: New Phase in Evolution of Crisis Centers*; and the unified e-database was designed to register cases of violence against women with further potential integration into the *E-Halyk* national database.

**Question 4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises—caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events—affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country?**

NO.

**Question 5. Which of the following does your country consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes?**

Gender equality and reinforcement of the family status remain among priorities of the RoK national policy. Kazakhstan's national priorities are reflected in the *Kazakhstan-2050 Strategy*, the *2025 Strategic Development Plan of Kazakhstan*, the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, and other key strategic instruments.

***1. The 2025 Strategic Development Plan of Kazakhstan.***

RoK Presidential Decree No. 636 dated 15 February 2018 endorsed the *2025 Strategic Development Plan of Kazakhstan* (the “Strategic Plan”). It is a policy paper

of the state planning system for the medium term and was designed to pursue the long-term *2050 Development Strategy of Kazakhstan*.

This strategic paper is constructed around seven critical system-wide reforms and seven priority policies that will be pursued in the economic and social domains of the country up to 2025.

It should be stressed that sustaining of family values and inadmissibility of gender-based discrimination are some of key targets under the Strategic Plan. The provisions of the paper read that the gender policy of Kazakhstan will be focused on achieving equal rights, benefits, duties and opportunities of men and women in all areas, and eliminating all forms and manifestations of gender-based discrimination. The referenced target on inadmissibility of gender-based discrimination shall be achieved through five initiatives:

*“Improvement of laws in the area of family and gender policies”*

This initiative will seek to improve legislation to ensure equal rights and opportunities of men and women in family relations, protection of motherhood and childhood, enhancing parents' responsibility for bringing up their children, and suppressing all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence.

*“Reinforcing the gender equality institute through state regulation and integration of gender impact assessment into the national and budget planning system”*

The initiative will identify an authorized body that will be responsible for steering and inter-agency coordination of the gender policy and will elaborate the integration of gender approaches, including gender statistics, into the national and budget planning system.

Nowadays, in line with the *Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the Ministries of National Economy and Finance are co-developing proposals to introduce gender-responsive budgeting into the national and budget planning system, which will be submitted to the RoK President's Office this June.

*“Creating an enabling environment for equal employment of men and women”*

National accounts will include gender-sensitive indicators to measure employment in the informal sector, unaccounted domestic care work, home-based employment, domestic paid employment. A gender perspective will be used to improve laws on work-rest routine and occupational safety, working conditions; and to look into possibilities to introduce and expand flexible forms of employment. Women's economic empowerment will be buttressed through promotion of employment and entrepreneurship, including in traditionally male sectors of the economy.

*“Ensuring equal access of men and women to all types of resources required for entrepreneurship“*

To develop entrepreneurship, equal opportunities will be secured for men and women. Gender-sensitive reviews of public services availability and government support for SMBs by place of residence, age, disability, income status will be run regularly. Furthermore, they will improve policies to reduce barriers related to administrative burden, overly restrictive regulations, and showstoppers in the development of women's entrepreneurship.

Actions will be taken to develop women's entrepreneurship covering all sectors of the economy, especially communications and digital services, entertainment and tourism.

It is also planned to assess gender-specific needs, employment demands, and access to basic social services in rural areas and single-industry towns, that will bode for a single map of gender needs and requirements. The list of business development priorities will embrace gender needs and requirements.

All regions will offer constant consulting support for rural women (entrepreneurs and self-employed) free of charge. Specifically, to apply the knowledge and skills in practice, mentoring schools will be set up where experienced professional business mentors will assist to create and develop businesses.

*“Promotion of gender education”*

Implementation of the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* will see an operational advanced system of gender public education and awareness that will cover all age groups, starting from childhood, facilitating uproot of gender stereotypes.

Along with that, the youth vocational guidance system will be revamped through application of new technologies to assess abilities and interests of the individual; publication of textbooks and handbooks on family and gender policies has also been considered.

It is planned to have gender content in all discourses of scientific, professional and public communities to discuss up-to-date approaches in education. Gender equality lectures will be made part of the teachers' professional development courses.

On top of that, training and professional development programs that address gender equality and gender mainstreaming, including data collection and analysis, as well as gender impact assessment prior to making governmental decisions will be expanded.

Principally, gender-related subjects were introduced in RoK higher education establishments as far back as 1999 with the UNDP support. In the years that followed, higher educational establishments (around 38) with gender-related courses (60) grew rapidly and so did the number of teachers, scholars, graduate students,

applicants, and doctoral students that were researching various fields of social sciences and humanities.

*“The directory of elective gender-related disciplines in higher educational establishments of the Republic of Kazakhstan”* – the national study delivered early 2019 by the Research Institute for Social and Gender Studies under the Kazakh State Women's Pedagogical University - showed that in the 2018-2019 academic year, separate gender-specific courses are taught in 21 universities, gender-related sections and topics are part of compulsory subjects in 12 universities. Cumulatively, it makes 25.7% of the total number of universities in the country.

## ***2. The 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan.***

RoK Presidential Decree No. 384 dated 6 December 2016 endorsed *the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan*.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Concept, the gender policy will be implemented in line with the following principles:

- 1) Ensuring equality in realization of all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights irrespective of gender;
- 2) Inadmissibility of discrimination, gender bias in public and social domains;
- 3) Building gender identity and uprooting gender stereotypes in the society.

As per *the Strategy of Gender Policy Implementation* (Clause 4.2. of the Concept), priority areas will be:

- 1) *“Reinforcing the gender equality institute through state regulation and integration of gender impact assessment into the national and budget planning system and at drafting of regulations”*.

It should be mentioned that under this priority area it is anticipated to implement a range of measures, including continuous oriented training of civil servants in gender-responsive budgeting in collaboration with the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan; enhancing international cooperation through regular exchange of knowledge, experience and best practices in gender equality initiatives in the social life.

It is also worth highlighting that over 2017-2018, the RoK Ministry of National Economy implemented a joint project with UN Women Kazakhstan under the title *“Assistance in achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of commitments in the field of promoting gender equality in Kazakhstan”* (“the Project”). Under the project, in 2017, they performed the gender analysis of state planning documents and associated budget programs on the example of the Ministry of Agriculture, engaging national and international experts; developed training modules and delivered trainings for public servants (over 88 civil servants in 2017 and more than 130 in 2018 in seven regions of Kazakhstan) related to the

methodology and gender analysis of documents pertaining to the state planning system and budget programs.

The project resulted in concrete propositions to amend and supplement regulations through a gender-sensitive perspective, which will be reflected in the *Plan for Integration of Gender-Responsive Budgeting into Existing System of State and Budget Planning*.

2) *“Prevention of violence against women”*.

Pursuant to the Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan, laws on the inadmissibility and suppression of all forms of discrimination and gender-based violence will be updated in line with UN international requirements, Sustainable Development Goals and OECD. Likewise, the prosecution services will engage regularly NGOs to visit penitentiary institutions for sexual harassment and violence monitoring, as well as to inspect the conditions of women’s detention in such institutions. Furthermore, guidelines will be drafted and universal general training will be integrated into the system of social and penitentiary institutions on the procedures for protecting the rights of girls and women to live free from discrimination and violence.

*For reference: In 2016, the RoK General Prosecutor's Office in cooperation with the National Commission for Women and Demographic Policy under the RoK President, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and UN Women Kazakhstan launched a pilot project to implement the Road Map “Kazakhstan Free from Domestic Violence”.*

3) *“Ensuring equal access of men and women to all types of resources required for entrepreneurship”*.

Women’s business will evolve in modern and innovative services: communications and digital services, entertainment, tourism, etc. The map will be also designed to assess gender-sensitive needs and requirements of rural areas and monotowns in employment and access to basic social services; and gender-sensitive needs and requirements of rural areas and monotowns will be integrated into the lists of priority areas for small business support. Under this umbrella, they will also put in place training and internship courses in order to offer free mentoring business rehabilitation and adaptation of self-employed rural women.

4) *“Creating an enabling environment for equal employment of men and women”*.

Pursuant to the Concept, a gender perspective will be applied to improve laws on work-rest routine and occupational safety, to upgrade working conditions; and to look into possibilities to introduce and expand flexible forms of employment.

5) *“Promotion of gender education”*.

Gender content will be integrated into all discourses of scientific, professional and public communities to discuss up-to-date approaches in education. Gender



equality lectures will be made part of the teachers' professional development courses.

6) "Increasing women's participation in peace and security"

The proportion of women among the military personnel of peacekeeping contingents (the national contingent of the Republic of Kazakhstan) under UN Peacekeeping Operations will increase, pursuant to the laws, on a voluntary basis, through involvement of those who have undergone peacekeeping training. Regional security entities will consider setting up advisory bodies embracing women and human rights activists.

It should be emphasized that in pursuance of the Concept, RoK Governmental Resolution No. 106 dated 3 March 2017 endorsed the Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan (Phase 1 in 2017-2019).

The Action Plan stipulates delivery of 54 events/activities over 2017-2019. In 2019, pilot regions are anticipated to roll out models of integrated special social services for families and children in difficult circumstances (January 2019), introduce moral and sexual courses with application of up-to-date techniques under the educational process umbrella in technical, vocational and post-secondary establishments (2018-2019), render special social services to domestic violence victims and human trafficking victims (2017-2019), put together lists of potential candidates from among women of the security sector to undergo peacekeeping training and be included in peacekeeping forces (2017-2019).

## **Section two. Progress across the twelve critical areas of concern**

**Question 6. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?**

*Reinforced/enforced laws, workplace policies and practices prohibiting discrimination in recruitment, retention and promotion of women in public and private sectors, and equal pay laws.*

The Republic of Kazakhstan has been consistently implementing measures to improve the status of the family, women and children, geared at honoring the III Millennium Development Goals pertaining to gender equality. RoK laws set forth that women enjoy equal rights with men to work and participate actively in all economic activities.

The Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan enshrines all rights and freedoms of citizens in the area of employment as guaranteed by the Constitution and international treaties. Article 6 of the Labor Code stipulates the prohibition of any discrimination in employment relations, including gender-based. Persons who

think they are exposed to discrimination in employment are entitled to go to court or approach other agencies as prescribed by the RoK laws. Article 25 of the Code prohibits breaching equal rights and opportunities at conclusion of an employment agreement. Pregnancy, children under three years of age, minors, disability status cannot abridge the right to enter into an employment agreement.

The Code specifies jobs where the use of women's labor is prohibited, and maximum rates for carrying or moving manually heavy items by women. Article 26 of the Code prohibits employment of women for arduous work, work in harmful and (or) hazardous conditions in line with the List of jobs where employment of women is prohibited (“the List of jobs”).

In pursuance of the Code, Order No. 944 dated 8 December 2015 of the RoK Minister of Health and Social Development endorsed the List of jobs where the employment of women is prohibited, and maximum rates for carrying and moving manually heavy items by women.

Article 10 of the *Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women* guarantees equal rights and equal opportunities to men and women in labour relations, including: in conclusion of an employment agreement; equal access to vacancies; skills upgrade, retraining and promotion.

As of 16 November 2012, the Law of Republic of Kazakhstan ratified ILO Convention No. 156 “*Convention concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers*”, which looks to create equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers with family responsibilities, as well as between these and other workers. Specifically, the provisions of the Convention are about enabling persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities.

Article 22.1.15 of the Labor Code stipulates equal pay for equal work without any discrimination. Therefore, the provisions of laws protect fully labor rights of women.

*Introduced/enhanced gender-responsive active labour market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies)*

The data of the Statistics Committee under the RoK Ministry of National Economy showed that in 2018 the economically active population aged 15+ totaled 9.1 mln. and women’s proportion was 49% or 4.5 mln. The employed population structure witnesses the growth of women’s employment which is 3.2 mln. or 76.5% as per the 2018 results.

The female unemployment as of end 2018 was 5.4%. In the employed population structure the women’s employment proportion was 48.5% or 4.2 mln. women at the end of 2018.

## Key labour market indicators in the Republic of Kazakhstan

	Population aged 15+				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Labour force, th.	8,962.0	8,887.6	8,998.8	9,027.4	9,138.6
Women's proportion, %	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8
Employed population, th.	8,510.1	8,433.3	8,553.3	8,585.2	8,695.0
Men	4,389.3	4,371.2	4,440.4	4,458.9	4,474.7
Women	4,120.7	4,062.1	4,113.0	4,126.3	4,220.3
Unemployment, total, %	5.0	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9
Female unemployment	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.4	5.4

In pursuance of the task set by the RoK First President, the *Enbek* National Program for Development of Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship (“the Program”) has been put in place. The key goal of the Program is to engage the unemployed and other persons without professional qualification in productive employment by implementing solutions across three areas:

- Mass training and skills development in high-demand occupations and entrepreneurship basics;
- Creating a conducive environment for mass entrepreneurship;
- Developing the labor market through employment assistance and support for labor mobility.

Specific categories of employed persons, the unemployed and unskilled persons, including women, are eligible for the Program.

As of 1 January 2019, 673,000 persons, with women amounting to 307,000 (50%), have been covered with state support measures under the Program.

*Supporting the move from informal to formal employment, including legal and policy measures that assist women in informal employment.*

The Program suggests introducing a specific tax regime - the Single Cumulative Payment (SCP) which ensures social and economic rights of self-employed in order to simplify registration and legalization of activities by informally employed persons, including women. SCP consolidates four payments into one (individual income tax, mandatory pension contributions, contributions to the Medical Insurance Fund and the State Social Insurance Fund). SCP payment will imply the automatic registration of activities and participation in the medical and social insurance, and the pension system. SCP is designed for key categories of the self-employed who provide services solely to individuals and earn less than 100

minimum wages per annum.

SCP introduction will formalize the activities of about 500,000 persons among the informally employed and ensure influx of 65,500 tax payers under existing fiscal regimes.

UN Women concluded a review that underpinned recommendations on further economic capacity building of rural women, entrepreneurship and employment development in rural areas. They were submitted to the Ministry of National Economy to be subsequently incorporated into the *Auyl – El Besigi* National Programme.

**Question 7. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?**

*Expanded support for frail elderly persons and other persons who need intensive forms of care*

The *RoK Law on Special Social Services* enacted on 1 January 2009, the *List of Free Guaranteed Special Social Services* and the *Standards for Provision of Special Social Services under Social Protection* allowed to enhance the quality of social services, ensuring the targeted and individual approach to a person in difficult circumstances, including the elderly.

As per these Standards, a person in difficult circumstances, including the elderly, is eligible for 8 types of services sponsored from the budget: socio-medical, household, psychological, pedagogical, labor, cultural, economic and legal. These services are provided comprehensively given the needs of each person and ensure a system-wide rehabilitation. Types and volumes of services vary depending on the type of specialist facilities rendering these services.

Under *the Law on Special Social Services* centers that provide special social services either on the hospital basis or at home accept for care elderly persons of retirement age, who are unable to serve themselves and need healthcare services at a hospital due to health conditions, who do not have working-age adult children, or a spouse who are obliged under the *RoK Code on Marriage and Family* to provide for their incapacitated parents or a spouse in need of care, or have working-age adult children or a spouse who, for objective reasons, cannot provide them with permanent assistance and care (since they have I and II groups of disability, oncological diseases and mental disorders, are in detention, are registered with a drug clinic, left to take up permanent residence outside the country, and additionally spouse-wise – being in advanced years).

The existing system of social services has in operation 49 centers of hospital-based special social services where more than 6,000 elderly people are referred to. To improve the institutional framework for the provision of these services to the

elderly and the disabled in need of assistance, alternative forms of services provision in day care facilities have been put in practice.

The 2018 results demonstrate the country has over 100 semi-residential facilities for the elderly and the disabled covering more than 4,300 elderly persons and 488 social assistance units that provide services at home and take care of more than 35,000 elderly persons, 177 NGOs operating under the state social order with 4,500 elderly persons on their radar.

*Introduced or increased maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave*

The Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan stipulates a range of provisions enabling women and other persons with family responsibilities to enjoy work-family conciliation:

- A temporary transfer of pregnant women to another job upon presentation of a medical certificate, (Article 44);
- Provision of additional breaks for the child (children) feeding (Article 82);
- Provision of leave due to pregnancy and birth of child (children), adoption of a newborn child (children) (Article 99);
- Granting the unpaid leave to care for a child until the age of three (Article 100);
- Ban on employer-initiated termination of an employment agreement with pregnant women who presented to the employer the certificate of pregnancy, women with children under the age of three, single mothers raising a child under 14 (a disabled child under 18), other persons raising the referenced category of children without a mother (Article 54.2);
- Pregnant women who submitted the certificate of pregnancy to the employer are not allowed to work overtime (Article 77.3.1);
- It is prohibited to engage pregnant women who provided the employer with the certificate of pregnancy in works during weekends and holidays (Article 85.4);
- The employer will authorize part-time work upon a written application of a pregnant woman, one of the parents (adoptive parent) with a child (children) under 3 (Article 70.3);
- The employer is obliged to grant unpaid leave to an employee to care for the child until the age of three at the parents' choice – either the mother or father of the child (Article 100.1.1).
- If, on the day of the employment agreement expiration, a woman submits a medical certificate of pregnancy that is 12 or more weeks, the employer is obliged to extend the employment agreement upon her written request up to the last day of parental leave until the child is 3 years old (Article 51.2).

