**Diagnostic Assessment of Gender-Responsive Budgeting**

**Report**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**List of abbreviations and acronyms …………………………………………………………. 3**

**I. Introduction ……………………………………………………………………………… 4**

*Purpose of the Assessment ………………………………………………………………………………* 4

*Methodological Approach ……………………………………………………………………………….*  4

**II. Background to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Armenia………… 4**

Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Armenia…………………………………………………… 6

The Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Budgetary System of the Republic of Armenia.. 7

Gender Situation in Armenia…………………………………………………………………. 8

**III. Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Strategic Objectives, Policies, Programmes**

**and Budget…………………………………………………………………………………. 9**

**IV. Current Situation of Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Armenia………………….. 13**

**V. Conclusions ……………………………………………………………………………. 16**

**VI. Recommendations…………………………………………………………………….. 17**

**Annexes**

*Annex I - List of documents reviewed ……………………………………………………………….* 19

*Annex II – List of interviewed respondents………………………………………………………….* 21

*Annex III – Medium Term Expenditures Framework 2021-2023………………………………….* 22

*Annex IV - International Commitments on Gender‑Responsive Budgeting and National Documents on Gender‑Responsive Budgeting……………………………………………………………………………* 23

# List of abbreviations and acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| ARMSTAT | The Statistical Committee of Armenia |
| BPfA | [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/) |
| CE | Council of Europe |
| CEDAW | [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx) |
| EU | European Union |
| GRB | Gender-Responsive Budgeting |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MESCS | Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports |
| MLSA | Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia |
| MoF | Ministry of Finance |
| MoH | Ministry of Health |
| NGOs | Non-governmental organizations |
| PGA | Participatory Gender Audit |
| PIU | Program Implementation Unit |
| RoA | Republic of Armenia |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| WEESC | Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |

# Introduction

* 1. ***PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT***

The objective of the assessment is to undertake due diligence and capacity building efforts on Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Armenia.

The scope of the assessment included review and evaluation of the documents and methodology on pilot implementation of GRB in the selected ministries: Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) and Ministry of Health (MoH).

* 1. ***METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH***

The assessment included a desk review of the documents, collected from the respective ministries (see Annex I); and interviews with key stakeholders from the MoF, MLSA and MoH, experts and representatives of international organisations (see Annex II) who were involved in providing technical support (TA) on Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Armenia.

# Background to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Armenia

Gender equality and women’s empowerment remain critical development issues in Armenia: women comprise 52.7%[[1]](#footnote-1) of population in Armenia. Although the majority of women have higher education, they have a limited representation in the leadership positions in the state and private sectors and accordingly very little influence over policy decisions.

Armenia has committed to advancing women’s empowerment through numerous international and regional human rights and development frameworks, including, inter alia, the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/) (BPfA), the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx) (CEDAW), ILO conventions on gender equality and, most recently, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

At the national level, the Gender Policy Concept Paper was adopted in 2010 and the Republic of Armenia (RoA) Law on Guaranteeing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in 2013 and the RoA Gender Policy Strategic Action Plan for 2011-2015,[[2]](#footnote-2) which however pay limited attention to mainstreaming gender in the national strategies, policies and programs, resulting in lack of women’s political participation in Armenia due to the rooted problems related to gender equality.[[3]](#footnote-3)

The 2019-2023 Strategy for Implementation of Gender Policy in the Republic of Armenia provides a new view on gender equality in Armenia with respect to a wide coverage of gender equality at both national, regional and local levels and proposing an implementation mechanism, responsible for the inter-agency coordination, implementation and monitoring.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The commitments under the international (UN, ILO, WTO, CE, EU) instruments ratified by the Republic of Armenia have played an important role in developing the Gender Policy.

The Strategy focuses on five identified priority areas and sets up goals to address the challenges in each respective area and the expected outcomes. The priority areas are: (i) improving the national mechanism for women advancement, and equal participation of women and men in management and decision-making process; (ii) overcoming gender discrimination in the social and economic areas, enhancing women’s economic opportunities; (iii) full and effective participation of women and men and promotion of equal opportunities in education and science; (iv) expanding equal opportunities for men and women in the health sector and (v) preventing gender discrimination.

