



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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against Women**

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**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of Kyrgyzstan to the list of issues and questions in
relation to its fifth periodic report***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Replies of Kyrgyzstan to the list of issues and questions in relation to its fifth periodic report

1. Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

The Constitution stipulates that no one may be subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religion, age, political or other beliefs, education, origin, wealth or other status, or other circumstances. Special legislative measures to ensure equal opportunities for different social groups in accordance with international obligations do not amount to discrimination.

These constitutional principles are reflected in the Act on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women.

The National Strategy for the Achievement of Gender Equality by 2020, approved by Government Decision No. 443 of 27 June 2012, defines the priorities of State gender policy. Specific measures for its implementation in the coming period are set out in the latest National Plan of Action for Gender Equality for the period 2018–2020. In an order of 21 September 2018, the Government approved an action plan to implement United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on the role of women in peace and security.

2. Access to justice

In 2019, the Coordination Centre for State Guaranteed Legal Aid (hereinafter referred to as the Legal Aid Coordination Centre), which reports to the Ministry of Justice, provided State legal aid to 95,322 persons (49,505 men and 45,817 women), as part of its mandated tasks, as follows:

- (1) Legal advice for 80,881 persons (37,663 men and 43,218 women);
- (2) Legal assistance from qualified professionals for 14,441 persons (11,842 men and 2,599 women);

Legal advice was provided by the regional justice departments and by centres attached to the regional justice departments that provide free legal advisory assistance.

Legal assistance from qualified professionals was provided by lawyers from the State register of lawyers for the system of State guaranteed legal aid. Elements of the system include online consultations, electronic registration of citizens' complaints and WhatsApp communications.

A survey of the complaints has shown that citizens most often have problems relating to family, inheritance, land and social issues.

The handbooks referred to have been used to create video courses with infographics, which contain brief, concise descriptions of legal processes and are designed to engage the largest number of students. They will be made available for all citizens on the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Aid Coordination Centre.

Moreover, on 13 December 2019, employees of the Ministry of Justice participated in a workshop for elders' (aksakal) courts in Chu province. This seminar was attended by representatives of various State and local government bodies, as well as representatives of the elders' courts of Sokuluk district and other non-profit organizations.

Also on 13 December 2019, the Interregional Department for Osh, Jalalabad, Batken and Talas provinces conducted awareness-raising activities for the staff of

local authorities and the population of the Leilek district on aspects of the new codes that came into force on 1 January 2019. In addition, local government officials received clarification of the procedure for providing professional legal aid under the Act on Guaranteed State Legal Aid, as well as Government Decision No. 594 of 20 December 2018 on approval of the procedure for cooperation between the entities of the State legal aid system and the list of documents confirming the right of an individual to receive legal aid from a qualified professional.

3. National machinery for the advancement of women

Government Decision No. 600 was adopted on 11 November 2019, amending Government Decision No. 268 of 2 May 2012 on the establishment of the National Council on Gender Development, which reports to the Government.

The Secretariat for Women and Gender Development is a working body of the National Council, and it provides organizational, information and other support for the activities of the National Council.

The staff of the Secretariat is drawn from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and other governmental entities, and international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Its objectives are the following:

- Promote equal opportunities for women and men in the economic sphere, further develop women’s entrepreneurship and increase their competitiveness in the labour market
- Promote gender education and public awareness.

On 15 January 2020, a regular meeting of the National Council was convened, and the Plan of Action for 2020 was adopted as an outcome of the meeting.

4. National human rights institutions

The status of the Ombudsman (Akyikatchy) is recognized in the Constitution. According to article 108 of the Constitution, parliamentary oversight of the observance of human and civil rights and freedoms in Kyrgyzstan shall be exercised by the Ombudsman.

In principle, the Ombudsman acts independently and submits annual reports on the observance of human and civil rights and freedoms in Kyrgyzstan to the parliament.

However, the current Ombudsman Act of the Kyrgyz Republic includes an essential contradiction with the norms of international law under which it was established – the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris principles) and the principles on the relationship between national human rights institutions and parliaments (the Belgrade principles).

The contradiction is in article 7, paragraph 7, of the Act, according to which parliamentary disapproval of the annual report may be grounds for early termination of the Ombudsman’s mandate.

In addition, a breach of oath may be grounds for the early removal of the Ombudsman. In view of these circumstances, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions has accredited the Ombudsman with “B” status, which indicates partial compliance with the Paris Principles.

We also wish to inform you that in the spring of 2018, members of parliament drafted a new bill on the Ombudsman, which has passed the first reading.

However, in 2019 the Office of the Ombudsman, after reviewing the draft of the new version of the Ombudsman (Akyikatchy) Act that had passed the first reading, requested that the bill be rejected, as the overall vision did not comply with the basic requirements of the Paris principles (the Paris Principles, adopted by General Assembly resolution 48/134, and the Belgrade Principles, adopted in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, General Assembly resolutions 63/169 and 65/207 on the role of the Ombudsman, mediator and other national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights, resolutions 63/172 and 64/161 on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, and Human Rights Council resolution 17/9 on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights).

In addition, the bill does not provide for appropriate amendments to the codes and laws adopted as part of the judicial and legal reform, which will also not provide for real parliamentary control over compliance with human and civil rights and freedoms, even if the bill is adopted.

In that regard, the Office of the Ombudsman, together with members of parliament and the Government, has prepared bills to amend and supplement those codes and laws.

In a second phase of the process, it is planned to adopt a constitutional law, the Ombudsman Act.

In addition, under the Ombudsman Act, one of the deputies is responsible for protecting women's rights. The department for the protection of the rights of children, women and the family is an independent structural unit of the Office of the Ombudsman that monitors respect for the rights, freedoms and legally protected interests of children, women and the family.

The Office of the Ombudsman has concluded a memorandum of cooperation with the Legal Aid Coordination Centre of the Ministry of Justice in order to establish effective cooperation to support the development of the legal aid system for women in difficult situations.

A memorandum of cooperation was also concluded with the Sezim Crisis Centre, a community association, to protect the rights and interests of women and the family in all areas of their lives.

In addition, the Office of the Ombudsman cooperates with many NGOs on a permanent basis, such as the human rights movement Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan, the Bishkek Solidarity Centre, the Reproductive Health Alliance and others working to protect women's rights.

5. Temporary special measures

Kyrgyzstan has a relatively progressive legal framework for ensuring gender equality, including constitutional norms, international treaties and specific laws on gender equality. The most significant of these are the Act on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women and the Act on Protection and Defence against Domestic Violence. It must be recognized, however, that achieving *de facto* gender equality remains a challenge. The women's movement in Kyrgyzstan has had some significant successes in efforts to achieve gender equality over the last decade, but women are still underrepresented in decision-making processes.

The indicators of women's political participation, and especially women's representation at decision-making levels, are a clear reflection of gender inequality.

The situation is particularly alarming at the level of local councils (ayil kenesh). Over the past decade, the proportion of women in the local councils has fallen from 24 per cent to 11 per cent. There is a total of 8,384 deputies, of whom 7,456 are men and 928 are women. Until recently, there were no mechanisms to monitor gender representation in the local councils.

In order to achieve the above objective of the National Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality by 2020 and increase the representation of women in local councils, the Act on Amendments to the Law on the Election of Local Council Deputies, signed on 8 August 2019, provided for a mechanism reserving 30 per cent of seats on local council for women and set out the procedure for distribution of reserved and vacant seats. In the event of premature termination of the mandate of a deputy elected under the proportional system, his or her mandate is transferred to the next registered candidate of the corresponding sex.

In addition, a draft law on amendments to certain legislative acts (the Constitutional Act on the Government and the Act on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women) has been prepared, which provides for women's participation in government bodies and in the decision-making process.

