



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

Distr.: General
30 January 2023

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

Eighty-fourth session

6–24 February 2023

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**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 Georgia to the list of issues and questions in
relation to its sixth periodic report******

[Date received: 30 January 2023]

* The present document was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent developments.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

*** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Replies to the list of issues and questions

Reply to Paragraph 1 of the list of issues [CEDAW/C/GEO/Q/6](#)

1. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (MIA) conducts intensive awareness raising activities regarding the rights of women and prevention of violence against women, including the following campaigns: “Do not deprive childhood”; “16 Days Global Campaign”; “Equality week campaign” and “Befriend the Police”. Through meetings, over 5,000 beneficiaries received information on women’s rights and the prevention of violence against women/domestic Violence (VAW/DV).
2. Two projects of the Prosecution Service of Georgia (PSG) – “Community Prosecutor’s Office” and “Local Council” aim to increase public confidence in the prosecution service and to increase public legal awareness including on domestic crime and gender-based violence against women. In 2020, despite the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was continued and 21 local council meetings were held remotely in 17 municipalities. In 2019–2022, the PSG was actively involved in the Council of Europe awareness raising campaign – “I Choose Equality”.
3. On October 6, 2022, the PSG launched a large-scale public information campaign “No to Femicide”. The purpose of the campaign against femicide is to raise public awareness about VAW/DV and to prevent femicide. In 36 cities and towns throughout Georgia, prosecutors held up to 80 informational meetings.

Reply to Paragraph 2

4. Despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic, the police swiftly imposed relevant measures to address alleged facts of violence. Particular attention was given to informing the population on the relevant ways of contacting the Police, through calling 112 or alternatively, using the application of 112, with an integrated “Silent Alarm” button. All relevant information was provided through social media, as well as via sms text messages, in Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian languages.
5. During April–June 2020, 5 000 new users downloaded the App, subsequently, the figures of using the App has raised. As of today, the mobile application has been downloaded by more than 50 000 users.
6. In April 2020, a video was produced making emphasis on the strict policy of the government towards VAW/DV. In the video, high-ranking representatives of the Georgian government informed the population about state services and alternative mechanisms for reporting to the police.
7. The Agency for State Care and Assistance for the (statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking (The State Care Agency) and its crisis centres/shelters operated without interruption and provided services to victims/alleged victims of violence against women, sexual violence and human trafficking.
8. The Government of Georgia (GoG) spared no effort to provide support to and meet the needs of conflict-affected population, including women, during the pandemic. To this end: Access to information was ensured for the local population through online, social media, and printed material in Abkhaz and Ossetian languages. Government web-portal on COVID19 was fully accessible in Abkhaz and Ossetian languages. Government briefings were also translated in local languages and distributed via TV-channels.
9. The Covid-infected persons were transported and provided treatment on the Georgian-controlled territory (in 2020–2021, 862 persons, including women, were

treated); in order to ensure rapid, unhindered access to medical care, multi-functional hospital was built in the village of Rukhi – near the occupation line with Abkhazia region, was promptly equipped and became fully operational in early 2020.

10. The National vaccination programme was extended to the occupied territories; the local population was eligible to easily access anti-covid vaccines on Georgian-controlled territory without prior registration.

11. The Government, in cooperation with international and local partners, delivered social assistance to 3353 vulnerable families in all 116 conflict affected villages located on the Georgian-controlled territory adjacent to the occupation line.

12. Unfortunately, the GoG was unable to provide similar support to occupied Tskhinvali region. The occupation regime in Tskhinvali politicized this purely humanitarian issue and rejected the offer of the GoG and international organizations to assist local communities with COVID-19 response. Further to that, severe restrictions on movement and long-term closure of the occupation line deprived the local population of the possibility to freely access quality treatment on the Georgian-controlled territory.

13. During the pandemic, criminal proceedings, including on the cases of VAW/DV, were carried out with no setbacks. The PSG switched to the remote/online mode of court hearings immediately after the state of emergency was declared.

14. To ensure the stable and uninterrupted administration of the courts during the pandemic, the courts were recommended to decide cases without oral hearings wherever the procedural law allowed to do so and to ensure remote participation of the parties. During the whole period of the pandemic, the electronic service of case registration in courts was available for citizens free of charge.

Reply to Paragraphs: 3, 5 (a), 14 (a)

15. In September 2022, the Government approved the Second National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights in Georgia for 2022–2030. The new Strategy, which was elaborated with the involvement of civil society and international organizations, is a comprehensive document that covers all fundamental human rights and freedoms. As one of the main priority areas, Strategy focuses on equality and anti-discrimination legislation, including gender equality, women’s rights and fight against violence.

16. A new State Concept of Gender Equality was adopted in December, 2022 by Parliament. The document sets government priorities regarding gender equality and women’s empowerment and guides the respected state agencies. It also stipulates a modern discourse on eliminating all forms of violence against women, increasing women’s safety and well-being, and, most notably, ensuring women’s economic empowerment.

17. In December, 2022 the concept for women’s economic empowerment was initiated in Parliament. It is a policy document that aims to establish a long-term vision for developing policies to strengthen and enhance women’s economic prospects and access to economic opportunities.

18. Georgia has been implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda since 2011. The implementation of the activities of the NAP (2018–2020) for the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security is up to 80%.

19. Two Stand-Alone National Action Plans on the Measures to be implemented for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims/Survivors for the years 2022–2024 and the National Action Plan on the

Implementation of the UN Resolutions 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for the years 2022–2024 were approved by the GoG in October, 2022. National action plans are targeted towards promoting gender equality, women empowerment and tackling violence against women and gender-based discrimination. The local NGOs, as well as women activists were actively involved at all stages of adoption of above-mentioned action plans. For the first time, both action plans have a dedicated budget with financial resources allocated for each activity.

20. See ANNEX No. 1 for statistics on cases of sexual harassment in public spaces and at workplace.

Reply to Paragraph 4 (a)

21. Free legal aid is provided to victims/alleged victims of VAW/DV when the court considers issuing of a protective order to ensure the protection of the victim/alleged victim and to limit certain actions of the perpetrator, in accordance with Article 2113 of the Administrative Procedure Code of Georgia, if she/he did not choose a lawyer as a general rule.

22. At all stages of the criminal proceedings, a person affected by domestic violence under Article 11-1 of the Criminal Code of Georgia and/or under Article 1261 enjoys free legal rights if he is an insolvent person and if he does not participate in the case through a lawyer hired by him (protection by agreement). If the said person is not considered an insolvent person, he/she is provided with free legal aid if the lawyer hired by him does not participate in the case and it is confirmed that the person is in material hardship.

23. In certain civil and administrative cases, taking into account the importance and complexity of the case, the victim of domestic violence, regardless of his insolvency, has the right to use legal aid, according to the article 5 paragraph 25 of the Law of Georgia on Legal Aid.