The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated 14 February 2012 ratified ILO Convention No. 183 “*Convention concerning the revision of the Maternity*

*Protection Convention (Revised), 1952*". The purpose of the Convention is to safeguard motherhood and take measures for protection of women's reproductive role. The provisions of the RoK laws are in compliance with this Convention.

One of the initiatives under the *2025 Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan* is to create an enabling environment for equal employment of men and women. The system of national accounts will include gender-sensitive indicators to measure employment in the informal sector, unaccounted domestic care work, home-based employment, domestic paid employment. A gender perspective will be used to improve laws on work-rest routine and occupational safety, working conditions; and to look into possibilities to introduce and expand flexible forms of employment. Women's economic empowerment will be buttressed through promotion of employment and entrepreneurship, including in traditionally male-dominated sectors of the economy.

Given the above, we believe that the provisions of the laws safeguard in full the rights of women, including pregnant women, women with children.

**Question 8. Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?**

Annually, during formation of the national budget for a relevant period, they perform an analysis and, if required, optimization of budget expenditures.

Over 2016-2018, base expenditures of the national budget got optimized by KZT765.8 bl., including:

- in 2016 – by KZT 580 bl.;
- in 2017 - by KZT 66.8 bl. or 10%;
- in 2018 - by KZT 119 bl. or 10%.

Optimization of expenditures is targeted to address two key issues:

- To ensure a balance of the budget that was upset by adverse impacts on the economy and associated decrease in budget revenues;
- To support the economy through identified reserves and their channeling for anti-crisis measures ("*NurlyZhol*", "*NurlyZher*").

Optimization of expenditures is done across these areas:

- Administrative, travel and representation, capital expenditures, costs of analytical and consulting studies, certain informatization-related expenses and other operational expenses;
- New projects and programs, including new initiatives, as well as ongoing cost-intensive and long-term projects;
- Programs and areas of expenditures with identified low or unconfirmed efficiency.

In the context of critical budget expenditures reduction the new economic

policy of Kazakhstan – ‘*NurlyZhol - Path to the Future*’ – has become the pivotal instrument to support the economy and pursue the counter-cyclical budget policy in 2015–2019. However, all social obligations of the state related to payment of wages, pensions and benefits, including to women, have been fully honored.

Overall, the fiscal policy is designed to cut budget deficits, keep the debt at a safe level and diminish progressively non-petroleum deficits relative to the GDP.

**Question 9. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?**

*Promoted poor women’s access to decent work through active labour market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures. Supported women’s entrepreneurship and business development activities.*

In pursuance of the task by the Head of State, the *National Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship Development Program “Enbek”* (“the Program”) has been under implementation since 2017. The Program provides for mechanisms to enhance professional competences, develop entrepreneurial skills of the unemployed and the self-employed, including women.

In 2018, the data of local executive bodies showed that 628,000 persons, including 307,600 or 49% of women, were covered by the Program. And 277,000 women or 55.7% got employed. 24,000 women had vocational training.

Under the *Bastau Business Project*, 12,900 women were trained in the entrepreneurship basics to start up their own businesses and 5,282 of them were able to defend their business projects.

As many as 3,033 women obtained microcredits: 1,849 of them started up their first businesses while 1,243 women were awarded grants in the amount of 100 MCIs (KZT2,525,000 in 2019) for the development of new business ideas.

Vacancies were filled with 191,700 women, social jobs got 5,400 women, 6,400 women got engaged in youth-related activities, 11,300 women had social jobs. Temporary jobs (social jobs and youth practice) were provided to over 11,750 women, and 11,322 women were referred to paid public works.

Under the labor mobility campaign, 1,403 women were relocated, and 639 working-age women got employed.

Key national labor market indicators show a steady positive trend over recent years; employment is on the rise while unemployment is going down.

*Introduced or strengthened social protection programs for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for elderly women)*

Protection of rights and legitimate interests of families with children is one of key priorities under the national policies of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

To date they have built the national model to support families with children

that represents a system of state benefits and transfers to boost birth rate and facilitate child-rearing in the family:

- Childbirth benefit has been put in place since 2013, over 2015-2019 it has increased 1.5 times (from KZT103,758 to KZT 159,075). In 2018, it was paid to 395,000 persons, totaling KZT 40.7 bl.;

- The childcare benefit until the child turns one has been in effect since 2006; it is a differentiated amount and depends on the number of children in the family; in 2015-2019, the benefit has grown 1.3 times (from KZT 17,640 to KZT 22,473). In 2018, 125,700 persons were eligible for this benefit, to the total amount of KZT 29.9 bl.;

- The benefit allocated and paid to a mother or a father, guardians and adoptive parents raising a disabled child, until the child turns 18; in 2019 it is KZT 31,183 (1.05 SM). In 2018, on average, 80,600 persons were eligible for the benefit, to the amount of KZT 29.5 bl.;

Since 1 July 2018, the care benefit for Group I disabled person since childhood has been KZT 31,183 (1.05 SM). In 2018, on average, 11,500 persons got this benefit, to the amount of KZT 2.1 bl.

#### *Cash transfers for multiple-child mothers*

- Monthly governmental transfers paid irrespective of the income to multiple-child mothers awarded with “Altyn Alka”, “Kymisalka” pendants or who have previously been granted the title “Hero Mother”, awarded with the Honor of Motherhood I, II degrees, increased 1.3 times in 2015-2018 (from KZT12,685 to KZT16,160). As of the end of 2017, 238,900 families received these transfers worth KZT 41.7 bl, in 2018 – 237,000 families, totaling KZT43.8 bl.

Multiple-child families with 4 or more minor children had their transfers increased by 1.3 times (from KZT 8,245 to KZT10,504) throughout 2015-2018. As of the end of 2017, 266,500 families got transfers worth KZT 30.7 bl., and in 2018 - 271,000 families, in the amount of KZT 32.8 bl.

### **Question 10. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?**

*Reformed contributory social protection schemes to strengthen women’s access and benefit levels.*

From 2018 the Republic of Kazakhstan has been raising the women’s retirement age. Since 1 January 2019, the retirement age for women has further increased by six months (compared with the previous period) and is now 59 years. The retirement age of men remains 63 years as before.

Over the next 8 years, the retirement age of women will grow annually by 6 months, and by 2027 it will be equal to the men retirement age of 63 years.

Since 1998 Kazakhstan has embarked on the pension system reform.



Specifically, they started with a phased transition from the solidarity pension system to the pension savings scheme based on individual pension savings of citizens.

Currently, Kazakhstan has in place a multi-level pension system, and accordingly, pensions have several components:

*Firstly*, it is the state basic pension payment that is minimum 54% of the subsistence level or KZT 16,037. It is guaranteed to all citizens with work experience of 10 years or less or who do not have any work experience at all. That said, citizens who have an extensive work experience will have their basic pension increase by 2% for each year worked over 10 years and with the work experience of 33 years or more, the basic pension will be maximum - 100% of SM or KZT29,698;

*Secondly*, solidary pensions paid out to the citizens who have not less than 6 months of work experience before 1 January 1998. To be eligible for the solidarity pension in full amount, men must have 25 years of work experience and women – 20.

*Thirdly*, it is the savings pension which is paid from individual pension savings of citizens and depends on the amount of accumulated funds.

Given the specifics of women's employment, i.e. relatively short periods of work and low wages, their pension coverage differs significantly from that of men's. Unification of the retirement age, therefore, is one of the measures to increase pensions for women. Ensuring they have equal rights with men for longer employment has a positive effect both on the increase of their pension savings and the work experience accounted for during the basic pension calculation.

By the way, the increased retirement age in Kazakhstan does not apply to women who are eligible for early retirement benefits, i.e.:

- women who gave birth to (adopted) five or more children and raised them up to the age of eight, - at the age of 53;
- women who lived in the areas of emergency and maximum radiation risk of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site from 29 August 1949 to 5 July 1963 for at least 5 years – at the age of 45 years.

Participants of the savings pension scheme, provided that they have accumulated sufficient funds, preserve the right to have pension payments from the savings pension system at the age of 51 years if they purchase a pension annuity.

In this context, the phased retirement age increase implemented by Kazakhstan aims to secure opportunities of an extended employment period in order to enjoy a socially acceptable level of pensions.

**Question 11. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?**

Improving the quality of life, soundness of family relationships, birth of healthy children are the goals of reproductive healthcare.

*The system of measures* enabling the production of healthy progeny, prevention of diseases and treatment of reproductive organs, protection from sexually transmitted diseases, family planning, prevention of maternal and infant mortality are key areas under the *RoK 2016-2019 National Healthcare Development Program “Densaulyk”*.

Critical aspects of reproductive health according to the WHO strategy are: improvement of antenatal care, medical assistance during and after delivery, newborns care; availability of family planning services, including infertility treatment; eliminating unsafe abortions.

*The RoK Law on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Healthcare* No. 80-VI, dated 30 June 2017, introduced amendments to grant foreigners and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Kazakhstan the right to have medical care under the guaranteed free medical care (the GFMC) on an equal basis with the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan from 1 January 2018. In this way, refugee women and refugee girls, as well as women and girls living in a humanitarian crisis, have access to emergency medical services related to sexual and reproductive healthcare under the Guaranteed Free Medical Care (the GFMC).

The new version of the *Code of the People’s Health and the Healthcare System in the Republic of Kazakhstan* suggests granting teenagers, from the age of 16, the right to give their own voluntary informed consent to medical services and has the expanded sections on youth-friendly reproductive and mental healthcare services.

To improve women's health, the country has in place the algorithm of reproductive age women check-up and screening programs to enable early detection of diseases, out-patient monitoring and the population health improvement, including cervical and breast cancer screening. The screening applies to these age groups: for breast cancer - women at the age of 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60 years, for cervical cancer - women at the age of 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 years, for prostate cancer – men at the age of 50, 54, 58, 62 and 66 years. Cervical cancer screenings have been in practice in Kazakhstan for 10 years and they are available to everyone. But despite the fact that screening is free and widely available in Kazakhstan, only 23% of women undergo it.

*Infertile marriage* is one of the most urgent and complex medical and social problems of reproductive health. Studies of the Urology Research Center demonstrated that nearly every second man in the country has reproductive dysfunctions (infertility, urological and andrological pathology, etc.). The largest number of persons with urological and andrological pathology is found in age group 26-35 (24%), age group 36-45 (19%) and age group 56-65 (17%).

The RoK Ministry of Health endorsed *the 2017-2020 Comprehensive Plan for*

*Male Reproductive Healthcare.* The Plan stipulates improvement of regulations, and interventions to prevent male reproductive diseases. The country has now in operation 16 Centers of Male Health and enhances their physical and technical infrastructure as well as human resources.

Decline in abortions and sexually transmitted infections has impact on the female reproductive health.

*Reproductive health of teenagers and women of childbearing age.*

The system of reproductive healthcare measures, family planning to ensure the birth of healthy children represents one of key areas under the *2016-2019 National Healthcare Development Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Densaulyk"*.

Infertility diagnosis and treatment is a critical aspect of reproductive healthcare. The regions are putting in operations specialist point of care for infertile couples where, in full compliance with confidentiality arrangements, they undergo comprehensive diagnostics and multidisciplinary treatment by highly qualified specialists (obstetrician-gynecologists, andrologists and urologists, fertility specialists, psychologists, ultrasound diagnostics doctors).

The 2019 national budget earmarked funds for 900 IVFs under the GFMC.

The regions have got in operation the infertility treatment points. The country has currently on the register over 14,000 infertile couples. To address infertility, in vitro fertilization is offered under the GFMC (100 IVFs in 2010, 900 IVFs in 2018). The adolescent birth rate remains high in Kazakhstan and is 24.9 per 1,000 girls aged 15-19. Meanwhile, independent studies in Kazakhstan reveal that adolescents and young people practice a high risk unsafe sexual behavior due to early sexual debut (16.5 years is the mean age of the sexual debut) and poor awareness about health protection. Almost one third of teenagers aged 15–19 are sexually active. That said, 91% of Kazakhstani teenagers aged 15–19 are not sufficiently knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS; 20% tend to practice risky sexual behavior; 14.8% reported the presence of at least one symptom related to the sexually transmitted infection (STI) over the last 12 months, and majority of them (62.6%) failed to seek medical assistance to treat the STI at a healthcare facility.

The RoK President's Addresses to the people of Kazakhstan of 10 January 2018 and 5 October 2018, stressed that special attention should be paid to protection and improvement of youth reproductive health, and the year of 2019 was declared the Year of Youth in Kazakhstan. Thereafter, the Ministry of Healthcare performs interventions and activities to develop the adolescent healthcare service and enhance the quality of medical, psychological and social services to protect the sexual and reproductive health of young people at the premises of 118 youth health centers set up under the outpatient care.

To improve the quality of services at youth centers, Almaty is now home to

the Excellence Center as the resource facility for regional centers. Trainings have been launched for relevant staff and the regulatory framework of youth centers is being updated to ensure sustainable funding through the social and healthcare insurance system, to be put into effect in 2020.

In addition to comprehensive services, youth centers assist with awareness-raising and education among adolescents and parents. To this end, with the UNFPA support, the country is expanding the volunteer network and 100 youth leaders have already been trained under the global Y-PEER reproductive health program to educate the youth on the peer-to-peer principle. The country has in operation 10 youth centers "Y-PEER" in 8 regions.

Preparations are now progressing to introduce the adolescent moral and sexual education in schools and colleges. The relevant curriculum has been designed and successfully rolled up in pilot colleges of 6 regions. Methodology advisers are now trained to help introduce the moral and sexual education and training of schoolchildren into the secondary education system.

In 2019, for the purpose of enhanced public awareness, social networks and Internet resources are proactively utilized instead of outdated conventional methods, such as making copies and distributing informational and educational materials.

To enhance public awareness, official accounts of medical facilities have been set up (on Facebook, Instagram, VKontakte) and offer informational and educational materials (infographics, announcements, publications, context-specific information, videos) regarding prevention of infectious and noninfectious diseases, behavioral factors of risk, injury, reproductive and mental healthcare.

To inoculate a healthy lifestyle among teenagers and young people at schools and universities, we implement WHO projects: “*Health Promotion Schools*” and “*Healthy Universities*”. In 2018, 735 schools and 62 universities got covered by the WHO project.

Overall, in 2018 the country hosted more than 700,000 events (*thematic classes in pre-school and general education facilities, parents' meetings, class hours, conferences, round tables, ‘Open Days’, workshops, etc.*) and covered in total 12.4 mln. persons.

National and regional media delivered 3,050,776 events: press conferences, TV and radio presentations, publications by news agencies (*nur.kz, zakon.kz, tengrinews, etc.*), TV reports, audio and video broadcasts, posts in social media and websites of healthcare facilities, videos on LED displays, outdoor ads (*LED displays, banners, billboards, etc.*), information distribution via: SMS, social media, utilities receipts and other actions.

Kazakhstan provides the universal access to free HIV testing. HIV tests can be done at any medical facility irrespective of its ownership form. HIV tests keep increasing annually and are to identify proactively HIV-positive cases. In 2018, the

country had 2,956,175 HIV tests which is 1.6% increase compared to 2017.

New international ‘test-and-treat’ recommendations have been put in practice that allow to prescribe treatment immediately after diagnosis. Free antiretroviral treatment is provided for all, including pregnant women, to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

The *WHO/UNAIDS Strategy on HIV/AIDS (90-90-90)* is rigorously implemented with the target to achieve these indicators by 2020: 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status; 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy; 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

In 2018, 84% of people living with HIV knew their status, 66% of HIV-positive received therapy, 65% of persons receiving therapy had viral suppression.

To preclude the mother-to-child intrauterine HIV transmission, the comprehensive mother-to-child transmission prevention program (PMTCT) has been put in place: double routine HIV-testing of all pregnant women registered, fast-track diagnosis of HIV infection in pregnant women who are not registered with prenatal clinics, prescription of preventive therapy once the HIV status is confirmed, during delivery and for the newborn child.

To maximize coverage of HIV-positive people with antiretroviral therapy and improve its quality, including treatment adherence, training seminars are delivered for AIDS center specialists on the HIV-positive patient management.

AIDS-caused mortality across all age groups (the number of HIV-infected people who died of AIDS-related causes per 100,000) is only -1.3; among women (0.9) 1.9 times less than among men (1.7).

It is ensured that key groups (injection drug users, sex workers, men who have sex with men) have access to prophylaxis programs and STI treatment on a free, confidential and anonymous basis.

**Question 12. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?**

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the *Law on the Rights of the Child* and the *Law on Education* guarantee the free universal mandatory secondary education to citizens of the country and prohibit gender-based discrimination.

The education accessibility index in Kazakhstan for women (0.980) is higher than for men (0.952), and it is 0.967 on average. The index is estimated against the literacy rate of the population aged 15+ and the enrollment rate.

Kazakhstan has 10,314 pre-school facilities with 880,900 enrolled children, including 432,400 girls. The coverage of children aged 3-6 years is 95.2%. In comparison with last year, the growth is 4.8%.

To ensure full access to pre-school education it is planned to set up before

2020 another 407 pre-school establishments, including 353 private entities.

At the beginning of the 2018–2019 academic year, the country had in operation 7,393 secondary schools, out of which 7,255 or 98.1%, are state-run. The number of enrolled students is 3,186,234. And 75.3% of total public day schools are rural, with 46% of pupils enrolled in them. Girls account for 54% of secondary school graduates.

