



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

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

**Tenth periodic report submitted by El Salvador under
article 18 of the Convention, due in 2021****

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* The annexes to the present report are available on the Committee's web page.
** The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. Gender inequality and discrimination constitute a challenge to human development in El Salvador. The effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) emergency have heightened the risks affecting women's lives. It is therefore essential to promote concerted action by State institutions in order to uphold women's human rights.
2. The Government promotes inter-agency coordination and public policies designed from a gender perspective with a view to ensuring that women have access to support and public services through which the protection of their rights can be guaranteed.
3. In this context, with the aim of fulfilling the commitments assumed, the tenth periodic report which follows details progress achieved under each of the articles of the Convention and in respect of the observations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women upon conclusion of the last dialogue in February 2017. For a better understanding of this document, it is important to refer to the information contained in the annexes.

Articles of the Convention and observations made by the Committee

Articles 1 and 2. Policy measures

4. Article 3 of the Constitution of El Salvador states that: "All persons are equal before the law. No restrictions may be placed on the enjoyment of their civil rights on the basis of their nationality, race, sex or religion."
5. Numerous legislative amendments have been made, constituting an important advance towards harmonization of the regulatory framework with the provisions of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women¹ and the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women.² Important examples include:
 - Introduction of measures to prevent offences against the sexual freedom of children by means of legislative amendments establishing that offences violating the sexual freedom of minors may not be time-barred (Criminal Code, art. 99; Code of Criminal Procedure, art. 32).
 - Revision of various offences established under the Criminal Code with a view to ensuring that women are able to enjoy a violence- and discrimination-free life in the family environment and in financial matters, including the offences of: failure to fulfil the duty to provide financial support (art. 201); failure to pay supplementary allowances (art. 201-A); and failure to obey precautionary or protective measures (art. 338-A).
 - Amendment of the Labour Code (art. 309 (1)), by means of Legislative Decree No. 143, and amendment of the Act on Rest Days, Vacations and Leave for Public Sector Employees (art. 5 (2) and art. 9 (1)), through Legislative Decree No. 174, concerning postnatal leave, to grant 16 weeks' maternity leave and thus

¹ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. Legislative Decree No. 520, 25 November 2010, Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women.
<https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/3396>.

² Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. Legislative Decree No. 645, 17 March 2011. Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
<https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/494>.

provide protection for pregnant workers in addition to the allowances available to facilitate breastfeeding.

- Amendment of the Police Service Act, through Legislative Decree No. 394, to grant up to 16 weeks' paid leave after the birth of a child for all female police officers who become mothers (art. 103 (1)) in order to protect pregnant workers and benefit newborns.
- Amendment of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, and specifically of the most-favourable-law principle enshrined in article 4 (b); addition of article 56-A, on the creation of special courts and multidisciplinary teams; and amendment of article 57 (f) and (l), to support the establishment of special courts for a violence-free life for women.
- Amendments to the Domestic Violence Act, through Legislative Decree No. 546, to harmonize it with the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women and thus improve access to justice for women, affecting: the duration of preventive, precautionary and protective measures (Domestic Violence Act, art. 9); the supervision of protection measures (Domestic Violence Act, art. 23); and support for the multidisciplinary teams attached to the special courts for a violence-free life for women (Domestic Violence Act, art. 42).
- Amendment of the Family Code, through Legislative Decree No. 605, affecting the “divorcee” family status assigned to women whose marriages have been dissolved through divorce, which, for most women, was a source of discrimination that undermined equality and their enjoyment of fundamental rights; for this reason, following divorce or the annulment of their marriage, women will henceforth have “unmarried woman” status (art. 186).
- Amendment of the Act on Names of Natural Persons, through Legislative Decree No. 606, affecting the family name that widowed women may use (art. 22), with a view to eliminating any form of discrimination against women and guaranteeing equal rights for men and women.
- Incorporation of article 1-A and amendments to article 29 (5) and (6) of the Labour Code, by means of Legislative Decree No. 900, to give effect to the principle of gender equality in the workplace and guarantee the prevention of discriminatory conduct.
- Amendments to the Labour Code, through Legislative Decree No. 41, to the Civil Service Act, through Legislative Decree No. 42, and to the Act on Rest Days, Vacations and Leave for Public Sector Employees, through Legislative Decree No. 43, in order to enhance guarantees of job security for pregnant women by creating conditions that should ensure that women can continue to provide for themselves, their children and their children's proper development.
- Amendment to article 31 (a) of the Consumer Protection Act, concerning unlawful advertising that conveys sexist and stereotyped messages, in order to strengthen protection for women's right to a violence-free life.
- Amendments to article 110 (1) of the Labour Code, through Legislative Decree No. 244, and the addition of subparagraph (p) to article 32 of the Civil Service Act, through Legislative Decree No. 245, concerning the protection of pregnant women who require medical check-ups or are unable to carry out work requiring physical effort incompatible with their condition, in order to provide job stability for women.
- Addition of paragraph 10 to article 61 of the Municipal Administration Employment Act, by means of Legislative Decree No. 246, protecting pregnant women from work requiring physical efforts incompatible with their condition,

in order to harmonize the different legal provisions governing the matter and to grant job stability to female municipal employees.

- Entry into force of the Special Act on Migration and Foreign Nationals, on 15 May 2019, with the aim of protecting the rights and establishing the migration obligations of nationals and foreign nationals: under the Special Act, the State undertakes to cooperate with the migration authorities of other countries by exchanging information, in accordance with its competencies, related to offences of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. In addition, the Act mandates the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women to take action to assist migrant women in vulnerable situations and to provide training on gender issues for the migration authorities.
- Amendment to article 51 of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, through Legislative Decree No. 321, on the offence of distributing pornography, to ensure that women are able to enjoy a violence-free life.
- Amendment of article 21 of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, through Legislative Decree No. 383, which requires public and private universities to establish mechanisms through which discrimination and violence against women can be identified, prevented and punished, in order to ensure that women can enjoy a violence- and discrimination-free life in higher education.
- Amendment to the Labour Code, adding paragraphs 11 and 12 to article 29 and revising article 123, through Legislative Decree No. 407, in order to ensure equal pay for men, women and persons with disabilities who carry out identical activities, in addition to ensuring that the regulations are harmonized with International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions.
- Amendment of article 10 (c) of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, through Legislative Decree No. 451, concerning violence in the workplace, in order to update the regulations and guarantee women a life free from workplace violence.
- Amendment of article 30 (11-E) of the Teaching Profession Act, by means of Legislative Decree No. 504, protecting pregnant women and women suffering from incapacitating chronic illnesses from work that requires physical efforts incompatible with their condition, in order to harmonize the various legal provisions governing the matter, besides providing job stability for teaching staff.
- Amendment of the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women, through Legislative Decree No. 553, incorporating article 10-A, which establishes that all public institutions must create institutional gender units to ensure that the principle of gender equality is respected throughout the institution and a gender perspective is mainstreamed in all institutional activities.

6. In 2020, the Legislative Assembly's Commission on Women and Gender Equality adopted an advisory opinion recommending that the Act Regulating the Use of Electronic Surveillance Mechanisms in Criminal Matters should be amended to allow for aggressors to be monitored when they are subject to measures to protect women victims of domestic violence or other types of violence covered by the Special Comprehensive Act. Other proposed amendments to the Special Comprehensive Act included the introduction of a requirement for the Consumer Ombudsman's Office to protect and safeguard the manner in which women are depicted in advertising.

7. The legal framework for the protection of the rights of children has been strengthened to reinforce protection for the right to a violence-free life, as follows:

- Amendments to the Comprehensive Child Protection Act, by means of Legislative Decree No. 479, adding a second subparagraph to article 33 that provides for the creation of Internet filters to prevent access to pornographic content that could damage children's mental health, and Legislative Decree No. 781, adding article 85-A and revising article 86 (m), concerning bullying in schools, in order to prevent bullying and associated conduct and guarantee that children are able to exercise and enjoy their rights in full.
- Entry into force of the Mental Health Act, article 5 of which introduces an obligation for the State, through the Comprehensive Child Protection System, working in close coordination with the Ministry of Health, to coordinate the work of agencies involved in providing care and support for children and adolescents, giving priority to those who are especially vulnerable, in order to guarantee the right to protection of mental health.
- Amendment of the Family Code, through Legislative Decree No. 754, which prohibits child marriage, in order to prevent violations of the rights of girls and adolescents.
- Amendment of the Criminal Code (arts. 160 and 161), by means of Legislative Decree No. 480, which defines indecent touching as a serious criminal offence rather than a minor offence, thereby confirming that touching of this kind is considered to be of a sexual nature, with a view to protecting children against sexual assault in any form.

8. The Legislative Assembly has begun work on drafting the Procedural Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which will serve to reinforce the application of the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

9. The Attorney General's Office has adopted a policy of criminal prosecution for cases of violence against women.

10. Through its annual monitoring exercises, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has noted an increase in the percentage of State institutions that have adopted at least two procedures or mechanisms for ensuring equality and eliminating discrimination. At the close of 2019, 56 institutions forming part of one of the three branches of government, equivalent to 64 per cent of the total, had adopted at least two public policy instruments for the advancement of equality and elimination of discrimination against women. At the municipal level, at the close of 2019, 213 municipal governments, constituting 81.3 per cent of the total, had municipal women's units; 65 municipal governments (24.8 per cent of the total) had formulated their own equality plans; and 171 municipalities (65.3 per cent of the total) had allocated a budget for equality-related action.

11. The percentage of State institutions that are applying at least two public policy instruments intended to advance women's access to a violence-free life has increased. At the end of 2019, 71.4 per cent of the institutions reporting to the Specialized Expert Commission were implementing at least two public policy instruments as a means to advance women's access to a violence-free life. At the municipal level, according to the Report on the Status and Situation of Violence against Women in El Salvador 2020, covering the period from July 2019 to June 2020, 65 municipal governments (representing 24.8 of the total) had municipal plans for preventing and responding to violence against women: 15 plans were at the preparatory stage, 6 had been approved and 44 were already in place.

12. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women is running a programme to reinforce the process of mainstreaming the principle of equality in the Salvadoran public administration and thus ensure compliance with the regulatory framework for equality.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

13. There are no changes to report relative to the information contained in the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

14. The right of women to a violence-free life, as defined in the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, takes account of the international standards set out in the Convention of Belém do Pará, as well as those established in general recommendation No. 19 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in that it recognizes that violence against women is a form of discrimination expressed in unequal power relations and in the subordination of women to men that has historically restricted or prevented the enjoyment of women's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

15. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women recognizes that the path towards the elimination of violence against women requires coordinated efforts on the part of State institutions and a systemic approach to the application of public policy which prioritizes the well-being of women, whose rights are being violated by the persistence of stereotypical patterns of behaviour, that is, social and cultural practices built on notions of inferiority or subordination, which keep fuelling gender-based violence against women. The efforts described below are of particular importance.

16. Working in coordination with the Central Reserve Bank and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has formulated a plan for research into the cost of violence against women. The research will focus on the following forms of violence, as defined in the Special Comprehensive Act: sexual violence, femicidal violence and physical violence.

17. As envisaged under the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, the Specialized Expert Commission³ was created to serve as an inter-agency coordination mechanism. A total of 24 institutions are represented on the Commission, which coordinates their efforts with those of other inter-agency mechanisms. Its work has included: (i) creating a committee of experts to assume responsibility for implementing the National Comprehensive Child Protection Policy, whose executive committee is chaired by the National Council for Children and Adolescents; (ii) drawing up guidelines for preventing and responding to sexual violence against girls; and (iii) producing guidelines for the organization and coordination of Gender Units and Occupational Health and Safety Committees and guidelines for the referral and counter-referral of cases involving women victims of violence.