24. Director of the Legal Aid Service may, based on the criteria predefined by the Legal Aid Council, decide that legal aid be rendered to a person who is not a member of a family registered in the unified database of socially vulnerable families.

Reply to Paragraph 4 (b)

25. Generally, courts do not keep a separate record of the data of judgments/decisions in which the provisions of the Convention were directly applied, invoked or referred to or judgments in which national legislation was interpreted in line with the Convention.

26. Based on the interest of the Committee on the matter, the relevant judgments/decisions have been randomly selected from courts. In these decisions the courts have made reference to the Convention and to the decision of the CEDAW on the case X and Y v. Georgia.

27. As an example, in a decision of the Gori District Court delivered in April 2020, the case X and Y v. Georgia is referenced to justify the imposition of a punishment and highlight the conclusions of the Committee with regard to violation of a positive obligation by a state by failure to implement effective measures and apply sanctions, that could prevent violence against women. In a decision of 23 April 2020, while deliberating on the case of domestic violence against a woman, the Akhaltsikhe District Court refers to the provisions of the Convention and the CEDAW General Recommendation No. 19: Violence against women. For illustration, in the judgment

of Tetrtskaro District Court, the judge referred to the CEDAW General recommendation no.21 on equality in marriage and family relations (1994). In particular, when dealing with forced marriage case, the court emphasized the right to marry on the basis of a free will, as a fundamental human right which is an important aspect of human dignity and equality.

28. It should be additionally underlined that based on the particular circumstances of each case, the courts use to make reference and interpret in their decisions the Declaration on the elimination of violence against Women (1993), the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention); the Recommendation Rec (2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers to the members States on the protection of women against violence; the relevant case-law of the European Court of Human Rights; the C183 Maternity Protection Convention.

Reply to Paragraph 4 (c)

29. In 2018, the PDO issued recommendations and general proposals to public agencies and private individuals, regarding the 6 cases of gender discrimination. In 2019, the PDO identified discrimination in 6 cases and addressed the defendants with appropriate recommendations, and also issued 2 general suggestions on discouraging discrimination. 3 decisions were addressed to public entities, and 5 recommendations were addressed to private companies. Also, the public defender presented 5 amicus curiae opinions to the common courts. In 2020, the Public Defender considered 113 new cases of alleged discrimination, of which 18% were related to the discrimination based on sex/gender. In 2021, 161 new cases were studied on the basis of referral or own initiative. From these cases the PDO issued 15 recommendations and 10 general suggestions on equality issues and prepared 2 amicus curiae opinions. Alleged discrimination based on gender, including sexual harassment, accounted for 16% in reports.

Reply to Paragraph 5

30. The work of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Inter-Agency Commission) is supported by the Human Rights Secretariat of the Administration of the GoG.

31. The secretariat of the Permanent Parliamentary Gender Equality Council (GEC) is established and a secretary is appointed that ensures the coordination of all activities of the parliament relating to gender equality. For smooth functioning of the GEC and the implementation of all the activities in the field of gender equality it has a budget of 50 000 GEL annually assigned from the budget of the Parliament.

32. The PDO performs its functions through the head office and ten regional offices, 13 departments and 8 divisions operate in the head office. The financing of PDO has increased significantly in recent years: in particular, in 2014, the approved budget of PDO amounted to 2.380 million GEL; in 2015 – 4 million GEL; in 2016 – 4.5 million GEL; in 2017 – 4.8 million GEL; in 2018 – 5.5 million GEL; In 2019 – 6.4 million GEL, in 2020 – 7 million GEL, in 2021 – 8.5 million GEL and 2022 – 8.869 million GEL. In addition, the PDO received grants from donor organizations over the years: 2019 – 585,099.92; 2020 – 589,199.28; 2021 – 867,893.5; 2022 – 711,448.9 GEL.

Reply to Paragraph 5 (b)

33. The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) is currently in a process of elaboration of Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) of the Law of Georgia on Civil Service that aims to support the CSB in identifying existing gender gaps in the Law and providing evidence-based recommendations and suggestions for actions needed to improve the law.

34. In 2022 CSB approved Bureau's Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan that aims to establish a gender-sensitive civil service system that enables women's full and effective participation and leadership in the decision-making processes. In April 2018, CSB developed the commentaries to the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, which support the establishment of a unified approach towards the enforcement of ethical obligations.

Reply to Paragraph 5 (c)

35. In 2020, the number of NGOs that are members of the Human Rights Inter-Agency Council under the GoG doubled as a result of the reform of the Council (was six and now there are 12 NGOs, enjoy the right of deliberative vote). Besides, a consultative group was created under the Council that can submit proposals and recommendations concerning the issues under the mandate of the Council. Any NGO can become a member of this group. More than 80 NGOs are members of the consultative group.

36. In the process of working on the Human Rights Strategies and Action Plans, Government of Georgia always actively cooperates with all stakeholders including NGOs.

37. Furthermore, the NGO's are always invited to the meetings of inter-agency Commissions (on women, children and persons with disabilities) that operate under the Human Rights Council umbrella in the Administration of Government.

Reply to Paragraph 6

38. The Constitution of Georgia guarantees the right to freedom of assembly. The detailed procedure for exercising the mentioned right is established by the "Law of Georgia on Assemblies and Manifestations". In addition, in 2015 MIA issued the "Guidelines for the behaviour of employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia during assemblies and demonstrations". When realising the mentioned right, the corresponding responsibility is imposed on the administrative offender and/or the person(s) who committed the crime. (In Makarashvili and others v. Georgia the ECHR in 2022 established that the Georgian legislation on freedom of Assemblies and Demonstrations is in full compliance with the international standards).

39. In 2020, a guideline was developed for prosecutors and PSG investigators – "Effective Investigation of and Procedural Guidance over the Crimes Committed against Human Rights Defenders", which incorporates international standards of investigating crimes against human rights defenders.

40. In 2018–2021, 14 persons were prosecuted for crimes committed against human rights defenders and 26 human rights defenders were granted a victim status, including one legal entity. In 2022, 7 persons were prosecuted for crimes committed against human rights defenders and 17 human rights defenders were granted a victim status.

Reply to Paragraph 7 (a)

41. One of the essential activities of the GEC is to raise awareness of gender equality and to implement measures in support of women's empowerment. Central Election Commission (CEC) took different approaches to tackle gender stereotypes within administration and beyond and offered combination of research, trainings, gender-sensitive policies to address the issue. Within the framework of the policy of continuous professional training of CEC employees, the participants subsequently undergo thematic informational training programs in September 2022 aiming to raise their awareness on gender equality-related issues that in itself also contains aspects of combatting gender stereotypes concerning women's participation in political and public life.

42. Raising awareness of judges and court staff on Violence against Women, Domestic Violence, gender equality and non-discrimination remains a priority. The training module on VAW/DV was updated in 2022.