Secondary school enrollment in 2018 was 99.8%.

Under the *General Education Program*, they identify children who do not go to school and take measures to enforce their right to education.

Pupils who experience permanent or temporary difficulties in the secondary education process (due to health status or socio-economic factors), can attend evening schools active in the country; in 2018 they totaled 74 (with 10,331 students), 29 of them were in penitentiary institutions and 7 - for children with deviant behaviors.

Currently, the country has 805 colleges (including branches): 56% of them are state-owned and 44% - private. Colleges offer 263 specialties and 745 qualifications.

As for male-female ratio in technical and vocational schools, there are 229,044 women (46.8%) and 260,774 men (53.2%).

Pursuant to the *RoK Law on Education*, the State ensures that citizens have free technical and vocational education and graduates get awarded with the established and higher working qualifications, as well as competition-based free technical and vocational, post-secondary education if it is the first time a citizen of the Republic Kazakhstan gets enrolled.

Educational curricula at all education levels meet gender balance requirements.

Kazakhstan has in operation 128 higher education establishments (including branches): state-run - 45, private - 83.

The composition of students in the 2018-2019 academic year is as follows: bachelor's programs - 542,458 persons, out of whom 292,231 or 53.9% are women; master's programs – 38,594 persons, out of whom 22,807 or 59.1% are women; PhD students – 5,609 with women accounting for 3,625 or 64.6%.

In pursuance of the *RoK Concept of Family and Gender Policy*, technical and vocational schools ensure high-quality vocational education, healthy working environment and studies of women.

Educational establishments have quotas for enrollment as approved by RoK Governmental Resolution No. 296 “*On establishment of enrollment quotas for educational establishments delivering professional training programs under technical and vocational, post-secondary education*” of citizens from among auyllar (rural) youth into fields of study that are decisive for the socio-economic development of the auyllar (village) (30%).

To support small and medium businesses, all technical and vocational education establishments deliver training and retraining, including for women.

This year, under the *Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship Development Program*, 21,000 persons are expected to undergo retraining courses at technical and vocational education establishments and training centers that will be covered by the national budget.

To that end, these educational institutions have compiled a list of specialties and professions for retraining courses, including retraining of women in new professions and qualifications: farm manager, foremen for sour milk and whole milk products, beautician/facialist, style hairdresser, makeup artist, insurance agent, masseur, master baker, manufacturer of semi-finished meat products, tourism instructor, marketing, hospitality and tourism management, candy maker, biscuit maker, accountant, administrative assistant, communications operator, fruit and vegetable gardening, designer-stylist/dress cutter, foremen of finishing works, archives and records management, librarian, translation service, etc.

Educational institutions designed agendas for female students under the following themes: "Woman and the economy", "Women and media", "Woman and safe employment", "Woman and social support", "Women and health", and host regularly multiple competitions to boost professionalism and creativity of students.

To enhance professional levels and identify talented, creative vocational instructors, including female ones, professional skill contests are also held.

Students, married women with babies, low-income families, multiple-child families, disadvantaged single women, and disabled women get social assistance.

Educational institutions provide disabled girls with opportunities to get trained in sewing, arts and crafts, catering, service industry.

Under the *RoK Law on Education* all secondary schools in Kazakhstan ensure that girls and boys have access to the same curricula and examinations, teachers of the same competence level, school premises and equipment of the same quality. Regardless of gender, they can make use of free information resources, gyms, reading rooms, concert halls and libraries at schools.

Educational grants for higher education are awarded annually. There is also a practice when grants are awarded by rectors, national companies and akims. At present 49,000 persons are enrolled in higher education establishments and 30,000 of them (61%) are women.

**Question 13. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?**

**Domestic violence prevention**

Ensure protection of women's and children's rights is one of the indicators

under the *2025 RoK Strategic Development Plan*.

December 2009 saw the adoption of the *RoK Law on Domestic Violence Prevention*. The law is designed to reduce offenses in family and domestic relations. To prevent offenses in family and domestic relations, a variety of organizational and legislative measures are currently implemented. The RoK Ministry of Internal Affairs initiated 12 times amendments and supplements to the *RoK Law on Domestic Violence Prevention (from 2010 to 2018)*, specifically:

- The restraining order term has been extended from 10 to 30 days;
- District police inspectors, juvenile affairs inspectors and inspectors for the protection of women against violence have been vested with the right to issue restraining orders;
- The provision has been introduced to evict temporarily (*up to 30 days*) the violent family offender from the housing facility (*if the offender has another housing*), as well as to ban contact with minors or incapacitated family members of the victim.

Through legal procedures, as part of specific requirements for the offender's behavior (*under Article 54 of the CoAV*), violent family offenders are banned from consuming alcohol, drugs and psychotropic substances for the term of three months up to one year.

Apart from bans to contact with the victim, additional bans may be imposed on the use and storage of any weapons and use of alcohol.

If a person breaches the restrictions imposed under such special requirements, administrative proceedings envisaged in Article 669 of the CoAV (*Non-compliance with the court sentence, ruling or any other judicial act and enforcement document*) are initiated, which stipulates as a sanction the fine of 5 MCIs, or an administrative arrest up to 5 days.

In case the offender continues to abuse alcohol and pursue the antisocial lifestyle, then, upon the relevant family report, healthcare authorities issue the opinion on the referral for the compulsory therapy at drug rehabilitation centers for up to 2 years (by court ruling).

#### **Data about issued restraining orders and imposed specific requirements, 2014-2018**

Name	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Issued restraining orders	63,012	63,223	64,132	61,046	64,852
Imposed specific requirements	5,250	4,869	5,301	5,934	6,605

The *RoK Law on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Legislative Acts on Improvement of the Law Enforcement System* dated 3 July 2017 decriminalized



two criminal offenses: intentional infliction of minor bodily injury (*Article 108 of the Criminal Code*) and battery (*Article 109 of the Criminal Code*) and now has them under administrative offenses.

Respectively, two new administrative offenses were introduced into the Code of Administrative Violations: Article 73-1 (*intentional infliction of minor bodily injury*) and Article 73-2 (*battery*).

Furthermore, the *RoK Code of Administrative Violations* increased the term of administrative detention from 3 to 24 hours.

All in all, civil, administrative and criminal laws stipulate liabilities in order to protect citizens' rights and freedoms, including women exposed to violence.

On 1 January 2015, the new Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan ("the CPC") was enacted, and now protection of women can be enforced under 23 articles (including criminalization of rape and sexual assault (Article 120, 121 of the CPC); it also sets forth liability for forced sexual intercourse, sodomy, lesbianism or other acts of sexual nature (Article 123 of the CPC).

#### *Trafficking in women and girls*

The country has in operation the *Interagency Commission for Combating Illegal Export, Import and Trafficking in Persons*, which is an advisory body under the Government (*since 2003*).

The Commission is mandated to analyze the current context and elaborate proposals to combat illegal export, import, trafficking in persons and support victims of trafficking. Similar commissions are operational under local executive authorities.

Governmental action plans for prevention, prophylaxis and fight against trafficking-related crimes are under a phased approval (*five such plans have been implemented since 2004*).

Now they have in operation the *2018-2020 Action Plan (RoK Governmental Resolution No. 609 dated 1 October 2018)* that contains a wide range of actions to address trafficking in persons and illegal migration.

By and large, over the last 5 years (*2014-2018*), implemented measures resulted in a steady downward trend of crimes against women. During this period the number of crimes has dropped by 15.9% (*from 136,552 to 114,850*).

Overall, the 2018 statistics show that 3,679 crimes were committed against women, where physical and sexual violence crimes, respectively, accounted for:

- 2,737, including 1,535 - against women aged 18-49, and 1,779 – against women aged 18-75;

- 1,322, including 994 – against women aged 18-49, and 1,081 – against women aged 18-75.

## Crimes against women in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2014-2018

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Population, total, th.		17 160,8	17 415,7	17 669,9	17 918,2	18 157,3
Women, th.		8 876,2	9 002,6	9 128,1	9 249,7	9 366,0
Proportion of women in total population, %		51,7	51,7	51,6	51,6	51,6
Total crimes against women		136 552	58 748	12 476	112 842	114 850
Out of which	Crimes against the person	5139	6253	5030	3975	3679
	Homicide (Article 99)	204	232	212	209	223
	Intentional infliction of grievous bodily injury (Article 106)	222	312	287	274	263
	Intentional infliction of moderate bodily injury (Article 107)	780	1175	1236	973	887
	Abuse (Article 110)	13	4	3	3	2
	Rape (Article 120)	2526	2296	1603	1285	1075
	Sexual assault (Article 121)	362	408	298	309	248
	Sexual intercourse with a person under 16 years old (Article 122)	290	701	441	272	363
	Kidnapping (Article 125)	22	27	37	25	21
	Illegal deprivation of liberty (Article 126)	127	128	75	61	70
	Trafficking in persons (Article 128)	10	25	13	22	10

**Question 14. What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?**

*RoK Presidential Decree* dated 6 December 2016 enacted the *2030 Concept of Gender and Family Policy* that builds on priorities of international and national development.

Kazakhstan is a party to more than 60 multilateral universal human rights treaties, including 13 international conventions, treaties and agreements that refer directly to countering contemporary forms of slavery, i.e.:

- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (*ratified by the RoK Law of 4 July 2001*);

- The UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others dated 21 March 1950 (*ratified by the RoK Law of 14 December 2005*);

- The UN Slavery Convention dated 25 September 1926 (*ratified by the RoK Law of 5 February 2008*);

- The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime dated 15 November 2000 (*ratified by the RoK Law of 4 June 2008*);

- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, that supplements the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime dated 15 November 2000 (*ratified by the RoK Law of 4 June 2008*).

Intergovernmental and interagency agreements governing direct cooperation with foreign law enforcement agencies are regularly executed to facilitate solving crimes, including those related to trafficking in persons, through:

- exchange of police investigative, reference and criminal, as well as archival information;

- inquiries and requests;

- operations and investigations that do not require the prosecutor's authorization, large-scale preventive and special operations.

In 2017, the General Prosecutor's Office put together the action plan under the *Kazakhstan Free from Domestic Violence Project* in Southern Kazakhstan. This initiative embraces a holistic approach to addressing domestic and sexual violence against women and children by expanding inter-agency response to domestic violence, drafting comments on the laws in effect and delivering the awareness-raising campaign on the domestic violence prevention.

This pilot project has evolved further within the framework of the three-year program under the general administration of the National Commission for Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of

Kazakhstan and the RoK Ministry of Labor and Social Protection in collaboration with UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.

The Government of Kazakhstan has allocated USD 868,130 for the 2019-2021 project life cycle to combat violence against women and children. The comprehensive approach to addressing violence against women and children, designed under the 2017 pilot project, will be replicated in other regions of the country from the next year.

It is also worth mentioning that in 2017, the Statistics Committee under the RoK Ministry of National Economy carried out “*The random survey on violence against women in Kazakhstan*” in collaboration with members of the Taskforce comprising representatives from the RoK Ministry of Health and Social Development, the RoK Ministry of Justice, the RoK Ministry of Internal Affairs, The Equality Institute (Australia) in attendance and with support of three UN agencies in Kazakhstan: UN Women, UNFPA and the World Health Organization.

This report built on findings of the “*Domestic Violence*” random survey presents data of the first national representative study of violence against women in Kazakhstan. The study collected and reviewed data about women’s experiences who suffered violence from an intimate partner or otherwise, in order to obtain critical inputs on prevalence of violence against women, violence impact on women's health and well-being, and women's reports seeking help.

To prevent trafficking in persons, the country has put into effect a robust regulatory framework, improved as required, designed to step up the fight against trafficking in persons.

In 2006, adoption of the RoK *Law on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Countering Trafficking in Persons* was driven by international obligations to combat trafficking in persons. In 2010, the Criminal Code was supplemented with the new Article 134 “*Minors Involvement into Prostitution*”.

In 2012, the Labor Code was amended with a view to improve its provisions related to workforce and minor’s employment.

Likewise, in 2012, RoK Supreme Court’s Regulatory Decision No. 7 “*On Enforcement Practice of Laws Stipulating Liability for Trafficking in Persons*” was put into force, with the purpose to ensure appropriate and uniform enforcement of the RoK laws and international treaties on trafficking in persons ratified by Kazakhstan.

The RoK *Law on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Countering Trafficking in Persons* was enacted in 2013 to improve the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Code of Administrative Violations regarding trafficking in persons.

New definitions, such as exploitation of a person, forced labor, coercion of a

person to begging, non-commercial sexual exploitation, as well as liability for violation of labor laws in relation to minors, have been instituted in the Criminal Code.

The Code of Administrative Violations sets forth liability of:

- the employer for violation of labor laws in respect of minors;
- healthcare actors for failure to fulfill their obligations to notify internal affairs bodies of persons who have reported just inflicted injuries, wounds, clandestine and unsafe abortions;
- individuals and legal entities that provide knowingly for prostitution or pandering.

The Labor Code imposes the restriction on entering into an employment agreement with persons previously convicted of crimes against minors, related to trafficking in persons.

*For reference: Article 26.2 of the RoK Criminal Code prohibits organizations and agencies that work with minors in the field of education, recreation and rehabilitation, physical culture and sports, medical support, social services, culture and the arts from entering into an employment agreement with persons who had or have a criminal record of trafficking in persons.*

Also, this very Law tightened sanctions under some articles, specifically: for trafficking in persons, engaging a minor in prostitution, trafficking in minors, engaging in prostitution, organizing or maintaining brothels for prostitution and pandering.

In 2014, the *RoK Law Amendments and Supplements to Certain Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Counteracting Domestic Violence* was adopted to provide for elaboration of the Criteria to assess abusive treatment under trafficking in persons and the Standard of special social services for trafficking victims.

On 1 January 2015, the revised Criminal Code and the Code of Administrative Violations entered into force, where provisions related to trafficking in humans remained intact.

Trafficking in persons is liable and punishable under Articles Nos.116, 125.3.2, 126.3.2, 128, 134, 135, 308 and 309 of the Criminal Code, with the maximum 15-year imprisonment with confiscation of property. Such punishment is quite severe and commensurate with penalties for grave offences.

The Code of Administrative Violations stipulates the provision under which foreigners shall not be expelled from the Republic of Kazakhstan if they are victims of grave and especially grave offences (*Article 51 of the CoAV*). In addition, a person shall be exempted from administrative liability if recognized as a victim of trafficking in persons (*Article 741 of the CoAV*).

Protection of trafficking victims is ensured by *the Law on State Protection of*

### *Persons Participating in Criminal Proceedings.*

These protective measures can also be applied to persons who help to prevent or elucidate a crime, prior to initiation of a criminal case, and when there is a real threat of violence against them or any other acts prohibited by criminal law.

Redress for victims, including victims of trafficking, is set forth in the *RoK Law on Victims' Compensation Fund* dated 10 January 2018.

Over 2016-2018, the police initiated 925 criminal cases related to trafficking in persons (*in 2016 - 345, in 2017 - 304, in 2018 - 276*) under:

- Article 116 of the Criminal Code (*coercion to remove or illegal removal of human organs and tissues*) - 2 (*in 2016 – 0, in 2017 – 2, in 2018 – 0*);
- Article 125.3.2 of the Criminal Code (*kidnapping for the purpose of exploitation*) - 5 (*in 2016 - 4, in 2017 - 0, in 2018 - 1*);
- Article 126.3.2 of the Criminal Code (*illegal deprivation of liberty for the purpose of exploitation*) - 58 (*in 2016 - 24, in 2017 - 15, in 2018 - 19*);
- Article 128 of the Criminal Code (*trafficking in persons*) - 70 (*in 2016 - 24, in 2017 - 32, in 2018 - 14*);
- Article 134 of the Criminal Code (*involvement of a minor in prostitution*) - 30 (*in 2016 - 12, in 2017 - 8, in 2018 - 10*);
- Article 135 of the Criminal Code (*trafficking in minors*) - 26 (*in 2016 - 9, in 2017 - 12, in 2018 - 5*);
- Article 308 of the Criminal Code (*engagement in prostitution*) - 127 (*in 2016 - 44, in 2017 - 35, in 2018 - 48*);
- Article 309 of the Criminal Code (*organization or maintenance of brothels for prostitution and pandering*) - 379 (*in 2016 - 228, in 2017 - 200, in 2018 - 179*).

Over the past three years, criminal operations of six organized groups (*11 criminal cases initiated under Article 262*) dealing with trafficking in persons and related crimes have been suppressed.

Six routes for taking Kazakhstani citizens out of the country for the purpose of exploitation in Qatar, Indonesia, Bahrain, UAE, Turkey and South Korea, as well as two routes from Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan were blocked off.

#### ***Assistance to trafficking victims***

Pursuant to the *RoK Law on Special Social Services*, trafficking in persons is recognized as a form of abusive treatment and serves as a ground for provision of special social services.

To enforce the Law, the RoK Ministry of Internal Affairs elaborated the Criteria to assess abusive treatment under trafficking in persons while the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection put together the Standards for the provision of special social services to trafficking victims (*“The Standard”*).

Assessment criteria regulate the procedure for person identification, and the Standard specifies the conditions for referral, admission and rehabilitation in entities

that render special social services.