18. At least five of the institutions that are represented on the Specialized Expert Commission report that they are coordinating their work with 19 civil society

³ The Specialized Expert Commission is an inter-institutional mechanism tasked with ensuring that the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, the national policy for ensuring access to a violence-free life for women and the related action plan are given practical effect.

organizations involved in the promotion and protection of the right to a violence-free life in different thematic areas, as detailed below:

- Ministry of Economic Affairs: works in coordination with women's and feminist organizations (ORMUSA, the Feminist Women's Organization, and ASMUJERES, the Women's Association) in implementing the gender training and awareness-raising plan for its staff and user base (members of cooperatives and the business sector).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs: works in coordination with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in efforts to prevent violence against women carried out under the National Action Plan for Indigenous Peoples with a gender perspective and the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, among others.
- Ministry of Health: coordinates with the Movement for a Secular Culture, the National Health Forum (a forum for coordination with civil society), APROCSAL (a health NGO), Masculinidades por la Paz (an NGO specialized in promoting new perceptions of masculinity) and the Coincidir Network (a network of young persons' organizations working to promote sexual and reproductive rights).
- Ministry of Labour and Social Security: works in coordination with Las Mélicas (the Mélica Women's Associative Movement) and the ASPDIH Arcoiris Association (an NGO working on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons) to promote and ensure respect for the labour rights of paid domestic workers and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community.
- Ministry of Public Works: worked with the NGOs Las Mélicas, Las Dignas (an NGO working to combat the capitalist and heterosexist patriarchy) and ACOAVIS to draft a protocol for action to prevent acts of discrimination and violence against women and persons belonging to gender-vulnerable groups.

19. A national cross-sectoral strategy for the prevention of pregnancy in girls and adolescents for the period 2017–2027 is being implemented through coordinated inter-agency efforts led by the National Council for Children and Adolescents and involving the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Salvadoran Institute for Children and Adolescents, the National Youth Institute and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, with support from the United Nations Population Fund and Plan International.

Article 3. Guarantees of human rights and fundamental freedoms

20. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has drawn up institutional guidelines and directives to facilitate implementation of the strategy for mainstreaming the principle of equality and the follow-up and oversight of the strategy.

21. The National Equality Plan for the period 2016–2020,⁴ adopted during the fifth general assembly of the National System for Substantive Equality,⁵ is the main public

⁴ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. National Equality Plan 2016–2020. San Salvador, September 2016. http://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=571%3Aris_documentos2017&Itemid=234&lang=es.

⁵ The National System for Substantive Equality ensures coordination between the State institutions responsible for compliance with national equality regulations, provides follow-up on the progress made by each institution in advancing women's rights and promotes accountability. It is composed of more than 50 institutions forming part of the three branches of government.

policy tool of the Government of El Salvador in the area of equality for women and is national in scope, but with sectoral and regional specificities. The Plan was subject to broad consultation with stakeholder institutions.

22. The tools needed to ensure harmonization between the regulations of the different public institutions working to ensure equality were established in 2019, in the course of consultations between the institutions that make up the National System for Substantive Equality. Given the legal character of public institutions and the diverse realities in which they work, in order to ensure compliance with articles 4 and 41 of the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women, two sets of harmonization tools have been created. The first set is informative in nature, while the second is of an advisory nature. The tools support the work that the Institutional Gender Committees or Gender Units carry out to mainstream the principle of equality and non-discrimination.

23. A pilot project was carried out that involved the harmonization of the following five internal regulations: the regulations for recording and monitoring the attendance, time at work and punctuality of civil servants and administrative employees of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; the handbook of human resources management processes and procedures of the Ministry of Economic Affairs; the internal staff regulations of the Court of Accounts; the regulations governing staff recruitment, selection and appointments of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources; and the human resources planning policy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.

24. In the first quarter of 2020, with technical assistance from the European Union, an evaluation of the National Equality Plan 2016–2020 was carried out with a view to identifying strengths and weaknesses in the management of the Plan. The evaluation was participatory in nature and was carried out in consultation with the public institutions that make up the National System for Substantive Equality and are responsible for the Plan's implementation, the staff of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, women's organizations, human rights defenders, vulnerable populations such as indigenous, rural and peasant women, and other civil society organizations. The inputs gathered will serve as the point of departure for the formulation of the National Equality Plan 2021–2025.

25. The five-year action plan implementing the National Policy for Women's Access to a Violence-Free Life 2016–2021,⁶ adopted by the Specialized Expert Commission in compliance with article 16 of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, is a policy tool that helps State institutions to achieve the strategic objectives set for agencies involved in preventing, detecting, responding to and punishing violence against women. The strategic objectives apply to both State agencies and civil society and are therefore multisectoral and inter-institutional by nature. The plan envisages a comprehensive, systematic and sustainable response to the violence that women face in both public and private spheres.

⁶ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Five-year action plan implementing the National Policy for Women's Access to a Violence-Free Life 2016–2021, adopted by the Specialized Expert Commission, in compliance with article 16 of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women. San Salvador, November 2016. http://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=491%3Arvlv_documentos2016&Itemid=234&lang=es.

Article 4. Temporary special measures

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 18 and 19 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

26. As part of its efforts to fulfil national and international commitments for the advancement of women's human rights, particularly those established under the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women and the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has made significant progress in strengthening the provisions of the regulatory framework for equality and non-discrimination that address political violence. The institutional changes achieved are evident in the fact that more women are working at all levels of public service, including in decision-making and skilled positions, showing that institutions are making reducing gender inequality gaps a priority.

27. At present, 57 per cent of the regular members of the National Council of the Judiciary plenary are women. Similarly, in the Attorney General's Office and the Judiciary's Executive Unit, women have been appointed at the most senior decision-making levels, including as Attorney General and Director General, respectively. In the Supreme Court and the Public Prosecution Service, women hold 33 per cent of the most senior decision-making positions. In the police force, 13.1 per cent of chiefs are women. In the Legislative Assembly, 28.6 per cent of regular deputies are women (see annexes, table 1).

Article 5. Elimination of sexist stereotypes and prejudices

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 20 and 21 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

28. The Training School for Substantive Equality⁷ run by the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has been providing systematic, continuous training for public sector officials in the legal instruments that have a role in the protection and promotion of women's rights, including, in particular, their right to a violence-free life, and the punishment of violations. The School was established as part of a strategic drive to strengthen the capacity of State institutions to ensure compliance with the regulatory framework for equality, non-discrimination and a violence-free life for women.

29. Between January 2017 and the end of December 2020, more than 4,226 persons received training, of whom 2,548 were women (60.3 per cent) and 1,678 were men (39.7 per cent) (see annexes, tables 2 and 3).

30. As part of its communications strategy for the promotion of women's human rights, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has run the following campaigns: "Soy Mujer, salvadoreña y defendiendo mis derechos" (I am a woman, a Salvadoran woman, and I am defending my rights); "La trata de mujeres es un delito, levantemos nuestra voz, no te dejes engañar" (Trafficking in women is a crime, let's speak out, don't let yourself be taken in); "Por nuestros derechos civiles y políticos ¡Yo decido!" (Because we have civil and political rights, I can decide!); "Un voto por las mujeres es un voto por la Igualdad" (A vote for women is a vote for equality); and "La violencia contra las mujeres es violencia contra la sociedad" (Violence against women is violence against society). In addition, eight seasons of the radio programme *Voz Mujer* (Women's Voice) have been broadcast, bringing information about the prevention of violence against women to the general public throughout the country.

⁷ Specialized Training Unit, May 2021.

31. During the pandemic, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has been running a continuous information campaign on social networks to address issues related to COVID-19 and to encourage responsibility-sharing in respect of the prevention of violence against women, to recognize women's contributions in emergency situations and to increase their visibility in national statistics.

32. Overall, 70 per cent of the institutions that are represented on the Specialized Expert Commission report having conducted awareness-raising campaigns in the period 2016–2018. Of this number, 40 per cent have been running campaigns on an ongoing basis from 2016 until the present date, 71 per cent indicate that their campaigns are aimed at staff and 50 per cent state that the campaigns are targeted at the general public using social networks, radio, television and other media. In all, 50 of the institutions forming part of the Specialized Expert Commission report having carried out multiple training exercises for staff and users of their services.

33. From the start of 2016 to the end of 2018, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women provided training on symbolic violence and sexist language to 63 institutional communicators working in the three branches of government, the Public Prosecution Service and municipal authorities, who received guidance on non-sexist communication and how to use the handbook for substantive equality in communication. It also engaged in advocacy and oversight activities aimed at State-run and private media, having established, in 2017, an observatory for equality in the media that monitors the manner in which women are portrayed in public and private media. In addition, since 2016, it has been providing training for the technical staff of the observatories of the Directorate of Public Entertainment, Radio and Television and the Consumer Ombudsman's Office.

34. Working with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has entered into dialogue with media chiefs and journalists to inform them about gender indicators. Training in communication for equality has been designed for communicators and journalists and will be implemented within the framework of commitments assumed by the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women with the Association of Journalists of El Salvador and the Association of Community Radio Broadcasters of El Salvador. Strategic alliances have been formed with organizations of women journalists and academia with a view to encouraging women journalists who are exposed to violence in the exercise of their profession to come forward and providing them with appropriate support.⁸

35. In 2018, as part of a drive for harmonization with the National Gender Regulations, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women provided technical assistance to the Association of Journalists for an update of the Code of Conduct for Journalists and Communication Professionals in El Salvador to address the management of communication and gender issues and ethical conduct for journalists in respect of women's human rights.

36. The Ministry of the Interior and Regional Development has reported that, to ensure compliance with the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, the Salvadoran Association of Radio Broadcasters has adopted the Declaration on Ethical Principles signed in Peru as its code of conduct and that the National Advertising Council has adopted a code of advertising self-regulation for the advertising industry.

37. The Ministry of the Interior and Regional Development has developed educational and awareness-raising programmes addressing women's human rights for

⁸ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Management Accountability Report 2014–2019. P. 75.

communication professionals and students that had been completed by 43 persons as of July 2019. Based on the obligations set out in the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, the Directorate of Public Entertainment, Radio and Television comments on the content broadcast in social media, warning of possible violations of the principles established in the Declaration on Ethical Principles. To support this work, programmes have been broadcast on free-to-air television and radio that specifically address the right of women and girls to be valued, to be educated and to enjoy an environment free of stereotyped patterns of behaviour and social and cultural practices based on notions of inferiority or subordination.

38. In consultation with the communications sector, the press, academia and journalists' associations, a list of 10 principles to be respected in the coverage of incidents of violence against women has been drafted and disseminated to provide journalists with a technical tool that should help them to incorporate the gender perspective in their news coverage and news articles.

Article 6. Trafficking in women and sexual exploitation

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 24 and 27 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

39. As required under the Special Act against Trafficking in Persons,⁹ the National Council against Trafficking in Persons¹⁰ has drawn up the following instruments: (a) implementing regulations for the Special Act against Trafficking in Persons; (b) a general protocol for the management of shelters for victims of human trafficking; and (c) an update of the National Policy against Trafficking in Persons and the related action plan.

40. The Specialized Units against Trafficking in Persons and Related Crimes that are required by law in prosecution services and police central offices have been reinforced. The Specialized Unit against Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling forms part of the General Directorate for Migration and Foreign Nationals and both bodies are subject to oversight by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

41. A total of 20 local victim support offices have been established by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security with a remit to support victims of crimes against human dignity, giving priority to trafficking in persons in its various forms.

42. The National Council against Trafficking in Persons has run training days covering the provisions of the Special Act against Trafficking in Persons for students, members of local violence prevention committees, community leaders, labour inspectors, police officers, prosecutors, forensic doctors, judges, journalists from the various communication media and staff of the Council, among others. Priority was given to training for labour inspectors and health personnel throughout the country, as these workers are considered the best placed to identify possible victims of trafficking.

43. As part of efforts to prevent and raise awareness of human trafficking, an accessible version of the Special Act against Trafficking in Persons has been drafted for use as an outreach tool in educational institutions and in communications with particularly vulnerable population groups. Seven municipal ordinances include measures related to the prevention of trafficking in persons.

⁹ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. Legislative Decree No. 824, 16 October 2014. Special Act against Trafficking in Persons. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/2012>.

¹⁰ The National Council against Trafficking in Persons is the body responsible for preventing, combating and providing comprehensive support for victims of this crime in El Salvador.

44. The National Council against Trafficking in Persons has drafted a protocol for institutional action to ensure immediate and comprehensive support for victims of trafficking in persons.¹¹

45. Help desks provide a strategic channel for promoting rights and disseminating information about the prevention of gender-based violence. Subjects addressed include: the different types and forms of gender-based violence; guidelines for the prevention of gender-based violence in educational settings; protocol for action to address sexual violence in educational communities; the regulatory framework: the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women; care pathways for victims of gender-based violence; trafficking in persons and its different forms; sexual harassment; and the prevention of violence and cyberbullying.

46. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women runs a comprehensive programme to promote a violence-free life for women,¹² contributing to the strategy for responding to and providing protection against gender-based violence by overseeing coordinated inter-institutional activities organized under agreements with NGOs and international organizations.

47. As a member institution of the National Council against Trafficking in Persons, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has spearheaded inter-institutional strategies involving, inter alia, the relocation of women to other parts of the country and the development of entrepreneurial opportunities that will enable them to generate income and become financially independent.

48. In those cases where relocation to elsewhere in the country is not possible owing to an elevated risk and/or the presence of femicidal violence or cases of trafficking, alternative solutions such as international protection are needed; in a number of cases, women and their family group have successfully applied for asylum or refuge in other countries.

49. The “Bienvenido a Casa” (Welcome Home) Programme offers returnees a range of services provided by different government institutions. For example, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has appointed a psychologist to work with the Directorate for Migrant Assistance to identify possible victims of smuggling and, when necessary, initiate a programme of psychosocial care that encompasses: psychological support to address the after-effects of the repeated abuse to which victims are subjected; the life and security plans essential to ensuring that victims do not end up returning to their original place of residence; and, lastly, the legal advice needed to promote access to justice and ensure that victims avail themselves of the system of protection available through the State.

Article 7. Participation in political and public life

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 28 and 29 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

50. Proposed amendments to the Political Parties Act and the Electoral Code have been drafted, and were submitted to the Women’s Parliamentary Group, the Supreme Electoral Court, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women and other bodies in 2017. The amendments proposed provide for the introduction of alternating

¹¹ National Council against Trafficking in Persons. Protocol for institutional action to ensure immediate and comprehensive support for victims of trafficking in persons. San Salvador, 2018. <http://www.salud.gob.sv/archivos/UAITFVIOLENCIA/documentos-normativos/4-Protocolo-actuacion-interinstitucional-atencion-integral-inmediata-victimas-trata-de-personas.pdf>.

¹² Specialized Assistance Directorate, May 2021.

male-female lists of candidates for elections to the Legislative Assembly, the Central American Parliament and municipal councils.

51. In February 2017, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women and the Supreme Electoral Court entered into an agreement whereby the principles of equality, non-discrimination and a violence-free life would be taken into account in the Court's institutional activities and, in particular, in the organization of elections carried out during the period 2018–2021.

52. Under the agreement, both parties undertook: to endeavour to develop instruments that promote equality and non-discrimination in electoral processes; to oversee the establishment of an institutional observatory to monitor women's political participation and electoral campaigns; to run campaigns to encourage women to stand in elections to public office; to work to increase knowledge of the Political Parties Act and the regulations relating to women's political participation; and to develop instruments and procedures to prevent and eliminate acts of discrimination and violence against women in the political sphere.

53. A report on the reasons for promoting women's participation in elections in El Salvador was published in 2017 that covers factors such as trust in institutions and support for the political system, gender stereotypes and women in politics, and public support for women's political participation. The report was put together at the instigation of the Women's Parliamentary Group with technical assistance from UN-Women and the University Institute of Public Opinion of José Simeón Cañas Central American University.

54. In 2017, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, working in conjunction with the Women's Parliamentary Group and the Supreme Electoral Court, called on political parties to sign a "pact to promote the political participation of women free from violence and discrimination", an instrument through which they made an ethical commitment to give effect to 10 undertakings, including: to refrain from engaging in any form of violence against women in the different phases of the electoral cycle; to reinforce the regulations adopted by political parties to address political violence; and to promote equitable access to financial, human and technical campaign resources for female and male candidates.

55. In 2018, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women began promoting the signature of a declaration entitled "More Women, More Equality", designed to promote dialogue between women in civil society and women in politics. Both registered female candidates of the different political parties and members of the public have been signing this commitment to advancing and guaranteeing women's rights to substantive equality and a violence-free life. The Institute is also encouraging female politicians to promote dialogue on the equal participation of women in all decision-making forums and to commit to including in their political programmes action to reduce equality gaps and eliminate violence against women.

56. With support from the United Nations Development Programme, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has produced a guide to addressing political violence against women,¹³ the aim of which is to highlight the violence that women face when attempting to exercise their political rights and to provide necessary guidance for filing complaints with the competent institutions.

57. Other documents that address political violence include: (i) the Women's Parliamentary Group's consensus agenda for the period 2018–2021, aimed at

¹³ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Guide to addressing political violence against women. San Salvador, October 2019. https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=619%3Ainforme-de-beijing&Itemid=234&lang=es.

improving the living conditions of Salvadoran women and girls; (ii) the training curriculum for staff and deputies of the Legislative Assembly; (iii) the review of parity democracy in El Salvador issued by UN-Women and the National Association of Women Councillors, Trade Union Leaders and Mayors in El Salvador; (iv) the training curriculum for women politicians, designed for female deputies in El Salvador and women members of the National Association of Women Councillors, Trade Union Leaders and Mayors; and (v) the curriculum for training on new perceptions of masculinity for deputies of the Legislative Assembly.

58. The Supreme Electoral Court has launched online training for members of temporary electoral bodies and the public in general, offering courses on the electoral process, legislation, inclusion, citizen participation and women's political participation.

59. A legislative proposal calling for amendments to the Electoral Code and the Political Parties Act with a view to ensuring equal political participation for women and men was presented on 9 December 2019.

60. The Legislative Assembly adopted an amendment to the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, through Legislative Decree No. 829 of 3 February 2021, to recognize political violence as one of the forms of violence against women (art. 10 (d)). A special section entitled "Political violence against women, institutional responsibilities in the face of political violence" has also been added to the Act, after article 10, chapter 1, title 1.

61. One of the strategic priorities of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has been to promote women's political and civic participation by encouraging their involvement in the advisory and citizen oversight committees tasked with defending women's rights, and in the Network of Women Human Rights Defenders and the Collective of Women Builders of Peace and Security, which work to reinforce women's full citizenship, ensure the enjoyment of their rights and develop consultation mechanisms and proposals for citizen oversight.

62. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has issued recommendations for elections to the second tier of the Legislative Assembly (Attorney General, Human Rights Advocate and Supreme Electoral Court) with a view to ensuring that women are included in shortlists and in compliance with article 120 of the Municipal Code, on citizen participation in Community Development Associations, which states that: "Community associations shall be formed of no fewer than 25 members of the community, of whom at least 30 per cent shall be women, and shall be constituted by act of the mayor or officials and employees designated for this purpose, which shall be documented in an official record." This recommendation was disseminated to all 262 municipalities in the country.

63. The representation of women in decision-making positions in the executive branch increased from 15.4 per cent (two female ministers) during the 2009–2014 presidential term to 35.7 per cent (five female ministers) in the 2014–2019 presidential term and 43.8 per cent (seven female ministers) in the 2019–2024 presidential term.

64. The results of the legislative and municipal elections held in March 2021 left women's representation in the legislature at 8.6 per cent (24 women) in 2021, down from 31 per cent (26 women) in 2018.

65. There was no change in women's representation in municipal councils in 2021 relative to 2018. In 2021, 29 of the total number of mayors' offices in the country are headed by women, representing 11.1 per cent of the total.

66. There has been little change in women's representation in the judicial branch of government and the number of female members of the Supreme Court has remained the same, at five members, representing a third of the total, since 2015.¹⁴

Article 8. Representation at the international level

67. The Government of El Salvador encourages its institutions to ensure that women take part and are represented in international meetings at all levels, in accordance with the principles of equality and non-discrimination, as is evidenced by the presence of Salvadoran women in various international organizations, conferences and forums including the Commission on the Status of Women, the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Council of Women's Affairs Ministers of Central America and the Dominican Republic, the Inter-American Commission of Women and the Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention.

68. Women participated in the interactive dialogues concerning the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports submitted under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2017, the seventh periodic report submitted under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 2018 and the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports submitted under the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2018, and in the third cycle of the universal periodic review in 2019, among other meetings.

69. With regard to women's representation in embassies and consulates of the Government of El Salvador, the percentage of women appointed as heads of diplomatic missions increased from 47.1 per cent in 2017 to 47.6 per cent in 2019 and the percentage of women appointed as heads of consular offices rose from 51.5 per cent in 2017 to 55.0 per cent in 2019 (see annexes, tables 4 and 5).

Article 9. Nationality

70. Information on the legislative changes made was reported in the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports submitted by El Salvador, and to date there have been no further changes in the legislation in force in this area.

Article 10. Education

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 30 and 31 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

71. One of the programmes run by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is the National Literacy, Inclusive Education and Flexible and Distance Learning Programme, which has achieved a 23 per cent reduction in illiteracy among women and girls aged 10 and older.

72. According to data from the 2019 multipurpose household survey,¹⁵ in recent years, there has been a sustained decrease in illiteracy, which fell from 14.0 per cent nationwide in 2009 to 10.0 per cent in 2019. Between 2009 and 2019, the illiteracy rate among women fell from 16.0 per cent to 11.7 per cent, while among men it fell from 11.6 per cent to 8.1 per cent. At the close of 2019, the illiteracy rate remained 3.6 percentage points higher among women than among men.

¹⁴ The Supreme Court is composed of 15 judges, of whom 5 (33.3 per cent) are women.

¹⁵ Ministry of Economic Affairs — Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses. Multipurpose household survey 2019. Delgado, 2020.
<http://www.digestyc.gob.sv/index.php/temas/des/ehpm/publicaciones-ehpm.html>.

73. The National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents was established with the overarching goal of eradicating pregnancy in girls and adolescents through coordinated cross-sectoral measures that incorporate the human rights, gender and inclusion perspectives, facilitating the empowerment of girls and adolescents with a view to their full development.¹⁶ It incorporates measures aimed at keeping girls and adolescents in school, ensuring their right to education and comprehensive sex education, improving their access to health care and promoting enabling environments that facilitate their comprehensive development and are free of violence.

74. In 2019, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology awarded 150 scholarships to girls and adolescents in the municipalities of Santa Ana, Ahuachapán, Izalco, Acajutla, Colón, Soyapango, San Martín, Jiquilisco, Usulután and San Miguel, with a view to increasing the number of girls and women of all ages enrolling and remaining in education, without any discrimination.

75. The Gender Equity and Equality Policy of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology was established to mainstream the principles of equality, non-discrimination and a life free of violence at all levels of public and private education.

76. The roll-out of the Gender Equity and Equality Policy has led to the following initiatives, which aim to address the right of women and girls to be valued, to be educated and to enjoy an environment free of stereotyped patterns of behaviour and social and cultural practices based on concepts of inferiority or subordination: (a) Programme for the Development of Morality, Courtesy and Civics: Preparing for life as a caring, kind and respectful citizen (nursery level); (b) Programme for the Development of Morality, Courtesy and Civics: How to be a caring, kind and respectful citizen (preschool level); (c) a basic literacy primer in two parts for children at the first level of basic education (first and second grades) and four workbooks for young people and adults at the second level of basic education (third and fourth grades) under the “Education for Life” National Literacy Programme, all of which are gender-sensitive — the mathematics modules of the curricula for grades seven, eight and nine are currently being reviewed to ensure a gender-sensitive approach; (d) a basic comprehensive sex education course for the nursery, preschool, basic and secondary levels, an update to the comprehensive sex education curriculum for all school levels, manuals on comprehensive sex education for the three levels of basic education (first, second and third cycles) and secondary education, and a comprehensive sex education guide for the family-education context, all of which are gender-sensitive and take a human-rights-based approach.¹⁷

77. A monitoring and evaluation manual is used to certify the equality plans established by educational facilities, and a protocol aimed at keeping girls and adolescents who are pregnant or already mothers in school is in the process of being formally adopted. A draft programme of practical initiatives aimed at preventing child and teenage pregnancy and gender-based violence and at promoting new perceptions of masculinity among students has been developed.

78. In 2018, four audiovisual aids were produced to sensitize students, parents and teaching staff to issues related to co-education. The final results of a national study on gender-based and sexual violence among students in the third cycle of basic education and secondary education in public and private schools have been published.

¹⁶ Office of Social Services and Inclusion of El Salvador, National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents 2017–2027, San Salvador, October 2017. <https://www.salud.gob.sv/download/estrategia-nacional-intersectorial-de-prevencion-del-embarazo-en-ninas-y-en-adolescentes-2017-2027/>.