The implementation of the Strategy is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) in coordination with the following structures at the national level: Government of RA, “Council for Men and Women Equality Issued in the Republic of Armenia”, Executive Bodies and other Agencies, Civil Service Office of the Prime Minister of RA, State Employment Agency, “Science Committee of the MESCS of RA”, Academy of Justice of RA, “Rural Financing Structures” of SE “Rural Economic Development” PIU of the Ministry of Economy of RA; at the marz (region) level it is implemented by the Governors offices and at the local level by the Local Governments.

The Commission on the Status of Women is one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the main body of the United Nations, and is the primary intergovernmental and global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Commission consists of 45 Member States elected on the basis of geographical representation.

In 2018, Armenia became member of the Commission, reaffirming commitment to support the global efforts for gender equality, enhancement of opportunities and empowerment of women in various aspects of social life and to contribute, on the national level, to the annual sessions of the Commission.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The Permanent Representative of Armenia was elected as the Chair of the 64th and the 65th sessions of the U.N Commission on the Status of Women for the period 2020- 2021.

In the framework of “Accelerating Progress for Gender Equality by 2030”, Armenia was selected to be the leader of the “Equality Generation” women’s rights related thematic coalition with respect to technologies and innovation. Armenia coordinated one of the six thematic groups worldwide in cooperation with Norway and Tunisia.

To note that the MLSA has greatly contributed to the above-mentioned successful endeavours of Armenia related to gender equality at the international level. MLSA is the co-chair of the Gender Theme Group Armenia, which includes the relevant Ministries, UN agencies, international organisations, NGOs and think tanks.

* 1. ***GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN ARMENIA***

The international legal commitments endorsed by Armenia include a legal obligation and basis for gender responsive budgeting. Although the Armenian legislation does not directly mention GRB, its legal and strategic framework contains enough elements that form a sound legal basis for work in this direction.

Armenia has a firm legal basis on gender equality principles; the description and main points of the national documents promoting gender equality and developed on the base of international treaties is presented below. (See the international commitments on gender‑responsive budgeting and national documents on gender‑responsive budgeting in Annex IV).

* + 1. **The Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Budgetary System of the Republic of Armenia**

**Article 1. The Objective of this Law**

The objective of this Law is to define the basic procedures of the budgetary system and to regulate the process of budgeting.

**Article 2. The State Budget and Community Budgets**

1. The State Budget and community budgets are fiscal plans for a particular period of time on raising and spending the funds necessary for state and local jurisdictions to perform their constitutional and statutory functions. 2. The budgets are drafted, discussed and adopted pursuant to the procedure set forth in the Constitution and the laws.

**Article 3. The Budgetary System of the Republic of Armenia**

1. The budgetary system of the Republic of Armenia is composed of the State Budget and community budgets (hereafter - the budgets); 2. The State Budget and community budgets are built upon a unified fiscal, monetary and tax policy of the State. 3. The budgetary system of the Republic of Armenia is built upon the principles of: - preparation of draft budgets; - budgetary classification of budget revenues and expenditures; - accounting; - reporting; - general principles of budget implementation.

**Article 4. Consolidated Budget of the Republic of Armenia**

Consolidated budget of the Republic of Armenia is the consolidated balance of state and community budget revenues and expenditures.

**Article 5. Budgetary Institutions**

1. Budget institutions are the legal entities which execute the powers of state and local governments, and are fully financed from corresponding budgets. 4 2. Personnel expenditure estimates of a state government agency are confirmed, within the limits of the general state budget appropriations, by the head of the agency, in accordance with the statutory procedure. 3. Personnel expenditure estimates of a local self-government agency are confirmed by the mayor, within the limits of general local budget appropriations, in accordance with the statutory procedure. 4. Personnel expenditure estimates of a budget institution which cannot be classified as a local agency are confirmed by the head of the responsible government agency, within the limits of general budget appropriations, in accordance with the statutory procedure.

