

GENDER ANALYSIS (SUMMARY)¹

A. Background and Development Context

1. Georgia has shown some progress toward gender equality, yet women's economic participation remains a challenge.² In 2013, Georgia ranked 86th with a score of 0.6750 among 136 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index.³ With this ranking, Georgia falls in the lower half of the rankings in the Europe and Central Asia region.⁴ The United Nations Gender Inequality Index (GII) for 2012 ranked Georgia 81st of 148 countries.⁵ The GI reflects gender-based inequalities in three dimensions—reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity.⁶

2. Despite improvement in women's political participation, women in Georgia are underrepresented in politics and decision making; women hold only 11.3% of seats in the Parliament of Georgia in 2014. Access to education is high for women, but this has not yet translated into increased overall employment and economic participation.⁷ While overall unemployment was 14.6% in 2013 and youth unemployment 36%, Georgian women experience high levels of unemployment.⁸ Only about half of economically active women are employed, and women are concentrated in the informal sector and lower-paying part-time work (health care, education, and subsistence agriculture).⁹

3. Domestic violence continues to be a persistent problem for women in Georgia, and is frequently raised as a concern by women's organizations, together with reproductive and sexual health concerns.¹⁰ According to a 2010 country-wide survey, every 11th woman in marriage or in a relationship with a partner is a victim of physical violence; and 35% have experienced controlling behaviour by a spouse or partner. A large number of women (78%) consider that domestic violence is a family issue and should be handled within the family.¹¹ Nongovernment organizations and government agencies both provide assistance to victims of domestic violence, but reporting cases of domestic violence by victims remains low.¹²

¹ Source: Drawn from background papers prepared under ADB. 2012. *Technical Assistance for Promoting Gender-Inclusive Growth in Central and West Asia Developing Member Countries*. Manila.

² World Economic Forum. 2013. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2013*. Geneva. <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2013>

³ The Index of the *Global Gender Gap Report* ranks countries according to their gender gaps on economic, political, education, and health criteria. Scores can be interpreted as the percentage of the inequality between women and men that has been closed. For 2013, the scores vary between the top score 0.8731 and the lowest 0.51288 meaning that a few countries have closed about 80% of the gap.

⁴ Azerbaijan, Hungary, and Tajikistan are also in the lower half of the Europe and Central Asia rankings.

⁵ United Nations Development Programme. 2013. *Human Development Report 2013*. New York.

⁶ The GI measures include maternal mortality, share of parliamentary seats, educational attainment, and labor market participation. Armenia ranked 59th and Azerbaijan ranked 54th in the 2012 GI.

⁷ The government reports that gender parity in the education system is well established. About 74% of education employees are women, including 54% of decision makers.

⁸ National Statistics Office of Georgia. Employment and Unemployment. http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p_id=146&lang=eng (accessed 18 October 2014).

⁹ National Statistics Office of Georgia. 2013. *Women and Men in Georgia*. Tbilisi.

¹⁰ United States Agency for International Development (USAID). 2010. *Gender Assessment USAID Georgia*. Washington, DC.

¹¹ United Nations Population Fund. 2010. *National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Georgia*. <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/AdvanceVersions/GeorgiaAnnexX.pdf>

¹² According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1,102 domestic violence cases were reported from 2007 through June 2014; the number of domestic conflicts reported during the same period was 4,935.

4. Gender imbalance at birth is indicative of gender discrimination in Georgia. Some 105 boys were born for every 100 girls in 1991, but by 2011 the ratio of newborn boys to newborn girls was 111 to 100.¹³ This skewed sex ratio places Georgia in the group of countries where increasingly girls are missing at birth.

5. Factors influencing the country's gender profile include traditional values and culture, the legacy of Soviet policy on gender equality, and the social and economic uncertainties of the transition period. Recent developments have included policy changes that accord equal rights and opportunities to women and men, although implementation of the laws and policies needs to be enhanced.

B. Laws, Policies, and Institutional Mechanisms to Promote Gender Equality

6. The constitution of Georgia guarantees equal rights to women and men. In 1995, Georgia adopted the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Millennium Development Goals also oblige the government to take measures for women's advancement and gender equality. After pursuing a fragmented approach to women's advancement and gender equality in the late 1990s, Georgia has made important policy improvements since 2003.

7. The Gender Equality Council, the focal point for gender equality issues, was established at the Parliament of Georgia in 2004 under the Speaker of the Parliament. Following the adoption of the Gender Equality Law, the council became a permanent body on gender equality. The council's mandate is to develop and submit an action plan on ensuring gender equality to the government for endorsement, and ensure coordination and monitoring of its implementation. The council is also tasked with (i) carrying out a gender audit and developing proposals for overcoming existing gender disparities in legislation, (ii) conducting gender reviews of draft laws, (iii) developing targeted programs and plan separate activities for achieving gender equality and enjoyment of equal rights by women and men, and (iv) developing and institutionalizing the system of monitoring and evaluation of interventions for ensuring gender equality. Coordination of gender equality issues is not yet supported by similar machinery at the executive level of government.

8. In 2005, Georgia adopted the State Concept on Gender Equality as a framework policy document for equal rights and opportunities. The Gender Equality National Action Plan for 2014–2016 is the latest national gender plan to be approved. It addresses gender equality issues in economic, health, and social protection fields, and promotes women's engagement in environmental protection and law-enforcement. It also envisages improvement of legislative and institutional frameworks on gender equality.¹⁴ Adoption of the Law on Gender Equality in 2010 is a significant step toward greater equality in Georgia. Most important, in May 2014, the Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination came into force, moving Georgia's antidiscrimination framework closer to international standards.