6. Stereotypes and harmful practices

Materials and social video clips of a pre-emptive and preventive nature on domestic violence, including with the participation of minor children, are produced and published on an ongoing basis.

A section on gender policy has been created on the website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The main provisions of the Protection and Defence against Domestic Violence Act and information on assistance services have been posted on that section, which also contains a collection of regulatory acts governing gender and domestic violence prevention. The section also includes videos on the prevention of gender and domestic violence and a video on liability for violation of legislation on the age of marriage. A total of over 15 videos have been posted on the site. In addition, there are videos on the following topics: "Do not destroy dreams", "Parents, keep an eye on your children!" and "Follow the rules of the road and save your life", which have been broadcast on the nation's television channels.

The video materials section contains videos on social issues, including suicide prevention, and protection against domestic violence and child marriage; a photo gallery; a section on campaigns and competitions; and a section entitled "Safe Internet for Children", which contains booklets on safe use of the Internet.

On 17 January 2020, the Kabar news agency held a press conference with staff from the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the subject of combating domestic and gender-based violence as a priority in the work of internal affairs agencies. The press conference was covered in the mass media, including the news agencies AKIpress, Kabar, 24 kg, fact.kg and Kabarlar; and on the television channels KTRK, EITR, STV, 5 Kanal, NTS, Asia TV, Kyrgyzstan TV, New TV, Piramida and Next TV.

In cooperation with the Women's Aid Centre, a campaign against child marriage was organized at the Kara-Zhygach secondary school in Alamudun district, Chu province. A manual entitled "Sexual violence is inadmissible and a criminal offence" and recommendations for violence prevention experts were developed as part of a project for providing comprehensive services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. These documents have been sent to the country's regional internal affairs departments. A video on child marriage was also produced.

7. Gender-based violence against women

Domestic violence is a common problem in society, including in Kyrgyzstan. Research in Kyrgyzstan has shown that the victims of domestic violence in most cases are socially vulnerable family members: children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Thus, 95 per cent of victims of domestic violence are women, 30 per cent of children suffer from physical violence in the family, and 71 per cent of the population surveyed noted the existence of violence against the elderly.

The country has crisis centres for women (14), children's centres and other specialized agencies providing assistance to the population, including victims of domestic violence.

In 2018, a total of 8,730 persons, most of them women (78 per cent), reported cases of domestic violence to crisis centres and other specialized agencies.

In 2016, standards were revised and a more effective mechanism for the protection of victims of domestic violence was developed. In April 2017, the Act on Protection and Defence against Domestic Violence was adopted.

Government Decision No. 390 of 1 August 2019 on the procedure for protecting and defending against domestic violence was adopted in order to implement the aforementioned Act. The Decision approves the procedure for cooperation between State bodies in identifying domestic violence and providing timely and comprehensive assistance to victims of domestic violence; and a correction programme to change violent behaviour for the perpetrators of domestic violence. In December 2019, employees of the central and regional offices of State agencies were trained to implement that Decision.

Joint Order No. 133 of 25 October 2019 of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Internal Affairs was approved. The order approved the directive for cooperation between social development and child protection agencies and internal affairs agencies in the area of protection and defence against domestic violence.

As part of the implementation of State social-sector procurement, a competition was held for crisis centres providing social services to victims of domestic violence. The crisis centres that participated in and won the competition in 2018 were allocated 3.5 million soms and in 2019 the total was 6.4 million soms.

In October 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, together with the United States Agency for International Development, organized a conference on the work of the domestic violence prevention committees.

A total of 27 committees from 4 districts of the Issyk-Kul and Osh provinces and 9 new buildings in the city of Bishkek presented the results of their work at the conference. Since January 2019, the committees have informed more than 3,400 local residents about the Act on Protection and Defence against Domestic Violence and how to protect themselves from and prevent domestic violence, and the committees have developed a draft procedure for the operation of local committees on protection and defence against domestic violence.

By Government Decision No. 5 of 13 January 2020 on certain issues related to organization of the activities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, that Ministry has been designated as the State body responsible for coordinating the activities of the entities involved in protection and defence against domestic violence, with 5 assigned posts.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has carried out the relevant work to implement the Act on Protection and Prevention against Domestic Violence. Government

Decision No. 642 of 3 October 2017 approved the modality for the protection order, and Ministry of Internal Affairs orders approved the directive for organizing the activities of internal affairs departments to protect and defend against domestic violence, as well as the directive for approving modalities for departmental reporting.

With a view to preventing and combating domestic violence, internal affairs departments regularly carry out awareness-raising campaigns with domestic violence prevention units.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Ministry of Internal Affairs prepared and issued a joint order approving the directive for cooperation between social development and child protection agencies and internal affairs agencies in the area of protection and defence against domestic violence.

At 10 new pilot housing projects, employees of the Bishkek Department of Internal Affairs conducted a three-day training course on the skills of public speaking and conflict management in order to improve preventive work among the population.

Ten information activities were carried out, including five carried out by juvenile affairs inspectors in schools with the participation of school pupils, representatives of local authorities, pupils' parents and representatives of NGOs and the Centre for the Study of Democratic Processes, a social organization. Five events were held by district police commissioners in the form of public meetings, where reports were made to the public, information was presented on the crime situation in new buildings, and on the prevention of theft and domestic violence.

Representatives of local government bodies and community-based organizations, residents of new buildings, and representatives of state agencies were invited to those events.

Internal affairs staff took part in activities on the prevention of gender-based and domestic violence with members of 27 committees for the prevention of domestic violence in Bishkek city and in Almadun, Jeti-Oguz, Ak-Suu, Kara-Suu and Nookat districts, with 3,477 participants (organized jointly with the Association of Crisis Centres, the non-governmental organization DIA and the public association Abiyir).

Four videos on the prevention of theft and violence against children have been produced.

Booklets (8,000 copies) on the prevention of domestic violence and information on assistance services for victims of domestic violence (Association of Crisis Centres) have been published and distributed.

Materials and videos of a pre-emptive and preventive nature on domestic violence, including with the participation of minor children, are produced and published on an ongoing basis.

In addition, representatives of community prevention centres, in particular, representatives of women's and youth councils, together with district police commissioners and juvenile affairs inspectors, carry out preventive work with individuals who are repeat offenders in the area of family and domestic relations and regular users of alcohol and narcotic drugs.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, with the assistance of the Centre for Democracy Studies, has developed online courses on combating gender-based and domestic violence for the law enforcement and legal system (a presentation was given).

An interdepartmental working group has developed a bill amending the Act on Prevention and Defence against Domestic Violence to bring it into line with the new

codes. The bill was approved by Government Decision No. 543 of 14 September 2019 and is under consideration in the parliament.

During the 12 months of 2019, 8,159 cases of family (domestic) violence were registered, including 5,379 cases of physical violence, 2,518 cases of psychological violence, 8 cases of sexual violence, and 254 cases of neglect.

Internal affairs departments issued 6,145 protection orders during that period, including 5,752 protection orders relating to men (94.1 per cent of the total number of orders issued) and 393 protection orders relating to women (5.9 per cent).

The total includes 790 extended protection orders.

Protection orders have been issued for 169 minors who are victims of domestic violence – 81 boys and 88 girls.

A total of 8,519 misdemeanours relating to domestic violence under article 75 of the Code on Misdemeanours (Domestic violence) have been recorded. A total of 554 cases were referred to the courts, and in 7,045 cases, action was discontinued. Seven offences have been recorded under article 76 of the Code on Misdemeanours (Non-compliance with the conditions of a temporary protection order), and in five cases action was discontinued.

A total of 129 cases were recorded under article 61 of the Code on Violations (Neglect of parental duties), and 649 cases of domestic violence under the Criminal Code.