Reply to Paragraph 7 (b)

43. Within the framework of the social program, there are special fully funded quotas for the citizens of Georgia, who have completed the Azerbaijanian- or Armenian sectors of general education and entered the university on the basis of unified national exams. Moreover, a special "1+4 Program", which allows ethnic minority young people to enrol in higher education institutions in simplified terms, has been successfully functioning throughout the years. Beneficiaries of this program are financed for one-year preparatory course and bachelor studies for the duration of the educational program in authorized higher educational institutions. (The number of students enrolled has increased 5 times).

44. A special internship program in the public sector for beneficiaries of "1+4 Educational Program" has been launched which implies recruitment of ethnic minority students in public service to increase their employment opportunities, through enhancing qualifications, improving knowledge and gaining working experience (more than 400 young people has successfully completed the program so far).

45. Georgian language learning programs and courses are available for all interested persons (including schoolchildren, students, public servants, clergy, penitentiary establishments) for free through Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration and its 12 regional training Centers and mobile groups, also in distance learning format (24 000 beneficiaries in 2015–2022).

46. The web-portal launched under the Public Broadcaster is available in seven-languages, including ethnic minority languages. Live broadcasting of news program with simultaneous translation in Armenian and Azerbaijani languages through regional TV channels is also operational on a daily basis.

47. The Rural Development Agency has started a new program, which provides financial and technical assistance to women in the municipalities of Marneuli and Lagodekhi to organize a new greenhouse. The program aims to increase women's motivation to engage in agricultural activities and economic empowerment.

48. Under 2020 legislative changes, parties have become obliged to take responsibility for the gender aspect when submitting their party lists to the election commission. The subsequent amendments introduced 25% gender quotas for the parliamentary election, which apparently was a positive encouragement to support women's involvement and participation in politics since this change aimed at raising

female representation to 30 MPs. It is aimed to increase the total number of women MPs to 50 in 2028, which would be one-third of the total number of 150 MPs. Also, see reply to Paragraph 13 (a) below.

Reply to Paragraph 8 (a)

49. To eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes, the MIA intensively implements public awareness raising campaigns, as well as being actively involved in campaigns together with state agencies and partner organizations. MIA disseminates information on: the importance of combating discrimination and gender violence; early age marriage and forced marriage, prohibition of discrimination, sexual harassment, etc. Information is, periodically, distributed in Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian languages.

50. MIA also disseminates information on how to contact the police in cases of VAW/DV. In 2022, 2 440 000 residents received a text message containing information on VAW/DV, and 2 600 000 residents – on forced early marriage as well as how to report such cases.

51. During 2022, MIA is intensively implementing the campaign “Befriend the Police”, which aims to raise the awareness of minors across the country on the issues of discrimination, VAW/DV, reporting mechanisms to the police.

Reply to Paragraph 8 (b)

52. The MIA periodically holds meetings with journalists on issues of media coverage of VAW/DV topics.

53. In 2022, MIA and relevant state agency representatives held meeting with representatives of various leading media outlets. Expert from PDO provided journalists with information on the ethical reporting of cases of violence based on the analysis of local and international practices, victim-oriented approaches, role of the media in the fight against gender-based crimes.

Reply to Paragraph 8 (c)

54. Issues related to gender stereotypes are reflected in the National Curriculum of Georgia, namely in the social sciences group standards. Besides, the mentioned issue is considered in the textbooks. The evaluation criteria for textbooks, in particular, the group of criteria - “compliance with legal and ethical norms” provides for the protection of equality and the prohibition of discrimination. The textbook must be free from stereotyped, incorrect, discriminatory and/or discrediting elements based on language, nationality, religion, gender, social affiliation and other grounds.

55. The issues of gender discrimination are reflected in the educational programs, modules and training courses of different higher educational institutions of Georgia, both private and public.

Reply to Paragraphs: 9 (a), (b), (c)

56. Since 2017, several new crimes have been added to the Criminal Code of Georgia (CCG) criminalizing: illegal abortion, sterilization without consent and female genital mutilation under articles 133, 1331 and 1332. Also, under Article 1501 of the CCG, coercion of marriage with prior knowledge against a minor was defined

as an aggravating circumstance. The MIA takes swift response to crimes of this category. Notably, the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department (HRPIQMD) monitors the quality of the legal proceeding on this category of crimes.

57. Since 2018, only one investigation was launched under Article 1332 (female genital mutilation), but female genital mutilation was not confirmed and the investigation was terminated due to the absence of elements of *corpus delicti*.

58. The PSG monitors and studies criminal cases of gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation and forced marriage cases. The PSG provides the service of victim and witness coordinator to any victim or witness, although special focus is made on VAW/DV, sexual violence victims. Victims are provided with the information about their rights, available services and if needed, they are referred to the different service providers (shelters, crisis centres, NGOs).

59. The Witness and Victim Coordinator Service has been operating in MIA since 2019, aimed at supporting the individuals involved in the legal procedure, defending the rights of the victims and enhance the quality of investigation. The coordinator is prominently involved in the litigation process when a person is a minor, person with disability, a witness or a victim of VAW/DV and trafficking.

60. For the last three years, the MIA has conducted information campaign “Do not deprive childhood”, aimed at eliminating child marriage and raising public awareness on this issue, as well as to ensure crime reporting to police in a timely manner. In 2022, 2 460 000 people received text messages on the ways of reporting the cases of child marriage.

61. On 17 September, 2020 GoG approved the concept of a psychological-social service center for children victims of violence, including human trafficking. The concept of the service center ensures the establishment of the center where all kind of services will be available for children victims of violence in one place (so-called Barnahus model). Its goal is to prevent secondary victimization of a child victim of sexual abuse in the best interests of the child. Since 2022, the service centre is already operational in Tbilisi, Georgia, which is a child-friendly, multidisciplinary and interagency model for responding to child violence and witnesses of violence.

Reply to Paragraph 9 (d)

62. See, ANNEX No. 2.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (a)

63. Articles 137 and 138 of the CCG defines the methods of sexual penetration into person’s body as well as methods of other acts of sexual character. According to these provisions, the helpless condition of a victim is considered as one of such methods, alongside with violence and the threat of violence. The helpless condition envisages cases when the victim lacks the capacity to express consent or refusal to sexual penetration or any other act of sexual character, and the perpetrator takes advantage of such condition of a victim.

64. It should be highlighted that context is always taken into the consideration while investigating cases of such category, as well as all the circumstances of the case are fully analysed. Therefore, when the victim states about rape the whole context is considered.