C. Gender in ADB Operations

9. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been mainstreaming gender equality in its operations to support the government's development objectives and strategies. A pilot project, supported under the Promoting Gender-Inclusive Growth in Central and West Asia DMCs

¹³ Institute for War and Peace Reporting. 2011. *South Caucasus: Selective Abortion Means Fewer Girls Born*. London.

¹⁴ Government of Georgia. 2014. *National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2014–2016*. Tbilisi.

Project to increase the benefits of the Urban Services Improvement Investment Program, aimed to improve water supply and sanitation and adopt a gender sensitive approach when targeting households. Under the pilot project, also as a part of the gender action plan, gender sensitive information-awareness campaign material was developed and public outreach was conducted in two pilot towns, mainly targeting women but also local communities.

10. **Transport.** Women and men use transport differently and have different mobility needs. In Georgia, women usually drive only in the capital and are more likely to travel by public transport. A lack of regularly scheduled public transport to villages and some secondary towns makes it difficult for women and men to access employment opportunities. In the urban areas, the lack of lighting, bus stops, commuter information, pedestrian crossings, and road signs all decrease the ease of travel for women—particularly those traveling with children. Enhanced roads and transport systems can save women time and facilitate their access to jobs and services, and to markets to sell their goods. Access roads and affordable public transport will thus bring important gender benefits. Opportunities to integrate gender concerns into ADB's future transport investments include the following:

- (i) Conduct social and gender analyses of road and transport projects to assess how women and men can fully benefit from improved road networks, and consider the analyses in planning road and transport projects.
- (ii) Improve secondary, feeder, and access roads for maximum impact on women's livelihoods and access to services.
- (iii) Address economic opportunities for women along transport corridors.
- (iv) Plan and coordinate roadside infrastructure development, such as sidewalks, street lighting, and sanitary facilities for female travelers.
- (v) Use visual information on public transport to discourage sexual harassment of female travelers and to promote transport safety.

11. **Urban water supply and sanitation.** Access to water is a problem in some secondary towns that affects women particularly as they are responsible for buying, fetching, or pumping water for domestic use. Opportunities for integrating gender concerns into ADB's future investments in this sector include the following:

- (i) Decrease the time women spend managing water for the household to free up time for their other responsibilities. Of the urban population served by the United Water Supply Company of Georgia, an estimated 25% has no access to a piped water supply and 36% lacks access to a reticulated sewerage system. Almost half of households with access to a piped water supply only receive water for 2–4 hours per day.¹⁵
- (ii) Support awareness raising among women in secondary towns on what constitutes good water management and service standards so that they can monitor the performance of water utilities.
- (iii) Develop consumer feedback mechanisms and monitor complaints by users to improve the responsiveness of the water utility.

12. **Finance and entrepreneurship.** Only 49% of economically active women in Georgia are employed (footnote 9). Factors hampering women's economic participation include unpaid

¹⁵ Based on estimates provided by the United Water Supply Company of Georgia, which provides water and sanitation services for urban settlements throughout Georgia, excluding Tbilisi, Mtskheta, Rustavi, and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara.

domestic work, the absence of affordable childcare especially in secondary towns and villages, unequal access to assets and resources, unequal say within households, and insufficient attention to gender in economic development policy. Since 2000, the growth rate of wages has been consistently higher for females than for males, decreasing the gender wage gap.¹⁶ However, the gap remains very high, with women earning 36% less than men.¹⁷

13. Entrepreneurship is seen in Georgia as a crucial option for women to gain a livelihood. In terms of loan requirements, women and men face similar obstacles in accessing finance. However, gender-based obstacles compromise women's ability to start and grow micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, and constrain robust and inclusive economic growth. Obstacles in Georgia (and elsewhere) include (i) lack of appropriate skills, information, and familiarity with the business environment; (ii) questions of self-confidence; (iii) lack of networks; (iv) aversion to risk; and (v) inexperience in running a business.

14. Of firms with more than five employees, 41% are at least partly owned by women and only 20% are managed by women. Cultural norms often limit women to part-time work and they are mainly active in the areas of hotels and restaurants; education; health and social work; and community, social, and personal services (footnote 9). Women represent about half of total labor migrants, and their share has steadily increased. Women migrants are generally skilled, are more likely than men to return, and send on average higher remittances.

15. Opportunities for integrating gender into ADB assistance in the finance sector include (i) capacity building to address women's lack of business skills, (ii) building women's business confidence and networks, (iii) increasing women's access to finance, and (iv) ensuring continuity in the equitable approach in pension reforms and adequate and sustainable old-age income.

16. **Cross-sector opportunities.** Opportunities to enhance gender equity include the following:

- (i) Enhance regular collaboration among users and producers of gender statistics and indicators, and encourage gender analysis to inform project design.
- (ii) Encourage women-focused nongovernment and community-based organizations to work within ADB projects to enhance social inclusion and the participation of women.
- (iii) Ensure terms of reference for project preparation and for subsequent design engineering integrate gender design elements as relevant.
- (iv) Specify publicly advertised, merit-based recruitment for all new jobs or positions created as a result of ADB-supported projects, and encourage qualified women to apply for all posts to send an inclusive gender message.
- (v) Develop public communication strategies for projects, and consider employing women as change agents in those projects.

¹⁶ International Labour Organization. *Global Wage Report 2012/13, Wages and Equitable Growth*. http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/global-wage-report/2012/WCMS_194843/lang--de/index.htm

¹⁷ National Statistics Office of Georgia. Wages. http://www.geostat.ge/?action=page&p_id=149&lang=eng (accessed 18 October 2014).