¹⁷ Documents available at <https://www.mined.gob.sv/index.php/component/k2/item/7212>.

These results were used as the basis for a draft proposal on mechanisms for handling gender-based violence in the school system.

79. The Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute has made progress in implementing institutional mechanisms and tools aimed at mainstreaming equality in the context of its vocational training programmes for non-traditional career paths, which include work experience in an enterprise or establishment. For example, it has developed regulations on equitable participation in its new programmes and incorporated a gender equality and equity focus into its work.

80. With a view to promoting the participation of women in career paths traditionally reserved for men, a scholarship programme has been established to help women to pursue technical degree courses at Zamorano University and the Roberto Quiñonez National School of Agriculture and relevant training courses have been organized through the Women's City Programme.

81. To prevent discrimination and violence in the context of technical and vocational training, the Salvadoran Vocational Training Institute has launched a campaign on gender stereotypes in coordination with the International Labour Organization, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women; designed and implemented a training programme for vocational training instructors and facilitators, through which 487 persons (200 men and 287 women) have received instruction over the course of 26 sessions; and prepared a guide on preventing and eradicating discrimination against women in the centres where its ongoing vocational training programmes are held.

82. According to data from the national survey on violence against women, an analysis of which is presented by the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women in the Violence against Women Status and Situation Report 2018, 29.7 out of every 100 women have experienced violence in an educational setting at some point during their lives, i.e. more than one out of every four women. This is a significantly high rate, given that people generally attend educational facilities only during a specific period in their life, and not throughout their lives. The rate for the 12 months prior to the submission of the present report is 4.5 out of every 100, which is particularly high, considering that only a fraction of the women surveyed attended an educational facility during that period.

83. Progress has been made in this area, for example:

- A review of the curricula of all university-level courses has been launched
- Comprehensive sex education is now provided at all levels of education through a 120-hour blended learning course – 26 teachers (15 women and 11 men) were trained to deliver the course in 2018, and 290 teachers (202 women and 88 men) received the same training between January and June 2019
- A national survey on gender-based and sexual violence among students in the third cycle of basic education and secondary education in public and private schools was conducted
- Twenty-three modules of the Gender-sensitive and Non-Sexist Education Training Programme have been designed and implemented
- The following training programmes were organized: (a) a one-year specialization in gender-sensitive and non-sexist education for teachers and administrators, taken by 271 teachers (229 women and 42 men); (b) training in gender-sensitive and non-sexist education for teachers and administrators, with 828 teachers participating in the first phase (60 women and 198 men) and 388 teachers participating in the second phase (265 women and 125 men); (c) training on gender mainstreaming for administrative and technical staff at the Ministry of

Education, Science and Technology, undertaken by 119 persons (79 women and 40 men); and (d) a postgraduate degree in gender-sensitive and non-sexist education for key staff at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, completed by 18 women

- An anti-violence observatory has been set up within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology – the observatory reports that, according to the 2018 school census, there were 87 acts of violence against female students and a total of 173 pregnant students in 2018

84. In 2019, in collaboration with the Network of Women Leaders in Higher Education, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology established a protocol for preventing and detecting gender-based violence against women in higher education institutions.

85. The University of El Salvador has taken significant steps to address violence against women, namely: (i) the University's Gender Differentials Research Network conducted a study on gender-based violence at the University; and (ii) the University offered the first ever master's degree in gender studies in El Salvador in 2019, in cooperation with the Faculty of Jurisprudence and Social Sciences, the Gender Studies Centre of the University of El Salvador and the Feminist Collective for Local Development.

Article 11. Employment

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 32 and 33 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

86. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security has updated its guidance on the preparation of internal labour regulations in order to ensure that businesses incorporate the principles of equality and non-discrimination into their internal regulations.

87. Between June 2018 and April 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security received 1,109 draft internal labour regulations for review. A total of 716 regulations were reviewed and 175 were approved as complying with national labour regulations on gender equality; the rest were returned with comments and/or reservations to be remedied by the applicants.

88. In 2017, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security organized 49 job fairs, 4 of which were reserved exclusively for women. In addition, 23 awareness-raising workshops for businesses were organized to promote the recruitment of women.

89. In 2018, 64 job fairs were organized for the general public, with an emphasis on priority population groups. Three of the fairs were reserved exclusively for women. Priority population groups are also the target audience of the information counters run by the Women's City Programme, which are staffed by specialists and have helped 839 women to find employment.

90. Between 2018 and 2019, 2,217 career guidance sessions were organized nationwide. A total of 86,622 people (48,314 women and 38,308 men) took part in the sessions, which helped participants to develop their skills and thereby increase their chances of employment.

91. Between 2018 and 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security implemented a plan for monitoring women's labour rights, under which 860 labour inspections were carried out, benefiting a total of 21,577 women; a plan for monitoring women's right to breastfeed, under which 736 labour inspections were carried out, benefiting 18,458 women workers; a plan for monitoring night work focusing on women workers, under which seven labour inspections were carried out; and a plan for monitoring the gender pay gap, under which 192 inspections were carried out.

92. The pilot version of a “gender equality seal” certification programme promoting gender equality in the workplace (IGUAL-ES) has been rolled out, with support from the newly formed Alliance for Labour Equality between the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

93. The IGUAL-ES programme is intended to encourage businesses to establish egalitarian, inclusive, dignified and decent workplaces through their employment practices, in order to build a fairer society. The eight areas in which companies have to demonstrate good practice in order to acquire certification are: recruitment and selection of personnel; equal pay for equal work; training; professional development; work environment, quality of life and health; work-life balance and shared social responsibility; prevention and handling of workplace and sexual harassment; and use of non-sexist and inclusive language in the workplace.

94. The pilot project is being implemented in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme, with technical and financial support from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation. The following activities are being carried out:

- Technical assistance in mainstreaming the principles of equality and non-discrimination for the three government institutions taking part in the pilot project, namely the National Commission on Microenterprises and Small Businesses, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment
- Monitoring of the progress made in the planning stage by businesses that have not yet received certification, and of the progress made in the implementation of action plans by businesses that are already in the implementation stage
- Information sessions on the programme’s methodology and key themes, namely: (1) planning; (2) architecture and institutional structure; (3) skills; (4) work environment; and (5) citizen participation and accountability
- Pilot methodology workshops on accelerating gender equality in the public sector in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, highlighting the areas of interest, powers and roles of institutions when it comes to advising, evaluating or auditing public agencies
- A systematic review of lessons learned and an external evaluation of the implementation of improvement plans in the three pilot institutions
- Training workshops on the basics of substantive equality, the concept of a violence-free life and perceptions of masculinity for the managers and technical staff (40 persons) of eight private companies to help them to comply with the requirements set by the Alliance for Gender Equality as part of the IGUAL-ES programme

95. An inter-agency committee is currently making preparations for the ratification of the International Labour Organization Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), with a view to protecting the rights of paid domestic workers.

96. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has launched a project to strengthen the productive capacities, autonomy and economic rights of women in rural and urban areas in prioritized municipalities. The project is intended to build the capacities of women in these municipalities, particularly women who participate in the advisory councils, through productive initiatives that contribute to their autonomy and economic empowerment and to the promotion of their rights.

Article 12. Health

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 34 to 37 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

97. The Ministry of Health has developed a number of policies on different aspects of sexual and reproductive health that incorporate the principles of equality and non-discrimination, including the National Health Policy 2015–2019, the Policy for Gender Equality and Equity in Health, the National Policy for the Prevention and Control of Cancer, the Intersectoral Strategic Plan on Comprehensive Health Care for Adolescents and Young Adults, the Comprehensive Health-Care Standards for Persons Affected by Violence and Injuries, the Technical Guidelines on Comprehensive Care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons, the Technical Guidelines on the Provision of Contraceptive Services and the Technical Guidelines on Comprehensive Care for Women at High Reproductive Risk.

98. In 2017, the Ministry of Health established two spaces for coordination: (i) the Intersectoral Alliance for Adolescents and Young Adults, a participatory forum gathering together the representatives of around 35 government institutions, non-governmental organizations, medical associations and youth associations, which includes the topic of teenage sexual and reproductive health in its programme of work every year; and (ii) the Inter-institutional and Intersectoral Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health, which has two working groups, one on sexuality and one on maternal health, both of which bring together representatives of different parts of the National Health System and civil society organizations working in the area of sexual and reproductive health throughout the country.

99. The maternal mortality rate has decreased from 42.3 per 100,000 live births in 2015 to 24.3 per 100,000 in 2019, one of the lowest rates in Latin America. This is the result of measures taken in the framework of the reform of the health sector. In 2017, the Ministry of Health revised the guidelines for monitoring extreme maternal mortality and morbidity. The revised guidelines are yet to be officially adopted. The Ministry also conducted investigations into every maternal death that occurred in 2017 and organized training for 100 health-care providers on reproductive risk and high reproductive risk.

100. The above-mentioned reduction in the maternal mortality rate is also related to various other factors, including the provision of free health-care services; an increase in the number of local health facilities; the breaking down of technological and scientific barriers, which has led to an increase in prenatal and postnatal health-care coverage; the fact that 99 per cent of births now take place in hospitals; the increased availability of obstetric and gynaecological care, which is now available 24 hours a day in maternity wards; the improved availability of blood transfers and obstetric care in the hospital network; and the availability of hostels for expectant mothers, which are operating nationwide.

101. In 2017, during National Breastfeeding Week, 23 health facilities were accredited as mother- and child-friendly, 4 of which are run by the Salvadoran Social Security Institute. At the same time, health-care services, including nutritional advice, were provided to 3,525 women (2,050 pregnant women and 1,475 nursing mothers).

102. The Ministry of Health has taken a number of measures to prevent adolescent pregnancies: (i) separate wards for the treatment of adolescents have been established in 23 hospitals; (ii) 272 community family health units and 24 hospitals are running educational groups for pregnant teenagers; (iii) 3,846 adolescents have participated in educational sessions on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV; (iv) 274 intermediate community family health

units are organizing training for youth health promoters as part of a community peer-to-peer strategy.

103. An inter-institutional, intersectoral 10-year programmatic agenda for the prevention of teenage pregnancy – the National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents¹⁸ – was established to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to this issue. It provides for actions in three main areas in 25 prioritized municipalities: (a) prevention; (b) special protection, access to justice and restoration of rights; and (c) knowledge management. The Strategy has five strategic objectives, which seek to promote the rights of girls and adolescents, improve their living conditions and bring about a change in the sociocultural patterns of behaviour of the Salvadoran population.

104. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women launched a project in support of the implementation of the National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents in the departments of Sonsonate and La Libertad to help reduce pregnancy in girls and adolescents through coordinated cross-sectoral measures that incorporate the human rights, gender and inclusion perspectives, promoting the empowerment of girls and adolescents with a view to their comprehensive development.

105. The Ministry of Health launched the National Multisectoral Strategic Plan on STIs and HIV 2016–2020, which focuses on evidence-based programme activities and critical enablers, takes a gender-equality-based approach and aims to ensure that the needs of all affected populations are addressed.

106. The strategy of the Ministry of Health for the elimination of vertical transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis seeks to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV to 2 per cent or less and to ensure that 100 per cent of pregnant women who test positive for HIV are referred to hospital for antiretroviral therapy. The strategy has successfully kept vertical transmission of HIV below 2 per cent, thus achieving one of the goals of the World Health Organization's Strategy and Plan of Action for the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Congenital Syphilis.

107. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology continues to enlarge the pool of teachers trained to teach the basic course on comprehensive sex education (2,508 teachers, who have so far taught the course to 77,220 students nationwide).¹⁹ In 2018, the Ministry trained 430 teachers (328 women and 102 men), who went on to teach the course to an estimated 12,900 students. In 2019, within the framework of the National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents and with funding provided by Canada, training will be organized for 300 teachers in 10 prioritized municipalities with the highest teenage pregnancy rate. In turn, these teachers are expected to work with 9,000 students and 1,800 parents, as well as 150 girls on scholarships.

108. Under the National Teacher Training Plan, textbooks on comprehensive sex education for students in the third cycle of basic education and a manual on comprehensive sex education for teachers in the same cycle are in the process of being approved.

¹⁸ Office of Social Services and Inclusion of El Salvador, National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents 2017–2027, San Salvador, October 2017. <https://www.salud.gob.sv/download/estrategia-nacional-intersectorial-de-prevencion-del-embarazo-en-ninas-y-en-adolescentes-2017-2027/>.

