



Project Brief

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS - ARMENIA



Women's economic empowerment is increasingly considered to be a prerequisite for realizing gender equality, strengthening women's agency and achieving sustainable development for all as agreed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the aim to reduce inequalities and to "leave no one behind".

The UN Women project "Women's Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus" (WEESC) was initiated in August 2018 and aims to ensure that women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are economically empowered and participate in relevant decision-making. The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).



Situation in Armenia

Armenia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993. The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia prohibits discrimination based on sex, race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion, worldview, political or any other views, belonging to a national minority, property status, birth, disability, age, or other personal or social circumstances and establishes that women and men have equal rights. The equal rights of women and men are also established in the national policy and legal framework on gender equality, but challenges remain in implementation and impact on the ground.¹ According to the 2017 Global Gender Gap Report, Armenia ranked 97th among 144 economies with regards to how well they use the "female talent pool, based on economic, educational, health based and political indicators".² Social and cultural barriers, gendered division of work and unpaid care work as well as weaker financial incentives for women to work, as reflected in the gender pay gap, constitute the major obstacles preventing women from engaging in income generating activities.³

On average, women earn 62 per cent of men's salary

The female economic activity rate is 53 per cent, falling behind the male economic activity rate by 18 percentage points

Source: ARMSTAT (2018), *Women and Men in Armenia*

Of those reporting that they do not work, 48 per cent of women, compared to 7 per cent of men, cite family circumstances as a reason, suggesting that women find it hard to reconcile childcare and work responsibilities

Source: UN Women, CRRC (2018)

¹ Dilbar Turakhanova (2018), Gender Analysis of the Labor Market Regulations in Armenia and Georgia, UN Women.

² World Economic Forum (2017), The Global Gender Gap Report. Available at http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf

³ CRRC (2018), Women's Economic Inactivity and Engagement in the Informal Sector in Armenia, UN Women.



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Outcomes

Outcome 1: Women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, use skills, economic opportunities and relevant information to be self-employed and/or to join the formal labour sector in Armenia (*grass-roots level*)

Outcome 2: Armenia implements adequate legislative and policy frameworks to enable women's economic empowerment (*policy and legislation level*)

Outcome 3: Government and public institutions develop and deliver gender-responsive programmes, public services, strategies and plans for women's economic empowerment in Armenia (*institutional level*)

Implementation Strategy

In line with the theory of change, the proposed project will bring about transformative change through a holistic approach, enabling linked interventions at three levels: grass-roots, policies and legislation, and institutions. This will be achieved through consistent dialogue and participation of women so that relevant institutions, policies, legislation and services respond to women's needs and enable women with strengthened capacities to empower themselves economically. The project will also support capacity development to mainstream gender in the relevant laws and policies, programmes and services to make sustainable contributions to women's economic empowerment.

Target Regions

In Armenia, the project will target eleven consolidated municipalities: four in Gegharkunik (Chambarak, Geghamsar, Shoghakat, Vardenis); and seven in Shirak (Akhuryan, Amasia, Ani, Arpi, Ashotsk, Marmashen, Sarapat).