In line with the Standard, temporary stay facilities offer 8 types of services depending on the needs (*social, accommodation, medical, psychological, pedagogical, labor-related, cultural, economic and legal*).

In 2018, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection earmarked KZT 93,6 mln. to provide special social services to 92 victims of trafficking in 10 regions of the country (Aktobe, Akmola, East Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Kostanay, Kyzylorda, Pavlodar, Turkestan Oblasts, Nur-Sultan and Almaty). As of the end of 2018, 127 persons were covered with services.

The National Budget Commission, as per its decision, budgeted KZT488,9 mln. for 2019-2021 to cover services for trafficking victims in 13 regions (Akmola, Aktobe, Almaty, East Kazakhstan, West Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Kostanay, Kyzylorda, Mangystau, Pavlodar, Turkestan Oblasts, Nur-Sultan and Almaty).

**Question 15. What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?**

Pursuant to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (ratified by the Republic of Kazakhstan on 29 July 1998), the RoK Ministry of Internal Affairs runs annually, from 25 November to 10 December, “16 Days without Violence against Women” with the participation of concerned authorities, NGOs and the public at large.

This campaign aims to raise awareness of the public about the measures to prevent and combat violence against women, to form the system of individual preventive interventions targeted at persons prone to violence against women.

In 2018, this campaign brought together over 16,000 people, including 11,000 of police staff, about 467 representatives of the prosecutor's office and courts, 2,577 education officials, nearly 793 representatives of healthcare, and 500+ representatives of non-governmental organizations.

1,500 presentations were delivered through the media, including 185 on TV channels, 416 in print publications and 395 in Internet resources.

The campaign also hosted 7,454 public events, including 453 mobile actions and flash mobs, 7,133 lectures, round tables and trainings (5,149 - in educational institutions, 1,984 - at enterprises and organizations).

“MODERN WORLD IS NO PLACE FOR VIOLENCE” and “WE ARE FOR PEACE IN THE FAMILY” posters were put in places frequented by the public, and videos were broadcast on LED-monitors and regional TV channels.

The campaign also saw implementation of preventive actions at residences of dysfunctional families and trips to family and domestic offense sites. More than 151,000 handouts (booklets, leaflets) were published and disseminated throughout the country.

Over 16,500 persons registered with internal affairs departments, including 9,500 persons who committed family and domestic offenses, were checked on; and more than 6,000 disadvantaged families were paid visits to. Throughout this campaign, over 3,500 people were brought to justice, 2,604 restraining orders were issued, the courts imposed 221 special requirements for the behavior of offenders and 484 dysfunctional families got registered.

Similar measures are underway to prevent trafficking crimes. *STOP Traffic*, a national operational preventive exercise, is regularly delivered. Modelling, travel, marriage agencies offering exit visa and employment abroad are also subject to inspections.

One of efficient preventive measures is the national free round-the-clock hotline 116-16 and its details are featured in national and local media.

Likewise, annually on 30 July, the regions host the national awareness-raising campaign “*United in Combating Trafficking!*” held in conjunction with the International Day against Trafficking in Persons, where participants tell about the forms of trafficking in persons, its indicators and implications, on the radio and TV, in newspapers and Internet, in perinatal centers, travel and modeling agencies, construction sites, farms, etc.

In addition, booklets, brochures with relevant NGOs detail and hotlines are disseminated in public places.

Local akimats have the authority to set up specialist facilities to help victims of domestic violence, as well as to finance NGOs that implement such social programs via the state social order.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is in cooperation with more than 200 NGOs of various agendas.

To enhance interaction and cooperation between the police and the non-governmental sector, the Ministry set up the Council for operations with NGOs. Engagement with NGOs is pursued through joint operational and preventive actions, campaigns, Internet conferences, etc.

To ensure appropriate engagement with NGOs, memoranda of cooperation were inked with *the Union of Children's Public Associations “Zhuldyz”*, *Kazakhstan Parents Association for Family and Family Values Support*, Unified kids and your organization *Zhas Ulan*. This year only they have contributed to delivery of more than 1,700 multiple and varied events.

Police units for protection of women against violence are in cooperation with NGOs that operate under grants to ensure prevention of domestic violence, and 30 of them have crisis centers (*and 17 - shelters*).

For the most part, their activities focus on social adaptation and psychological rehabilitation of women and children who have experienced violence, and inoculation of non-violent practices in society, making impact on the public opinion



to change attitude towards women-survivors of violence and perpetrators.

These centers offer anonymous, confidential and free assistance and help. Crisis centers' staff has consulted YTD over 20,000 women-survivors. Their hotlines have been called 4,000 this year.

The key priority is to develop mechanisms of engagement with partners to make available comprehensive and integrated professional assistance to violence victims.

**Question 16. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?**

To enforce liability for IT-facilitated offenses the *Law on Amendments and Supplements to Some Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Protecting Children against Information Detrimental to Their Health and Development* dated 2 July 2018 amended the Criminal Code Republic of Kazakhstan.

Thus, Article 134 (part 3) of the Criminal Code (*Minors involvement into prostitution*) is supplemented with Clause 1-1) “*by means of telecommunications networks, including the Internet*”.

Moreover, multiple measures are ongoing to counter minors-related crimes that undermine physical and mental development of children, including those facilitated by IT, Internet, and social media.

Organizational and practical measures are rolled out to counter pornographic products distribution, including those depicting minors (*Article 311 “Illegal distribution of pornographic materials or objects”, Article 312 “Production and circulation of materials or objects with pornographic images of minors or their engagement in pornographic performance” of the Criminal Code*).

*In 2018, internal affairs agencies uncovered over 15,000 (15,053) illegal Internet resources (for distribution of pornographic materials - 5,713, extremism - 3,970, violence and cruelty propaganda -, 105, drug-related crimes - 5,265). And, in total, 7,154 were blocked off.*

To unearth online pedophiles, all regional internal affairs units have specialized taskforces to identify pedophiles that molest children and distribute pornographic content via social media and Internet-based engines. These taskforces are to identify and monitor social networks, Web pages, regional communities, groups, dating sites, etc., which can be precursors for crimes against children.

Informational support is provided under the state-contracted order and assignments around the thematic cluster: “*Information support and clarification of the 2030 concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan, activities for the motherhood and childhood protection*”.

In 2015, two cases of minors' corruption via the Internet (Article 124 of the Criminal Code) were registered, in 2016 - 16, in 2017 - 7, in 2018 - 2.

Information-related initiatives concerning gender policy are also delivered under the *Consolidated National Media Plan* which incorporates propositions of all national governmental agencies.

In 2018, the *Media Plan* envisaged coverage of round tables, workshops, the "First National Forum of Rural Women" and other events.

In general, 2018 saw publication of 626 relevant outputs in the media. Specifically, there were 75 news reports on national TV, 65 articles in print media, 380 features in regional media and 106 posts on Internet resources.

In 2014, *Khabar 24* broadcast 19 spots, in 2015 - 42 news stories, in 2016 - 57 spots, in 2017 - 57 spots, in 2018 - 66 spots. Additionally, *Channel 2* offered special features under existing programs "Proekt zakona" ("A Draft Law"), "Interv'u" ("Interview"), "Specialnyi Reportazh" ("Special Coverage") and "Arnaiy Khabar".

Likewise, *Kazak Radiosy* broadcast "Ana men bala", "Kyzdar ne deidi?", "Kyz omirdin kызgaldagy", and *Shalkar Radio* – "Oynegeli otbasy", "Besigindi tuze", *Radio Astana* - "Pravo znat" ('Right to know'), "Edilet elemi" and others. Publication and articles about gender policy and combating violence against women were featured in the *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* under columns "Politics", "Gender Policy", "Topicality", "Highlight", etc.

Moreover, in 2018, national TV channels broadcast sixteen short-term TV series (7 channels) and more than 30 videos ("KTK") related to family and gender issues.

**Question 17. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?**

Advocacy and promotion of family and gender policies is one of key priorities pursued by the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In 2018, 3605 outputs were posted in the media. Specifically, 326 news articles – on national TV channels, 382 features - in national print media, 1,979 stories - in regional media (815 articles, 1164 articles) and 918 articles on Internet resources.

Channel 7 broadcast a series of 16 episodes related to family and gender-based issues, while KTK channel offered a custom-made cycle of 50 episodes.

Special broadcasts on such topics as "Kazakhstan isker ei elderi kauymdastygynyn kogamdagy orny", "Auganstan akhualy", "Elemnin barlyk elderinin agrooenerkeseptik keshenin muddesi ushin genderlik alshaktykty zhoyu", "Women in business", "Women's issues in social media", "About Kazakhstan's

women-entrepreneurs: it is important for them to fulfill their potential and remain mothers and women”, “Yerkekke ainalgan ei elder”, “Yerlermen katar enbek etip zhurgen nazik zhandar” and others were on Qazaqstan TV channel in “Basty taqyryp” show, on Khabar 24 channel in *Suykhat, Agrobusiness, Interview, Bloggers 2.0, In Details*, on Channel I Eurasia in such talkshows as “Pendemiz goy”, “Basty Bagdarlama”, “Keshki Kozdesu”, and on Khabar TV in “Betpe-bet” and “Let's talk”.

Furthermore, national media published features under columns “Gender Policy” (“Yuridicheskaya Gazeta”), “Gender”, “Genderlik Sayasat” (“Zan gazeti”Law), “aiel ale mi” (“Aiqyn”), “Main theme” (“Kazakhstanskaya Pravda”), “Kogam”, “ÁIEL ÁLEMI” (“Egemen Qazaqstan”), “Kogam” (“Kala men dala”), “Iskerlik Orta” (“Tenge monitor”), “Gender” (“Express-K”) published articles “ANAGA KURMET- ELDIK MINDET”, “Eyel kykugu eu bastan korgalghan”, “By gender principle”, “Is there a gender difference?”, “Be equal in everything”, “Achievement of gender development”, “On gender theme” and others. Internet-based resources had publications “Kazakhstan galamdyq derezhede ei elderdin korgaluyna ulken ules kosyp keledi” (“qamshy.kz”), “There is no such area where women could not achieve success - Head of State” (bnews.kz), “Kazakstan eskeri katarynda 8000-ga zhuyk eyel kyzmet atkaruda” (inform.kz), “There should be more women in the army – Minister Bozhko” (total.kz), “Shaimova: there are more women in civil service in Kazakhstan than in Belgium and Italy” (sputniknews.kz) and others.

As part of efforts by UN Women in cooperation with the RoK Ministry of Foreign Affairs, more than 30 journalists were trained in 2017 under the theme: “Sustainable Development Goals through Gender Lens: Integration into National Policy and Mechanisms for Efficient Coverage of the Implementation Process”, where journalists learned coverage mechanisms and had better understanding of SDGs in general, gender-related SDGs and their indicators.

Under the project “Promoting the Nationalization of Gender-Related Sustainable Development Goals in Central Asia” implemented by UN Women with the support of the RoK Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017-2019), over 45 journalists, representatives of the press services of governmental agencies and focal points for coverage of gender issues, academic institutions took part in trainings to enhance their capacities for further coverage of SDGs and gender.

Trainings were attended by representatives of various media and ministries, educational and research institutions that focus on gender issues or SDGs.

Attendees studied conceptual frameworks of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as gender-responsive Sustainable Development Goals in the national context.

Trainings were designed to make participants aware of comprehensive information about the SDGs content and continuity with the Millennium Development Goals; national indicators of SDGs achievement, with the focus on the gender perspective; gender inequalities in Kazakhstan in the context of alignment with SDGs targets.

Furthermore, annually, regional secretaries of commissions for women's affairs, family and demographic policy deliver trainings for journalists on gender coverage.

Furthermore, pursuant to the *RoK Law on Mass Media*, broadcasting any cinema and video products, radio and TV programs of pornographic and sexually-erotic nature shall be prohibited. The media space, including social media, is constantly monitored for compliance with the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The monitoring covers national and regional print media, TV channels, domestic and foreign Internet-based resources. Once violations are revealed, owners of the media get warning notices to rectify them; notifications remain the key form of interaction with owners and administrations of social media, including for removal of illegal content distributed via social media.

To date, the authorized agency has forged constructive engagement with such Russian social media as “VKontakte”, “Odnoklassniki”, “Mail.ru”, “DrugVokrug”, “Livejournal”.

In 2018, working contacts were set up with representatives of Facebook for India, South and Central Asia, negotiations were held with the Telegram management.

Thanks to the arrangements in place, removing suicide-based content from Facebook, Instagram and Telegram is now solved quickly enough. In the meantime, communications, though unilaterally, are underway with Twitter and Youtube (Google).

In September, a specific meeting was hosted with major Kazakhstani trade platforms. Their management confirmed they were fully available to assist authorized agencies in removing such illegal content.

In 2018, owners and administrations of Internet-based resources were recommended and advised to remove over 118,000 illegal materials, including 375 - promoting cruelty, violence and pornography, and 39 materials involving violation of the *Law on Advertising*.

In case the Internet-based resource owner fails to address violations or the concerned governmental agency issues a relevant notification to the authorized agency about dissemination via telecommunications networks of information prohibited by the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan and (or) enacted judicial decisions under the Rules for State Agencies' Interaction in Telecommunications

Networks, the Ministry issues a prescript to communications operators about access restrictions pursuant to Article 41-1 of the RoK *Law on Communications*.

In 2018, in line with procedures prescribed by *the Law on Communications*, the authorized agency restricted access for users from the Republic of Kazakhstan to more than 9,014 materials, including 1,845 promoting cruelty, violence and pornography.

**Question 18. Has your country taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?**

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan enshrines that no one shall be subject to any discrimination, including on the basis of gender. The Criminal Procedure Code also prohibits any discrimination on the grounds of gender in criminal proceedings.

Article 141 of the RoK Criminal Code stipulates criminal liability for direct or indirect restriction of rights and freedoms on the basis of the referenced above grounds, including using his/her official position or by the head of a public association.

Relevant articles are also contained in the *RoK Constitutional Law on Elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the *Law on Marriage and Family*, *Law on Education*, etc.

This framework enables an efficient and adequate response to discrimination in all walks of social relations.

Kazakhstan makes a lot of efforts to suppress all forms of trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women.

Articles 308 and 309 of the RoK Criminal Code set forth liabilities for engaging persons in prostitution, pandering for mercenary purposes, as well as setting up and keeping brothels for prostitution.

Kazakhstan criminalizes trafficking in persons, including women and girls.

To improve laws on combating trafficking in persons, the *Law on Amending and Supplementing Some Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Combat Trafficking in Persons* dated 4 July 2013 was put into effect.

**Number of registered criminal offences, including against women**

Years	Registered	Against women	Against minors
2014	341,291	136,705	7,360
2015	386,718	65,325	3,820
2016	361,689	124,298	2,605

<b>2017</b>	316,418	119,608	2,014
<b>2018</b>	292,286	115,285	2,125

The national model for protection of the child’s and women’s rights is built at institutional and legislative levels in line with international standards.

The legislation of our country to protect children’s and women’s rights is underpinned by the Constitution, the *Law on the Rights of the Child in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the *RoK Code on Marriage and Family* and other regulations.

The Republic ratified about 60 international instruments related to human rights, and 16 of them are about the protection of children’s and women’s rights.

It is common knowledge that women and children suffer most often from domestic violence. The Head of State pointed out explicitly in the *Strategy-2050* and in the *Plan of the Nation -100 concrete steps* that domestic violence should be eliminated.

In December 2016, by the President’s Decree endorsed the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy*, with the target to decrease domestic crimes by 50% by 2050.

*Kazakhstan Free from Domestic Violence* initiated by the General Prosecutor's Office has been under implementation since 2015.

The project is designed to identify the most efficient measures to combat domestic while testing them on the ground.

The focus is on deployment of new approaches to prevention of domestic violence and working with families in a comprehensive way.

The roadmap is now in place and rolled out as a pilot initiative in one of the country's regions.

The Project also facilitated establishment of social psychological support services in the Turkestan Oblast and Shymkent (for 44 beds). Now these services are considered to be provided with offices, transport, and trainings (*Arys -15 beds, Kentau - 4 beds, Saryagash - 10 beds, Kazygurt - 3, Keles-3, Sozak - 3, Turkestan - 6 beds*). In 2018, these services helped and assisted 2,200 citizens (1,547 person received medical care, 650 - legal assistance, 57 - social assistance).

A medical center for work with family aggressors has been put into operation in Shymkent for the first time. Shymkent Akimat has set up a separate department for family, children and youth with similar units at the district level. Family Support Centers have been also been put into operation in every district that offer social, psychological and legal assistance. The Center focuses on violence prevention and engagement with violence victims. Indicators have designed to assess performance of government agencies in combating the violence.

The practice has been introduced to prepare newlyweds for a family life with special trainings prior to marriage registration. Likewise, a mechanism for robust

public awareness and legal education has been elaborated.

Measures are underway to reinforce family values and have zero tolerance towards any form of violence. Implementation of family policies, protection of maternity, paternity and childhood implies efforts and contributions by all state institutions. Therefore, indicators of authorized agencies were revised to ensure efficient prevention and quality public services. Funds have been allocated to cover special social services for victims of domestic violence.

**Question 19. What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?**

The *Law on Public Service in the Republic of Kazakhstan* asserts inadmissibility of any discrimination at the civil service employment, including on the grounds of gender or otherwise.