¹⁹ Ministry of Education, basic course on comprehensive sex education, December 2013. <https://www.mined.gob.sv/sexualidad/EIS%20CURSO%20BASICO%20LIBRO.pdf>.

Article 13. Economic and social benefits

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 38 and 39 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

109. To support the growing economy of microenterprises and small and medium-sized businesses, in 2019, the Legislative Assembly approved amendments to the Government Procurement and Contracting Act,²⁰ specifically an amendment to article 39-C (b) and the addition of a new subparagraph (d) under the same article, which now provides that 25 per cent of the annual budget for procurement and contracts will be earmarked for goods and services provided by microenterprises and small and medium-sized businesses, with at least 10 per cent of the budget reserved for purchases of goods and services from businesses whose owner, majority shareholder or legal representative is a woman.

110. Article 5 of the Act on the Promotion, Protection and Development of Microenterprises and Small Businesses²¹ establishes that the central Government and the municipal authorities must provide support to new and existing microenterprises and small businesses, encourage private investment in such businesses and promote a range of business and financial services under conditions of gender equity.

111. The National Commission on Microenterprises and Small Businesses is applying a national “one village, one product” policy to energize and strengthen the “one village, one product” movement at the national level and make it a competitive and sustainable programme based in an empowered and coordinated business community that helps to forge a sense of local identity. One of the policy’s core components is gender equality and equity, which has been made one of its four cross-cutting themes.

112. In 2018, the Social Housing Fund launched the Homes for Women Programme, which offers special conditions for single women, female heads of household, single mothers and widows who wish to own their own home and whose household income is below two and a half times the minimum wage, which is equivalent to \$760.43. Between July 2018 and March 2019, 600 loans were awarded to women between the ages of 26 and 45, which amounted to a total sum of \$10.65 million.

113. The Women’s Banking Programme of the National Development Bank of El Salvador promotes the economic autonomy and financial inclusion of women entrepreneurs, providing them with lines of credit, loan guarantees and opportunities for capacity-building through training and technical assistance. The Women’s Fund Programme provides support to women who wish to expand their businesses. It is aimed at users of the economic autonomy module of the Usulután and Morazán branches of the Women’s City Programme, including dynamic businesswomen or entrepreneurs who do not have the necessary support to apply for a loan and women living in poverty or in a socially vulnerable situation.

114. In 2018, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, in coordination with the Central Reserve Bank of El Salvador, conducted an assessment of the invisible barriers to women’s access to financial services with a view to the preparation of guidelines on financial inclusion from a gender perspective.

²⁰ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador, Legislative Decree No. 240, 14 February 2019, Government Procurement and Contracting Act. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/sites/default/files/documents/decretos/C948363C-0588-4B33-AC5A-84AA35419350.pdf>.

²¹ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador, Legislative Decree No. 667, 25 April 2014, Act on the Promotion, Protection and Development of Microenterprises and Small Businesses. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/1767>.

115. In 2018, the Policy on Social Co-responsibility for Caregiving in El Salvador was approved by the Office of Social Services and Inclusion. It will soon be disseminated to public and civil society stakeholders for approval. The Policy defines the shared responsibilities of men, women and the State with regard to the care of young children, persons with disabilities and older adults. It proposes strategic actions including the implementation of instruments, mechanisms and services for the provision of care to persons with disabilities and older adults in situations of dependency or vulnerability. It places the State under the obligation to establish systems and mechanisms that facilitate the care of dependent persons.

116. In 2018, the Special Act for the Regulation and Establishment of Employer-sponsored Childcare Facilities was adopted pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 20.²² Under this Act, employers have a duty to provide childcare facilities for their employees' children between the ages of 4 months and 3 years, for the duration of the working day, in order to provide a suitable environment for their comprehensive development and to enable persons with family responsibilities who are or wish to be employed to exercise their right to employment without discrimination and, as far as possible, without any conflict between their family and professional responsibilities.

117. In 2020, the Labour and Social Security Committee of the Legislative Assembly issued favourable opinion No. 25 on the amendment of article 15 of the Special Act for the Regulation and Establishment of Employer-sponsored Childcare Facilities, postponing the date of entry into force of the Act until 1 January 2021. This postponement is justified by the national emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and is intended to give public and private employers the time to make the necessary adaptations to be able to provide quality childcare services. The amendment was approved on 4 June 2020 through Legislative Decree No. 652. On 10 December 2020, pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 790, the entry into force of the Act was again postponed until 1 January 2022.

118. With regard to recognition of reproductive work, including unpaid domestic and care work, the Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses carried out a national time-use survey in 2017,²³ for which it developed and reviewed information-gathering tools and data forms in cooperation with the Prudencia Ayala Feminist Coordinating Committee and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, which also provided training on the basics of substantive equality to the staff of the Directorate involved in conducting the survey.

119. The main takeaways from the survey were that:

- Women in paid work spend an average of 3 hours and 48 minutes a day on domestic and care work, compared to an average of 1 hour and 37 minutes a day among men; over the course of one week, women spend an average of 35 hours and 56 minutes on domestic and care work, while men spend an average of 16 hours and 41 minutes on such activities
- Young adult women (30–39 years) do more unpaid work, while men do more unpaid work in their later years (60 years and older)
- Women between the ages of 16 and 29 who are not in education or in paid employment spend an average of five hours a day on domestic and care work, while men in the same age range spend an average of two hours on such activities

²² Legislative Assembly of El Salvador, Legislative Decree No. 20, May 2018. Special Act for the Regulation and Establishment of Employer-Sponsored Childcare Facilities. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/3465>.

²³ Information available at http://aplicaciones.digestyc.gob.sv/observatorio.genero/uso_tiempo/index.aspx.

Article 14. Rural women

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 40 and 41 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

120. According to data from the 2019 multipurpose household survey,²⁴ the total population of El Salvador is 6,704,864, including 2,570,504 persons who live in rural areas, or 38.3 per cent of the Salvadoran population. Of the total rural population, 52.1 per cent is female and 47.9 per cent is male.

121. The total number of households is 1,938,530, of which 37 per cent are in rural areas and 63 per cent are in urban areas. Of the 717,069 households in rural areas, 32.1 per cent are headed by women and 67.9 per cent by men. Of the 234,123 female-headed households in rural areas, 21.3 per cent are in poverty; of these, 3.8 per cent are in extreme poverty, while the other 17.5 per cent are in relative poverty.

122. In 2019, the illiteracy rate was approximately 10 per cent nationwide. The illiteracy rate among women stood at 11.7 per cent nationally and at 17.4 per cent in rural areas.

123. In 2019, the school enrolment rate of the population aged 4 years and over was 26.1 per cent nationwide, meaning that 1,645,073 persons were enrolled in school at the time. The enrolment rate among women was 24.4 per cent both nationally and in rural areas.

124. In 2019, the average level of schooling at the national level was 7.1 grades. There were differences between geographical areas: in urban areas, the average stood at 8.2 grades, while in rural areas it stood at 5.3. The national average level of schooling was 7.0 years for women and 7.3 for men.

125. In 2019, the working-age population²⁵ was 74.5 per cent of the total population; 54.5 per cent of the working-age population was female and 45.5 per cent was male. Among the working-age population, 36.6 per cent of persons resided in rural areas; within that subgroup, 53.2 per cent were women and 46.8 per cent were men.

126. In 2019, the overall rate of participation²⁶ was 62.2 per cent nationally and 59.1 per cent in rural areas. The overall rate of participation in rural areas was 36.8 per cent among women and 84.4 per cent among men.

127. In 2019, the economically active population²⁷ stood at 3,104,867, of which 41 per cent were women and 59 per cent were men. Within the economically active population, 34.8 per cent of persons resided in rural areas; of these, 33.1 per cent were women and 66.9 per cent were men.

128. In 2019, the overall unemployment rate²⁸ was 6.3 per cent. Disaggregating by sex reveals considerable differences: the unemployment rate was 5.4 per cent among women and 7.0 per cent among men, i.e. there was a difference of 1.6 percentage

²⁴ Ministry of Economic Affairs — Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses, Multipurpose household survey 2019, Delgado, 2020.
<http://www.digestyc.gob.sv/index.php/temas/des/ehpm/publicaciones-ehpm.html>.

²⁵ The working-age population comprises all persons aged 16 and over who are able to participate in productive activities, according to the current socioeconomic situation in the country.

²⁶ The overall rate of participation is an indicator of the relative size of the labour force; it is defined as the number of persons who make up the labour force as a percentage of the number of persons of working age.

²⁷ The economically active population is the proportion of the working-age population that performs or is available to perform economic activity in the labour market.

²⁸ The unemployment rate is the proportion of the economically active population that the economic system is unable to absorb at a given time.

points between the sexes. In rural areas, the unemployment rate was 6.8 per cent overall, 5.0 per cent among women and 7.6 per cent among men.

129. In 2019, the average monthly salary at the national level was \$344.29, with women earning \$306.11 and men earning \$373.40 on average. In rural areas, the average monthly salary was \$251.92, with women earning \$213.23 and men earning \$276.34 on average.

130. The Development and Social Protection Act²⁹ adopted pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 647 of 3 April 2014 establishes a legal framework for human development, protection and social inclusion, in order to promote, protect and guarantee the fulfilment of people's rights. The State is the guarantor of its application following a human rights approach, striving to ensure that the population has access to adequate resources for satisfying and exercising their rights and discharging their duties. This law will apply to the whole population, especially those persons who are in a position of poverty, vulnerability, exclusion and discrimination, giving priority to girls and boys, women, young people, older adults, persons with disabilities or in abandonment, indigenous peoples and all who are not fully enjoying their rights.

131. The Women's City Programme is, by law, part of the National System of Development and Social Protection. It provides comprehensive support to women through specialized services with the aim of improving their quality of life. It seeks to empower women to exercise their rights, participate actively in decision-making, achieve financial independence and live in an environment free of gender-based violence and discrimination. It has six branches located in the municipalities of Colón, Usulután, Santa Ana, San Martín, San Miguel and Morazán and has the following subprogrammes:

- The Young Women's City Subprogramme, which comprises a set of services from the different modules of the Programme tailored to adolescent girls and young women, taking into account their specific circumstances vis-à-vis other Programme users, while at the same time fostering their empowerment and knowledge of their rights
- The Women's City Community Subprogramme, which brings services and opportunities closer to Salvadoran women in their communities, thereby benefiting women who, for whatever reason, cannot travel to any of the Programme's main branches

132. The Sustainable Families Programme has the aim of contributing to the eradication of poverty, especially extreme poverty, by 2030, through social assistance, capacity-building activities and measures to raise the income of families living in poverty in the country's 262 municipalities, all while contributing to the empowerment of women participating in the Programme.

133. The Women's Entrepreneurship Programme run by the National Commission on Microenterprises and Small Businesses promotes the entrepreneurship and economic empowerment of Salvadoran women with a view to achieving gender equity and equality. The Programme is implemented through the Women's Entrepreneurship Programme counters located in the offices of the Women's City Programme, in microenterprise and small business development centres and in the regional offices of the National Commission on Microenterprises and Small Businesses.

134. In order to ensure women's rights of access to and control over land, housing and property, especially in rural areas, the competent State institutions are taking

²⁹ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador, Legislative Decree No. 647, 3 April 2014, Social Development and Protection Act. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/3376>.

measures to close the gender gap, including by establishing criteria for the granting of land intended to eliminate barriers to women's access to land ownership.

135. In 2018, the Salvadoran Agrarian Reform Institute revised and incorporated a gender perspective into its user service guidelines, provided information to 500 women on Legislative Decree No. 719, which establishes land as a family asset, and modified the content of the property handover form.

136. As of 2018, 44.0 per cent of deeds for housing plots and agricultural lots had been awarded to women. Between 2017 and 2018, 16,647 deeds were awarded to women pro indiviso, with ownership of the property shared equally between the parties, i.e. family members, under conditions of equal rights. As of 2019, 52.9 per cent of the beneficiaries of the agricultural development programmes implemented by the Salvadoran Agrarian Reform Institute were women.