65. The chapter on the crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability of the CCG covers all acts of a sexual nature, in which the person's free will may not be expressed for such an act. The punishments provided for committing the crime defined in this chapter are the most severe, for example, there is provided life imprisonment as maximum measure of punishment for several aggravating circumstances for the crime of rape.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (b)

66. The effectiveness of the National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Measures to be implemented for the Protection of Victims (Survivors) for 2018–2020 was evaluated through the annual progress reports.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (c)

67. The MIA takes swift response to crimes of this category. Notably, the HRPIQMD, operating since 2018, monitors the quality of the legal proceedings on this category of crimes. Several mechanisms were implemented to effectively deal with GBV and/or DV, including a mechanism for assessing and monitoring the risk of recurrence of VAW/DV; possibility to establish electronic surveillance against the abuser if there is a real threat of a recurrence of violence, with the issuance of a restraining order. PSG actively works to prevent re-victimization and secondary victimization by constantly training the prosecutors and investigators. Since 2018, specialisation is mandatory for the prosecutors and investigators of PSG who work on domestic violence and gender-based violence cases and since 2021 specialisation is mandatory for all the prosecutors and investigators of PSG who work on sexual violence cases.

68. In 2018–2022, 114 prosecutors successfully accomplished the training courses on the topics of gender based VAW/DV and access to justice for women. Currently 21 more prosecutors are being trained via above platform on topic of VAW/DV.

69. In 2021, MIA started specializing sexual crime investigators. The curriculum also covers guidelines for interviewing minor victims of sexual abuse. 240 investigators from various territorial and structural units of the MIA have already been specialized. In 2021, for the crime provided for in Article 137 (rape) of the CCG, investigations were started on 170 criminal cases. In 2021, case opening rate increased to 60%.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (d)

70. In 2021 a guideline “On investigation and procedural supervision of crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability” was developed by the PSG giving prosecutors better vision on issues related to sexual violence, deeper knowledge on how to supervise investigations of sexual offences and standards of prosecution.

71. In cases of crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability, Prosecutors are instructed not to set a higher standard of proof for crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability than for other crimes and consider the specifics of sexual violence and the gendered nature of the crime while prosecuting these cases.

72. Due to implementation of policies and guidelines developed by the PSG, quality and effectiveness of the prosecutorial work carried out by specialized prosecutors, as

well as the rate of initiation of investigation and prosecution on sexual crimes has been increased in recent years.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (e)

73. As a result of the implemented measures, referrals from victims of VAW/DV have significantly increased over the years that indicates an increase in public awareness and trust in the police.

74. While in 2017, the rate of investigations of cases of VAW/DV did not exceed 3000 cases and the rate of issuance of restraining orders did not exceed 5 000, today the rate of investigations exceeds 5 000 cases, as for the rate of orders, it reaches 10 000 orders.

75. The State Care Agency conducts and will continue to organize different outdoor activities for the awareness raising campaign on the issues of VAW/DV. To achieve this goal, the Agency conducts informational meetings, trainings, spreads information (social network, information brochures, information clips) about the helpline and agency's services.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (f)

76. The Agency for State Care provides the following services: protection, assistance and rehabilitation of the victims/statutory victims/alleged victims (both adults and minors) of VAW/DV and/or sexual abuse and/or of human trafficking regardless of the race, skin, colour, language, sex, age, religion or belief citizenship, origin, property or social status, place of residence, political or other opinions, national, ethnic or social affiliation, profession, marital status, health status, disability, sexual orientation, Gender Identity and Expression. The Agency provides the services within the shelters or crisis centres. The services of Agency are available to Georgian as well as foreign citizens. The individual rehabilitation-reintegration plan is made for each beneficiary.

77. The so-called existence of "victim status" is directly related and the main prerequisite for using state services, which, in many cases, is a significant barrier for a person exposed to violence. Therefore, on December 22, 2022 the Parliament adopted a legislative amendment eliminating the "status of the victim" which will enter into force from July 1, 2023.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (g)

78. In November, 2022, the GoG approved the rules and amount of compensation for victims of VAW/DV. Victim of VAW/DV applies for compensation to the State Care Agency.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (h)

79. An aggravating circumstance "on the ground of gender" was added to Article 109 (intentional murder), Article 115 (incitement to suicide), Article 117 (serious harm to health) of the CCG which ensures the responsibility appropriate for femicide at the national level.

80. Article 108 – Intentional Killing – of the CCG, criminalizes murder which is punishable by 10 to 15 years of imprisonment. Article 109 – Intentional killing under

aggravating circumstances – of the CCG, envisages committing abovementioned crime on the grounds of gender (gender-based murder) and against a family member as aggravating circumstances, and is punishable by 16 to 20 years or life imprisonment. Accordingly, femicide is punishable by 16 to 20 years or life imprisonment.

81. A package of amendments was prepared which addresses the elimination of the harmful practice against women/girls – virginity testing. The initiative aims to protect women’s right to personal life, including the right to body autonomy, and in this regard, to promote the elimination of gender-based discrimination against women/girls.

82. In 2018–2022, 68 persons were prosecuted for murder/attempted murder/incitement to (attempted) suicide of a woman with gender-based intolerance motive and 64 persons were victims of the abovementioned crimes.

Reply to Paragraph 10 (i)

83. In 2018–2022, the PSG held 93 educational activities on gender-based violence (trainings on effective investigation of gender-based violence, gender-based discrimination, VAW/DV and hate crime, as well as femicide (since 2022)) and 1328 employees attended them: prosecutors, investigators, advisors and victim-witness coordinators.¹

84. As of today, numbers of the employees of the PSG, who are specialized in different fields, are following: Specialization course on Domestic Violence – 243 employees (172 prosecutors, 24 investigators, 35 managers, 12 victim-witness coordinators); Specialization course on Hate Crime – 150 employees (90 prosecutors, 7 investigators, 35 managers, 18 victim-witness coordinators); Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Specialization courses – 108 employees (78 prosecutors, 5 investigators, 15 managers, 10 victim-witness coordinators); Specialization course on Crimes against Sexual Freedom and Inviolability – 116 employees (68 prosecutors, 11 investigators, 37 managers).

85. MIA academy constantly raises the awareness of policemen on combating VAW/DV through providing relevant trainings. In 2020–2022, 4 582 employees were trained under the training course “Violence against women and/or domestic violence” and 4 635 trainees were trained on discrimination. More than 3200 employees of MIA were trained on issues of gender-based violence and hate crimes during 2018–2022. In 2021–2022, 100 law enforcement officers were trained on issues of ensuring access to justice for women with disabilities.

Reply to Paragraphs: 10 (j), 13 (e)

86. It should be noted that the crisis centres operated by non-governmental organizations are supported by municipalities. Such assistance may take various forms such as: allocation of space, payment of utility bills, etc.

Reply to Paragraph 11

87. See ANNEX No. 3.

¹ Single employee may have been trained or re-trained through more than one training activity.

Reply to Paragraph 12 (a)

88. 6 inspection mobile groups composed of representatives of law enforcement under MIA regularly operate in the high-risk areas. They also monitor persons and organizations which offer employment in or outside of the country; organizations, which ensure transportation for persons leaving the country; travel agencies; enterprises which employ foreigners, organizations and persons providing visa assistance; Within the framework of the training course on trafficking 302 trainees were trained at the MIA Academy during 2020–2022.