The *Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women* stipulates that the heads of governmental authorities are obliged to ensure equal access of men and women to civil service given their experience, abilities and competencies.

The *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* pursues the objective to ensure the 30% representation of women in executive, representative and judicial authorities, in the state, quasi-state and corporate sectors at the decision-making level.

As of 1 January 2019, countrywide women accounted for 55.4% among civil servants against their total actual number (50,331 out of 90,932), including: political staff - 11.7%, A Corps administrative staff - 3.3%, B Corps - 55.7%.

The proportion of women in senior positions is 39.8% (9,727 out of 24,433).

However, the representation of women in high-ranking positions is as follows: deputy akims of regions 10.7% (9 out of 84), akims of cities and districts 1.5% (3 out of 200); deputy chairmen of committees and directors of departments under central governmental agencies 30.4% (89 out of 293); heads of territorial divisions of central governmental agencies 14.2% (50 out of 352); heads of regional departments 17.6% (66 out of 376); deputy akims of cities and districts - 15.4% (91 out of 590).

According to elections' outcomes as of 20 March 2016, the number of women in the Lower House of the Parliament (Majilis) edged up to 27.1% (in the 2011 elections the representation of women was 24.3%).

Overall, representation of women in the Parliament (the Senate and the Majilis) is 22%, which corresponds to the OSCE average level. The proportion of women in local representative bodies as of 1 January 2019 is 22.2%.

Each election campaign witnessed the growth of local representative bodies

with women's representation at or about 30%.

On 1 January 2019, the Republic of Kazakhstan introduced a proportional system to elect local representative bodies (maslikhats), which, in our opinion, will significantly improve women's representation in local representative authorities (Article 103 of the *Law on Elections*).

The Central Election Commission and the National Commission for Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan had a joint meeting on 30 March 2018 where they endorsed special recommendations for political parties to have gender quotas in their charters or give consideration to a gender perspective when making the party list of candidates and nominating candidates for elected office.

Election commissions are state electoral bodies that prepare and conduct elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Women account for 66.8% in 10,202 election commissions. The Central Election Commission, which is part of the highest rank political civil service, has women's representation at more than 40%. *Social protection measures in the civil service are ongoing.*

In 2017, for example, employees on maternity leave and child care leave (5,195 or 20.9% of the total exempted persons), women with children under 3 years, single mothers with a child under 14 (a disabled child under 18), other persons raising this category of children without a mother, and pregnant women (10,476 or 42%) had dispensations from the comprehensive appraisal.

Thematic sessions on family-work conciliation built on positive international experience were introduced into the training system for heads of HR departments in governmental agencies.

In 2018, for example, the Schedule of skills upgrade workshops and retraining courses for civil servants included an event with the involvement of foreign experts under the theme "Career and family: how to keep balance?".

In the regions, civil servants participated in skills upgrade workshops on the following topics: "Gender policy of Kazakhstan along the lines of socio-economic modernization", "Gender-sensitive public administration", "Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan (Phase I in 2017-2019)", etc., with their duration of 8 to 40 academic hours.

In 2018, the curriculum of skills upgrade courses for civil servants appointed for the first time to the executive administrative state position under B Corps included the 4-hour "*Gender-sensitive public administration*" course.

**Question 20. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies?**

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan enshrines that no one shall be



subject to any discrimination, including on the grounds of gender. The country has in effect the *Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women* which governs social relations to uphold state guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women and sets forth key principles and norms to create an enabling environment for gender equality in all areas of state and public life.

Pursuant to the *RoK Law on Media*, freedom of speech, creativity, expression in print and other forms of one's opinions and beliefs, receiving and disseminating information by any method not prohibited by law shall be guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

These legislative norms enable an efficient and adequate response to any manifestations of discrimination regarding women's access to expressing their opinions and participating in decision-making in the media.

In 2018, women as media heads accounted for 508 or 30.2% of the total executives.

**Question 21. Do you track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?**

The concept of gender-responsive budgeting (“GRB”) was first introduced in the *2006–2016 Strategy for Gender Equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, and its implementation was incorporated in the list of priorities under the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* adopted in 2016.

The review of the RoK national legislation and some state-run programs demonstrates that there are some provisions and targets with direct or indirect impact on gender groups.

To date, annual expenditures under the national and local budgets have a socially-oriented focus:

1. Motherhood and childhood social support.

Under this line the expenses will be earmarked to cover benefits and allowances for childbirth and care of the child until the age of one. They also provide for transfers to multiple-child mothers; to a mother or a father raising a disabled child; benefits to care for Group I disabled child since childhood.

2. Delivery of measures for family health protection.

Under this line, expenses are envisaged annually to put in effect family planning measures (*youth health centers*), to prevent diseases (*implementation of social projects, including inoculation of healthy nutrition skills, raising public awareness about prevention and treatment of chronic diseases*), to treat and provide rehabilitation in case of chronic diseases.

3. Securing the guaranteed free medical care.

The expenses under this line are earmarked to implement measures related to

targeted screenings, improving maternal health and monitoring pregnant women; regionalization of medical care for various diseases, including perinatal care; development of gerontological care.

4. State support for women entrepreneurship development through the State Program for Business Support and Development “*Business Road Map - 2020*”, as well as programs of international financial institutions and “*Damu*” Fund.

The *Business Roadmap - 2020* program was designed to ensure a sustainable and balanced growth of regional entrepreneurship and to maintain existing jobs and create new permanent ones. One of the Program’s areas is to support new business initiatives of entrepreneurs from single-industry towns, small cities and rural settlements, to award free state-provided grants to small businesses, including young entrepreneurs, start-up entrepreneurs, women, disabled persons and individuals over 50 years old.

In 2015-2019, implementation of the *Business Roadmap- 2020* program was supported with KZT145,819,065 from the national budget, KZT 90,000,000 - from the local budget, KZT 32,907,693 - from the National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Since the inception of the *Business Roadmap- 2020* program in 2010, more than 12,000 projects have been subsidized and 4,000 of them were delivered by women-run businesses. In 2018, 451 out of 1,432 subsidized projects were done by women (31%).

Most recent data suggest that women account for 43% among small and medium business owners in Kazakhstan.

Evolvement of women's business is facilitated by governmental programs and multiple programs of international financial institutions, together with the *Damu Fund*. Since 2010 the *Damu Fund* has been implementing the female entrepreneurship microcrediting program, and to date it has funded 1,527 borrowers, to the total amount of KZT13.7 bln.

Under the agreement between the Government and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, they are implementing the “*Woman in Business*” program. Granted loans totaled USD 41 mln., and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan allocated USD 8.2 mln. This is the one and only program in Central Asia aimed at funding enterprises run by women and staffed with at least 50% of women. In addition to funds EBRD provides access to know-how and best management practices.

The expert review demonstrated that the key reason why GRB cannot be used in Kazakhstan is the non-availability of required regulations on GRB and available relevant methodologies that would consider the national context, or a specific article on gender-responsive budgeting.

One of the targets under the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in*

*the Republic of Kazakhstan* is to explore and assess incorporation of the gender perspective into the state and budget planning framework, and to ensure equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women when drafting the regulations.

In collaboration with UN Women Kazakhstan under “*Assistance in achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of commitments in the field of promoting gender equality in Kazakhstan*”, Austria’s experience in gender-responsive budgeting was studied, training modules were designed, and GRB trainings were delivered for civil servants at the national and local levels. Upon completion of the project, specific proposals were elaborated to amend the laws which would lay the foundation for the plan to introduce gender-responsive budgeting.

**Question 22. As a donor country, does your country track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?**

Gender equality and women empowerment are linked with the United Nations Global Agenda.

Kazakhstan, as a member of the Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, advocated proactively for a stand-alone goal to achieve high results in the interests of women and girls.

The first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev, presented at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly the initiative that each UN member state should transfer annually 1% of its defense budget to a special UN Fund for Sustainable Development Goals.

The *RoK Law on Official Development Assistance* (ODA) enacted in December 2014, reaffirmed the role of Kazakhstan as a responsible actor of the global community.

Following the *RoK Presidential Decree on Approving Key Areas of National Policies in ODA for 2017-2020*, geographical and sectoral priorities, as well as funding forms and mechanisms for official development assistance, have been finalized. CA countries and Afghanistan are at the top of the countries to which Kazakhstan would render assistance. As for sectoral priorities, the focus is on social development, public resource management and regional development.

Currently, Kazakhstan’s major partners in ODA efforts are UNDP and Japan. The first ODA project was designed to assist Afghanistan in its development.

The “Afghan Project” is geared to enhance the economic autonomy of Afghan women employed in public administration, healthcare and education. This project is implemented through consultations and workshops.

ODA is a very important domain under the OECD, and the Republic of

Kazakhstan enjoys a very close cooperation with the OECD in gender policy development.

In October 2014, the RoK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP launched a project to develop the national ODA institute in Kazakhstan to systemize Kazakhstan's assistance to other countries and align it with the country's foreign policy priorities.

To promote peace and security, Kazakhstan has delivered and delivers humanitarian assistance to CA countries, Latin America and the Pacific. In 2017-2018, in collaboration with UNDP, Kazakhstan had the training for African middle-level staff of healthcare, agriculture, oil and gas sectors.

Through "Promoting Kazakhstan's ODA Cooperation with Afghanistan" Project, Kazakhstan will further systematize the ODA system and will accumulate essential experience in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating ODA rendered to other countries in an efficient, rational and transparent manner. The project was supported by UNDP.

The National Commission for Women's Affairs and the Family and Demographic Policy is committed to engage actively with the OECD to fulfill the strategic objective related to achievement of gender level and standards in OECD countries. Kazakhstan intends to build on OECD experience, apply up-to-date approaches, use innovations, know-how, OECD robust expertise to review the gender policy development in Kazakhstan.

For the first time in the history of relations between Kazakhstan and OECD, our country together with the European Union led the Central Asian Initiative of the Eurasia Competitiveness Program.

By and large, over the years of gender policy implementation in Kazakhstan, the positive trend has been witnessed in conferring and securing equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Further delivery of Sustainable Development Goals is pursued through the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan endorsed by the RoK Presidential Decree dated 6 December 2016.

Kazakhstan incorporated recommendations of the OECD Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship adopted by the OECD Council on 29 May 2013, when it designed the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy.

These recommendations looked to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions, eliminate the discriminatory gender wage gap, reduce the gender gap in entrepreneurship activity, incorporate gender equality in development, formulation and evaluation of relevant policies and budgets, etc.

The Action Plan for implementation of the Concept also stipulates measures related to the recommendations of the 2015 OECD Council on gender equality in

public life. These OECD Recommendations highlight five key objectives:

- To mainstream gender equality in development and evaluation of relevant public policies and budgets;
- To strengthen accountability mechanisms for gender equality initiatives across and within all government bodies;
- To increase women representation in decision making positions in public life;
- To take measures to improve the gender equality in employment;
- To strengthen international co-operation through continuously sharing knowledge on gender equality initiatives in public institutions.

On 6-7 May 2014 in Paris the OECD Council of Ministers adopted a positive decision on the approval of the OECD Country Program for Kazakhstan. The anticipated country program funding totals €5.38 mln.

**Question 23. Does your country have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?**

Kazakhstan has had a positive trend in pursuing the BPfA target of 30% women representation in decision-making.

Successful implementation of the 2006-2016 Strategy for Gender Equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan enable a two-fold increase of women representation in the Mazhilis of the Parliament, and now they make up 27.1% of the total Parliamentarians (in 2011 - 14%). This indicator is comparable to the numbers of most European countries.

At present, women account for 50% of committees' chairmen under the Senate of the Parliament. There are now more regions where the proportion of women deputies is nearly 30%.

Kazakhstani women are very active in trade unions. The women's proportion in trade unions is 55%, and 67% of these women run primary trade union organizations.

The 2006-2016 Strategy for Gender Equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan endorsed by the President of the country specified 60 indicators underpinned by the Millennium Development Goals and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. To date its implementation has resulted in the following:

1. Women's participation in the economy has grown. Over 43% of all active small and medium businesses in the country are run women, and they secure 31% of all jobs in this sector.

2. Measures are ongoing to advance women socially and politically. Local representative agencies of all levels have the representation of women at 22.2% of the total number of elected deputies, while in 2006 it was limited to just 16.7%.

3. The health of women and children as well as reproductive health keep improving. During the past years of the Strategy implementation, Kazakhstan has been sharing the first position with other countries under WEF Global Ranking “Health and Survival”. Within 2017 the maternal mortality dropped by 1.5%, infant mortality - by 7%. Birth rate, compared to 2006, grew by almost 100,000 and amounted to nearly 400,000.

4. Domestic violence prevention has been stepped up. In pursuance of the President’s task, the laws were enhanced with stricter penalties for crimes against women and children. The measures implemented from 2010 curtailed the domestic crime in the country by 10% average.

The 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan has been pursuing the target of the 30% representation of women in executive, representative and judicial authorities, in the state, quasi-state and corporate sectors at the decision-making level by 2030.

This document is virtually about transition of family and gender policies in Kazakhstan to a qualitatively new level. It is aligned with objectives under Kazakhstan-2050 Strategy, the Plan of the Nation, the UN Concept on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and builds on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Its purpose is to enable families to fulfill their functions in the best possible way through promotion of gender equality and sustainable development in all governmental and social institutions.

The Concept will be implemented in three phases.

The first phase (2017-2019) is set to ensure steps in order to build upon the outcomes of family and gender policies under the Plan for the Concept execution.

The second phase (2020-2022) will look into implementation of long-term objectives and activities.

The third phase (2023–2030) will deliver on objectives and measures to achieve SDGs, which in turn will contribute to joining the 30 most developed economies in the world.

**Question 24. Does your country have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?**

Following the review of Kazakhstan’s combined third and fourth periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the RoK Deputy Prime Minister endorsed on 28 April 2015 the “*Action Plan for implementation of UN CEDAW Concluding*

*Observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, dated 14 February 2014*". All actions under this Action Plan were completed on time.

Pursuant to the 2008 *Guidelines on the form and content of reports to be submitted by states parties to the international human rights treaties*, in 2019 the Republic of Kazakhstan will submit the RoK Fifth Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women ("the Convention") to the UN CEDAW.

The report is put together by the taskforce under the RoK President's National Commission for Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy which embraces Mazhilis Parliamentarians, members of the National Commission, representatives of ministries, agencies and NGOs. The report is endorsed by the RoK Governmental Resolution.

It was subject to the community expert review through participatory meetings and round tables involving civil society institutions that were not part of the taskforce. Furthermore, the draft report was reviewed at a session of the National Commission on 24 November 2017; and in collaboration with UNDP Kazakhstan it was presented to the public with the follow-on discussion and in attendance of international organizations using the human rights dialogue platform of the RoK Ministry of Foreign Affairs (30 November 2017), and at the meeting of the Mazhilis Committee for the Socio-Cultural Development (12 December 2017).

The report built on analytical inputs from all ministries and departments, commissions for women's affairs and family and demographic policy under akims of Nur-Sultan, Almaty and oblasts ("Regional commissions"), drawing on CEDAW concluding observations regarding Kazakhstan's combined third and fourth periodic reports ("CEDAW Concluding Observations").

The fifth periodic report describes key changes and progress by Kazakhstan in ensuring economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of women on an equal basis with men for the 2011-2017 reporting period under the Convention implementation.

The report has two main parts: Part I gives general information about Kazakhstan, its population, political structure and laws safeguarding human rights, as well as measures to raise awareness of the public and authorities about human rights enshrined in varied human rights instruments; Part II is about specific information as per the Convention about existing constitutional, legislative, administrative and other measures, the progress, showstoppers and the way forward for its further implementation.

Apart from the Convention, Kazakhstan is also committed to multiple international obligations, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,

SDGs. The gender equality policy implementation is driven by an integrated gender approach that means a comprehensive definition of equality and evaluates diversity and existence of differences. RIAMAPS Mission 2016 (rapid integrated assessment) findings show that 61% of UN SDG targets are incorporated in national and sectoral plans and strategies in Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan is taking specific actions to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (states parties) or the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights instruments geared at combating inequalities and discrimination against women.

*The 2006–2016 Strategy for Gender Equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan* has been fulfilled and two gender-related laws are now in effect: the *Law on Equality* and the *RoK Law on Domestic Violence Prevention*. The country publishes annually statistics reports “*Women and Men of Kazakhstan*”.

These have been endorsed and put in effect: the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* and the *2017-2019 Action Plan for Implementation of the Concept Phase I* (2016); the *RoK Law on Pensions in the Republic of Kazakhstan* that unifies the retirement age for men and women (2013); the *RoK Law on Employment* that sets forth provisions regarding employment of persons caring for children under 7, a disabled child, and Groups I and II disabled persons (2016), the updated Criminal Code with 10 new articles regarding criminal penalties for offenses and redress for the wrongs done to women and girls who survived the violence (2014); the new updated Code of Administrative Violations with provisions on enforcement of administrative sanctions to protect women (2014); the revised Labor Code with introduced provisions to protect the health of women at work (2015); the Ethical Code of Civil Servants that stipulates measures to exclude any form of discrimination and affronts to honor and dignity of civil servants (2015); “Densauyk” which one of the key targets is to cover women with healthcare services (2016).