**Article 6. The Process of Budgeting**

1. The process of budgeting includes the legally regulated activities of state and local government agencies for drafting, discussing, adopting and implementing of annual budgets and confirming the annual report on budget implementation. 2. Draft budgets are prepared in accordance with action and development plans of the state and local governments. 3. The fiscal year (FY) in the Republic of Armenia starts on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same year. By a Cabinet Decision, operations on coverage of the previous fiscal year’s liabilities (hereafter - conclusive operations) can be continued during the first month of the following fiscal year. 4. The process of budgeting starts on the dates set forth in this law and ends when the annual report on budget implementation is confirmed.

* + 1. **Gender Situation in Armenia**

The analysis of a gender situation in Armenia demonstrates that the social and state system of Armenia cannot yet be called gender-sensitive.

The correlation between gender imbalance and the country’s competitiveness is reflected through the Gender Gap. The most problematic for Armenia in the Gender Gap Index are spheres of economy, politics and health. In the health sector, where differences in life expectancy and in sex ratio at birth are taken into consideration, Armenia ends up with the 97th rank because of the practice of sex-selective abortions.

As to the indicators of a gender imbalance in the economic sphere (employment rates for men and women, men’s and women’s pay for equal work, the proportion of men and women among specialists and technical staff), Armenia ranks 42nd.

**Armenia has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.262, ranks it to 55th out of 160 countries.**[[6]](#footnote-6)

In Armenia, 24 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 96.9 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 97.6 percent of their male counterparts.

For every 100,000 live births, 25 women die from pregnancy related causes; and the adolescent birth rate is 23.2 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19.

Women comprise 48% and men 52% of the total employed population.

# Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Strategic Objectives, Policies, Programmes and Budget

The desk review has identified some reference with respect to gender equality, discrimination and limited indication of gender-disaggregated data in the RoA documents. Some of the key documents of Government of Armenia, e.g. RA Government Program Action Plan 2019-23 proposes several specific interventions for women, however gender equality is not systematically mainstreamed and there are insufficient links and synergy with the 2019-2023 Strategy for implementation of Gender Policy and Action Plan of the Republic of Armenia.

Several policy and programmatic documents include aspects related to “gender equality” and “women in development”, however are not full gender-sensitive and lack gender-disaggregated data, with the exception of the “2019-2023 Strategy for implementation of gender policy and action plan in the Republic of Armenia”, which is the main policy document related to gender equality in Armenia.

MLSA is the pioneer Ministry in applying gender responsive budgeting for the preparation of annual budgets and medium-term expenditures framework (see in Annex III), with the support of external experts. However, considering that the approach is new to the Ministry and the staff lacks in depth knowledge and skills related to gender equality, gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting, the process was limited to development and application of mostly quantitative sex disaggregated indicators related to some of the projects.

Another limitation regarding mainstreaming gender in the policy documents, programs and reports was identified with respect to the insufficient coherence among the 2019-2023 Strategy for implementation of Gender Policy, the Action Plan of the Republic of Armenia and other relevant documents of the line ministries. To note that in several cases the indicators of the Strategy are not specific enough and should be well-defined in the Action Plan to enable effective achievement of the planned goals and objectives by the means of development of effective coordination and implementation mechanisms.

RA Action Plan 2019-23 reflects gender perspective with respect to the following: (i) defining new directions to increase the competitive advantages for youth, women and people with disabilities in the labour market; (ii) securing equal rights for men and women in all the sectors of public life; (iii) implementation of Gender Policy 2019-2023 and Action Plan; (iv) prevention of gender-based violence.

To note that the document does not always apply gender sensitive language, gender equality is not properly mainstreamed in the Action Plan, and the gender-disaggregated data is applied only in limited cases.

Action Plan also lacks clarity regarding gender perspective in its analysis as most areas that would need a gender adjusted approach are not analyzed from a gender perspective (see below some examples):