89. Since 2014, so called special Task Force consisted of highly qualified investigators and prosecutors has been operating in Adjara Region. Like the mobile groups, Task Force also proactively checks the risk places, interview the employees there, in case of any suspicion, investigates and prosecutes human traffickers.

90. In addition, aiming at proactively identification of THB victims among the migrants and asylum seekers, on 19 December 2017 the THB Council also approved the Guidelines on Identification of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings at the Border of Georgia (border crossing and customs crossing points, land and coastal border). These Guidelines were adopted for border police officers and Customs officials and sets forth indicators of alleged victims and standards of interrogation/interview of THB victims, including minors and to whom to refer for assistance of alleged victims.

91. The Labor Inspection Office under the Ministry of IDPs from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs (MOH) has a major role in combating labor trafficking since 2015. Currently, the Labor Inspection Office consists of 123 labor inspectors carrying out planned and unplanned (without prior notice) inspections of companies to monitor labor conditions. Labor inspectors use special guidelines on forced labor and labor exploitation elaborated in 2021.

92. In 2020 special guidelines were also elaborated for the mobile groups of the Agency for State Care responsible for identification of children working and/or living in the streets.

Reply to Paragraph 12 (b)

93. Georgian legislation does not punish the victims and statutory victims of human trafficking for committing any crime or administrative violation for the actions caused by being victims or statutory victims of human trafficking. According to Article 15 of the Anti-Trafficking Law, victims and statutory victims of human trafficking shall be discharged from liability for committing actions under Article 344 (Illegal crossing of the state border of Georgia) and Article 362 (Making, sale or use of a forged document, seal, stamp or blank forms) of the CCG, Article 1723 (Prostitution) and Article 185 (Residing in Georgia in violation of the registration rules established for Georgian citizens and aliens residing in Georgia) of the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia. Nor shall they be held liable for participating in illegal acts, if they had to behave so because of their being victims or statutory victims of human trafficking.

94. The National Referral Mechanism on Human Trafficking (Referral Mechanism) ensures two possible ways in order for a person to be involved in state run services. Georgian law differentiates status of victim of trafficking and status of statutory victim of trafficking. The status of victim of trafficking is granted to the person by Permanent Group (consists of 3 local NGOs and 2 international organizations (IOM and ICMPD) of Inter-Agency Council on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

while the status of statutory victim of trafficking is granted by law enforcement authorities in accordance with Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia. A person enjoys the services of State Care Agency after he/she is granted the status of victim/statutory victim.

95. The aim of the two statuses is to ensure victim-centred approach and in case, he/she does not want to cooperate with law enforcements, to offer different way/procedures for enjoying the state funded services.

96. The Agency for State Care provides the victims/statutory victims with the following state-run services: Shelters (in Tbilisi and Batumi) from 3 to 9 months; Child-tailored services and care-taker; Day-care centers service for children in street situation; Legal aid and Consultation; Physiological and medical assistance; Rehabilitation and reintegration measures; one-time state compensation -1000 GEL.

97. All services of State Care Agency are available and provided to victims/statutory victims and presumed victims without discrimination on any ground and regardless of his/her nationality, immigration status, the form of exploitation etc.

98. In addition, Georgian legislation ensures the Witness and Victim Coordination Services, which are functioning in the system of the MIA as well as in the PSG. The main function of Witness and Victim Coordinators is to protect interests of witnesses and victims involved in criminal law proceedings, to support them and to avoid victimization and secondary victimization.

99. There are two hotlines serving for the potential victims of human trafficking – one is based on MIA (2411 714) and another one is operated by State Care Agency (116 006). These hotlines have remained in operation during the pandemic.

100. In MIA, 24/7 Hotline operates in Georgian, Russian and English languages, while the hotline of the Agency of State Care which is also available for 24/7 operates in 8 languages (Georgian, English, Russian, Turkish, Azeri, Armenian, Arabic and Persian languages).

101. In addition, there is a 24/7 emergency hotline -112, which operates in 4 languages (Georgian, English, Russian, Turkish).

Reply to Paragraph 12 (c)

102. Georgia considers public awareness raising campaigns on trafficking as one of the essential crime-preventing measures. TV and radio shows and advertisements are frequently devoted to THB issues and information leaflets on Georgian, English, Russian, Azerbaijanian, Armenian and Turkish languages are largely disseminated in big cities and rural areas, at state borders and consular units.

103. In 2021, 3500 fliers informing about trafficking hotline (1160060) and services for victims were donated to Georgian National Tourism Administration by the Agency for State Care. The fliers were available in six languages and were distributed through the Tourism Information Centres.

104. In 2022, 20 000 brochures on child labor trafficking in Georgian, Azerbaijani, Armenian and Russian languages were produced for Agency for State Care.

Reply to Paragraph 13 (a)

105. Due to gender quotas, women's representation in the 2020 Parliament of Georgia has increased and reached 30 deputies out of total 150 MPs through a

proportional electoral list and one member was elected through majoritarian electoral system.

106. Gender quota also increased women's participation and representation following 2021 municipal elections where 31% of women were elected through a proportional party list and 8% were elected through the majoritarian contest. More precisely, out of elected 2026 members of Sakrebulo (local councils), 488 were women (of these 441 (31%) elected through proportional list and 47 (8%) elected through majoritarian electoral system) that amounts to 24 % of total of entire Sakrebulo members.

107. An additional mechanism for encouraging women's participation in political life is the regulation of financing political parties. In particular, a political party, which for any parliamentary elections to be held before 2032, forms the party list in the way that every third in the list represents a different gender, will receive additional funding from the budget.

108. The procedures for compiling a party list for the 2028 parliamentary elections of Georgia and for the next parliamentary elections to be held before 2032 shall be determined by a political party in such a manner that at least one person in each three on the party list should be a representative of the opposite sex. The abovementioned mandatory gender quota concerns proportional list of parties and does not apply to majoritarian part of elections, the same rule applies to municipal elections.

Reply to Paragraph 13 (b)

109. The CEC conducted a large-scale research study titled "Identifying Barriers to Women (Candidates) Entering Politics in Georgia" with objective to identify barriers for women entering politics and women candidates in electoral processes in Georgia and propose solutions to enhance the active engagement of women in decision-making.

110. To encourage women's participation in the electoral processes, the training was held that focused on women's leadership skills and was conducted for political party representatives elected in 2020 parliamentary elections. Please also see the response to Paragraph 7 (a).

Reply to Paragraph 13 (c)

111. In 2021, the GEC started the process of monitoring the implementation of the recommendations issued within the framework of thematic inquiries conducted on the accessibility of vocational education for women and women's participation in State economic programmes carried out in previous years.