Officials from the juvenile affairs inspectorate delivered 166,065 lectures in educational institutions and organized 993 media appearances. A total of 24,370 preventive measures were carried out, including 4,819 workshops; 2,501 round tables; 726 conferences; 2,341 sports competitions; and 13,983 other events.

The staff of internal affairs departments sent out 48,552 communications on problematic issues, including 26,066 to education authorities; 3,031 to health authorities; 6,020 to social development departments, 2,577 to community prevention centres; and 10,858 to other social services.

National Statistics Committee. Number of cases of domestic violence and measures taken

	<i>2019</i>
Number of cases of family (domestic) violence	6 145
Including:	
Physical	4 194
Psychological	1 688
Sexual	8
Neglect	254
Number of protection orders issued	5 355
Number of criminal cases processed as a result of domestic violence and referred to court	649
Number of cases of domestic violence recorded	7 045
By articles:	
Domestic violence (art. 75)	4 983
Non-compliance with the conditions of a temporary protection order (art. 70)	18
battery (art. 65)	438

	<i>2019</i>
Minor health impairment (art. 66)	287
Less serious injury by negligence (art. 67)	95
Disorderly conduct (art. 119)	833
Other articles	391
Neglect of parental duties (Code on Violations, art. 61)	129

In 2018, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Centre for Research into Democratic Processes conducted joint review missions in the city of Osh and the Provinces of Osh and Issyk-Kul to develop a practical manual for internal affairs personnel of investigative units on working with victims of gender-based violence, including bride kidnapping.

In 2019, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the Centre for Research into Democratic Processes and the Centre for Assistance to Women, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund, the British Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic and the United Nations Development Programme Country Office in Kyrgyzstan, prepared, in both the State and official languages, a practical manual for the staff of investigative services of internal affairs departments of the Kyrgyz Republic on the effective investigation of gender-based crimes committed against women and minors. The manual was distributed among the local subdivisions of the country's internal affairs agencies (1,600 copies).

In August 2019, 77 staff members of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Investigative Service, together with the Centre for Research into Democratic Processes, held training seminars for investigators and interrogators of the Bishkek city and Chu Province internal affairs directorates and the Osh and Jalalabad province internal affairs departments on the effective investigation of gender-based crimes committed against women and minors.

The new Criminal Code, which entered into force on 1 January 2019, provides for separate articles 175, "Abduction of a person for the purpose of marriage", and 177, "Forcing a person to marry", unlike the former version of 1997, in which the above-mentioned offences were combined in a single article 155, "Forcing a woman to marry, abducting a woman for marriage or preventing a woman from marrying".

Since December 2014, the Ministry of Health has adapted and is actively introducing international standards for the effective medical documentation of violence into the practice of health care. These standards are designed not only to improve the quality of medical care, but also to assist judicial and investigative bodies in the process of investigating cases of violence in terms of providing objective medical evidence. For example, the Ministry of Health developed practical guidelines on a unified standard form of medical examination (Order No. 680 of the Ministry of Health of 7 December 2015) for medical professionals in the Kyrgyz Republic to use for effective documenting of violence, torture and cruel treatment, which became a national document based on the principles of the Istanbul Protocol and addresses the tasks of correct and complete documentation and recording of cases of violence, torture or cruel treatment, and targeted referral of victims to the appropriate authorities for comprehensive support (including the investigation of such cases), information, State accounting and recording at the national level, in order to improve the quality of forensic medical and psychiatric assessments, and ensure a more sensitive approach to vulnerable groups.

According to data from the e-Health Centre, a total of 1,428 persons applied to primary health-care organizations on account of domestic violence in 2019, including 824 women and 604 men (compared to 1,679 for the same period in 2018, including 909 women and 770 men).

A total of 5,436 people were hospitalized for conditions resulting from domestic violence in 2019, including 2,102 women and 3,334 men (in 2018, 5,796 were hospitalized, including 2,255 women and 3,541 men).

In 2019, 4,627 forensic medical examinations were carried out, a decrease of 7.1 per cent (compared to 4,967 in 2018), including 2,035 (39.2 per cent) for domestic violence; 3 for psychological abuse (0.2 per cent); 4,258 for physical violence (92.0 per cent); and 356 for sexual violence (7.6 per cent).

The data obtained, together with other statistical medical materials, are published in the form of a compendium that the health system uses in its work.

10. Bride kidnapping

In 2017, in order to prevent child marriage, a lecture was held in general educational institutions in Bishkek on the consequences of child marriage, with the screening of a video and distribution of handouts.

In cooperation with the Women's Aid Centre, a campaign against child marriage was organized at the Kara-Zhygach secondary school in Alamudun district, Chu province. A manual entitled "Sexual violence is unacceptable and is a criminal offence" and recommendations for violence prevention experts were developed as part of a project for the comprehensive provision of services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. These documents have been sent to the country's regional internal affairs departments. A video on child marriage was also produced.

In 2017 and 2018, the Ministry of Internal Affairs held training workshops in all regions of the country, under a joint project of the United Nations Population Fund and the Centre for Research into Democratic Processes, to step up preventive efforts against gender-based violence and bride kidnapping. As a result, some 600 internal affairs officers have been trained.

In 2017, a number of general preventive measures were taken throughout the country, and cooperation was organized with the education, social development, labour, migration and youth welfare and defence authorities to prevent offences among schoolchildren and young people.

In addition, in order to prevent child marriage and to clamp down on illegal activities regarding marriage ceremonies involving minors, Act No. 179 of 17 November 2016 amended certain legislative acts (the Family Code and the Criminal Code). The new Criminal Code, which has been in force since 2019, now contains article 178, on violation of the law on marriageable age for religious ceremonies.

In 2017, a manual on the prevention of child marriage was produced.

The new Criminal Code, which entered into force on 1 January 2019, provides for separate articles 175, on abduction of a person for the purpose of marriage, and 177, on forced marriage, unlike the former version of 1997, in which the above-mentioned offences were combined in a single article 155, on forcing a woman to marry, abducting a woman for the purpose of marriage or preventing a woman from marrying.

Over the 12 months of 2019, the investigation services of the country's internal affairs agencies reported to the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanours a total

of 218 cases of offences under article 175, on abduction of a person for the purpose of marriage (11 cases were referred to the courts; 158 were terminated; and proceedings are under way for 49 criminal cases).

In order to implement Interdepartmental Order No. 1125 of 11 December 2017 approving the plan for the implementation of Act No. 179 of 17 November 2016 on amendments to certain legislative Acts (the Family Code and the Criminal Code), Order No. 226 of the Ministry of Health of 30 March 2018 on measures to prevent child marriage in the Kyrgyz Republic was issued and a plan of action for the implementation of the Act was approved.

The heads of health-care organizations and medical universities have been mandated to adopt and implement the aforementioned Act and Interdepartmental Order. Internal directives and a plan of preventive measures for health-care organization have also been developed and approved in order to implement Family Code standards on the inadmissibility of violating legislation on the marriageable age. The issue of early pregnancy and childbirth (clinical and psychological, medical and social, and legal aspects) has been incorporated into the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula, taking into account the marriageable age in the Kyrgyz Republic.

11. Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is taking measures to implement the action plan to implement the Government programme to combat human trafficking for the period 2017-2020. In order to implement the law on preventing and combating human trafficking, Government Decree No. 493 of 19 September 2019 on the national referral mechanism for victims of human trafficking was adopted. A Departmental Act of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of 18 October 2019 approved the directive for internal affairs agencies on the detection, identification and referral of victims of human trafficking and the directive for internal affairs agencies on the confidentiality of personal information of victims of human trafficking.

A manual for law enforcement officers on combating human trafficking and a manual on combating human trafficking and the defining elements of the offence have been prepared.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the State Migration Service and international organizations, has developed training modules for advanced training of staff of internal affairs agencies and other law enforcement agencies in international and national law on trafficking in persons, best practices and methods for conducting investigations and conducting search operations, and on the procedure for cooperation with other State agencies and international organizations to facilitate solutions to the social and domestic issues of trafficking victims.

In cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, nine workshops have been held to enhance the effectiveness of efforts to combat human trafficking and related crimes. These workshops were held in Bishkek city, Batken province and Osh city, and the heads of regional and territorial subdivisions of the internal affairs agencies were invited to attend.

Information campaigns are being conducted to explain to the public the risk of being trafficked and the dangers of illegal labour migration. For each detected case of human trafficking in the territory of the Republic and abroad, crime reports are being posted on the Internet.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is working to strengthen cooperation with foreign law enforcement agencies in order to establish working contacts for identifying and suppressing human trafficking channels and exchanging information

as part of the implementation of the agreement signed by the Ministries of Internal Affairs of the Central Asian region (the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan) on 6 October 2018 in Cholpon-Ata, and in accordance with the inter-State programme of joint measures to combat crime for the period 2019–2023, which was adopted by a decision of the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

In order to detect and prevent illegal migration, including human trafficking, and in cooperation with the State Border Service that reports to the Government, efforts are being made at checkpoints in border zones to identify possible victims of human trafficking.

In order to ensure a safe environment for people, national preventive measures are carried out on a monthly basis as a “unified day of prevention”, with the participation of all internal affairs services, as well as State bodies and community associations. The events have been attended by staff of internal affairs agencies, representatives of State and local authorities, education and social development agencies, community prevention centres, elders’ courts, and members of voluntary citizens’ patrols.

Households, hostels and service stations were checked during the events. Protocols for various violations have been drawn up as a result of the activities carried out.

In order to strengthen interaction with the public in the activities of internal affairs agencies and to increase public confidence in those agencies, reports are made public. In 2019, 9,961 reports were presented to the public at events attended by the heads of local district administrations and local government bodies, prosecutor’s offices, educational institutions, neighbourhood and house committees, religious organizations, community prevention centres and elders’ courts. The events were covered by the media, including television, radio, Internet sites and the press.

In order to provide access to the internal affairs agencies, all such agencies in Kyrgyzstan and educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs organize public meetings. There are city and settlement police departments and neighbourhood police stations, the number of neighbourhood police commissioners and juvenile affairs inspectors is increasing, and the tourist police force is in operation (Bishkek, Issyk-Kul, Osh province and Osh city), while remote areas of the country have mobile police units (30 vehicles for meetings with members of the public, who can file statements and communications). A police patrol service has been established as a pilot project in Bishkek city.

In 2017, 81.9 per cent of the staff of the country’s internal affairs agencies received training on the directive on the prevention of HIV infection by the State agencies responsible for internal affairs, drug control and penal correction.

In order to execute Ministry of Internal Affairs Order No. 226 of 18 March 2019 on approval of the plan of action of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on implementation of Government Decision No. 852 of 30 December 2017 on overcoming HIV infection, the Ministry’s plan of action for 2017–2021 is in place.

The plan includes training modules for training the managerial staff of project internal affairs agencies, followed by an introduction to the training process of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on thematic areas in the prevention of HIV and gender-based violence and new evaluation criteria for police activities.

Over the 12 months of 2019, 166 HIV/AIDS prevention activities were carried out (175 in 2018), in which 292 drug users and dependent persons (162 in 2018) were informed about facilities providing anonymous medical care.

In cooperation with NGOs, 81 training seminars (79 in 2018) were held for the staff of the country's internal affairs agencies, and 668 lectures (612 in 2018) were delivered for the public.

The Medical Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs has conducted examinations of 109 people for HIV infection from the defined group (medical workers), with no positive results.

Doctors in the Medical Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs have delivered 10 lectures to staff from units of internal affairs departments, and have also provided first aid training for 240 employees.

The medical facilities of the medical department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs monitor compliance with the sterilization regime for the collection, storage and disposal of single-use medical devices.

At present, 71.5 per cent of internal affairs agency units are equipped with first-aid kits for situations involving contact with biological material and persons who may be living with HIV/AIDS.

Training in the directive on the prevention of HIV infection has been provided by authorized State agencies for internal affairs, drug control and penal correction for 77.6 per cent of the staff of internal affairs agencies.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the above-mentioned normative and ministerial acts, Ministry of Internal Affairs Order No. 602 of 11 July 2019 was issued, providing for training seminars for 104 staff members of the various services and regional departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Pursuant to Government Decision No. 493 of 19 September 2019 on the national referral mechanism for victims of human trafficking in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Ministry of Health promulgated Order No. 945 of 4 October 2019. The Order has been brought to the attention of heads of medical and preventive health-care organizations.

All medical and preventive health-care organizations have telephone helplines to advise citizens on human trafficking issues, and awareness-raising activities are organized on prevention of human trafficking and assistance for victims.

If patients inform medical workers, medical assistance will be provided under the programme of State guarantees for the provision of medical and health care. The information is transmitted to the appropriate authorities.

As at the end of 2019, no cases of human trafficking had been reported to health-care organizations.

A clinical protocol has been established (Order No. 6 of the Ministry of Health of Kyrgyzstan, of 10 January 2014) for medical personnel to use in cases of sexual assault. It contains recommendations regarding the conduct of medical examinations, the extent of medical intervention, sexually transmitted disease prophylaxis, including that relating to viral hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, prevention of unwanted pregnancy and post-conflict treatment of victims of sexual violence, including rape.

A clinical guide was produced in 2018 for the handling of early pregnancy and birth (clinical/psychological, medical/social and legal aspects), and standards for protecting children from violence, including early pregnancy and early marriage.

Efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking are a priority of the State migration policy.

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic takes ongoing measures to systematize and coordinate the State's actions to combat trafficking in persons.

Since the adoption of the Act on preventing and combating human trafficking (2005), three programmes of measures to combat trafficking in persons have been adopted and implemented (2002–2005, 2008–2011 and 2013–2016).

By Government Decision No. 743 of 15 November 2017, the Programme to Combat Human Trafficking for 2017–2020 and the plan for implementation (hereinafter the Programme and the Action Plan) was adopted and is being implemented.

Pursuant to article 2 of Act No. 2 of 11 January 2018 on amendments to the Act on preventing and combating human trafficking, Government Decision No. 101 of 5 March 2019 was adopted, which designated the State Migration Service, which reports to the Government, as the body responsible for coordinating activities to prevent and combat trafficking in persons.

The same Decision approved the rules for the organization of shelters and the procedure for their operation, management, financing and control.

The Government approved Decision No. 493 of 19 September 2019 on creation of the national referral mechanism for victims of human trafficking, which approved the criteria for identification of victims of human trafficking. The following were also approved:

- Model directive on the detection, identification and referral of trafficked persons
- Model directive on the confidentiality of personal information concerning victims of human trafficking
- Directive on the provision of assistance to victims of human trafficking in social rehabilitation
- Directive for law enforcement agencies to adopt a victim-centred approach to human trafficking.

The directives create a unified legal framework for the creation and functioning of the referral mechanism for trafficked persons.

An Information and Advisory Centre, which reports to the State Migration Service, provides information and advice on migration issues, including on the prevention of human trafficking.

A total of 62,830 persons received counselling from the Centre during the reporting year 2019, including 14,146 women, and 7,611 were employees, including 3,604 women. Everybody was provided with information and counselling assistance, explanations about the rules for stay and residence in the country of employment, and leaflets on the procedure for stay or residence in the territory of the Russian Federation, which is part of the Eurasian Economic Union.

In the first half of 2019, staff of the State Migration Service, together with the non-governmental organization Resource Centre for the Elderly, provided field consultations in all regions of the country. The consultations included activities to prepare migrants and their families for safe migration, including pm the prevention of human trafficking and addressing emerging issues.