* In the action related to prevention of human trafficking and providing support to its victims, women are not reflected or addressed, while children are not disaggregated per sex, despite of the different needs to be addressed for both women and girl/boy victims.
* Lack of gender-disaggregation also applies to the protection of children, where it is important to ensure the gender-responsiveness of the action.
* In the actions related to ensuring equal rights of labour, where gender equality has a key importance, gender is not reflected. The same refers to the ‘labour relations’, where gender equality is not reflected, and the maternity rights are missing in the proposed improvements related to the labour code.
* The actions related to gender equality and involvement of women in management and decision making, refer only to the women’s economic empowerment, e.g. equal opportunities for decision making in politics and other spheres is missing, although it is one of the goals of the Priority I of the Gender Strategy 2019-2023 “Ensuring full participation of women in all aspects of civil society formation and public life in the country, including in politics”[[7]](#footnote-7).
* The MLSA developed a summary report on the implementation of the Gender Strategy in 2020, which includes the activities implemented in 2020, however lacks information on the achievement of the results, i.e. the report is activity oriented and it is hard to measure the indicators and achievement of the targets.
* The actions addressing the needs of the vulnerable population with respect to improving the social welfare do not mention and address the needs of single mothers, although according to statistics they are one of the main vulnerable groups of the society. The evaluation system of the “Paros” social support lacks comprehensive gender-sensitive indicators.
* The Action Plan does not address violence and harassment in the workplace, as well as the issues related to equal pay and hazardous work.
* According to the “Justification of the 2019-2023 Government’s Action Plan Activities “, the system related to the care of the elderly and the alternative community services does not make a differentiation among the needs of elderly women and men, and accordingly does not propose any specific gender-responsive measures.
* The “Draft Law on Disability” does not make any references to gender equality at all, neither the new model of the needs assessment of the people with disabilities, which cannot enable targeted support to men and women with disabilities.
* The action of the MLSA addressing the Convention on “Elimination of sexual exploitation against children and their protection” does not make any reference to gender equality. The proposed three-level protection system is not gender-sensitive and does not address the needs of girls and boys in a tailored manner, although tailored support is greatly important in the case of the children victims from sexual exploitation.
* The studied midterm expenditures programs do not make any reference to gender equality and therefore do not enable implementation of gender-responsive actions and interventions.
* MLSA key area related to “**Retirement Provision”** does not make any references to gender equality. Thus both men and women can be retired after 63 y.o.
* The policy and programs related to “**People with disabilities and elderly**” do not make any reference to gender equality. The legislative regulations related to people with disabilities are gender neutral.
* The area related to “**Work and employment**” makes limited reference to gender equality, nevertheless without analysis and further implication on how to regulate work and employment in a gender equal way.
* The 2021-2023 midterm expenditures program lacks resources clearly ear-marked for the required gender-related work.

# Current situation of GRB in Armenia

The MoF, MoH and MLSA have received technical support from several organisations, including Technical Assistance (TA) of the European Commission, UNDP and UN Women.

In the framework of the TA of the European Commission, a manual on GRB was developed and a brief training was conducted for the respective staff members of all the ministries.

The MoF has shared the above-mentioned GRB manual and associated guidelines with all the line ministries prior to each fiscal year since its drafting in September 2019. However, the staff of the Financial Departments of the ministries, responsible for the budget development and execution, lack an understanding on GRB and are not able to apply the key pillars of the manual, as the training was not enough to raise awareness on GRB, its importance, the practical implications and the tools and processes.

During the preparation of the budget for 2020, the MoF introduced and tested gender-responsive budgeting approach. Particularly, five programs implemented by the MLSA have gender disaggregated output indicators in line with recommendations provided by the MoF on Preparation of Gender-Responsive Budget Programs, which includes only sex-disaggregated data:

* According to the MLSA officials, they lack tools and capacities for gender-related analysis of any state programme, e.g. in the case of the “Day Centres” state programme, no proper analysis is conducted for the planning and the assessment of the impact and lessons learned.
* Another example is related to the gender-neutral pension system due to the lack of required instruments for gender-responsive analysis and GRB.

Some of the officials of the MoF and the line ministries consider GRB to be related mainly to sex-disaggregation of the programme targets, (no other quantitative or qualitative indicators) which is presently applied in the 2022 GRB result indicators.

MoH applied gender equality in the programming, but could not develop GRB for the health sector.

To note that most technical support was received by the MLSA, considering that the Department of Family, Women and Children’s Issues (DFWCI) is responsible for developing and implementing the government’s gender equality policies, assessing, analysing, coordination and monitoring of gender equality in the state policies and programmes. Nevertheless, the DFWCI lacks the required human resources to address all the required gender equality related priority issues.