112. In 2021, 5 working meetings were held with the participation of Rural Development Agency, LSI "Produce in Georgia," the Ministry of Finance of Georgia, and partner donor organizations in connection with the implementation of the grant program for the development of entrepreneurship and the introduction of mentoring programs for women entrepreneurs in Guria Municipality.

113. The mentioned mentoring program is a part of the concept of women's economic empowerment which aims to empower women in the regions by appointing experienced women entrepreneurs as mentors, training them, and promoting their involvement in state financing programs.

Reply to Paragraph 13 (d)

114. On October 5, 2022, Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia initiated the draft on “Amendments to the Organic Law of Georgia on Normative acts”. The draft law envisages mandatory indication of information on gender impact assessment in explanatory notes accompanying the draft laws. The draft law has been adopted in the second reading and the procedures for its review are ongoing.

115. Parliamentary committees have already implemented several GIAs in the previous years. The GEC’s action plan aims to complete this process. Accordingly, work is actively being carried out to identify the areas of GIA distribution, methodology, and the bodies responsible for enforcement and monitoring.

116. For this time, the GIA Institutionalization Work Group consisting of the GEC members, representatives of the executive branch, donors, international organizations, and local experts is established; five meetings were held where experts presented the draft framework of GIA institutionalization.

Reply to Paragraph 13 (f)

117. According to Article 203, section 8 of the Organic Law of Georgia “Georgian Election Code”, the procedures for compiling a party list for the general municipal elections to be held before 2028 shall be determined by a party in such a way that at least one of every three candidates on the submitted list must be of the opposite sex. In the view of the Constitutional Court Ruling (No. 3/2/1647, October 21, 2021) at least one, out of every three candidates on the relevant list must be a woman, however, if all three of the candidates on the list are women, it is no longer mandatory to consider a man.

118. Furthermore, the political party list for the general elections of the municipality bodies shall not be registered by the CEC if it does not reflect gender balance established by article 203.

119. Furthermore, Constitutional Court invalidated the normative content of section 10 of Article 203, according to which, in case of termination of the mandate of a male member of the representative body of the municipality – Sakrebulo elected by the proportional election system, the next male member on the party list would be considered as his replacement (Ruling No. 3/2/1647, October 21, 2021). As a result, if a female member of the Sakrebulo is terminated prematurely, her place will be mandatorily taken by the next female candidate for membership of the Sakrebulo in the same party list, and if there is no such candidate, the mandate will be cancelled.

120. After the self-government elections held in 2021, the chair of the GEC sent letters to all 64 newly elected municipal councils and openly expressed her support to the members of the Sakrebulo for their empowerment. She focused on the role of gender equality councils at the local level in the process of eliminating gender inequality nationwide. The letter also emphasized the importance of identifying women’s problems at the local level and reflecting them accordingly in municipal programs.

121. In 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs adopted the Gender Equality Strategy of the Ministry for 2022–2025 which inter alia aims to create equal conditions for the realization of equal rights, freedoms and opportunities of women and men, prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination and fight against all forms of gender violence. Currently, in diplomatic service staff gender allocations are as follows: Central apparatus – 60% Women, 40% Men; Diplomatic Representations –

44% Women, 56% Men; On leading positions at Central apparatus – 52% Women, 48% Men; On leading position at Diplomatic Representations – 18% Women, 82% Men.

122. From the total number of 14826 Civil Service employees (apart from contract employees) 58% are female and 42% are male. Total number of managerial positions in Civil Service occupied by females is 44% and males 56%.

Reply to Paragraph 14 (b)

123. The Georgian delegation in the Geneva International Discussions (GID) and in the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRMs) under the GID actively raises all issues related to the needs and priorities of women IDPs and conflict-affected women within each round of the GID which is the only format with the Russian Federation for addressing implementation of the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement and consequences of security and humanitarian issues. The Georgian delegation in the GID and the IPRMs underlines the necessity of strengthening the Women, Peace and Security agenda within the GID, namely, the need for increasing women’s meaningful engagement as well as adopting a gender-sensitive approach in order to ensure an inclusive peace process.

124. GID participants hold regular meetings with the representatives of civil society, including women IDPs and conflict-affected women, women’s rights defender NGOs in order to exchange information about the peace negotiations and to ensure that the needs and priorities of women IDPs and conflict-affected women are integrated in the planning for the peace process and raised at the negotiation formats, particularly at GID and IPRMs.

125. In 2021 GoG has launched an inclusive process of elaboration of the “State Strategy for De-Occupation and Peaceful Conflict Resolution”, which include both pillars of Georgia’s peace policy: (1) de-occupation of Georgia’s territories by Russia; (2) reconciliation and engagement between the divided communities across the occupation line. In this context the Georgian side has been conducting meetings with the wide range of society including conflict-affected women, youth and IDPs in order to properly integrate their views, needs and priorities into the strategy.

126. In 2021, special institutionalized mechanism – “Advisory Platform on Enhancement of Women’s Meaningful Participation in Peace Building” was established under State Ministry for Reconciliation and Civic Equality with the aim to effectively implement the national commitments under the UN Security Council resolutions and enhance women’s role and inclusion in peace processes.

Reply to Paragraph 15(a)

127. In 2019 Amendments were made to the regulation “On the Rule of enrolment of a child in public school”, enabling undocumented children’s full access to general education. According to the revised rule, it is enough for a legitimate representative of a child to write an official statement in the name of school principal, requesting the enrolment in the first grade of the school. All children are able to receive certificate of completion of full general education.

Reply to Paragraph 15 (b)

128. Issues related to gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights are reflected in the National Curriculum of Georgia, in particular – standards of the social and natural sciences subjects groups.

129. Apart from the mandatory subjects, in 2021–2022 academic year, MoES started to pilot “Doctor’s Hour” at elementary level of general education. For I-VI graders “Doctor’s Hour” covers the following topics: gender equality, gender stereotypes, conflict resolution, feelings and emotion, healthy life-style, healthy nutrition, hygiene, elements of reproductive health, cyberbullying, violence, sexual violence (how to identify it), personal space, personal information and etc. It is planned to increase the number of pilot schools.

130. Sexual and reproductive health issues are covered in the training course “Sexual and Reproductive Health for Teachers” which is planned to be offered from 2023.

Reply to Paragraph 15 (c)

131. See, ANNEX No. 4.

Reply to Paragraph 16(a)

132. The Labour Code of Georgia (LCG) determines the obligation of the employer to provide equal remuneration for men and women for equal work. The LCG also includes the clause on non-discrimination based on pay. The LCD determines sanctions for the violation of labour norms. In particular, the violation by an employer of the principle of prohibition of discrimination covered by the LCD, including direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace, and the principle of reasonable accommodation and the provision of equal remuneration for equal work, shall result in a warning, or a fine.