137. The Ministry of Agriculture has taken steps to include women in its services. The data indicate an increase in the proportion of women receiving agricultural packages (from 38 per cent in 2014 to 49 per cent in 2019) and in the participation of women in technical assistance programmes and training in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture (from 28 per cent in 2014 to 38 per cent in 2019). Over 50 per cent of the persons participating in the Salvadoran Agrarian Reform Institute's agricultural development programmes are women; however, despite these efforts, the gap between women and men remains at an average of 75 per cent.

Article 15. Civil rights

138. There are no changes to report relative to the information contained in the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports.

Article 16. Marriage and family relations

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 48 and 49 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9)

139. Legislative Decree No. 754³⁰ on the reform of the Family Code was adopted and prohibits child marriage – a practice that undermines the comprehensive development of children and adolescents – and remedies shortcomings in national legislation, bringing it into line with international treaties. However, the prohibition of non-marital unions with children and adolescents is still pending, which would complete the measures in this area for the protection of minors from practices that violate their rights.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Access to justice)

140. Legislative Decree No. 286³¹ established the specialized courts for a life free of violence and discrimination for women, which are competent to hear cases involving the offences covered by the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women; consider complaints and notices under the Domestic Violence Act; monitor and control the interim and protective measures provided for in the aforementioned Special Comprehensive Act and the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women; and deal with offences related to discrimination in

³⁰ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. Legislative Decree No. 754, 17 August 2017, amendment of the Family Code. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/sites/default/files/documents/decretos/6F7D49A5-F86F-4ABC-BFC6-659B11CD7196.pdf>.

³¹ Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. Legislative Decree No. 286, 25 February 2016. Creation of the specialized courts for a life free of violence and discrimination for women. <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/2709>.

employment and infringements of the right to equality, breaches of the duty of care, improper separation of a minor or incompetent person and failure to obey in cases of domestic violence. In parallel with the creation of the specialized courts, other justice sector institutions (the police force, the Attorney General's Office, the Public Prosecution Service, etc.) have strengthened their capacities in order to improve services and their response to violence against women and have created specialized support units and technical tools for handling and investigating crimes of violence against women.³²

141. The Public Prosecution Service reports that 6,868 cases involving acts of violence against women were brought before the ordinary courts between June 2019 and July 2020; of these, 43 per cent involved physical violence, 30 per cent were offences against the sexual freedom of women and 26 per cent were offences regulated by the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women (not including femicide). It also reports that there were 94 prosecutions for cases of femicide and attempted femicide, which corresponds to 1 per cent of the total.³³ The Supreme Court reports that, in 2019, the number of cases heard by the specialized courts was as follows: specialized courts of investigation, 1,760 cases; specialized trial courts, 64 cases; and the specialized chamber, 38 cases.³⁴

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Women and peace and security and peace agreements)

142. In the area of women and armed conflict, various projects have been carried out in accordance with the judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in order to contribute to the recognition of the struggle of women survivors and to preserve historical memory. Particular attention is drawn to the inter-institutional work of key actors in this process.

143. In the area of human rights, a commission was set up to implement and follow up on actions to give effect to the judgment.

144. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has carried out processes of recovery of memory and psychosocial support with women survivors, including healing processes, the recording of testimonies, meetings and festivals of memory. The testimonies were compiled in the book and documentary *La Memoria de las Luciérnagas* (The Memory of the Fireflies).³⁵

145. The memory of the women survivors of the massacre was disseminated during a presentation tour in El Mozote, La Joya, El Pinalito, Yancolo, Arambala, El Barrial, Jocoaitique and San Francisco Gotera. In coordination with the Ministry of Culture, the book and documentary *La Memoria de las Luciérnagas* were presented and

³² Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Report on the Status and Situation of Violence against Women in El Salvador. San Salvador, November 2019. Pp. 52 and 55. <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/institutions/instituto-salvadoreno-para-el-desarrollo-de-la-mujer/documents/informes-exigidos-por-disposicion-legal>.

³³ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Report on the Status and Situation of Violence against Women in El Salvador. San Salvador, November 2020. P. 42. <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/institutions/instituto-salvadoreno-para-el-desarrollo-de-la-mujer/documents/informes-exigidos-por-disposicion-legal>.

³⁴ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Report on the Status and Situation of Violence against Women in El Salvador. San Salvador, November 2019. P. 54. <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/institutions/instituto-salvadoreno-para-el-desarrollo-de-la-mujer/documents/informes-exigidos-por-disposicion-legal>.

³⁵ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. *La Memoria de las Luciérnagas*. San Salvador, 2013. https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=199%3Ainvestigaciones_2015&Itemid=234&lang=es.

distributed to 172 representatives of 88 schools in the Department of Morazán, as well as to 58 representatives of the cultural centres in the eastern region.

146. The methodological guide for memory recovery and psychosocial support for women survivors in the context of armed conflict was approved.³⁶

147. In 2017, training was provided on memory recovery and psychosocial support to key institutions in El Mozote and surrounding areas that work with women survivors of the armed conflict. Activities were carried out with 63 women and 17 men from El Mozote, San Luis Meanguera, Jocoaitique, Quebrachos, Yancolo, Flor del Muerto, Arambala and Perquín.

148. In 2017, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, together with the Ministry of Culture, curated the travelling exhibition *La Memoria de las Luciérnagas*, which was reflected in the book *Mujeres Construyendo Memoria. Testimonios de sobrevivientes de la masacre de El Mozote y lugares aledaños* (Women Building Memory. Testimonies of survivors of the massacre in El Mozote and surrounding areas).³⁷

149. Twenty-four women participated in the second meeting of women survivors of the armed conflict and 27 in the third. At the third meeting, they created their own exhibition called “Healing our history”, in which they present their own creations, such as audio recordings, videos, photographs, embroidery, paintings, engravings and clay statuettes.

150. Between 2017 and 2018, the travelling exhibition was temporarily on display at the National Museum of Anthropology, the Western Region Museum, the Eastern Region Museum, the Cultural Centre in El Mozote and during the monitoring visit by the judges of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights as part of the historical memory round table. It was taken to government institutions and key institutions such as the University of El Salvador in Morazán, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, the cultural centres in Guazapa and Panchimalco and the University of El Salvador in San Salvador, as well as to memory festivals.

151. In 2018, the memory of the women survivors of the massacre in El Mozote and the surrounding area was disseminated internationally, in coordination with the Museum of Liberty and Human Rights of Panama.

152. In 2019, a day for the recovery of collective memory and dissemination of the research carried out into the life stories of 15 women who were killed in the massacres was held. This resulted in the development of the travelling exhibition *Altares*, which will be part of the collection of the memory centre.

153. The results of the research will form part of the collection of historical memory for the Memory Centre in El Mozote, which will be temporarily on display in other spaces. Eighteen women participated in this process.

154. As a reparation measure and part of the commemoration of the massacres, a symbolic act of collective healing and a commemorative ceremony were held at the

³⁶ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Methodological guide for memory recovery and psychosocial support for women survivors in the context of armed conflict. San Salvador, November 2015. https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=619%3Ainforme-de-beijing&Itemid=234&lang=es.

³⁷ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. *Mujeres Construyendo Memoria. Testimonios de sobrevivientes de la masacre de El Mozote y lugares aledaños* (Women Building Memory. Testimonies of survivors of the massacre in El Mozote and surrounding areas). November 2017. https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=619%3Ainforme-de-beijing&Itemid=234&lang=es.

site of the massacre, with the aim of practising personal and community healing techniques.

155. Through the departmental office of Morazán, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women carried out a process of psychosocial support with 33 survivors from Yancolo and Flor del Muerto in Cacaopera over six days, applying the methodological guide for memory recovery and psychosocial support for women survivors in the context of armed conflict and creating group bonds and an understanding of the trauma of armed conflict.

156. The Institute held the fourth festival of memory as part of the commemoration of the thirty-eighth anniversary of the massacres; it presented the travelling exhibition and screened short films telling the life stories of women killed in the massacre, among other activities.

157. Between 2019 and 2020, information was disseminated to 10,963 people (5,860 women and 5,103 men) through screenings of the documentary at film forums and staging of the travelling exhibition, as well as the delivery of books to cultural and student spaces.

158. The Institute collaborates with the virtual platform Espacio de Memorias y Derechos Humanos (Space for Memories and Human Rights) managed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Culture, providing input on the historical memory of women survivors and victims of serious human rights violations in the Salvadoran armed conflict.

159. The Institute and the Attorney General's Office have worked together to create a community mediation project as part of efforts to give effect to the ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. A meeting was held with representatives and survivors of the massacres in order to have an overview of the situation when it comes to coexistence within the communities.

160. In 2020, there were plans to launch memory recovery and healing processes with women survivors of the Rio Sumpul massacre and other massacres that occurred in Chalatenango, and the women who were to participate in the processes were identified. This project has been suspended for the time being due to the pandemic.

161. The Collective of Women Builders of Peace and Security was created, made up of ex-combatants or women who played a role in the armed conflict, with the aim of providing a space for reflection and analysis to contribute individual and collective experiences on issues related to the construction of a culture of peace.

162. The National Committee for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and Subsequent Resolutions formulated a National Action Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2017–2022).³⁸ The Plan ensures the coherence and coordination of the activities of the national institutions that are members of the Committee.

163. The government and civil society institutions that make up the Committee have carried out the following actions in implementation of the Committee's mandate:

- Awareness-raising programmes on resolution 1325 targeting armed forces personnel and personnel undergoing training to participate in United Nations peacekeeping missions

³⁸ Government of El Salvador, National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, June 2017. http://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=541%3Arvlv_documentos2017&Itemid=234&lang=es.

- A meeting of women of the armed forces, in March 2018, during which the important role played by women in peacebuilding was recognized and six women members of the armed forces were awarded the Prudencia Ayala medal for their professionalism, loyalty, efficiency and responsibility
- The signature of a cooperation agreement between the armed forces and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women to train personnel from the different branches of the armed forces on issues related to the normative instruments for the protection of women's human rights, including resolution 1325
- The creation of the network of women human rights defenders working in the police force, which aims to guarantee and support the care processes for women working in the institution, including students from the National Public Security Academy who are doing internships in the police
- Health care for women war veterans and women victims of serious human rights violations
- Promotion of psychosocial support groups for women veterans and victims of war and preparation of a draft psychosocial care manual

164. In 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked in coordination with various NGOs that participate in the implementation of measures to prevent violence against women carried out under the National Action Plan for Indigenous Peoples with a gender perspective and the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, among others.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Women human rights defenders)

165. The human rights defenders and civil society organizations that make up the Round Table for the Right to Defend Rights worked on drafting a bill on the recognition and comprehensive protection of human rights defenders, which has been presented to the Legislative Assembly.

166. In 2017, women human rights defenders issued a statement calling for the protection of the integrity of women human rights defenders in the framework of the international women's strike against heteropatriarchy and for an end to sexist violence and denouncing unequal treatment in employment, care work and access to economic resources and wealth, which was signed by other groups such as Women Peacebuilders and advisory councils. The statement was presented at a commemorative event on 8 March organized by the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women.

167. Organizations of women human rights defenders have identified and drawn attention to a number of situations they face, including: (i) unfavourable and risky conditions that women face in defending the human rights of other women throughout all stages of life as a result of the various aggressions and violations of their rights when carrying out their work in their communities, municipalities and at the national level; (ii) shortcomings in the promotion, protection and guarantee of the rights of women defenders due to the scarcity or non-existence of legal mechanisms and recognition of those who defend the rights of women in particular; and (iii) situations of violence, discrimination and smear campaigns that they face individually and collectively with the groups they represent in their family, community or professional environments.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 16 and 17 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (National machinery for the advancement of women)

168. The draft legislative decree of the Act on the Salvadoran Institute for Women³⁹ was presented in 2018 and provides for the establishment of the Salvadoran Institute for Women as the lead agency for the advancement of women's rights, with the goal of mainstreaming the principles of equality and non-discrimination and the right to a life free of violence for women.

169. Under the current Act on the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, issued by Legislative Decree No. 644 of 29 February 1996, the Institute has responsibilities that need to be harmonized and updated in order to be brought into line with the powers and responsibilities established under the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women and the Domestic Violence Act. It is therefore necessary to issue a new law to redefine the responsibilities now conferred on the Salvadoran Institute for Women. It is proposed to create an institution under public law, with technical, financial and administrative autonomy, endowed with legal personality and its own assets. The draft law is still being studied by the Legislative Assembly with a view to its timely approval in accordance with the law.