Most interviewed government officials stated that they lack knowledge and understanding related to both GRB as a concept, and to its practical implications; for the stakeholders of the MoF, it is important that all the officials from the Financial Departments of all the line Ministries have a good understanding on GRB and can apply it in their budgets, in close relation with the policymaking departments.

Considering the lack of institutionalisation of GRB at the national level and the lack of human resources at both the MLSA and the MoF, both state agencies are not ready to take the full responsibility regarding effective accomplishment of GRB in Armenia, instead all the three above-mentioned ministries have significant expectations from the international community regarding receiving tailored TA on GRB. As GRB is both related to the budget preparation/execution/reporting process and to policies for equal opportunities, the identification of the respective responsibilities in implementing it should be clear between the MoF and the MLSA.

The observed weaknesses point out to the insufficient gender-related expertise of the interviewed staff of the above-mentioned three ministries and lack of in-depth knowledge and capacities related to gender equality and mainstreaming.

The three ministries lack also of in-depth capacities on gender-equality and mainstreaming and do not accomplish analysis of gender and various factors prior to planning and developing the state programs.

The interviewed staff members of the three Ministries also lack an understanding regarding the required indicators, and the monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The indicators that have been selected are mere gender-disaggregated reporting indicators, and cannot be considered as gender-sensitive performance indicators. On the one hand, they are not reflecting a specific policy design to foster gender equality; their perimeter is more general and not gender-specific. On the other hand, they do not have any target for future assessment of the policy outcome reflected by the indicator.

These flaws can be related to the lack of development of program budgeting and performance-based budgeting (misalignment between strategic and budget planning, misalignment of programs with the administrative organization, lack of a performance data control system…) that has prevented the institution of a results-based culture rather than an expenditure-based culture. GRB indicators currently in place do not influence policy design.

Applying GRB implies profound changes to the way policy is formulated and executed, which is however not yet clear to the respective Ministries.

Among the reasons of the lack of awareness and capacities of the Ministries, the present assessment identified the following: (i) the TA provided on GRB was not tailor-made enough for Armenia, too generic; (ii) international agencies provided the support within some project(s), which only focused on some ministries; (iii) in some cases the provided support was not properly applied and institutionalized; (iv) there was lack of follow-up and case by case consultations; (v) the staff of the ministries could not address their questions and concerns due to the lack of regular and comprehensive TA support.

According to the interviewed officials of the Ministries, most activities regarding GRB are on paper but are not properly implemented. The situation will change in case a practical and comprehensive TA is provided, with regular coaching, in addition to a political will and integration of GRB in the State budget procedures.

# Conclusions

Understanding of the gender equality issue is evolving over the time. There are significant changes at the Government level, including the adoption of the Gender Policy Strategy for 2019-2023 and Action Plan, introduced gender-responsive budgeting approach to reflect gender equality in the Government programs, plans to conduct collection of gender sensitive and gender-disaggregated indicators.

There is general knowledge about gender equality; the interviewed staff considers gender related issues mainly to be the mandate of the MLSA. Despite the fact that the MLSA has developed and is responsible for the implementation of the Gender Policy Strategy for 2019-2023, gender equality is not fully mainstreamed either at programmatic or organizational levels.

The staff of the addressed three Ministries (please see the list of respondents in Annex II): MLSA, MoF and MoH lack awareness and capacities on gender-equality and mainstreaming, GRB and do not accomplish gender analysis and various factors prior to planning and developing the state programs.

According to the perception of some interviewed officials, gender-responsive budgeting refers mostly to the equal number of female and male beneficiaries and not their specific needs to be addressed in a tailored approach.

The methodology of the developed GRB manual is not comprehensive enough for the staff of the Ministries, and they do not have a clear understanding on the instruments required for GRB, including the required GRB analysis of both budgets and policies from a gender perspective, as well as the economic rationale with respect to eliminating inequalities.

The provided TA support by various organisations is not sufficient for effective budget reform.

# Recommendations

The Ministries need significant technical support, including capacity development of the staff on gender equality, gender analysis and gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), as well as application of GRB in practice and using the developed Manual on Preparation of Gender-Responsive Budget Programs.