12. Participation in political and public life

According to article 4 of the Act on the Civil Service and Municipal Service, the civil service and municipal service build on the unity and integrity of the system of public administration and operate on the following principles:

- (1) The supremacy of the Constitution;
- (2) Stability and continuity;

- (3) Professionalism, competence and initiative;
- (4) Equal access for citizens to employment in regardless of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religion, political or other beliefs, origin or property or other status;
- (5) Merit-based promotion;
- (6) Discipline and personal responsibility for the performance of official duties;
- (7) Legal, economic and social protection of employees and guarantees of a decent standard of living for employees and their families;
- (8) Exclusion of political or religious influence and undue interference in the activities of employees.

Also, in accordance with the Regulations on the procedure for competitive recruitment and promotion in the civil service and municipal service, approved by Government Decision No. 706 of 29 December 2016, progression in the civil service and municipal service is regulated from the date of entry into service until the end of service. Thus, based on the results of interviews of the candidates with the highest score in all stages of the competitive examination, the recruitment commission recommends for appointment a candidate whose ethnicity and gender is less represented in the state body or local government body.

The Regulations on the procedure for evaluating the activities of civil servants and municipal employees, approved by Government Decision No. 131 of 1 March 2017, establish principles – objectivity, that is, an impartial, unbiased attitude towards the employee and his activities in the State body or local government body, prohibiting various forms of discrimination, and transparency, that is, the employee evaluation procedure should be open, and the reasons and motivation for the evaluation should be explained to the employee. In addition, when an evaluation commission is formed, it shall include employees holding administrative positions, taking into account gender representation to the extent possible.

In order to further improve the training system for public and municipal employees, a programme has been developed for the period 2018–2023.

Annually, as part of this programme, the State Order for training of State and municipal employees is prepared. In the State Order for 2019, training on gender issues was included in the section on development of State programmes and projects. A total of 10 courses were held, providing training for 172 employees.

At the same time, the State Personnel Service processes statistical data on the number and composition of civil servants and municipal servants by gender, ethnicity and age. Data for 2019 will be ready by 10 February 2020 and posted on the official website of the State Personnel Service: www.mkk.gov.kg.

13. Women and peace and security

In Decision No. 334 of 21 September 2018, the Government approved an action plan to implement United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on the role of women in peace and security.

According to paragraph 2 of the Government Decision, ministries, State committees, administrative agencies, local state administrations, local government bodies are to finance the activities of the action plan from funds provided by the State administration and local government bodies involved in its implementation, in accordance with the Acts on the national budget for 2018 and the forecast for 2019–2020, as well as other sources not prohibited by law.

As part of the implementation of the action plan, certain work was carried out by government agencies in 2019. By Government Decision No. 418 of 22 August 2019, the Regulations on the procedure for intersectoral cooperation to prevent, combat and respond to gender-based violence in emergency situations were approved.

The State Agency for Local Government Affairs and Inter-Ethnic Relations has developed and approved a quadripartite joint action plan for the implementation of section 2.2 of the action plan for implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on maintaining peaceful and conflict-free development in Yssyk-Ata and Uzgen districts for 2019–2020 (State Agency for Local Government Affairs and Inter-Ethnic Relations, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Education and the State Commission on Religious Affairs). In order to implement the plan in two pilot districts, a task force that includes 16 women representatives has been formed.

The Ministry of Health has developed and approved clinical guidelines on child abuse; the diagnosis and treatment of traumatic stress disorders; and the provision of psychological assistance to women victims of gender-based violence in emergency situations. The guidelines are applicable to all categories of persons affected by violence (both the beneficiaries and the providers of assistance).

On 5 November 2019, at the Crisis Management Centre of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, an interdepartmental meeting was held with representatives of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the General Staff and the Supreme Council, as well as representatives of international organizations. At that meeting, a plan of action to implement Government Decision No. 418 of 22 August 2019 was adopted.

The plan includes action to develop a draft unified interdepartmental directive on measures or actions by the civil protection authorities and forces in response to gender-based violence in emergency and crisis situations.

On 4 March 2019, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the Association of Women in the Security Sector, the Legal System and Law Enforcement, held a national forum on the topic “Women of Kyrgyzstan for Peace, Security and Development” in Bishkek (Hayatt Regency Hotel, Bishkek).

From 1 January to 20 December 2019, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs trained 402 internal affairs employees in special programmes that included conflict prevention and the prevention of risks of violence against women and girls.

In November 2019, the Government Commissioner in Osh Province carried out information campaigns in Aravan and Kara-Suu districts on the prevention of radicalization of women. In addition, workshops with the participation of women leaders on combating extremism and terrorism have been held in all districts.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has held workshops on the organizational and legal basis for cooperation between State bodies and religious organizations in preventing extremism and terrorism.

The State Commission on Religious Affairs, in collaboration with the progressive women’s association Mutakalim, has developed a practical guide for women and girls on the subject of women and girls as agents of peace and stability. Workshops with the participation of women leaders on combating extremism and terrorism have been held.

14. Nationality

A bill on civil status has been drawn up to simplify birth registration so that it can take place at civil registry offices in cases where the parents (or parent) do not have or do not present their identity documents on time. The bill is currently before the parliament.

According to paragraph 51 of the Regulations on the procedure for consideration of citizenship issues, which was approved by Presidential Decree No. 174 of 10 August 2013, the Commission for Determining Citizenship has the right to consider applications of persons permanently residing in the territory of the country, to determine whether or not they are citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, or to recognize them as stateless and issue an opinion.

Over the 12 months of 2019, a total of 3,438 persons, including 453 women, were granted citizenship under the Presidential Decree.

We also wish to inform you that in accordance with the regulations on the State Registration Service, which reports to the Government, the Service carries out State registration in accordance with a clear procedure.

Religion and faith groups are separate from the State, in accordance with article 7 of the Constitution. The basis for the State registration of marriage is the joint declaration of the persons entering into marriage.

15. Education

According to the norms of the Education Act, all citizens have equal rights to receive free basic, general secondary and higher vocational education. The law stipulates that the same criteria shall apply to men and women in terms of career choice and access to educational institutions in all categories.

Graduation of pupils and students of educational institutions for 2019/2020 academic year, by sex

	<i>Total children</i>	<i>including</i>		<i>Proportion of each sex in the overall number of students, percentage</i>	
		<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>
Primary school (9 grades)	96 671	47 424	49 247	49.1	50.9
Secondary school (11 grades)	49 582	27 115	22 467	54.7	45.3
Secondary vocational schools	26 727	15 977	10 750	59.8	40.2
Higher vocational schools	33 571	18 517	15 054	55.2	44.8

16. Employment

Article 9 of the Labour Code prohibits discrimination in employment, including on the grounds of gender. Chapter 24 of the Labour Code also contains specific provisions regulating the work of women and other persons with family responsibilities. That section of the Code provides a number of guarantees and rights for working women, including additional guarantees for pregnant women and women with children, as well as guarantees regarding the termination of employment contracts and regulations on business trips, overtime, night work, weekends and public holidays, and so on.

The Government, out of particular concern for women's health, has prohibited the employment of women in heavy work, hazardous and/or dangerous conditions, or

underground work, with the exception of non-physical work and cleaning and domestic services, or in work involving the manual lifting or moving of loads that exceed limits set for women under article 303 of the Labour Code.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Development, together with a technical expert from the International Labour Organization, is working to revise the list of industries, jobs, occupations and posts with harmful and dangerous working conditions in which the employment of women is prohibited, as approved by Government Decision No. 158 of 24 March 2000.

During the period 2013–2018, no instances of discrimination against women’s labour rights were identified, as no complaints were received from citizens by the State Inspectorate for Environmental and Technical Safety, which reports to the Government.

A number of legislative Acts regulating social and labour relations are in force in the country. One of the aims of the Labour Code is to establish State guarantees of citizens’ labour rights and freedoms.