170. Since May 2021, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women has had a new organizational structure, with the following objectives: (1) strengthening the Institute's lead role in developing public policies to promote equality and guarantee the right to a life free of violence; and (2) strengthening and expanding specialized services for women. The aim is to fulfil the institutional priorities of guaranteeing public policies on human rights for women and providing high-quality and friendly support to women victims of gender-based violence and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons.

171. In the approved 2019 budget, the amount allocated for the implementation of measures in accordance with the regulations on substantive equality and the Women's City Programme amounted to more than \$39 million (\$39,164,659), which represents an increase of almost \$18 million in relation to the approved 2018 budget (\$21,186,240).

172. On 10 December 2019, the Women's Parliamentary Group recommended that the Finance and Special Budget Committee make some modifications to the draft general national budget for 2020, including a reversal of the decrease of \$3.7 million in the amount allocated for implementation of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women and the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women; the reallocation of funds to avoid any reduction in social programmes and liquefied gas subsidies, the elimination of which would have a differentiated impact on women, deepening poverty and the burden of care on them; and the inclusion in the 2020 Budget Act of an article ensuring that budget items are earmarked to guarantee women's rights and thus prevent them from being transferred to another sector.

173. In 2017–2018, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women had an average of 255 employees, of which about 85 per cent were women and 15 per cent were men. Since the 2019 fiscal year, with the exception of the Executive Director, 100 per cent of the Institute's staff is employed under the Salary Act regime, which provides staff with job stability, thus facilitating the qualification of personnel and the continuity of work processes. As at the end of 2020, 53.54 per cent of the staff are

³⁹ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Draft legislative decree of the Act on the Salvadoran Institute for Women, 2018. http://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=200%3Ainforme-cedaw&Itemid=234&lang=es.

performing technical management tasks (technicians and specialists), 9.45 per cent are management personnel, area heads and departmental coordinators, 28.74 per cent are administrative staff and 8.27 per cent are operational staff.

174. With a view to strengthening institutional capacity, the Legislative Assembly approved a budgetary increase of \$700,000 for 2019, equivalent to an 18.4 per cent increase. For 2020, there was a larger budget for current expenditure, with an increase of 3.4 per cent compared to 2019, as detailed in the table below:

Table 1
**Budget of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women
Resources from the general national budget**

2017–2020

<i>Type of expenditure</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
Current expenditure	\$5,143,445	\$5,163,155	\$5,864,860	\$6,064,860
Investment projects	\$180,000	\$43,000	\$300,000	\$75,000
Total	\$5,323,445	\$5,206,155	\$6,164,860	\$6,139,860

Source: Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Own compilation based on administrative records (2017–2020).

Data correspond to approved budgets for each year.

175. In compliance with the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in 2017 the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women created the Planning Coordination Unit, responsible for the technical coordination of the institutional planning process and monitoring of the Institutional Information and Statistics System. The information system has modules with indicators corresponding to the areas of the National Equality Plan 2016–2020 and the gender statistics and indicators module. It is available at www.infoigualdad-isdemu.gob.sv. Work is currently under way on drafting the National Equality Plan up to 2024; the process has included technical areas.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 22 and 23 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Gender-based violence against women)

176. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women runs the national support system for women affected by violence as a mechanism for inter-agency management and coordination at the national level to provide comprehensive and specialized care for women facing gender-based violence. The system is comprised of the specialized institutional support units for women affected by violence and shelters.

177. Since the entry into force of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, there has been a gradual increase in the availability of care services for women nationwide. As of 2019, there are 81 specialized institutional support units for women affected by violence, with coverage in the country's 14 departments, in the following institutions: the Supreme Court, the Attorney General's Office, the Public Prosecution Service, the Office of the Human Rights Advocate, the National Police, the Institute of Forensic Medicine, the Ministry of Health, Women's City and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. In addition, 12 local victim support offices have been established by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

178. Institutions that provide shelter services for women affected by violence include the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, the National Police, the

Salvadoran Institute for Children and Adolescents, the Executive Technical Unit of the Justice Sector and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

179. Through a dedicated project, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women supports the care, protection and psychosocial recovery of returned migrant women and their children by providing technical equipment, furniture and equipment for the shelter and transition house in the eastern region of the country with a view to supporting their integration into economic and social life on an equal and non-discriminatory basis.

180. The Institute provides remote and face-to-face care through the Directorate of Specialized Care,⁴⁰ which has specialized care units in the 14 departments. They provide the following services: psychological, legal and social support; playrooms for children; therapy; medical care; psychological care for children and adolescents; sexual and reproductive health care; and cervical smear and temporary protection campaigns.

181. Other protection alternatives include: sheltered housing, which is provided in coordination with NGOs that support women in obtaining decent and safe housing; emergency accommodation, to provide women with a safe space for a short period of time; and international protection, a project implemented by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

182. The Comprehensive Programme for a Violence-Free Life for Women supported 5,579 women in 2018, 4,675 in 2019 and 3,920 in 2020 (annexes, table 6).

183. During the state of emergency declared in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, protection and support continued to be provided to women, taking into account the biosecurity measures imposed by the Ministry of Health. The 126 helpline remained in service, and new ways of bringing services to people were introduced, such as teleservices via mobile phone/WhatsApp (7608–6805) and email (atencion.especializada@isdemu.gob.sv). Women were provided with crisis care, psychological first aid and legal advice.

184. In 2018, in view of the rise in the number of femicides, the board of directors of the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women approved the Strategy for the Prevention of Femicide and Sexual Violence to reduce the incidence of these crimes through intersectoral measures for the prevention and detection of such violence and the support and protection of women and girls. It was also recognized that all institutions of the executive branch need to comply with the mandates established in the various regulatory instruments for the protection of women's rights and, in particular, those contained in the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women and the National Policy for Women's Access to a Violence-Free Life.

185. The main results achieved include the following:

- Forty-three institutions have committed to implementing actions to prevent femicide and sexual violence within their institutions and among the population they serve
- The Strategy has been disseminated among various key actors, including the Supreme Court, the Legislative Assembly, municipal authorities, the diplomatic corps and cooperation agencies accredited in the country
- Forty-one institutions from the three branches of government have reported on the implementation of actions to prevent femicide and sexual violence and have

⁴⁰ Formerly the Programme of Comprehensive Care for a Life Free of Violence.

implemented 346 campaigns to prevent violence against women, educating and raising awareness among more than 4,030,806 people

- Capacity-building is taking place at the institutional level, as in the case of the Agricultural Development Bank, which is implementing an online course on the basics for a life free of violence for women
- Twelve institutions are participating in the campaign against street sexual harassment in the Centro de Gobierno district of the capital and surrounding streets, coordinated by the Attorney General's Office
- The Ministry of the Interior and Regional Development is running a campaign through the Directorate of Public Entertainment, Radio and Television entitled "For women's right to a life free of violence. Do your part, break the silence", broadcast on radio and television stations affiliated with the Salvadoran Association of Radio Broadcasters and members of the Salvadoran Media Network, channel 11, channel 12 and Radio Sonora
- The Strategy was formulated with the participation of 16 institutions: the National Council for Children and Adolescents, the Salvadoran Institute for Children and Adolescents, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Community Participation in Education Programme, the Ministry of Health, the Health Solidarity Fund, the Secretariat for Social Inclusion, the Supreme Court, PASMO, Plan International, Médecins du Monde, UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN-Women, Oxfam and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women
- A guide on the development of plans for the prevention of violence against women in public and private institutions is being drafted. Three institutions – the Social Investment for Local Development Fund, the Salvadoran Institute of Teacher Welfare and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security – have adopted such guidelines. The Ministry of Health is updating the technical guidelines for comprehensive health care for persons affected by violence
- There are 41 specialized courses on the prevention of femicide and sexual violence, involving the participation of 3,366 students – 2,275 women and 1,091 men – from public and private universities
- Sixty-nine awareness-raising activities on sexual harassment in public places have been carried out in 43 municipalities
- One hundred sixty-one information-sharing activities have been run as part of the media campaign to raise awareness of gender-based and femicidal violence
- An evaluation report on the specialized institutional support units for women affected by violence is prepared at the national level
- The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has conducted two studies on sexual violence in educational communities

186. Through the project "Triangular cooperation between Peru, El Salvador and Spain to institutionalize a knowledge management system for the generation of evidence on femicidal violence in El Salvador, based on the experience of Peru and Spain", the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women contributes to guaranteeing the right of women to a life free of violence through the design, implementation and evaluation of evidence-based public policies supported by the development of a knowledge management system that has an impact in reducing femicidal violence. It seeks to benefit women and the general population of El Salvador through the design of public policy proposals for the detection, prevention

and punishment of femicidal violence and the provision of support, protection and reparation to victims.

187. The plan of action run in partnership with UNHCR aims to strengthen the Institute's capacity to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence and seeks to benefit returning migrant women in need of protection.

188. The Institute formulated the Strategy for the Prevention of Violence against Women, which is implemented at the municipal level through its departmental offices.⁴¹ The results are as follows:

- Skills training was provided to 1,044 professionals – 845 women and 199 men – in multidisciplinary teams, who work for more than 23 institutions responsible for providing care to women affected by gender-based violence. These include the Ministry of Health, the Salvadoran Social Security Institute, the National Police, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, local victim support offices of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, Women's City, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the National Council for Children and Adolescents, the armed forces, the Legislative Assembly, the Attorney General's Office, the Public Prosecution Service, the Supreme Court, the Human Rights Advocate and the municipal women's units
- Twenty-one local care pathways for women affected by violence in 21 priority municipalities were drawn up on an inter-institutional basis
- Capacity-building was provided for 47 municipal committees for the prevention of violence through 162 awareness-raising workshops that addressed the different types of violence against women
- Skills training for the exercise of active citizenship was provided to 525 women leaders of the advisory and citizen oversight committees in the priority municipalities
- A total of 759 help desks for the promotion and dissemination of women's rights were set up in educational centres in the priority municipalities, serving a total of 31,539 persons – 18,615 women and 12,924 men
- A total of 580 activities were carried out to disseminate information and promote knowledge of rights for the prevention of violence against women, through mobile desks set up in health centres, fairs, community festivals and through the broadcasting of *Voz Mujer* (Women's Voice) radio programmes

189. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security published reports on acts of violence against women⁴² for 2015, 2016–2017, 2018, 2019 and the first half of 2020.

190. In 2017, the results of the National Survey on Violence against Women in El Salvador were presented, and in 2019, the National Survey on Sexual Violence against Women and Girls was conducted by the Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses.

191. Following a process to strengthen the Tripartite Operational Committee, a proposal was made for the establishment of a single registry of femicidal violence in El Salvador to allow the reconciliation of data on homicides and femicides.

⁴¹ Departmental support centres, May 2021.

⁴² Ministry of Justice and Public Security — Directorate General of Statistics and Censuses, Reports on Acts of Violence against Women. El Salvador.
http://aplicaciones.digestyc.gob.sv/observatorio.genero/informe_violencia/index.aspx.

192. The Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women is mandated by law to prepare an annual report on violence against women in El Salvador⁴³ that presents progress in the implementation of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women and an analysis of the status and situation of violence against women.

193. The Institute formulated guidelines for institutions represented on the Special Commission of Experts and municipalities to implement measures in line with the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, including the National Support System and the Guide for the Preparation of Municipal Plans for the Prevention of Violence against Women.

194. With support from the Inter-American Development Bank, the Institute launched the virtual support platform for women affected by violence “126 Te Orienta” on International Women’s Day 202, through which guidance is provided remotely. It includes care pathways, emergency plans and information related to COVID-19, as well as other information of interest to women.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 42 and 43 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women)

195. The Attorney General’s Office provides specialized support and legal and psychological advice and assistance, regardless of a person’s gender identity or expression or sexual orientation. To this end, it works constantly to raise the awareness of staff in all its support units.

196. It continues to adapt support processes to bring them into line with applicable regulations. Amendments to the Office’s Organization Act, which were recently approved by the Legislative Assembly, provide for the establishment of the Office of the Deputy Attorney General for Victims, tasked with designing strategies and mechanisms to continuously improve the provision of assistance to this sector of the population. The Gender Unit has been expanded to apply an inclusive approach and develop internal strategies and raise awareness among staff so as to ensure quality care for all persons who request it.