**Question 25. Is there a national human rights institution in your country?**

To enhance the system for protection of citizens’ constitutional rights and freedoms, the Republic of Kazakhstan set up in 2002 the function of the Commissioner for Human Rights (“*the Commissioner*”, “*Ombudsman*”).

The Commissioner, elected by the Senate of the Republic upon the proposition of the RoK President, is an official with the mandate to monitor the observance of rights and freedoms of an individual and a citizen, and has the powers under his/her remit to take actions in order to restore violated rights and freedoms of an individual and a citizen.

The activities of the Commissioner are supported by the National Center for



Human Rights (“*the National Center*”), which is a state-run institution.

The legal status of the Commissioner and its institution - the National Center, is governed by *the Regulations on the Commissioner for Human Rights* approved by RoK Presidential Decree No. 947 dated 19 September 2002, and the *Regulations on the National Center for Human Rights under the Commissioner for Human Rights* approved by RoK Presidential Decree No. 992 dated 10 December 2002.

The Commissioner complements the existing State measures to protect rights and freedoms of an individual and a citizen with his/her efforts. The Commissioner’s activities do not entail restrictions of other governmental agencies’ work that protect human rights pursuant to the Constitution and the RoK laws.

Protection of human rights, including the women’s rights, is under close scrutiny of the Commissioner. Activities include consideration of appeals, reception of citizens, expert and analysis reviews, monitoring, engagement with governmental agencies, NGOs and international organizations.

The Ombudsman and his employees visit regularly various governmental agencies and explore the living conditions of vulnerable groups, including women, and their coverage with medical, social, legal and other services.

To support women-survivors of domestic violence, the country has in operation 30 crisis centers offering free healthcare, social and legal, social and psychological services, as well as temporary shelter services. In 2017 27,000 persons sought help there, and in 2018 – 23,000.

The Ombudsman Office collaborates permanently with NGOs, including in the area of women's rights protection.

In September 2014, the Commissioner for Human Rights became the member of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (one of the regional networks under the International Coordinating Committee) at the Annual Forum Meeting in New Delhi (India).

The Commissioner for Human Rights participates in the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation set up when Kazakhstan chaired this Organization.

The 2017 Report of the Commissioner for Human Rights mentioned, concerning women's rights and gender equality, that the national human rights institution is a partner of the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia Project “*Improving the system of legal assistance for vulnerable groups in Kazakhstan*”. The project is designed to improve the mechanisms and practices to protect the rights of vulnerable groups, including women and children in difficult life circumstances, orphanage graduates and minors in general, by enhancing the quality and access to free state-guaranteed legal assistance.

It should be highlighted that with the aim to improve the national system for protection of the child’s rights in the Republic of Kazakhstan and support the efforts

of the world community to create a comfortable and friendly environment for children, RoK Presidential Decree dated 10 February 2016 put in place the institution of the Commissioner for the Child's Rights. The activities of this Commissioner are governed by the *RoK Law on the Rights of the Child* dated 8 August 2002. The national model of the Commissioner for the Child's Rights in the Republic of Kazakhstan is specific since it represents a combination of this function with the parliamentarian's mandate.

Since the inception of the Commissioner for the Child's Rights who is tasked with ensuring fundamental guarantees of children's rights and legitimate interests, and restoring their violated rights and freedoms, in collaboration with governmental and public institutions, some RoK laws related to the protection of the child's rights (Law No. 504-V, dated 9 April 2016) have been amended and supplemented.

The Law stipulates a provision to ensure that the Commissioner for the Child's has an unobstructed access to governmental agencies, and education, healthcare, social protection, defense, culture and sports entities, penitentiary facilities and other organizations where minors are located, as well as to documents of governmental and public institutions that deal with children's rights.

The Law also prescribes the procedure of filing individual complaints to the Commissioner for the Child's Rights about violations of children's rights and resolving them.

**Question 26. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?**

The national policy to deliver the women, peace and security agenda is pursued along several lines.

Specifically, through expansion of women's representation in international organizations. Upon formulation of the lists with national candidates for election or appointment to international organizations, UN bodies, specialized UN agencies, for senior and middle positions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs makes emphasis on competencies of the candidate, without any gender-based discrimination. In general, the citizens of Kazakhstan get promoted to UN agencies, without any linking to gender, either through secondment or under the fully-funded UN Volunteers Program.

The proportion of female employees in international organizations accredited to the Republic of Kazakhstan is 59.4% (233 out of 392 persons).

Under the gender policy implementation, law enforcement agencies practice nominations of female employees of internal affairs agencies to senior positions, relying only on their professional skills and integrity, as well as work experience.

Now women account for 11,313 (12.1%) of all employees in internal affairs

agencies, and 809 (9.7%) of them are in senior positions.

The penitentiary system employs 2,268 (26.0%) women, and 378 (16.0%) of them are heads.

Emergency departments have 1,388 (7.0%) women and 28 of them hold managerial positions (7.0%).

The women, peace and security agenda is also delivered via efforts to facilitate women empowerment in Afghanistan. As a follow-up to the 2013, 2016, and 2017 Afghan Women Symposia, Kazakhstan, under its commitment to regional peace and security, hosted a regional conference on women empowerment in Afghanistan in September 2018.

Kazakhstan was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2017-2018 and acted as a chairman of the Council in January 2018. During its tenure, Kazakhstan placed particular emphasis on Afghanistan and women's economic empowerment.

In particular, following the visit of the UN Security Council members to Afghanistan, it adopted a resolution which noted that Kazakhstan wished to raise international awareness and support for specific needs of Afghan women and girls, to advance and empower them in order to achieve long-term peace and sustainable development in Afghanistan and its subsequent prosperity.

**Question 27. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?**

For the purposes of building and sustaining peace, assisting peaceful and inclusive communities for the sustainable development of women, peace and security, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan run a comprehensive screening of the personnel for positions of military observers and staff officers in the UN peacekeeping and security missions.

This comprehensive screening pays special attention to the recruitment of female military personnel as military experts in UN missions. For the first time in the history of the RoK Armed Forces, the first female officer, Major Sholpan Tauishova (an officer of the department for operational and logistical support unit referrals under the HR Division of HR and Military Education Department of the RoK Ministry of Defense) was dispatched as a military observer to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara from 22 December 2018 to 22 December 2019.

The Partnership for Peace Training Center that delivers theoretical courses for the RoK Armed Forces under UN and NATO programs has a positive experience of

employing female instructors in officer posts.

Each military unit is now reinforced with women's councils to facilitate military security, keep up morals and strengthen the family institution.

These women's councils are set to enhance women's role in the military service, to raise further the social status and help improve relations in military teams, as well as support military staff and address social issues.

To incentivize and boost activities of women's councils, the Order of the RoK Minister of Defense established '*Otan korgaushysynyn ayauly zhary*' Badges of I and II degrees for major contributions to the morals of a military unit.

As part of communications strategies to raise awareness about women, peace and security agenda, information resources and print media publish articles about critical and vital contributions of female military staff in conflict prevention, settlement, peace building and humanitarian activities.

Every year in line with the Media Plan for informational support of the National Commission for Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the media publish articles by the RoK Ministry of Defense top officials about the role of women in strengthening peace and security.

The 2019 RoK Ministry of Defense Operations Plan (*Section II "Measures to Address Other Tasks of the RoK Ministry of Defense"*) has the target indicator "*Women in peacekeeping and security*" in view of *the Action Plan for Implementation of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in Republic of Kazakhstan* that is in effect.

Yet, despite all these measures, women's employment in the army remains limited to support (auxiliary) functions as communications operators, translators, legal advisers, financiers, medical personnel, culture and leisure and educational staff.

At the same time, women can now be seen in service in any units of the armed forces. 65% of privates and sergeants are contract soldiers.

The command staff of military units engage closely with committees of soldier mothers, the army community: youth initiative centers, officers' meetings, women's councils of military units, trade unions.

**Question 28. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response.**

In 2017 Kazakhstan performed the constitutional reform which opened a new charter in the political and legal evolution of the state. The *RoK Law on Amendments*

*and Supplements to the RoK Constitution* was enacted on 10 March 2017 and encompassed 26 amendments to 19 articles of the RoK Constitution. Essentially, these changes are about the redistribution of powers between branches of government and the transfer of some powers from the President to the Government and the Parliament.

The RoK Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in civil, criminal and other cases, and supervises local and other courts, considers cases that fall under its jurisdiction as stipulated by law, and issues clarifications regarding judicial practices.

Kazakhstan is a full-fledged actor of international law and a party to more than 60 multilateral universal human rights treaties, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and seven United Nations human rights conventions referred to as “international human rights instruments”.

Furthermore, Kazakhstan enjoys diplomatic relations with all UN countries, is a party to the CIS, OSCE, CSTO, CAC, EAEU, SCO, CICA, the Council of Turkic-speaking Countries, the Turkic Military Council and other international organizations. The country collaborates with the OECD under the Eurasian Competitiveness Program and the Country Program for Cooperation with OECD.

In 2017 Kazakhstan became a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Its key goals as a member of the UN Security Council are to contribute to strengthening of international peace and security and draw attention to the problems of Central Asia and Afghanistan.

2016 witnessed the start of the national legislation overhaul to pursue the *Plan of the Nation - 100 Concrete Steps to implement 5 institutional reforms*. The HR policies of courts have been reinforced; and e-justice is under development to ensure maximum transparency of courts. Civil proceedings have been reformed, criminal and criminal procedure laws are also under improvement.

International treaties ratified by the Republic take precedence over its laws. The procedures and conditions for application of international treaties within Kazakhstan, to which Kazakhstan is a party, are stipulated by RoK laws (Article 4.3 of the Constitution).

All laws, international treaties to which the Republic of Kazakhstan is a signatory, get published. Official publication of regulations about rights, freedoms and duties of citizens is a condition precedent for their enforcement.

Compliance of national laws with international standards allowed Kazakhstan to ratify in 2012 ILO Convention No. 183 “*On Maternity Protection*” (dated 14 February 2012, the RoK Law on Ratification of the Convention concerning the revision of the *Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952*); No. 156 “On Ratification of the Convention concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities” (“*the RoK Law on Ratification of the Convention concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal*

*Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities” (Convention 156) dated 16 November 2012).*

In 2015 Kazakhstan ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the *RoK Law on Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities dated 20 February 2015*) (Item 40 of CEDAW Concluding Observations). Supported by UNDP, Kazakhstan implemented in stages the 2012-2018 Action Plan to safeguard the rights and enhance the quality of life of disabled persons in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The government also recognized the competence of the Committee against Torture, the Committee on Human Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the CEDAW Committee to accept individual complaints from RoK citizens and foreigners about violation of rights under relevant treaties.

Under the efforts to implement the Convention, the National Commission, together with UNDP Kazakhstan worked consistently to build capacities of civil servants and raise public awareness about forms of discrimination through workshops, “*Women's Convention - A Comprehensive Bill on Women's Rights” Guidelines*, to produce social videos and recommendations for law enforcement agencies on women’s protection against violence, infographic for violence victims.

**Question 29. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?**

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, international legal instruments ratified by our state, such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Rights of the Child, guarantee the girls in our country comprehensive support and protection against discrimination.

Girls enjoy all the rights that enable them as future women and mothers to make free choices of life, education, a successful career, building a happy family, i.e. all the rights to have a fulfilling, meaningful and safe life.

Pursuant to the *RoK Code on Marriage and Family*, a marriage shall mean an equality union between a man and a woman entered into with free and full consent, as prescribed by law, i.e. at the registration agency under local executive bodies. The age at marriage shall be 18 for men and women. Registration authorities can lower the age of marriage by no more than two years in case of a pregnancy or a common child (early marriages).

The registration authorities reported that in 2018 they registered 1,052 early marriages. Compared to 2012, they are on a downward trend (2012 – 1,554, 2013 – 1,448, 2014 – 1,360, 2015 – 1,272, 2016 – 1,111, 2017 – 1,020, 2018 – 1,052).

The problem of child and forced marriage in Kazakhstan is found in some ethnic groups, particularly in rural areas. It is driven by poor awareness of adolescent girls about their rights, incomplete enforcement of penalties against persons who

abduct brides, religious registration of marriages with minor girls (such registration has no legal force and does not protect the rights of married girls).

*Women's League of Creative Initiative* NGO believes that given the statutory age of marriage for registering marriages with relevant authorities, the actual number of “unofficial” marriages (that are not registered with authorities) may be higher. As this NGO claims, over the past five years, only 33,000 pregnancies among girls under 15 have been registered and 10,000 of them were terminated by abortion (*for reference: the Statistics Committee reports that as of 2018, the number of children aged 0-17 is 5,784,583 with boys and girls accounting for 2,973,375 and 2,811,208 respectively*).

Yet, at the same time, among women aged 15-18, over the past 6 years: the number of births decreased by 35.8% (*in 2012 - 12.3 cases per 1,000 of the relevant population, in 2018 - 8 cases*); abortions dropped twice (*in 2013 - 5.7 cases per 1,000 of the relevant population, in 2017 - 3 cases*).

For the record, sexual intercourse or other acts of sexual nature with a person under 16 are criminally liable, with the imprisonment from 5 to 15 years (Article 122 of the RoK Criminal Code).

The Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Records under the RoK General Prosecutor's Office reports that in 2014 there were 497 such crimes, in 2015 — 740, in 2016 — 458, in 2017 — 274, and in 2018 — 379.

Realizing that early marriages and pregnancies, abortions at a young age, violence and child abuse pose a great threat to the health of girls and the newborns, compromise access to education and other social guarantees, the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan* highlights them as some of the most pressing issues requiring urgent solutions.

One of the tools to address these problems is to form a relevant public opinion, eliminate stereotypes that perpetuate violations of girls' rights, raise awareness of girls and their parents about risks related with early pregnancy and abortions, about rights and opportunities to get education, healthcare, social and mental services.

Every year, on 11 October, media, non-governmental organizations and educational organizations get engaged in a ten-day country-wide awareness raising campaign dedicated to the International Day of Girls under the auspices of the UN. As part of this campaign, educational facilities invite experts who offer free advice to children and their parents regarding healthcare and legal literacy, prevention of early pregnancy and abortion.

Raising awareness about violence, especially against women and children in the family, state guarantees of legal protection, social, medical and mental support represent the goal of the national campaign “16 Days without Violence”, which is also carried out across the country every year, from 25 November to 10 December.

In 2019, social networks and Internet-based resources are widely utilized to

raise public awareness. Official accounts of healthcare facilities have been set up (*on Facebook, Instagram, VKontakte*) to offer informational and educational posts (*infographics, announcements, publications, context-specific information, videos*) regarding prevention of infectious and noninfectious diseases, behavioral factors of risk, injuries, reproductive and mental healthcare.

To inoculate a healthy lifestyle among teenagers and young people at schools and universities, we implement WHO projects: “*Health Promotion Schools*” and “*Healthy Universities*”.

In 2018, 735 schools and 62 universities were involved in these WHO projects and more than 700,000 events were delivered across the country (thematic classes in pre-school and general education establishments, parent meetings, classroom hours, conferences, round tables, Open Days, seminars, etc.) covering in total 12.4 mln. people.

2019 will see further implementation of WHO projects “*Health Promotion Schools*” and “*Healthy Universities*” in 897 more schools and 33 universities in the country.

Reproductive health status is interlinked with safeguarding reproductive rights, which include, inter alia, the right to education and access to information enabling you to make informed and free reproductive choices and prevent sexual transmission of HIV and other infectious agents. Adequate information steers appropriate behavioral choice of adolescents and young people in terms of gender relations, their reproductive healthcare and upholding their reproductive rights.

Recognizing that young people's extensive access to reproductive health services and information is one of key determinants of the nation's health status, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) makes a lot of efforts to upgrade youth health centers so that they could provide adolescents with comprehensive information and services related to their reproductive health.

UNFPA advocates rigorously for peer-to-peer education. Now Kazakhstan has in service ten youth training centers (Y-PEER centers) that operate under this principle. Developing a national Y-Peer network as a reliable partner of the government will help adolescents and young people have locally the information and education on leadership, healthy lifestyles and safe behavior, reproductive healthcare through the peer-to-peer method which has proved its high efficiency.

UNFPA provided technical assistance for development and piloting the *Healthy Lifestyle* course with a stronger component on reproductive health for college students, designed to present adequately the information about sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. More than 300 college teachers are trained to teach students about reproductive health. They have taught over 30,000 adolescents and young people how to preserve reproductive health, prevent unwanted pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted infections.



In 2018, over 3 million messages, publications, stories, social ads were disseminated via media, SMS-messages, social networks, utilities receipts.

Since 2015, Kazakhstan has up and running 118 youth health centers in its regions that provide young people with preventive and counseling services on reproductive health on a regular basis. Every year there are more and more young people who seek advice at these centers. In 2018, the centers had over 393,000 young people visiting them (*11-14 age group - 65,129, 15-29 age group - 328,674*).

The 2018 data reveal that 2,880 girls aged 15-17 years were first time diagnosed with gynecological diseases. Yet, compared with 2017, the prevalence of gynecological diseases dropped by 8%. The adolescent health review shows that over 18% of girls aged 15-17 are registered with hospitals for various diseases. Therefore, reproductive health protection and family planning measures to ensure the birth of healthy children are prioritized under the *2016-2019 National Healthcare Development Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan "Densaulyk"*. Adolescence behavior is key to reproductive health of childbearing age women.