Under article 9 of the Labour Code, unequal pay for equal work is not permitted.

Ensuring the observance and protection of women’s labour rights is one of the priority areas of labour legislation, which contains a system of guarantees protecting them from discrimination in employment. These guarantees are set out in Chapter 24 of the Labour Code.

State guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for persons of different sexes in the political, social, economic, cultural and other areas of human activity are also regulated in the Act on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women. Accordingly, article 5 of this Act prohibits direct and indirect gender discrimination against men or women in any field of activity, including different pay for equal work with equal qualifications.

The Constitution, in article 16, paragraph 2, stipulates that no one may be subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religion, age, political or other beliefs, education, origin, wealth or other status, or other circumstances.

Under article 9 of the Labour Code, every person has equal opportunities to exercise his or her labour rights and freedoms. No one may have his or her labour rights and freedoms restricted or be granted any advantages on the grounds of sex, race and so on. Persons who consider that they have suffered discrimination at work are entitled to apply to the courts for the restoration of their rights and compensation for material or moral harm.

Under article 398 of the Labour Code, the main means of protecting workers’ labour rights and legal interests are State supervision and monitoring of compliance with labour legislation, protection of workers’ labour rights by trade unions and other representative bodies, and workers’ self-protection.

State labour inspectors responsible for supervision and monitoring carry out inspections of organizations throughout the country, irrespective of their organizational and legal form, in order to exercise State supervision and monitoring of compliance with labour laws and other regulations.

In the event of a violation of labour law or other regulations containing labour law norms, the State inspector may issue a binding order to the employer. The directives of labour inspectors are binding and may be appealed under article 405 of the Labour Code.

17. The Legal Aid Coordination Centre has provided practical handbooks on family, inheritance and land law and a handbook on social assistance law for lawyers of the Centre for Free Legal Aid and for the general public.

In the handbook on social assistance law, a specific section is devoted to the social protection of citizens in cases of temporary disability and pregnancy and childbirth.

The handbooks referred to have been used to create video courses with infographics, which contain brief, concise descriptions of legal processes and are designed to engage the largest number of students. They will be made available for all citizens on the website of the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Aid Coordination Centre.

18. Health

Health-care organizations have installed and are operating a video surveillance system and have provided locked boxes for anonymous complaints and suggestions, which are opened by a specially established commission, and the numbers of the telephone helplines of the relevant government agencies are made available.

The Government's compulsory health insurance fund conducts reviews of patients' medical records to monitor compliance with approved clinical protocols and standards, and the quality of services is assessed using an outpatient and inpatient score card.

In accordance with Order No. 751 of the Ministry of Health of 2 October 2019, a working group has been established to revise the methodology for development and implementation of clinical guidelines and protocols in the Kyrgyz Republic. Based on the results of the work, the final procedure will be approved, with step-by-step instructions for all the procedures that take place during development and implementation of clinical guidelines, including the mechanism for monitoring their implementation.

Each year in June the Ministry of Health assigns placements, in accordance with the personnel needs of the country's health-care organizations, to residency graduates whose studies had been subsidized.

A Ministry of Health commission arranges the placement of residency graduates, taking into account the requests received from health-care organizations regarding their needs for medical specialists. The heads of health-care organizations and regional health coordinators also participate in the work of the commission.

A five-year plan has been developed in order to gradually increase public funding to meet the needs of 50 per cent of women from the high medical and social risk groups of maternal mortality by 2023. This document sets out the list of contraceptives to be procured with public funds, taking into account their quality, safety and effectiveness; identifies categories of women of reproductive age from the medical and social risk groups in order to provide them with contraceptives procured with public funds; forecasts the need for contraceptives for women from the medical and social risk groups for the next 5 years; and provides for a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of contraceptives procured with public funds.

Recognizing the importance of meeting the needs of the population in the area of family planning, the procurement plan includes contraceptives for an amount of 3,200,000 soms in the State budget for 2018. State funding for the purchase of contraceptives for women from groups with high medical and social risk of maternal mortality increased by one million soms in 2019 compared to 2018. The amount for

2019 is 4,200,000 soms. When considering the medium-term budget expenditure strategy for 2019, the Ministry of Health has introduced a performance indicator on contraceptive coverage for women from groups with high medical and social risks of maternal mortality into the Ministry of Health's budget programme, by source of funding, with a description of the budget measure.

Every year the Ministry of Health, in conjunction with the compulsory health insurance fund, carries out public information campaigns in order to raise the awareness of insured citizens about the possibilities of obtaining contraceptives at preferential rates on prescription and to assess the quality and reliability of data on contraceptive coverage among women of reproductive age.

As of 2018, 150 mg of the injectable contraceptive depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (DepoProvera) is included in the supplementary package of the compulsory health insurance fund. Emergency contraceptives are under consideration for future inclusion in the supplementary package of subsidized medicines under the programme of State Guarantees.

In addition, in May 2015, the compulsory health insurance fund has been providing mandatory medical insurance policies free of charge for uninsured women who have been registered because of pregnancy, which is one of the achievements of the Reproductive Rights Act, which makes provision for pregnant women to have access to subsidized medicines.

At present, the cost of the mandatory medical insurance policy is 1,200 soms (previously it was 500 soms). One advantage of the policy is that uninsured women who have been registered as pregnant have the opportunity to purchase prescription medicines with a discount of up to 50 per cent.

In order to increase the number of medical specialists in terms of the intake of residents for the 2019–2020 school year, subsidized places have been allocated for the following specialties that are the most in demand in health-care organizations, especially in rural and remote regions:

Family medicine (general practitioner) – 150; anaesthesiology and intensive care – 17; obstetrics and gynaecology – 4; infectious diseases – 7; paediatrics – 22; neonatology – 18; and others.

Each year in June the Ministry of Health assigns placements, in accordance with the staffing needs of the country's health-care organizations, to residency graduates whose studies were subsidized.

A Ministry of Health commission arranges the placement of residency graduates, taking into account the requests received from health-care organizations regarding their needs for medical specialists. The heads of health-care organizations and regional health coordinators also participate in the work of the commission.

In 2019, 233 of the 280 residency graduates who received subsidized training have received their placements. (83 per cent). The process of travel to the placement destination and confirmation of employment is continuing.

Currently, 175 doctors from various provinces are included in additional incentive programme for physicians.

19. Economic and social benefits

Based on the agreement between the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction and the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Japan Fund grant No. 9170-KGZ), a project for the development of women's entrepreneurship was implemented for the period 2013–2017 to improve the living standards of women in rural areas and small towns in the

country through improved access to financial services. A total of 405 loans worth a total of US\$1,525,798.28 have been disbursed under this project.

Project staff carried out activities to improve access to financial resources while also developing the business environment for women's entrepreneurship. The project has provided the following expert support in that area:

- The staff of Talas JIA has been trained to quickly assess the market and the export potential of products made by women entrepreneurs in the context of Kyrgyzstan's entry into the Eurasian Economic Union.
- Recommendations have been prepared for the Agrobusiness Association of Kyrgyzstan Zher Azygy in Osh Province to develop the organization's network by expanding the range of training services for rural women with the introduction of remote learning and mentoring. A total of 75 per cent of respondents expressed a desire to study remotely without leaving their business.
- Services have been provided to the Union of Banks to amend the law on leasing.
- A methodology has been developed and training has been conducted for consultants in the villages of Naryn and Talas Provinces which are partners of the Association of Microfinance Institutions to reduce the level of over-borrowing by rural women entrepreneurs. A total of 24 consultants have been trained.
- A methodology to assess client poverty has been developed for Bai-Tushum Bank.
- A methodology has been developed and training conducted for the staff of two pilot municipalities and interested experts in the Jalalabad region to assess the functions of local government bodies in the development of entrepreneurship with a focus on women entrepreneurs.
- Recommendations have been prepared for Smart Campaign certification for three credit and financial institutions.
- Recommendations have been prepared on the introduction of remote financial services for Bai-Tushum Bank and the microcredit company PMKK (mobile and Internet banking).
- A strategic document has been prepared for the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic on guidelines for the development of the microfinance sector for the period 2018–2021.