The recommendations based on the results of the assessment include the following:

4.1. To conduct awareness – raising for high-level senior officials/political decision makers, and the respective staff members of all the line ministries by organizing an inter-ministerial workshop on gender-related policies and GRB with high-level representation to explain the essence and importance of Gender-Responsive Budgeting.

4.2. To develop a comprehensive, tailor-made, guideline on gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive programming, budgeting and monitoring, to enable the staff members of the Ministries apply it as a practical guide for their operations. The guideline should be brief, include the requirements of GRB, a brief summary of the required steps and some practical examples.

4.3. To conduct a comprehensive and a practical workshop for the selected staff members of all the line ministries, which should include the following topics among others: (i) formulation of the budget in a gender-responsive way; (ii) linking gender responsive policies with adequate budgetary funds; (iii) executing the budget in a way that benefits women and men, girls and boys equitably; (iv) monitoring the impact of expenditure and revenue raising from a gender perspective, etc. The capacity building should involve also consultations and support to the financial departments of the line Ministries during the development of the respective budgets.

4.4. To develop State strategies to ensure that GRB becomes a regular practice, subject to the political willingness and continued interest from Government of Armenia. To secure annual discussion between MoF, MLSA and every line ministry about GRB.

4.5. To ensure access to gender-sensitive, disaggregated statistics (ARMSTAT).

4.6. Conduct gender-responsive budget analysis, including the combined analysis of budgets and policies from a gender perspective.

4.7. Monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and expenditure to check whether they have produced the intended effect in promoting gender equality, i.e. to make sure that needs and interests, priorities and challenges of women and men in different social situations conditioned by age, class, ethnicity, location etc. are addressed adequately in policy making.

**Annex I – List of the reviewed documents**

1. Action Plan implementation of RA Government 2019-2023 Program
2. Justification of the 2019-2023 Government’s Action Plan Activities
3. Gender-responsive Budgeting Manual
4. 2022 Gender-Sensitive Budget result indicators
5. Report on RA Gender Policy Implementation, 2021 implemented activities in the health sector
6. Decision of the Republic of Armenia N1334 on approval of the Gender Policy Implementation 2019-2023 Strategy and Action Plan
7. RA MLSA 2020-2022 midterm expenditures program and the 2020 budget financing requests (package 2)
8. RA MLSA 2021-2023 midterm expenditures program
9. Armenian model of the new pension plan
10. Second program of the social protection division
11. Report of the implementation of the Action Plan 2019 of the RA gender policy 2019-2023.
12. Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2019 of the RA Gender Policy 2019-2023
13. 2019-2023 Strategy for Implementation of Gender Policy in the Republic of Armenia
14. Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia
15. Law of the Republic of Armenia on Civil Service
16. Law of the Republic of Armenia on Administrative Legal Relations
17. Law of the Republic of Armenia on Remuneration of Persons Holding State Positions
18. Law of the Republic of Armenia on State Budget of the Republic of Armenia for 2020
19. Decree of the Government of Armenia on N 1510-N approved on October 20, 2011
20. Decree of the First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia N 2-Ն on Organization of training of the civil servants adopted on January 9, 2019
21. Internal Disciplinary Rules of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs approved by the order N111-Լ of the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs on August 2, 2015
22. Report on Implementation of the Action Plan for 2019 of the Gender Policy Strategy 2019-2023
23. Manual on “Gender sensitive and disaggregated indicators”, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, 2012
24. Legal Information Sites ([www.arlis.am](http://www.arlis.am), [www.irtek.am](http://www.irtek.am))

**Annex II – List of interviewed respondents**

1. Kristina Hovhannisyan - Head of Equal Opportunities Provision Department , MLSA
2. Lilit Poghosyan - Chief Specialist of Foreign Relations Department, MLSA
3. Maria Hovakimyan – MoH
4. Ruzanna Martirosyan – MoH
5. Aharon Barseghyan - Head of State Health Agency , MoH
6. Sveta Harosyan – MoF
7. Ruzanna Gabrielyan – MoF
8. Nina Hajoyan – Expert, EU TA on Gender-Responsive Budgeting
9. Armen Bezhanyan –UNDP officer
10. Anahit Petrosyan – UNDP expert