Reply to Paragraph 16(b)

133. According to the LCD an employee shall be granted paid maternity leave of 126 calendar days and in the case of complications during childbirth or the birth of twins, maternity leave of 143 calendar days. Employees may distribute the period of maternity leave at their discretion over the pregnancy and postnatal periods. Enjoyment of maternity leave is an exclusive right of the mother of the child, although the father of the child has a right to enjoy the days of said leave which have not been used by the mother of the child.

134. The LCD also provides for additional unpaid parental leave, in particular, employee may be granted, in whole or in parts, but not less than 2 weeks a year, additional unpaid parental leave of 12 weeks until the child turns 5. Additional parental leave may be granted to any employee who actually takes care of the child.

Reply to Paragraph 16 (c)

135. Since 2020, the LCG incorporated new provisions regulating the rights of a pregnant woman, a woman who has recently given birth or is breastfeeding, in particular, employment agreements for performing arduous, harmful or hazardous work shall not be concluded with minors, and/or with pregnant women, or women

who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding. Pregnant women and women who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, shall not be employed for night work. A list of hazardous and high-risk works for an employee who is a pregnant woman, a woman who has recently given birth or is breastfeeding was adopted by the MOH.

Reply to Paragraph 16 (d)

136. As of 2019, sexual harassment is punishable by the Code of Administrative Offenses and prohibited by the LCG and the antidiscrimination law. In 2020, the Inter-Agency Commission started to coordinate the process of creation of mechanisms for detecting sexual harassment in public services. Currently, this mechanism operates in 10 public agencies.

137. From January 1, 2021, the Labour Inspection Service was transformed into an independent body subordinated to the MOH. Its mandate extends to and ensures the supervision of labour rights defined by the Organic Law on Labour Safety, the LCG and the Law of Georgia on Public Service, including timely detection and prevention of direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, gender sensitivity, forced labour and labour exploitation, implementation of agreements of labour mediation and enforcement of other critical issues defined by labour legislation.

Reply to Paragraph 17 (a)

138. In May 2022, the GoG adopted the National Health Protection Strategy for 2022–2030 inter alia to improve access and quality of maternal, newborn, and reproductive health/family planning services.

139. One of the long-term objective of the National Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy for 2017–2030 is that by 2030: all women shall have universal access to evidence-based prenatal, antenatal, obstetric, neonatal and postnatal care.

140. Several the State funded maternal and child healthcare programs have emerged related to antenatal care provision; identification and management of high-risk pregnancies; early detection of congenital anomalies; screening of pregnant women for HIV, hepatitis B and C, and syphilis; free provision of folic acid and iron supplements for pregnant women; free childbirth and caesarean section services as part of Universal Health Care Program (UHC).

141. The mortality rate of children under five years of age per thousand live births decreased from 13.4 (2010) to 10.0 (2021). The maternal mortality rate (deaths per 100,000 live births) has increased in 2020–2021 due to the new coronavirus pandemic.

Reply to Paragraph 17 (b)

142. The State fully funds HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis prevention, diagnosis and treatment services. All HIV/AIDS-positive persons have access to vital free, highly effective antiretroviral treatment and relevant quality laboratory and treatment adherence monitoring.

143. The following is carried out within the framework of the state programme on Management of HIV/AIDS: voluntary counselling on HIV infection/AIDS (pre-test and after test) and testing; procurement, reception and transportation of the first-line medication for HIV/AIDS treatment, diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted

infections in persons at high risk of HIV-infections/AIDS, pilot-HIV-infection/AIDS prevention among injecting drug users (IDU) (from July 1, 2020).

Reply to Paragraph 17 (c)

144. In 2021, the mental health strategy of Georgia for 2022–2030 was approved which sets strategic objectives and policy directions for improving mental healthcare system in Georgia.

145. In 2020, the guideline “Management of the Perinatal Period in Mental Disorders” was prepared, which represents the use of contraception and pregnancy planning; A tool for assessing the impact of pregnancy and childbirth on mental health, as well as the impact of mental illness or its treatment on the fetus and newborn. Early detection and screening services are fully available to women in mental health facilities and institutions.

146. The GoG has prepared a set of recommendations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular: National Recommendation for Mental Health and COVID19 Clinical Practice (guideline); Safe management of patients in mental health inpatient services under COVID-19 – State Standard for the Management of Clinical Conditions (Protocol).

Reply to Paragraph 17 (d)

147. Evaluation of drug users is done every 4–5 years in the country. According to official statistics, 2% of abstinence-oriented treatment recipients are women. Only 0.3% of people on replacement therapy are women. Apart from estimated data on the number of drug-using pregnant women, official statistics are not yet available.

Reply to Paragraphs 17 (e), 18 (d)

148. In order to address and prevent sex-selection abortion (Gender Biased Sex Selection) GoG continues to focus on: promoting gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, and fighting against negative gender stereotypes; guaranteeing for the women right to access modern reproductive technologies, by working with service providers and reproductive health specialist to engage them as partners and promote more ethical use of reproductive health care technologies; conducting communication campaign throughout the country with a slogan “do not differentiate, boy and a girl are both your future”.

149. The Order of the MOH on the “Approval of the Rules for Implementing Artificial Termination of Pregnancy” established the pre-abortion consultation/interview procedure, which serves to fully inform the patient about the complications expected as a result of abortion. The Order prohibits selective abortion, except in cases where it is necessary to prevent a sexually transmitted disease.

Reply to Paragraph 17 (f)

150. By adopting Article 1331 (Sterilisation without consent) in the CCG, criminal liability was determined for conducting an operation or manipulation on a person with the purpose of destroying his/her reproduction ability.

151. In accordance with the Law of Georgia on health care, sterilization is allowed only by a certified doctor in a medical facility with the appropriate permission. This

intervention takes place only in the case of the patient's written consent. The patient is pre-interviewed and sterilization is performed only after a one-month waiting period. The sterilization without the patient's will is punishable.

Reply to Paragraph 18 (a)

152. Over the past decade, much has been accomplished through the introduction of free, modern family planning methods and increased access to them. The primary care physicians were trained to provide family planning services and the health system was provided with free modern contraceptives.

153. A package of abortion regulatory mechanisms was prepared by the MOH followed by the inclusion of family planning services in the competencies of primary health care providers, in particular, family doctors. If necessary, a referral to a specialist is provided.

Reply to Paragraph 18 (b)

154. The 2017–2030 maternal and newborn health promotion strategy provides access to family planning and reproductive health services for women, adolescent girls, including those who are unmarried, living in rural areas, living in poverty and belonging to ethnic minority groups.

155. As part of the maternal and child program, pregnant women are provided with 8 antenatal visits, determination of hepatitis B and C, HIV infection/AIDS and syphilis in pregnant women and prevention of transmission of hepatitis B from mother to child, early detection of genetic pathologies, diagnosis and treatment of syphilis in pregnant women.

Reply to Paragraph 18 (c)

156. In order to reduce the stigma on reproductive health services awareness raising campaigns are being conducted within the framework of the state health promotion program which involves the preparation of booklets, video clips, materials in different languages as well as primary health care staff trainings.