The project also focused on training, awareness raising and capacity-building for the development of women's microentrepreneurship:

- 906 women were trained in financial literacy, business planning and leadership (planned for 300 persons) with a specially designed curriculum;
- 100 professionals from planning and finance agencies were trained to use appropriate tools, methods and financial services to address the needs of women microentrepreneurs; monitoring and evaluation of borrowers' business development, and social performance management.
- 9 training courses were conducted for representatives of local authorities and other stakeholders and 185 people were trained.
- 100 women in the Issyk Kul and Talas provinces have been trained to improve their economic efficiency in cow's milk production;
- 16 employees of the Guarantee Fund were trained in business plan analysis and the conduct of financial literacy consultations;

- A video on women’s entrepreneurship was produced and broadcast on central and local television channels.

Three information seminars were organized (a special seminar for journalists of mainstream media to report on the Government’s activities in the sphere of economic development, and two seminars in Bishkek and Osh on methodological materials developed as part of the project). In addition, 9 round tables were held on various issues related to developing the business environment for women’s entrepreneurship.

To date, the Ministry of Economic Affairs has prepared the final draft of the exit strategy of the Women’s Entrepreneurship Development project, and on 28 August 2019 the prepared draft was sent to Ms. Candice McDeigan, the Country Director of the Resident Representative Office of the Asian Development Bank in the Kyrgyz Republic for consideration and further referral to the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction for approval. It is proposed that the future mechanism for further disbursement of the remaining project funds, in the amount of US\$ 510,000, take place in accordance with the internal credit policy and procedures of the partner financial organization, which will be selected by the Ministry of Economy on the following criteria:

- Experience working with financing programmes for women entrepreneurs
- Availability of adapted products and services for women entrepreneurs
- Capacity to use the project’s loan products for lending to women entrepreneurs
- Availability of a social impact assessment of products and services aimed at women entrepreneurs.

It should be noted that women’s entrepreneurship is a topical issue throughout the country, since it is women who take the initiative of creating small businesses in education and medical and social services, as they develop the new area of social entrepreneurship.

On 5 July 2019, with the participation of the Prime Minister, a national conference entitled “Women’s entrepreneurship in Kyrgyzstan: new momentum” was held, in which 400 women entrepreneurs from all regions of the country took part.

As part of that event, the problems faced by women entrepreneurs were highlighted, and on that basis the national conference adopted the resolution “Women’s entrepreneurship in the Kyrgyz Republic: new momentum” on 5 July 2019.

At present, the Ministry of Economic Affairs together with interested State bodies is working to implement the adopted resolution. Furthermore, the adopted resolution highlighted the need to develop and approve the National Programme for the Development of Women’s Entrepreneurship for the period until 2030.

20. Rural women

Pursuant to Act No. 214 of 3 August 2015 on the promotion of employment, applicants are guaranteed freedom of choice of activity, profession, assistance in finding suitable work and employment, free vocational guidance, training and retraining services, participation in paid public work programmes and the payment of unemployment benefits.

One of the main tasks of the employment service is to promote employment. During the reporting period, 27,009 unemployed citizens (including 15,188 women) found jobs with the assistance of the employment service.

Employment is promoted through active labour market measures. When unemployment rates and job shortages rise, training for unemployed citizens is a

priority. In order to improve the competitiveness of the unemployed on the labour market, taking into account labour market needs for certain professions, as of 1 January 2020, the employment services sent 7,725 unemployed citizens (including 4,873 women) for professional training. The training of unemployed citizens was conducted mainly for professions in demand on the labour market.

In 2019, 17,872 unemployed citizens (including 6,799 women) were sent to paid community service as temporary employment.

Job fairs are one of the most effective measures for providing employment. The job fair provides unemployed citizens with information about vacancies in institutions and enterprises, as well as the establishment of direct links between employers and job seekers. A total of 52 job fairs were held over the 12 months of 2019, with the participation of 839 employers, resulting in job referrals for 2,469 citizens, and 771 of those received jobs.

In order to raise the legal awareness of the population, including women, improve access to justice, protect the rights and legitimate interests of citizens, and increase opportunities to defend their rights, the Legal Aid Coordination Centre conducted 72 awareness-raising activities in 2019. The total number of citizens attending was more than 8,499, without considering coverage by television and radio, magazines, newspapers and social networks, which included:

- 35 television and 15 radio appearances
- 12 newspaper and magazine articles
- 42 publications on the website and in social networks
- 17 public meetings (reaching an audience of more than 600)
- 24 meetings with the staff of local government bodies, with law enforcement, judicial and other government officials (reaching an audience of over 300)
- 27 lectures (seminars) for schoolchildren, students (reaching an audience of more than 350)
- 3 campaign and ten-day events, including trips as part of the “Solidarity Bus” project (reaching an audience of 7,249).

In addition, with support from partners of the Legal Aid Coordination Centre, 9 videos on State guaranteed legal aid were produced and released, and they were shown on television and social networks (Internet). More than 5,000 booklets and posters were produced and distributed.

Medical services for pregnant women, women in childbirth and puerperium and newborns are provided free of charge by the country’s health-care organizations under the programme of State guarantees in accordance with Government Decision No. 790 of 20 November 2015 on the programme of State guarantees relating to the provision of medical and health care, in section II on the category of citizens entitled to free medical care for clinical indications of an underlying disease at outpatient and inpatient levels:

1. Women registered as pregnant.
2. Women in hospital for treatment who are pregnant (as the main diagnosis).
3. Women entering hospital for termination of pregnancy for social and medical reasons.
4. Women entering hospital to give birth.
5. Women with postnatal complications within 10 weeks of delivery.

The Ministry of Health has organized and is operating a sanatorium service with highly qualified tertiary specialists, who provide emergency obstetric, gynaecological and neonatal assistance to pregnant women, women in labour and high-risk mothers. They travel to remote regions, thus saving the lives of both women and newborns. The system of referral, which covers all obstetric services in the country, has improved, and as a result the number of births has increased at the secondary level and at the level of regional health organizations.

Pursuant to Government Decision No. 790 of 20 November 2015 on the programme of State guarantees for the provision of medical and health care, inpatient care is provided free of charge to all citizens admitted to emergency hospitals until they are no longer in a life-threatening condition and their haemodynamic and respiratory indicators have stabilized. Patients are then transferred for inpatient treatment in the form of routine inpatient care with a referral for hospitalization or outpatient treatment. Routine inpatient care is provided only if there is a referral for hospitalization, free of charge and on the condition of citizens making a co-payment in accordance with the annexes approved by the Decision. Citizens who are in the low-income category, who have an income below the guaranteed minimum, or are homeless, undocumented, conscripted military personnel with a certificate issued by social protection or village governance (ayil okmotu) agencies or the commander of a military unit, are exempt from making a co-payment in accordance with the decision of the public health-care organization's medical-control commission, which was established by an internal order of the head of the organization.

21. Vulnerable groups of women

The State Legal Aid Act provides for the right to receive free legal aid not only for citizens but also for foreign nationals, stateless persons and refugees.

In accordance with the Act, the right to legal assistance from a qualified legal professional in civil, administrative and criminal proceedings is extended to plaintiffs, defendants, suspects, accused persons, persons on trial, convicted persons, acquitted persons and witnesses under the age of majority and those whose annual income does not exceed 60 times the minimum wage established annually in the Budget Act of Kyrgyzstan, except for cases provided for in section 2 of the relevant article.