**Annex III - Medium Term Expenditures Framework 2021-2023**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs** | | | | |
| **Medium Term Expenditures Framework 2021-2023** | | | | |
| **mln drams** | | | | |
| **N** | **Programs** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** |
| 1 | Support to vulnerable groups of population | 38,244.8 | 38,244.8 | 38,244.8 |
| 2 | Improvement of demographic situation | 25,249.7 | 25,244.2 | 25,242.8 |
| 3 | Social insurance program/ Pensions | 352,682.7 | 359,011.5 | 365,461.2 |
| 4 | Employment program | 2,079.7 | 2,079.7 | 2,079.7 |
| 5 | Provision of social care services to people over 18 years old | 3,182.5 | 3,182.5 | 3,182.5 |
| 6 | Support to population with disabilities | 1,103.4 | 1,200.5 | 1,200.5 |
| 7 | Support to families, women and children | 3,051.3 | 3,051.3 | 3,051.3 |
| 8 | Bonuses and honours payments | 11,261.3 | 11,147.3 | 11,099.3 |
| 9 | Social benefits program for employees of state institutions and organizations | 10,619.5 | 10,619.5 | 10,619.5 |
| 10 | Social assistance to population with disabilities | 14,253.6 | 14,351.9 | 14,351.9 |
| 11 | Social protection area development program | 128.3 | 128.3 | 128.3 |
| 12 | Deposits’ compensation and other reimbursements | 1,212.0 | 1,212.0 | 1,212.0 |
| 13 | Social security program | 30,862.6 | 30,861.4 | 30,861.4 |
| 14 | Provision of housing to specific groups of population | 1,790.6 | 1,620.2 | 1,620.2 |
| 15 | The World Bank financed Second Social Protection Administration Program | 2,053.4 | 410.7 | 273.8 |
| 16 | State policy development, programs coordination and monitoring in the area of social protection | 5,736.4 | 5,808.6 | 5,882.1 |
|  | **Total Budget** | **503,611․7** | **508,174․2** | **514,511․2** |

**Annex IV - *International Commitments on Gender‑Responsive Budgeting and National Documents on Gender‑Responsive Budgeting***

1. ***INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS ON GENDER‑RESPONSIVE BUDGETING***
2. **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979)**

Governments’ commitments under CEDAW include removing barriers to women’s participation in public life and are linked with the four main dimensions of budgets: revenue, expenditure, macroeconomics of the budget, and budget decision-making processes.

1. **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)**

Refers to the need for “the integration of a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men.” (annex II, chapter VI, para 345)

1. **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)**

Commit governments to “a significant increase in investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels.” (A/RES/70/1, para 20)

1. **Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development ( UN, 2015)**

“We reaffirm that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. We reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.” (A/RES/69/313, Para 6);

“We will strengthen national control mechanisms, such as supreme audit institutions, along with other independent oversight institutions, as appropriate. We will increase transparency and equal participation in the budgeting process and promote gender responsive budgeting and tracking. We will establish transparent public procurement frameworks as a strategic tool to reinforce sustainable development.” (A/RES/69/313, Para 30).

1. **European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life (Innsbruck, 2006)**

“Integrating the gender perspective into all activities of local and regional government is necessary to advance equality of women and men. The gender perspective must be taken into account in the drafting of policies, methods and instruments which affect the daily life of the local population – for example, through the use of “gender mainstreaming” and “gender budgeting” techniques. To this end, women’s experiences in local life, including their living and working conditions, must be analysed and taken into account.” (Part I, Principle 5).

1. ***NATIONAL DOCUMENTS ON GENDER‑RESPONSIVE BUDGETING***

The principle of equality between sexes is formulated in the **Armenian Constitution** as a ban on discrimination on the grounds of sex. Amendments to the Constitution made in December 2015 included important articles and provisions such as:

* **General Equality before the Law** (Art. 28),
* **Prohibition of Discrimination** (Art. 29), and
* **Equality of Rights for Women and Men** (Art. 30).