The preventive measures targeted at reproductive healthcare decreased the number of births by girls aged 15-18 and abortions. Actions are underway to improve access for women of child-bearing age, including adolescents, to family planning means, and to provide free contraceptives. Regional healthcare departments reported that in 2018 the coverage of child-bearing women with contraceptives grew by 10.3% against 2017.

#### Deliveries and abortions among women aged 15-18

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Increase/ decrease 2018/2012
<b>Number of deliveries, total</b>	383,835	387,820	398,758	397,238	400,424	390,069	400,721	
Deliveries among women under 14 (absolute numbers)	41	38	34	22	14	13	11	
Deliveries among women aged 15-18 (absolute numbers)	5 693	3 676	5 693	4 671	4 226	3 443	3 482	
Deliveries among women aged 15-18 per 1,000 of relevant population	12,3	7,8	12,8	10,7	9,6	7,9	8,0	-35%

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Increase/ decrease 2018/2012
Abortions, total	95,654	84,265	83,709	81 440	78,857	80,328	78,593	
Abortions among women:								
under 15	66	76	34	27	16	19	27	
Aged 15-18 (absolute numbers)	2,661	2,027	1,551	1 069	1,418	1,286	1,237	
Abortions among women aged 15-18 per 1,000 of relevant population	5,7	4,5	3,6	2,5	3,2	3,0	2,8	A two-fold decrease

Concerning girls' access to education, we would like to stress general indicators in this area: the education accessibility index in Kazakhstan for women is higher (0.980) than for men (0.952), and it is 0.967 on average. The index is estimated against the literacy rate of the population aged 15+ and the enrollment rate.

As for the girls' access to education under 6 years old, it should be mentioned that the country has 10,314 active pre-school facilities with 880,900 enrolled children, including 432,400 girls. The coverage of children aged 3-6 years is 95.2% (compared to 2018 the growth is 4.8%).

To ensure full access to pre-school education it is planned to set up before 2020 another 407 pre-school establishments, including 353 private entities.

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan guarantees free secondary education in state-run educational establishments for all citizens. At the beginning of the 2018–2019 academic year, the country had in operation 7,393 secondary schools, out of which 7,255 or 98.1%, are state-run. The number of enrolled students is 3,186,234.

Out of 7,255 state-run schools, 75.3% are rural, with 46% of pupils enrolled in them. Girls account for 54% of secondary school graduates.

Overall, secondary school enrollment in 2018 was 99.8%.

At the same time, there are cases when children in permanent or temporary difficult life circumstances (due to health status or socio-economic factors) do not go to school. Identification of such children and enabling them to exercise their right to education is ensured via the General Education Program run by the RoK Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with concerned local authorities.

One of the ways to address the problem of these adolescents is the availability of 74 evening schools (in 2018, 10,331 students were enrolled in them), 29 of them are in penitentiary institutions and 7 - for children with deviant behaviors.

All secondary schools ensure that girls and boys have access to the same curricula and examinations, teachers of the same competence level, school premises and equipment of the same quality. Regardless of gender, they can make use of free information resources, gyms, reading rooms, concert halls and libraries at schools.

It is possible to get secondary vocational and technical education or post-secondary education in 805 colleges, of which 56% are public and 44% private. The number of girls and women in colleges is 229,044 (46.8%), boys and men - 260,774 people (53.2%).

Under the *2016-2019 National Program for Development of Education and Science*, it is envisaged to build 4 more colleges for 2,900 students. The college infrastructure is quite robust, since their designed capacities are for 546,900 students while the actual enrollment is 489,800 persons.

Colleges offer 263 majors and 745 qualifications.

The higher education in Kazakhstan embraces 131 higher education establishments: national - 10, state-run - 31, non-civil - 14, AEO - 1; international - 1; incorporated - 18, private - 56.

Breakdown of university students in the 2018-2019 academic year is as follows: bachelor's programs – 505,025 persons, out of whom 292,031 are women; master's programs – 37,792 persons, out of whom 22,807 are women; PhD students – 5,262 with women accounting for 3,625 persons.

To encourage citizens living in rural areas to get technical and vocational education in colleges and universities, the government provides for the 30% quota for enrollment into fields of study that are decisive for the socio-economic development of the aul (village) (30%).

Violence against children, including domestic violence, labor exploitation is another priority area for the Government of the Republic. Kazakhstan has in effect criminal and administrative liabilities for exposing children to the worst forms of child labor and violence against children.

The RoK Ministry of Labor and Social Protection approved the list of jobs where the employment of children under 18, including girls, is prohibited.

Since 1 January 2015, penalties have been tightened for sexual and economic exploitation of children and failure to perform or improper performance of parental duties. The laws stipulate life imprisonment for rape and sexual assault of small children. From 9 April 2016, more severe punishment has been set forth for crimes against sexual inviolability of minors.

Since 2018 they put in effect the compulsory therapy in the form of chemical castration to be applied to persons who have committed crimes against the sexual inviolability of minors on the basis of a court decision.

Over the last 5 years, sexual crimes against minors edged down by just 1.3 times (*from 943 in 2014 to 722 in 2018*), which indicates that efforts of governmental

agencies and organizations need to be further intensified, particularly in prevention of such crimes.

In March 2019, the Law was enacted that introduced amendments to six codes and six laws:

- stepfather and stepmother are included among criminal perpetrators violating sexual inviolability of minors;
- criminal liability for failure to fulfill without any good reason obligations to rear a minor by a parent, a legal representative, a teacher, whose functions include the responsibility to supervise the child;
- centers will be set up to support children in difficult life circumstances. They will be part of entities protecting the rights of the child;
- technical and vocational schools offer external/non-residential form of learning in culture and arts, physical culture and sports for winners of competitions and tournaments;
- public healthcare and social protection staff are now obliged to report immediately to law enforcement authorities about any acts by minors or acts against them that have elements of a criminal or administrative offense.

Furthermore, under the ongoing judicial system upgrade, the RoK Supreme Court is implementing a pilot project on family courts which is expected to set them up on the premises of juvenile courts and make it possible for judges to take an integrated approach to judicial protection of the children's and women's rights.

**Question 30. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?**

Kazakhstan is an active actor in such global processes as “Environment for Europe” and “RIO-92”. Since 1998 all educational establishments have had in their curricula the Environmental Education Program that is accessible to all students irrespective of gender and includes: environmental education in pre-school facilities, education and training in secondary schools, education in colleges, higher education establishments and institutions for retraining.

Equal access to justice, without gender-based distinction, is secured through Kazakhstan's participation in the Convention on Access to Information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters (*the Aarhus Convention*). Under the auspices of the Aarhus Convention, Kazakhstan has become home to 14 Aarhus centers that are non-profit organizations providing information and advice to the population on the gender-neutral basis.

The State Fund for Environmental Information put in service in 2007 (the SFEI) has nearly 20,000 pieces of environmental information in paper and electronic formats for the purpose of educating the public and nature users in a gender-neutral manner.

Kazakhstan's preparations for *Astana EXPO 2017* gave impetus to establishing in 2015 a new women's movement *Expo&Women* - the movement for green economies and SDGs-2030.

*“International Organization “Expo&Women”* was set up in 2015 with the support of the National Commission for Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to bring the women of Kazakhstan and the world into the movement for ecology, innovation and robust engagement of women's organizations in international EXPO exhibitions. The mission of *Expo&Women* is to mobilize capacities of women and women's organizations to support a green economy, state-of-the-art innovations for sustainable development, the integration of women's initiatives for the environment, innovations and EXPO, and SDGs-2030 delivery. Over 2015-2018, *Expo&Women* has implemented multiple projects designed to ensure the global integration of women's initiatives for the environment, innovations and EXPO.

**Question 31. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?**

Integration of gender perspectives into policies and programs for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation are performed in the context of the ongoing nationalization of SDGs within the national policy for sustainable development under the environmental domain.

The State appreciates linkages between the environmental, economic and social components of sustainable development and has taken actions to prevent devastating effects of climate change, preserve limited natural resources and move towards green economy.

Amendments to the Environmental Code have been drafted with the aim to improve GHG state regulation mechanism, get resilient to climate change effects, boost and bolster roll-out of best available (green) technologies, especially in vulnerable sectors of the economy.

*“Energy of the Future”* EXPO-2017 and the *International Center for Green Technologies and Investment Projects Development “Future Energy”* put in place with UN assistance serve as examples of Kazakhstan's substantive contributions to international SDGs-related efforts. This Center was set up through proactive support of UN agencies (UNDP, ESCAP, UNIDO, UNECE, UNEP).

Given iodine deficiency exposure in many regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, virtually in 11 out of 14 regions, the Government progresses with its policy to prevent iodine deficiency disorders to ensure sanitary and epidemiological requirements and protect the public health in line with the specific Law dated 2003.

Under its GHG reduction policy, in 2015 Kazakhstan committed to bring

down by 2030 GHG emissions by 15% against the 1990 national contributions.

2013 saw the launch of the GHG Emissions Trading System (ETS) and on 1 January 2018 the ETS embarked on a new stage in its operations.

With UNDP assistance the National Adaptation Plan is now drafted to initiate medium-term and long-term adaptation planning in Kazakhstan under the umbrella of strategic development papers.

To protect the environment through better use and management of soil and foster healthy nutrition, the *RoK Law on Organic Products* was enacted in 2015 stipulating fundamental requirements for the production and trade of organic products.

Amendments to the Environmental Code have been drafted with the aim to improve GHG state regulation mechanism, get resilient to climate change effects, boost and bolster roll-out of best available (green) technologies, especially in vulnerable sectors of the economy.

Minimizing the burden on the environment, inhibiting climate change, moving towards a green economy and alternative energy sources, active participation and leadership of women in climate resilience and climate change mitigation programs and projects were at the center of the agenda during the *Women for Energy of the Future International Forum* on 31 August 2017 hosted under the International Specialized Exhibition “EXPO-2017” in Kazakhstan.

This Forum, attended by delegations from 25 countries of the world, was organized by the National Commission for Women’s Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and supported by the United Nations as well as other international organizations.

The launch of *the International Center for Green Technologies and Investment Projects Development “Future Energy”* in 2018 on the premises of the International Financial Center in Kazakhstan (Nur-Sultan) with an exclusive legal, tax, visa regime and extraterritorial jurisdiction will enable this Center to implement regional projects, first of all, in Central Asia countries (the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan), Iran, Afghanistan, Mongolia and Azerbaijan.

The Center is committed to cooperate with the OECD and EU countries, India, China and Latin America. To ensure its lasting and sustainable development, the Center will embrace national holdings and development institutions on a long-term basis: Samruk Kazyna NWF, KazENERGY Association, Baiterek National Management Holding, AlmatyTechGarden, “Damu” Entrepreneurship Development Fund” JSC, Development Bank of Kazakhstan and others.

Starting from 2013, under its *2013–2020 National Concept on Transition to Green Economy*, Kazakhstan has been launching specific projects in partnership

with non-governmental and international organizations and with financial support from international financial institutions.

Likewise, the international community enjoys a strong cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in this area. The United Nations Development Program implements a portfolio of projects designed to address climate change resilience and climate change mitigation. Gender equality is also part of project activities both at the legislative level and during interventions on site.

*Supporting Kazakhstan in Transition to Green Economy Model* Project, for example, has among its partners such agencies as the RoK Ministry of Agriculture, *Coalition for Green Economy and Development G-Global* NGO, the United Nations Development Program, the European Union, the Global Environmental Facility and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It is designed to implement green practices in public utilities, agriculture, and use of renewable energy sources in the water sector, especially with the participation of women living in rural areas. The RoK Ministry of Energy in collaboration with the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), is implementing the Regional Adaptation Plan driven by the ecosystem approach in the East Kazakhstan Oblast, and subsequently the National Adaptation Plan will be built on this experience under the regional Central Asia Project “*The Ecosystem Approach to Climate Change Adaptation in the CA highlands*”.

As part of the UNDP energy efficiency project portfolio they ran a comprehensive and extensive review “*Promoting clean and affordable energy for empowerment of women and girls in Kazakhstan and Central Asia*”, and formulated gender-sensitive *Policy Recommendations* to ensure gender equality in access to sustainable energy, increase participation in problem solving, generate initiatives and manage the energy and related sectors, as well as empower women to have employment and career in the energy sector.

Under the UNDP biodiversity and agriculture project portfolio, they elaborated a set of recommendations for local governments to slash gender inequalities in biodiversity conservation and sustainable biodiversity management policies, to imbed gender-sensitive solutions for sustained natural resource management. In 2015, UNDP and “*Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture*” JSC, put in practice a financial support tool to develop alternative types of “green” activities for communities that live close to specially protected nature areas, with the priority on women.

Moreover, in the context of its project activities, UNDP hosts multiple round tables, workshops and conferences in attendance of government partners, the international community, the non-governmental sector and business community to advance gender equality. In 2018, for example, they hosted “*Gender mainstreaming of the energy sector in Central Asian countries*” as well as gender training sessions

for local communities engaged in agriculture and forestry, and all pilot projects under implementation incorporated the gender equality perspective.

Joint stock companies with participation of the State: Baiterek National Management Holding JSC and "Damu" Entrepreneurship Development Fund" JSC are implementing a joint project funded by the European Investment Bank, that should offer to unemployed women theoretical and practical knowledge how to start up business based on green technologies and assist the rural unemployed with jobs.

Another major project geared towards the use of green" technologies in both urban and rural areas, especially among women, is implemented by the Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture and KazAgro National Holding.

The launch of *the International Center for Green Technologies and Investment Projects Development "Future Energy"* in 2018 on the premises of the International Financial Center in Kazakhstan (Nur-Sultan) with an exclusive legal, tax, visa regime and extraterritorial jurisdiction will enable this Center to implement regional projects, first of all, in Central Asia countries (the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan), Iran, Afghanistan, Mongolia and Azerbaijan.

The Center is committed to cooperate with the OECD and EU countries, India, China and Latin America.

To ensure its lasting and sustainable development, the Center will embrace national holdings and development institutions on a long-term basis: Samruk Kazyna NWF, KazENERGY Association, Baiterek National Management Holding, AlmatyTechGarden, "Damu" Entrepreneurship Development Fund" JSC, Development Bank of Kazakhstan and others.

Kazakhstan is progressing its policy on climate rebuilding, hazard reduction and mitigation at the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site that was shut down following Kazakhstan's renunciation of the world's fourth nuclear arsenal in the context of the declared complete and comprehensive disarmament policy. It should be mentioned that most regions of Kazakhstan are prone to natural disasters and the most dangerous and devastating of them are earthquakes, floods, mudflows, landslides, avalanches, hurricanes, forest and steppe fires, epidemics and epizootics. Over 2014-2018, they registered average 86,622 natural and man-caused emergencies which resulted in 5,762 deaths and injuries to 19,388 persons.

It should be highlighted that the *RoK Law on Civil Protection* put in effect in 2014 regulates explicitly the civil protection response mechanism employed in referenced disasters that includes provision of social and rehabilitation service, medical and urgent financial assistance from local executive bodies, the Government and the authorized agency as well as civil protection entities. The Law also specifies approaches to priority hazard mapping for regions and economic facilities, which should be addressed systematically to minimize losses or damage.



**Question 32. What is your country's current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government.**

Since 1998, a permanent consultative and advisory body has been operational under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on women's issues, family, demographic and gender policies. The National Commission for Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of Kazakhstan is now led by RoK Deputy Prime Minister Gulshara Abdykalikova. The Regulations on the National Commission and its composition are endorsed by the RoK Presidential Decree, which shows once again the attitude of the State to ensuring gender equality and women empowerment.

The RoK Deputy Prime Minister's leadership in the National Commission facilitates implementation of its decisions by central and local executive bodies. Coordination of gender equality and women's empowerment efforts at the local level is done through regional commissions under local executive bodies (akimats) of regions, and Nur-Sultan (*capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan*), as well as Almaty and Shymkent (*cities of national status*).

Operational coordination of the RoK Government activities to advance gender equality and empowerment of women in the context of specific industries is carried out by all central executive bodies within their remits, i.e.: the Ministry of National Economy – in budget planning, national statistics, and trade operations; the Ministry of Health – in public health, the Ministry of Defense – in peace and security, etc.

**Question 33. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees).**

To navigate and facilitate interagency cooperation and coordination at the Government level related to SDGs implementation, the RoK Government has in operation the Steering Council led by the RoK Deputy Prime Minister. Institutional process of SDGs delivery is controlled by the Minister of National Economy under his competency to coordinate and monitor the drafting and enforcement of national strategic development papers.

The Ministry of National Economy acts as the working body of the Steering Council.

**Question 34. Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

Formal mechanisms for participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encompass the National Commission for Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, regional commissions for women's affairs, family and demographic policy under local executive bodies of regions, Nur-Sultan (*the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan*), Almaty, Shymkent (*cities of national status*) together with the Steering Council under the RoK Government.

The National Commission and the Steering Council comprise heads and/or deputies of central (national) governmental agencies, civil society organizations, including organizations for the protection of women's rights, the private sector, business community associations, RoK Parliamentarians, and UN representative offices to Kazakhstan, media, academia, and think-tanks. The operations of the National Commission and the Steering Council are regulated by Deputy Prime Ministers of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The structure of the Steering Council has 5 interagency taskforces: People, Planet, Prosperity, World, Partnership. The Economic Research Institute provides constant expert and analytical support for the activities of the Steering Council, while the overall coordination of its activities is effected by the RoK Ministry of National Economy (the Statistics Committee).