Without taking into account the annual income specified in section 1 of the relevant article, qualified legal assistance is provided to the following persons:

- Detained persons
- Persons suspected, accused or convicted of particularly serious crimes
- Persons with disabilities in groups I and II
- Psychiatric patients
- Veterans of the Great Patriotic War and persons with equivalent status
- Minors, for their benefit, and their parents (guardians, custodians), for the benefit of the children
- Single mothers raising a minor child or children
- Persons raising a minor child or children without a mother – on issues related to the safeguarding and protection of the rights and legitimate interests of children
- Conscripts
- Older persons who are residents of State-run homes
- And to other persons as provided for by criminal procedure law.

In the context of expanding citizens' access to legal assistance from the Legal Aid Coordination Centre, work is continuing to open free legal aid centres in the central districts of provinces.

To date, 26 free legal aid centres have been opened in the country.

In the future it is planned to open a free legal aid centre in every district of the country.

In 2019, 17 public meetings were held in order to inform citizens and provide them with access to justice by explaining the law on State Guaranteed Legal Aid and other normative legal Acts adopted as part of judicial and legal reform. Information on access to justice was also provided during campaigns and ten-day events organized by the Legal Aid Coordination Centre. They reached an audience of 7,249 people.

Citizens are also informed through electronic communications, namely:

- The official website of the Legal Aid Coordination Centre (www.ukuk-jardam.gov.kg)
- Social networking pages (such as Facebook and Instagram)
- An electronic system for reporting on and analysis of legal advisory assistance, through which citizens can receive online legal advice.

In addition, 15 training events (training courses, workshops and round tables) have been held as capacity-building for lawyers who are part of the system of State guaranteed legal aid and lawyers and consultants at the free legal aid centres to ensure that effective and high-quality legal assistance is available from qualified professionals.

Investigators from the Investigative Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and internal affairs agencies investigate criminal cases in accordance with the Constitution and the Code of Criminal Procedure, irrespective of gender or gender identity.

Internal affairs agencies carry out certain tasks in the area of prevention of drug addiction and drug use (round tables, lectures, meetings and sports and other events with slogans against drug use).

Regarding the steps taken to combat discrimination and violence by the police against women belonging to vulnerable groups, in particular lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women living with HIV/AIDS and women who use drugs, we wish to report that, according to the new Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, crimes and misdemeanours must be recorded in the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanours. The register contains information on the commencement of pre-trial proceedings, procedural actions, progress in a criminal case or a misdemeanour case, and claimants and participants in criminal proceedings (article 5, para. 9, of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

It is mandatory that all intelligence and special investigative activities, including detention, are carried out only on the basis of registered complaints and when the investigator has received an investigative order. The rules of the new Criminal Procedure Code also provide additional procedural guarantees for suspects and accused persons.

In order to provide access to the internal affairs agencies, all such agencies in Kyrgyzstan and educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs organize public meetings. There are city and settlement police departments and neighbourhood police stations, the number of neighbourhood police commissioners and juvenile affairs inspectors is increasing, and the tourist police force is in operation, while

remote areas of the country have mobile police units in operation. A police patrol service has been established as a pilot project in Bishkek city.

The telephone numbers of helplines and a hotline are published on the information portal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. There is also a feedback page and an email address (secretariat@mvd.kg). The main internal affairs departments of Bishkek and Chu provinces have created websites on which advisory assistance is provided to citizens who post statements or messages or seek information.

A clinical protocol has been established (Order No. 6 of the Ministry of Health of Kyrgyzstan, of 10 January 2014) for medical personnel to use in cases of sexual assault. It contains recommendations regarding the conduct of medical examinations, the extent of medical intervention, sexually transmitted disease prophylaxis, including for viral hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, prevention of unwanted pregnancy and post-conflict treatment for victims of sexual violence, including rape. The protocol includes detailed recommendations regarding effective interviewing and counselling of victims of sexual violence, the provision of information on State services and the provision of contact details for crisis centres and authorized State entities.

Clinical guides were produced in 2018 for the handling of early pregnancy and birth (clinical/psychological, medical/social and legal aspects), and also standards for protecting children from violence, including child pregnancy and child marriage.

In 2019, the National Centre for Health Promotion of the Ministry of Health held a seminar on family planning and reproductive rights with safe services for 100 experts from community health-care institutions (42 per cent), with the aim of developing a plan to introduce a referral programme (with vouchers) to facilitate access to family planning services for women from vulnerable groups in the country's district centres and cities. Vouchers and information and educational materials on safe reproductive health services have been produced. In April, mentoring visits were made to 6 Islamic schools to provide methodological assistance for lessons on health basics, including reproductive health issues. All the Islamic schools have approved work plans for this lesson; training sessions were held to train teachers in methods for conducting classes on healthy lifestyles and HIV prevention, including reproductive health issues.

22. Marriage and family relations

A bill on civil status has been drawn up to simplify birth registration so that it can take place at civil registry offices in cases where the parents do not have or do not present their identity documents on time.

The bill is currently before the parliament.

Religion and faith groups are separate from the State, according to article 7 of the Constitution. The basis for the State registration of marriage is the joint declaration of the persons entering into marriage.

23. Sustainable Development Goals

A key result of the comprehensive assessment was the level of consistency between the Sustainable Development Goals and national policy documents, such as:

- The national sustainable development strategy for the period 2018–2040 (Taza koom. Zhany door), approved by Presidential Decree No. 221 of 31 October 2018.
- The Development Programme of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2018–2022 (Unity, trust, creation) approved by the Zhogorku Kenesh (parliament) Decision No. 2377-VI of 20 April 2018.

The National Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality by 2020 was developed and approved in 2012.

The National Strategy is Kyrgyzstan's first long-term document in the area of achieving gender equality, and is a logical continuation of the gender policy that the State has been implementing over the 20 years since independence.

The goal of the long-term National Strategy is to create an institutional framework for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for citizens, regardless of sex, age, social status, health opportunities, gender identity and other grounds for discrimination, in order to achieve the full realization of the human potential of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The implementation process was divided into three medium term periods, and in order to achieve the objective of the National Strategy, detailed three-year action plans were developed and approved, which cover all priority areas:

- National action plan to achieve gender equality for the period 2012–2014; for the period 2015–2017; and for the period 2018–2020.

One of the priorities of the Strategy is the economic empowerment of women. The national action plans also include measures for the economic empowerment of women. The national strategy is for the period until 2040.

Kyrgyzstan has approved the Regulations on the conditions of payment for the services of a personal assistant to a child with special needs who requires constant care and supervision. The regulations are intended to support parents with children with disabilities who are in need of permanent care and to realize the right of such children to a family environment.

Since January 2019, a personal assistant has been assigned to a child with a disability based on the opinion of a medical and social expert commission.

A personal assistant may be:

- A parent
- A legal representative (adoptive parent, guardian, custodian or foster parent)
- A close relative (grandmother, grandfather, full or half-sibling).

In May 2019, the Second Forum of Women of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries was held in Bishkek with the participation of Prime Minister Abylgaziev and former President Otunbayeva.

The Forum participants – representatives and observers from the SCO countries, government agencies, non-profit organizations, the United Nations system in the Kyrgyz Republic and development partners – expressed confidence that the introduction of gender development issues into the SCO Agenda would provide an impetus for the exchange of experience, implementation of joint projects and development of measures for joint action, as well as for the joint building of a community of SCO countries with a shared future and a community of all humankind with a shared future. They noted the importance of holding a regular Women's Forum within the SCO and of eventually establishing a specific mechanism for cooperation on gender development issues within the SCO.

In order to strengthen State and municipal bodies and to promote gender equality policies, the Gender Commission of the Ministry of Justice was established by Order No. 1858 of 10 September 2019.