Reply to Paragraph 19 (a)

157. Under the Rural Development Strategy for 2017–2020 and respective action plans, several activities were prescribed to promote the development of skills of entrepreneurs.

158. The program of “Support to Beekeeping Agricultural Cooperatives” envisages a special condition that at least 15% of the cooperative partners should be women in order for the cooperative to be eligible for funding.

159. Under the Youth entrepreneurship support program 100 young entrepreneurs (among them 39 women) from the rural areas received co-financing (40% grant) from the Agriculture and Rural Development Agency to implement different type of rural development projects. Within this program, 660 farmers were trained (including 192 women) in 2019 and 132 farmers (including 53 woman) in 2020.

Reply to Paragraph 19 (b)

160. As of October 31, 2022, unsecured loans were granted to 3,851 women (including 3,536 individuals and 315 sole proprietors) within the framework of the state program “Preferential Agrocredit”.

161. The Central bank analyzes internal credit policies of commercial banks and no discriminatory approaches were observed. If such fact is detected, the Central Bank will take appropriate measures. The data regarding portfolio without collateral:

October-2022 Category	Loans without Collateral* ²		Total	
	Amount ³	Number of Loans	Amount	Number of Loans
Men	3 972 708 868	1 148 241	15 121 028 633	1 522 130
Women	2 798 096 349	1 075 272	9 037 289 582	1 564 263
Total	6 770 805 217	2 223 513	24 158 318 215	3 086 393

² Loans without Collateral* - Loans which aren't collateralized with movable property/real estate or Cash.

³ Amounts presented in Georgian Lari.

Reply to Paragraph 19 (d)

162. The pre-school education is decentralized. Municipalities offer free full services (including meals) in public kindergartens for children aged 2–6 years. Up to 50 non-Georgian language kindergartens operate in the country. In 2017–2022, the construction/rehabilitation of kindergartens in the regions was funded with approximately 63 million GEL.

Reply to Paragraph 19 (e)

163. Access to relevant social benefits (pension, compensation, social package, subsistence allowance, etc.) to different categories of women is ensured under the relevant state programs and funds. The GoG plans to develop a Social Code which will cover directions and schemes of social protection, such as social benefits, including IDP allowances, healthcare, pensions, issues regarding PWDs, employment, etc.

Reply to Paragraph 20 (a)

164. The Universal Health Care (UHC) program envisages universal access to healthcare services for all citizens of Georgia. UHC Program covers: planned ambulatory care, emergency outpatient and inpatient care, elective surgery, cardio surgery, chemo-radio-hormone therapy, delivery and C-section, infectious diseases, transplantation of liver, bone marrow and stem cells. UHC program beneficiaries are: persons holding identity card of Georgia, neutral identity card, neutral travel document, also persons without citizenship having stateless status in Georgia, asylum seekers in Georgia, refugees and persons with humanitarian status. In addition to the universal health program the health needs of the population are covered by 24 vertical programs.

Reply to Paragraph 20 (b)

165. Georgia has a well-developed anti-discrimination legal framework which covers discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE). In 2020, Georgia has adopted the first-ever policy document on SOGI rights as part of the National Human Rights Action Plan.

Reply to Paragraph 20 (c)

166. Law of Georgia on Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories of Georgia and other legal acts regulate the legal status of IDPs, the grounds and procedure for granting, terminating, withdrawing and restoring the IDP status, legal, economic and social guarantees of IDPS.

167. Acquiring an IDP status is voluntary. IDP enjoys all the rights of a citizen of Georgia, including the right to choose housing, benefit from state and other programmes of social protection, healthcare and education, freedom of economic activity and access to financial resources, right to participate in elections, etc. The legislation prohibits discrimination against IDPs in exercising their rights and freedoms. IDPs are integrated into targeted social assistance and vocational education state programmes.

Reply to Paragraph 20 (d)

168. In accordance with the Law of Georgia “on the Legal Status of Aliens and Stateless Persons”, a temporary identification card is issued to asylum seeker, and a person under international protection. The regulation provides for the issuance of identity documents to any person regardless gender.

169. Asylum seekers rejected by administrative body or first instance Court, inter alia on the ground of national security, have right to appeal rendered decision. Subsequently, they maintain all relevant rights and legal guarantees of asylum seeker upon appealing the given decision, before the final decision of the Court enter into force.

170. These identity documents allow a person to use various state funded and private sector services.

Reply to Paragraph 20 (e)

171. There is a treatment program for alcohol and drug addicts which provides for: inpatient detoxification and primary rehabilitation for mental and behavioural disorders caused by the use of opioids, stimulants and other psychoactive substances; implementation of replacement therapy; psychosocial rehabilitation; inpatient services for mental and behavioural disorders caused by alcohol consumption, etc.

Reply to Paragraph 20 (f)

172. Upon receiving relevant information about the cases with the alleged motive of intolerance based on the grounds of discrimination, the MIA commences an investigation. From the initial stage, upon receiving the notification about the crime, the HRPIQMD monitors the criminal procedure for such cases.

173. Regarding the mentioned crimes, the data is collected by MIA, the PSG, the Supreme Court and the National Statistics Service, in accordance with the international standards, in line with the unified methodology, based on the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2020 and is publicly available in Georgian and English languages.

174. It should be noted that from the cases monitored by MIA, as of 2021, a sign of sexual orientation was identified in 58 cases, and a sign of gender identity in 48 cases.

Reply to Paragraph 21 (a)

175. As of January 1, 2017, all exceptional provisions allowing the marriage of a person under 18 were cancelled; now, marriage is permitted only for a person above 18. In addition, awareness-raising activities are systematically carried out to prevent early marriage.

Reply to Paragraph 21 (c)

176. According to Article 1152 of the Civil Code, in domestic relations the spouses shall have equal personal and property rights and shall bear equal responsibilities.

177. Under Articles 1158 and 1160 of the Code, any property acquired by the spouses during their marriage shall be treated as their joint property (communal property) and the right to such property shall arise even if one of the spouses ran the household, took care of the children or did not have an independent income for any other valid reason.

178. As for the intestacy, the decedent's spouse shall be considered as one of the first degree heirs along with the children of the deceased. The surviving spouse's right of inheritance shall not apply to the part of the estate to which he/she is entitled from the communal property.

179. For facilitating land registration and supporting women to become land owners, in 2022 National Agency of Public Registry conducted a number of activities: meetings with the population of 59 municipalities where local women actively participated; meetings with public school female teachers in 7 regions of Georgia; Information on systematic land registration was also circulated in all 59 municipalities determined by systematic land registration. A video was also created and broadcast on both central and regional TV channels of the country.

180. As of November 2022, women amount to 48.7% percent of those who own land in Georgia.

Reply to Paragraph 21 (d)

181. See reply to paragraphs: 9 (a), (b), (c).