However, the **de jure** banon discrimination does not necessarily mean the **de facto** absence of discrimination. The main problem manifests itself as the **lack of opportunities for enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the constitution.**

**Law of the Republic of Armenia on provision of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men (2013)**

* The Law regulates the issue of ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities to women and men in the fields of politics, public administration, labor and employment, entrepreneurship, health care, education, etc.
* introduces the concept of “gender-based discrimination” into the legislation, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, introduces the concepts of direct and indirect discrimination into the legislation,
* contributes to the development of culture of gender equality and to the elimination of gender stereotypes that underlie discriminatory practices,
* informs on the necessity to establish national machinery for gender equality, etc.

The main document that reflects Armenia’s commitment to gender equality policy and its international obligations in that sphere is the ***RoA Gender Policy Concept Paper*** (2010).

* The *RoA Gender Policy Concept Paper* reflects the latest international approaches to gender equality implementation based on the principle of equal rights and equal opportunities and lays the groundwork for mainstreaming gender into legislative practices and into the overall context of public life and State policies.
* The mission of the *Gender Policy Concept Paper* is to facilitate *gender mainstreaming* in all spheres of socio-political and socio-economic life and in policies at all levels of government *as a tool for* ensuring sustainable democratic development of the society and for consolidating democratic, open and just civil society and the rule-of-law State.
* The main goals of the *Gender Policy Concept Paper* are to:
  + Achieve gender equality in all spheres of public life for securing sustainable development of the society and democratic reforms;
  + Ensure equal representation of women and men at all levels of decision-making;
  + Eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination;
  + Create equal opportunities and equal accessibility to economic resources for women and men in the spheres of labor market and employment, and to
  + Develop a democratic political culture and a tolerant gender dialogue in the society.

As a result of the women movement in 1990s, in order to identify the main problems, as well as to set the goals for the improvement of the situation with women a number of National Actions Plans were adopted by the government since 1998:

National Plan for the Improvement of Women’s Status and Enhancement of Their Role in the Society for the Period 1998-2000 in the Republic of Armenia

The First National action plan on women issues adopted after independence.

**Republic of Armenia Government’s program 2017-2022**

For this period this is the only national document that *inter alia* included chapter on Work and Social Policy, special provisions to the creation of conditions for combining family and work responsibilities by women as well as “to define the criteria for complex services provided to persons subjected to domestic violence and to expand the network of these services during 2018-2021…”

**Resolution “On Approving the Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Policy Implementation in the Republic of Armenia 2019-2023”.**

At its 2019 September 19 sitting, the Government of the Republic of Armenia adopted a Resolution “On Approving the Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Policy Implementation in the Republic of Armenia 2019-2023”. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia reports this, presenting the priorities of the adopted program.

 The strategy has been developed in line with the Government’s Action Plan and meets the requirements of Article 8 (1) (4) of the Republic of Armenia Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities.

 The draft sets out the priority directions of gender policy, which aim to create conditions conducive to the realization of women’s and men’s rights and opportunities in all areas of public life, taking into account also the international commitments of the Republic of Armenia.

 The strategy outlined 5 priority areas:

* + Improving the national mechanism for the promotion of women, equal participation of men and women in governance and decision-making.
  + Overcoming gender discrimination in the socio-economic field, expanding women’s economic opportunities.
  + Promoting full and effective participation of women and men and equal opportunities in education and science.
  + Expanding equal opportunities for men and women in the health sector.
  + Preventing gender discrimination.

 The development of the strategy has been based on gender assessments carried out by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, other state agencies and institutions, international and local partners, analytical reports and reports, results of public discussions, and numerous recommendations.

1. <https://www.armstat.am/file/article/demog_2019_2.pdf>, p. 38 – The Demographic Book of Armenia 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See: <http://www.irtek.am/views/act.aspx?aid=61509> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Research on public perceptions of and policy gaps regarding women’s leadership and participation in decision-making in the context of local self- government reform, Yerevan 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 2019-2023 Strategy for Implementation of Gender Policy in the Republic of Armenia [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Permanent Representative of Armenia to the UN elected as Chair of the UN Commission on the status of women, 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UNDP Armenia [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. 2019-2023 Strategy for implementation of gender policy and action plan, p. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)