197. The Attorney General’s Office reports that, in 2020, 38 people belonging to this vulnerable group received advice, legal assistance and psychological care.

198. The Public Prosecution Service continuously applies elements of normative instruments and runs capacity-building activities in order to ensure that there is zero tolerance for discrimination. The following mechanisms are in place:

- The criminal prosecution policy, which from its very first article develops the guiding principles for prosecutorial action and establishes human dignity and equality as the basis for the daily work of the Service
- A protocol for the provision of legal assistance and psychosocial support to persons experiencing violence – especially children, adolescents, women and other vulnerable groups – that standardizes the conduct of the staff of the Service and avoids the revictimization of persons who have been affected by violence
- A protocol for the investigation of aggravated hate crimes based on gender identity and expression or sexual orientation. This instrument was developed to ensure that the services provided by the Public Prosecution Service are based on the values of equality, liberty and security, in accordance with the law, and

⁴³ Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women. Reports on the Status and Situation of Violence against Women in El Salvador. <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/instituciones/instituto-salvadoreno-para-el-desarrollo-de-la-mujer/documents/informes-exigidos-por-disposicion-legal>.

establishes the guidelines to be followed in the investigation of crimes committed against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons

- Specialized training programmes on human rights and sexual diversity

199. In 2020, the Supreme Court, aware of the need to assist in the prosecution of hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity and to contribute to strengthening efforts to ensure due process for women in detention, decided to strengthen the specialized court system for a life free of violence and discrimination for women by establishing the second such specialized court in San Salvador, and another in Cojutepeque, which will become operational in 2021 and will reduce the caseload of the current specialized court of investigation by 60 per cent.

200. Between 2018 and 2020, training was provided for the specialized courts for a life free of violence and discrimination for women and the ordinary criminal courts that deal with the same subject matter, with the aim of strengthening the knowledge of judicial personnel who apply the legislation on gender-based violence and discrimination.

201. Efforts have been made to combat discrimination against women on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity. With support from UNICEF, a gender- and diversity-sensitive care guide for helplines was published and disseminated; it is being distributed to judges in various jurisdictions, judicial support staff and professionals in multidisciplinary teams, among others.

202. In 2019, the Technical Unit for Comprehensive Support for Victims and Gender was created to promote the implementation and institutionalization of the gender perspective and gender equity within the judicial branch and to enhance access to justice for victims of violence.

203. In implementation of the law and to support efforts to prevent discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security carries out the following actions:

- It participates in the LGBTI Round Table, working on the formulation of LGBTI policy
- It is drafting a protocol, currently under review, for prison staff on the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, aimed at guaranteeing decent conditions of detention and equal treatment without discrimination
- It updates statistics on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons so that they can receive targeted attention that meets their needs
- Together with governmental and non-governmental organizations, it coordinates awareness-raising activities for prison staff
- It has designated the remand centre and prison in Jucuapa exclusively for prosecuted and convicted persons belonging to the LGBTI community so as to provide them with specialized care and improve their health and living conditions
- The Gender Unit, in coordination with the Prison Staff Training Academy, provides training to prison officials to strengthen their knowledge of diversity in order to ensure that the LGBTI population is treated in accordance with the principles of equality, equity, inclusion and non-discrimination

204. The police force operates the Institutional Policy on Gender Equity and Equality 2011–2021, and its 3 action plans contain 12 strategic action lines. The first, seventh, ninth and twelfth strategic action lines contain elements related to differential treatment,

statistical registration, criteria for differentiated spaces and the use of non-discriminatory language for the LGBTI population.

205. Strategic Line 1: “Review and develop action protocols that regulate police services and procedures, mainstreaming the philosophy of community policing and a gender equity approach, to ensure specialized intervention that respects human rights and takes into account the characteristics of each individual according to their needs, interests and differences.” The following instruments have been developed: instructions on differential treatment of human diversity, with a gender and human rights approach, in police services for victims and witnesses; protocol on differential treatment of human diversity, with a gender and human rights approach, in the framework of police action and procedures of the Road Traffic Division; protocol on differential treatment of human diversity, with a gender and human rights approach, in the framework of police action and procedures of the Border Security Division; protocol on differential treatment of human diversity, with a gender and human rights approach, in the framework of police action and procedures of the Division for the Enforcement of Judicial Decisions.

206. Strategic Line 7: “Incorporate gender criteria into the entire institutional information system with regard to police activity and crime rates to allow for qualitative and quantitative analysis,” reflected in the IMPERIUM digital platform for statistical registration, update the complaints module in operation in each of the police headquarters nationwide and incorporate the fields for the registration of the gender identity and sexual orientation of the LGTBI population involved in acts of violence as victims or perpetrators.

207. Strategic Line 9: “Ensure that police furniture, clothing and equipment is appropriate to the needs, characteristics and different anthropometric measurements of men and women who work in the institution, including special situations such as disability and pregnancy,” and include a section on general standards in the Infrastructure Division’s Standards and Procedures Manual.

208. Strategic Line 12: “Create, strengthen and implement communication strategies that are respectful of human rights, highlighting the contribution of both genders to ensure well-being, and avoid reproducing traditional stereotypes about the roles of men and women.” The following instruments have been developed: Instructions for coordinating institutional communication to the media and regulations applicable to the police disciplinary regime.

209. The Ministry of Culture has made efforts to combat discrimination against women based on their sexual orientation and gender identity and has designed and implemented awareness-raising and training activities for civil servants and the general public, including:

- Developing the skills of public servants to promote and guarantee equal rights and conditions for the entire population through:
 - (a) The design of training courses on the culture of equality, including the module “Homophobia as a behavioural regulator”
 - (b) The Ministry of Culture, in coordination with the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, has run informative workshops through its Substantive Equality Training School and launched its online Open Platform. Workshops have been organized on the following themes: perceptions of masculinity and shared responsibility; the principle of non-discrimination; a life without violence for women; and homophobia as a behavioural regulator
 - (c) Training and awareness-raising on human rights, gender and sexual diversity for public entities, including the Attorney General’s Office, the

National Registry of Natural Persons, the General Directorate for Migration and Alien Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Development Bank of El Salvador and the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women

- Developing a cultural management model, based on equality and respect for diversity, by:
 - (a) Promoting research into different aspects related to population groups that face exclusion, discrimination and vulnerability, especially women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons
 - (b) Launching the journal *Identidades 15*, Studies on the LGBTI+ population in El Salvador and Central America
 - (c) Organizing the third digital LGBTI film festival, in partnership with the Cuban Embassy in El Salvador and with the support of ASPIDH (the Solidarity Association for the Promotion of Human Development)
- Coordinating governmental inter-institutional communication to apply an approach based on respect for diversity, inclusion and gender equity, through:
 - (a) The Ministry of Health, through the National HIV Programme, has issued instructions for the care of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons living with HIV during the state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the delivery of medicines to avoid health complications and provide the minimum essential conditions for the normal and full development of life
 - (b) Coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in relation to international conferences, declarations and other communications related to the LGBTI population
 - (c) Coordination with the National Development Bank of El Salvador to support women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons
 - (d) Advice and support for the National Registry's Inclusion and Gender Plan

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 44 and 45 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Indigenous women)

210. The State has made significant efforts to adopt specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of indigenous women, including the following.

211. The National Policy for Rural, Indigenous and Campesina Women was designed to transform rural development policies into instruments that guarantee human rights and promote the autonomy of rural women, with a focus on campesina and indigenous women. The policy is aligned with article 36 of the Act on Equality, Equity and Elimination of Discrimination against Women and contains guidelines and measures to promote non-discrimination, social inclusion, economic autonomy, political and civic participation, food security, climate change action and the cultural protection of rural, indigenous and campesina women.

212. In follow-up to the agreements reached at the first World Conference of Indigenous Peoples, a consultation process was undertaken to formulate the Public Policy for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador,⁴⁴ the objective of which is to engage in public administration for and with indigenous peoples, based on their rights and

⁴⁴ Ministry of Culture. Public Policy for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador. San Salvador, 2017. https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=619%3Ainforme-de-beijing&Itemid=234&lang=es.

world view, through transformative social action. That process culminated in the adoption of the National Action Plan for Indigenous Peoples in 2018.⁴⁵

213. The Ministry of Health introduced the Indigenous Peoples' Health Policy in 2018 to guarantee the right to comprehensive health care for the country's indigenous peoples, with an intercultural and gender perspective and recognizing and respecting indigenous knowledge and wisdom and incorporating it into the national health system. The policy is the result of consensus and inter-institutional coordination with organizations that protect the rights of the country's indigenous peoples and with government ministries and institutions.

Recommendations contained in paragraphs 46 and 47 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Women in detention)

214. Pursuant to the ratification of international treaties covered by article 144 of the Constitution, the prison system complies with inter-institutional agreements aimed at guaranteeing due process for persons deprived of their liberty.

215. According to reports from the Ilopango women's remand centre and prison and the Izalco prison farm, which as of March 2021 housed a total of 757 prosecuted women, the following actions are being carried out in order to respect due legal process.

216. Legal advice: They are informed about their rights and duties within the facilities. Logistics are coordinated to ensure that women deprived of their liberty attend scheduled hearings. Legal assistance is provided by the prison's technical criminology team. The Attorney General's Office provides inter-institutional support, the Public Prosecution Service and judges take action when cases require it, and private lawyers give professional advice with regard to inmates' legal proceedings.

217. Accommodation: A technical assessment is carried out to determine inmates' personal circumstances and state of health in order to ensure that they are appropriately classified in relation to accommodation, security and enjoyment of the basic services necessary in the detention process.

218. Health: A medical evaluation is performed to identify each detainee's state of health. In the case of illness, detainees receive treatment at the prison clinic or in an establishment of the Ministry of Health network, if appropriate. At the same time, the technical criminology team or the Prison Unit for Human Rights implement a strategy of contacting the detainee's family to purchase additional medication. This measure guarantees the right to health to the extent possible. Persons with physical and mental disabilities who are unable to follow the ordinary prison regime are transferred to special facilities.

Recommendation contained in paragraph 51 of the concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action)

219. In 2019, there was a national review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000), which reflects progress in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. This review was carried out on the basis of the Beijing Platform for Action and contributes to the fulfilment of obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

⁴⁵ Government of El Salvador, National Action Plan for Indigenous Peoples. San Salvador, December 2018. <https://rree.gob.sv/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Plan-de-Acci%C3%B3n-Nacional-de-Pueblos-Ind%C3%ADgenas-PLANPIES.pdf>.

*Recommendation contained in paragraph 52 of the concluding observations
(CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)*

220. In El Salvador, gender equality and girls' and women's rights and empowerment have been mainstreamed into the 2030 Agenda in order to contribute to progress on all goals and targets, bearing in mind that the elimination of discrimination against women and girls is a prerequisite for achieving many other Sustainable Development Goals, such as ensuring universal access to health care (targets 3.1, 3.7 and 5.6), equal access to affordable and quality education at all levels (targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6), access to the labour market (targets 8.3, 8.5 and 8.8) and participation in political life (targets 5.5, 10.2 and 10.3).

221. El Salvador is making efforts to ensure the enjoyment of rights and opportunities by women, who make up more than half of the population. Accordingly, the National Agenda for Sustainable Development was developed for the short term, initially prioritizing eight of the Sustainable Development Goals and some specific targets from the other goals. One of the priority Sustainable Development Goals is Goal 5 on gender equality.

*Recommendation contained in paragraph 53 of the concluding observations
(CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Dissemination)*

222. During the period from July to October 2017, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held working sessions, with the participation of 302 delegates from all the institutions with responsibility for implementing the concluding observations, women representatives of the advisory committees and feminist and women's organizations, in order to present and discuss the recommendations contained in the concluding observations and incorporate them into the following planning instruments:

- The National Equality Plan
- The Policy Plan for Women's Access to a Violence-Free Life
- The Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325

*Recommendation contained in paragraph 54 of the concluding observations
(CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9) (Follow-up to concluding observations)*

223. In March 2017, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women presented its concluding observations on the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of El Salvador, adopted by the Committee at its sixty-sixth session (held from 13 February to 3 March 2017).

224. Among its recommendations, the Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 13 (a) and (b) (Access to justice) and 17 (a) and (c) (National machinery for the advancement of women). The report was prepared with input from various institutions and submitted to the Committee in March 2019.