The operations of the National Commission are coordinated by the relevant department under the RoK President's Office (the Secretariat).

Religious organizations are invited to participate depending on the agenda of discussions since the Republic of Kazakhstan pursuant to its Constitution holds itself to be a secular state. Local executive and representative authorities together with other referenced entities are members of regional commissions for women's affairs, family and demographic policy that are active in regions, Nur-Sultan (*the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan*), Almaty and Shymkent (cities of national status).

### **Section 3. National mechanisms and processes.**

#### **Question 35. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?**

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including in rural areas, are among top priorities of the national SDG implementation strategy.

In the context of international commitments, the 2025 RoK Strategic Development Plan (*approved by RoK Presidential Decree No. 636 dated 15 February 2018*) set forth the objective “*Sustaining of family values and inadmissibility of gender-based discrimination*” and stipulates measures to achieve

it through the following Initiatives:

- *Initiative 6.13 “Improvement of laws in the area of family and gender policies”* – to improve the legislation to ensure equal rights and opportunities of men and women in family relations, protection of motherhood and childhood, enhancing parents' responsibility for bringing up their children, and suppressing all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence;

- *Initiative 6.14 “Reinforcing the gender equality institution through state regulation and integration of gender impact assessment into the national and budget planning system”*

- to identify an authorized body that will be responsible for steering and inter-agency coordination of the gender policy and integration of gender approaches, including gender statistics, into the national and budget planning system.

The project run by the RoK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UN Women envisages the promotion of gender-related SDGs at the central and local levels, including through localization of gender indicators and their integration into national programs and territorial development programs.

- *Initiative 6.15 “Creating an enabling environment for equal employment of men and women”*

- To include gender-sensitive indicators into national accounts to measure employment in the informal sector, unaccounted domestic care work, home-based employment, domestic paid employment; to improve laws on work-rest routine and occupational safety; to introduce and expand flexible forms of employment with a gender perspective; state support to women's economic empowerment through promotion of employment and entrepreneurship, including in traditionally male-dominated sectors of the economy;

- *Initiative 6.16 “Ensuring equal access of men and women to all types of resources required for entrepreneurship”* – regular gender-sensitive reviews of public services availability and government support for SMBs by place of residence, age, disability, income status; and improvement of policies to reduce barriers related to administrative burden, overly restrictive regulations, including for women's entrepreneurship;

- *Initiative 6.17 “Promotion of gender education”* – development of gender public education and awareness that will cover all age groups and facilitate uprooting of gender stereotypes, expansion of skills upgrade programs targeted at gender equality and gender mainstreaming during government policy formulation and decision-making.

In view of commitments under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the SDGs, the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030 sets forth the following principles of gender

policy:

- 1) equality of rights, opportunities and obligations of spouses in family functions;
- 2) availability of conditions for the best functioning of the family;
- 3) family independence in making decisions regarding their lives;
- 4) responsibilities of the family for the upbringing, education and development of the child (children) and his/her healthcare;
- 5) partnership between the family, the society and the state;
- 6) targeted aspect and inclusiveness during the national family policy implementation, given the needs and requirements of families;
- 7) zero tolerance to all types of domestic violence;
- 8) intolerance towards immoral behavior in the society.

The Concept has the following national gender policy goals: achievement of equal rights, benefits, duties and opportunities of men and women in all areas, and eliminating all forms and manifestations of gender-based discrimination.

The Concept stipulates the following targets to facilitate the fulfillment of the above goals:

1. improvement of gender policy laws and their alignment with international standards, UN, SDG and OECD recommendations;
2. putting in place mechanisms and conditions for robust planning and coordination of actions by central and local authorities to progress gender policies;
3. ensuring the 30% women representation in executive, representative and judicial authorities, state, quasi-state and corporate sectors at the decision-making level;
4. setting up an environment to increase women in ownership of tangible assets (land, property, companies, individual entrepreneurship, etc.);
5. enhancing women's participation in the economy through equal access to the labor market, financial and other resources;
6. targeted support to women in rural areas through female entrepreneurship development mechanisms;
7. research and methodology-related support of family and gender policies and continuous universal gender education;
8. creating conditions for reduction of the gender gap in average wages of men and women;
9. expert review/analysis and evaluation for mainstreaming gender into the state and budget planning system and regulatory drafts designed to ensure equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women;
10. enhancing women's participation in peacekeeping and security.

## Section 4. Information and statistics

**Question 36. What are the top three areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?**

Over the past five years, the greatest strides in gender statistics have been achieved at the national level in these three areas:

- Improved indicators of national statistical reporting by increasing the number of gender-related indicators in the national 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan, and their inclusion in other strategic papers under development, and also in in policies to assess the performance of governmental agencies;

- Expanding the themes of national sample surveys that are part of national statistical reporting using gender-related indicators (*“Generations and Gender”, “Violence against Women”, “Quality of Disabled Persons’ Life through Gender Lens”, “Assistance in achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of commitments in the field of promoting gender equality in Kazakhstan”*);

- Putting in place the centralized gender statistics web database (*in 2016, building on the UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, they designed the Methodology to formulate the gender statistics indicators; in 2018, the Statistics Committee had on its web page a new option ‘Gender Statistics’ that incorporated data for all regions and the Republic by 75 gender-related indicators over time, from 2000*).

Previously, gender statistics were published only in paper format as the annual national statistical handbook “Women and Men of Kazakhstan”, which will mark its 20th anniversary in 2019. The Handbook is now published in three languages (Kazakh, Russian and English) and is available in e-form and on the web-site of the Statistics Committee. It is worth mentioning that the gender statistics web database and publications of the Handbook are covered solely from the national budget, without any external loans or grants.

Thanks to more gender statistics indicators under the *2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan*, users of national statistics have now available these indicators:

- “Gender gap in life expectancy”;
- “Abortion rate per 1,000 women of reproductive age”;
- “Ratio of the average female wages to the average male wages”;
- “Women’s proportion in executive, representative and judicial authorities”.

In 2019 it is planned to include:

- “The rate of divorces against the number of registered marriages”;

- “Reduction of registered domestic violence cases against women”;
- “Reduction of registered violence cases against children”.

Methodology-related efforts are underway with a view to add subsequently in the Handbook:

- “The ratio of women to men who own a tangible asset (land, property, companies, individual entrepreneurship, etc.)”;
- “The proportion of women in the quasi-state and corporate sectors at the decision-making level”;
- “The proportion of women in peacekeeping and security”.

In 2016, building on the UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, the Statistics Committee of the RoK Ministry of National Economy designed national gender statistics indicators included in the Methodology to formulate the gender statistics indicators. It embraces 10 sections and 75 indicators pertaining to gender equality:

- 1) Poverty eradication;
- 2) Decent employment;
- 3) Family-work conciliation;
- 4) Education;
- 5) Healthcare;
- 6) Social life;
- 7) Rights of women and girls;
- 8) Social protection;
- 9) Environmental protection;
- 10) ICT access.

In 2018, the Statistics Committee had on its web page a new option ‘Gender Statistics’ with data by 75 gender-related indicators over time, starting from 2000, including disaggregation by age, region, urban/rural.

**Question 37. Out of the following which are your country’s top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?**

To develop national gender statistics over the next five years, three top priorities have been set:

1. Expanding and developing administrative or alternative data sources to bridge gaps in gender data (*specifically, on violence against children, gender mainstreaming in agriculture and transport, geospatial data, including price statistics, environmental and agricultural statistics*);
2. Generating accessible information products on gender statistics (*through development of user-friendly publications, better access to websites of governmental agencies and organizations to official analytical reviews, scientific articles and national statistical reporting*).
3. Improving statistical skills of users to promote the statistical assessment of

gender statistics and its use (*through enhanced statistical literacy of non-governmental organizations, the media and governmental agencies*).

**Question 38. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?**

In September 2015, under the framework of the 70<sup>th</sup> UN GA Session at the UN Summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Kazakhstan, among other UN member states, signed a new document for further global development, stressing that the goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), are fully consistent with the priorities and objectives pursued by Kazakhstan.

Following the peer review of the Integration, Acceleration and Policy Support Report (MAPS) by UN agencies, it was concluded that the SDG targets are well integrated in national and sectoral plans: 61% of the SDG targets had been already covered by national strategic papers.

In November 2016 RoK Senate Parliamentarians endorsed the Statement about the need to advance sustainable development principles and to further integration of the SDGs into existing laws to create a conducive environment for their implementation.

In this context, starting from 2016, the next two years saw the building of the national architecture to deliver the SDGs with a permanent monitoring mechanism in the form of the Steering Council under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Steering Council comprise not only representatives of governmental agencies, but also NGOs and international organizations. It has 5 interagency taskforces: People, Planet, Prosperity, World, Partnership.

The Economic Research Institute under the RoK Ministry of National Economy provides expert and analytical support to the Steering Council, while monitoring is performed by the Statistics Committee under the RoK Ministry of National Economy.

The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals have 169 targets and 244 indicators (including - 232 unique indicators (not duplicate).

Kazakhstan is a member of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB), which is composed of Member States, including regional and international UN agencies.

To nationalize the indicators and ensure the monitoring of the SDG implementation, the Statistics Committee put in place the special Interagency Working Group (“the Working Group”) comprising representatives of governmental agencies, NGOs, the private sector, academia and international organizations.

A number of events were held with the participation of the Working Group members and the support of the UN agencies, including at the regional level with the participation of local executive authorities.

Proceeding from the global list of UN indicators and following multiple discussions with the Working Group members, in 2018 the Statistics Committee put together the first draft of indicators to monitor the SDG achievement in Kazakhstan given national development priorities.

To date, the draft offers 257 indicators:

- 175 global indicators were accepted without any change;
- 34 global indicators were slightly changed;
- 35 global indicators were replaced with proposed alternative national indicators;
- 13 national indicators were additional.

Once the five SDG Interagency Taskforces, i.e. “People”, “Planet”, “Prosperity”, “Partnership” and “Peace” were put in place in November 2018, the second stage of national discussions on the SDG indicators nationalization took place.

Participants were requested to split the national SDG indicators into 4 groups: *relevant, for monitoring, deferred, irrelevant.*

This effort will result in the final list of national indicators (about 300 indicators) to be submitted for approval by the SDG Steering Council at the end of April 2019.

Some national SDG indicators are already set forth in the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan endorsed at the end of 2016. The indicators below are prioritized as follows:

- The gender gap in life expectancy of men to women by 2020 will be 8.5 years, by 2023 - 8 years, by 2030 - 7 years;
- The rate of divorces against the number of registered marriages by 2020 will be 32%, by 2023 - 30%, by 2030 - 25%;
- Abortion rate per 1,000 women of reproductive age will be 17.0 by 2020, 15.0 by 2023, and 10.0 by 2030;
- Reduction of registered domestic violence cases against women by 2020 - by 20%, by 2023 - by 30%, by 2030 - by 50%;
- Ratio of the average female wages to the average male wages will be in 2020 - 70%, in 2023 - 73%, in 2030 - 75%;
- The ratio of women to men who own a tangible asset (land, property, companies, individual entrepreneurship, etc.) will increase by 2020 by 5%, by 2023 by 7%, by 2030 by 10%;
- Women’s proportion in executive, representative and judicial authorities, in the state, quasi-state and corporate sectors at the decision-making level will be 22% by 2020, 25% - by 2023, 30%- by 2030;



- The proportion of women in peacekeeping and security will be 8% by 2020, 8.5% - by 2023, 10%- by 2030.

The consistent and systematic implementation of the SDGs in Kazakhstan, including the gender policy delivery, will have a positive multiplier effect, specifically:

- Assisting in joining the 30 most competitive economies in the world by achieving OECD indicators through the SDG implementation;

- Giving an additional impetus to such processes as the enhancement of human potential, bringing in overseas technologies and experience, upgrading skills in big data processing;

- The SDG implementation grows to be one of investment attractiveness determinants for major international corporations that see the socially responsible business model and its compliance with the SDGs as pivotal and critical components of their image.

The national set of indicators to monitor SDG implementation progress is finalized and under final approval with government agencies. It includes now over 233 (it contains only indicators from the first 2 categories: relevant, for monitoring) indicators, out of which 87 are gender-related indicators. Additionally, out of 87 gender-related indicators there are nine additional national indicators and 7 alternative indicators, i.e. they are not part of the global monitoring system and SDG indicators. Following the nationalization of SDG gender-related indicators, they are expected to be further localized at local levels. This effort will also involve such international organizations as UN Women and UNDP amongst others.

#### Alternative indicators:

<b>No. of the Global Indicator</b>	<b>Name of the global indicator</b>	<b>Name of alternative indicator</b>
1.4.2	The proportion of the adult population with documented tenure rights that are legally recognized by governments, and who perceive their tenure rights as legally secure, by sex and by land tenure	Proportion of adult population who own land (the number of land owners and land users) disaggregated by gender and types of tenure
3.5.1		Incidence of mental and behavioral disorders due to substance use, disaggregated by sex

	Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders	Incidence of mental and behavioral disorders as a result of alcohol use, disaggregated by sex
		Incidence of mental and behavioral disorders as a result of drugs use, disaggregated by sex
4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment	Proportion of university students involved in community activities
		Proportion of students in TVE establishments involved in community activities
		Proportion of children covered with updated education content

### Additional national indicators

Number of SDGs-related targets	Name of an additional national indicator
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	Readiness for school (percentage of children enrolled in the first form of the primary school who attended pre-school facilities in the preceding year).
4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	Digital literacy level
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	Reduction of registered domestic violence cases against women
	Reduction of registered violence cases against children
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	Proportion of women who were formally married before 15
	Proportion of women who were formally married before 18

<p>16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere at least 7 per cent per annum in the least developed countries</p>	<p>The proportion of street offenses committed in the past 12 months, including committed:</p> <p>1) - on streets,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- squares;</li> <li>- in parks;</li> <li>- public gardens;</li> <li>- leisure areas;</li> <li>- other places.</li> </ul> <p>2) - against minors (persons under 18);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- against the elderly (men 63+, women 59+);</li> <li>- against women;</li> <li>- against the disabled.</li> </ul>
<p>3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births</p>	<p>Infant mortality rate</p>
<p>3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases</p>	<p>Number of new identified HIV infections among injection drug users</p>

**Question 39. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?**

Official gender statistics now incorporates in full 38 (70.4%) of 54 global SDG gender-specific indicators. At present, they run in parallel the reconciliation and data for all SDG indicators, except for SDG 5.3.2. the reason is that this genital mutilation indicator is irrelevant for the country since this practice has never been part of traditions and cultures of the ethnicities living in Kazakhstan. Incorporation of outstanding data was deferred due to data non-availability or the lack of a global methodology.

It should be highlighted that over 2007-2016, the national system of gender statistics indicators included 61 gender-specific indicators stipulated in the 2006-

2016 RoK Gender Equality Strategy. Since 2016, data are collected and compiled on 75 gender-specific indicators built upon international standards and national priorities.

Likewise, from December 2016, with the adoption of the 2030 Concept of Family and Gender Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, they embarked on developing the methodology for three indicators: the ratio of women to men who own a tangible asset (land, property, companies, individual entrepreneurship, etc.); the proportion of women in the quasi-state and corporate sectors at the decision-making level; the proportion of women in peacekeeping and security.

Under the umbrella of the Joint Economic Research Program of the RoK Government, the Statistics Committee envisaged the SDG component and based on that, in June 2018, it formulated jointly with the World Bank and the Netherlands Statistical Office the first draft report on the SDG statistics, which encompassed statistics on 125 available indicators (out of 257 indicators adapted by that time), including gender-specific indicators.

Collecting data for SDG gender-specific indicators also require the availability of relevant indicators in governmental programs, plans of authorities, and therefore it is critical and instrumental to incorporate relevant indicators into these policy documents.

**Question 40. Which of the following disaggregations is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?**

During major studies in our country, the following disaggregations are routinely provided (*\*from those specified in A/RES/70/1 with the addition of education and marital status*): geographical location, income, gender, age, education, marital status, migration status, disability. All other disaggregations relevant for national statistics are determined given the goals of the planned statistical interventions, research and development.

The approach to identifying disaggregations meaningful in the national context is formulated in view of the objective stipulated in the *RoK Law on State Statistics*, i.e. meeting the needs of the society, the state and the international community in official statistics.

The referenced data disaggregation was applied in the below sample surveys that are part of the national statistical reporting:

“Multi-indicator cluster survey” (in 2011 and 2015);

“Violence against women” (in 2015);

“Generations and Gender” (started in 2018 jointly with UNFPA, will be presented in 2020);

“Quality of Disabled Persons’ Life through Gender Lens” - a survey (in 2014);

“Time budget use” (2001, 2006, 2012, 2018, in cooperation with the UN

Statistics Division).

Since 2001, sample surveys “Assessment of Living Standards” and “Employment of the Population” are run quarterly.

All results of the national statistical reporting, including sample and total surveys, are posted on the website of the Committee of Statistics under the RoK Ministry of National Economy at: <http://stat.gov.kz>