1. Legal framework on gender equality situation and gender statistics aspects in the Republic of Armenia (RA);

This paper describes and comments some examples of progress recently made in the gender statistics. Meantime, it describes but does not comment a policy implemented by the Government of Armenia towards the provision of equal rights both to men and women, taking into account the Principle of “Professional Independence” of Principles of European Statistics Code of Practice (Adopted by Statistical Programme Committee on 24.02.05).


A great number of changes have taken place in the policy on improving the status of women, which, in our opinion, can be regarded as the achievements of the Republic of Armenia in this field, in particular the legislation has been revised and improved, institutional mechanisms have been established, research, educational programs and advocacy plans have been implemented, state social protection programs have been regularly reviewed and a transition in the policy from women’s issues to gender issues has been made. Information on these developments has been included in the reports prepared by the Republic of Armenia and submitted to different UN bodies.

The brief overview of the national legislative instruments provided below presents the chronology of gradual changes and achievements in the protection of women’s rights and provision of equal opportunities for both women and men:

Thus, in the first stage (1996-2002), the first Three-year National Action Plan — the "National Action Plan on Improving the Status of Women and Enhancing their Role in the Society", was developed, gender-related expert review of the legislation of the Republic of Armenia (of a number of core laws) was carried out, recommendations were elaborated, capacity building programs were initiated, discussions pertaining to the issues of the field were held throughout the whole territory of the Republic of Armenia and campaigns covering the women's issues were conducted. In fact it was these procedures that contributed to a transition of the state policy from women's issues to gender issues dictating new approaches in the formulation and solution of political, social and economic issues of the public.

In that context a Concept Paper on Gender Policy in the Republic of Armenia was developed which was approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Armenia of 11 February 2010. The Concept Paper was aimed at creating gender equality, eliminating all types of discrimination on grounds of gender, ensuring equal rights of men and women in the labour market and the employment sector and equal access to economic resources, establishing democratic political culture and tolerance, gender-related dialogue in the public through the inclusion of the gender criterion in all spheres of life.

Gender Policy Strategic Action Plan for 2011-2015 was approved by the Resolution of the Government of the RA of 20 May 2011 that defined the priority directions of the state policy on men and women.

One of the most important achievements concluding the current stage is the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On provision of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men" in May of 2013 which defines the guarantees for ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities of men and women.
in political, social, economic, cultural and other fields and regulates the relationships arising with regard thereto. The Article 10 fully refers to legislative basis and commitment for gender statistics implementation. At the same time it defines the commitments of all bodies and organizations in the country to provide gender-based data to the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia (NSSRA) where it is possible.

The legislation of RA is to the extent possible called to ensure equality of rights of men and women and equal opportunities for the enjoyment of those rights in public and political life.

When defining fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms the phrases "every person" and "every citizen" are mentioned in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia without any reference to either men or women. According to Article 14.1 of the Constitution, everyone is equal before the law. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic peculiarities, language, religion, ideology, political and other opinions, belonging to a national minority, property status, birth, disability, age, or other personal or social circumstances is prohibited.

The Labour Code of the Republic of Armenia adopted on 11 October 2004 and entered into force on 21 June of 2005 defined — as its principles — freedom of labour, including the right to work, prohibition of any forms (nature) of compulsory labour and violence against employees, legal equality of parties to labour relations irrespective of their gender, race, national origin, language, origin, nationality, social status, religion, marital and family status, age, beliefs or viewpoints, affiliation to political parties, trade unions or non-governmental organizations, and other circumstances not associated with the professional skills of an employee, ensuring the right to fair working conditions for every employee, equality of rights and opportunities of employees.

Article 3 of the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia (adopted on 26 May of 2011 and entered into force on 26 June of 2011) defines that "Electors shall — irrespective of national origin, race, gender, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, property or other status — have the right to vote and to be elected". Thus, the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia also excludes all forms of discrimination, including on the grounds of gender. In the mentioned law gender sensitive quotas aimed at increasing women's representation in the legislative power. In particular, Article 108 defines: "... The number of representatives of each sex must not exceed the 80% of each integer group of five candidates.

According to Article 143 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia (adopted on 18 April of 2003 and entered into force on 1 August of 2003), a violation of nationals' legal equality, in particular direct or indirect violation of human and citizen's rights and freedoms on ground of national origin, race, sex, language, belief, political or other opinion, social origin, property or other status, which has harmed a person's lawful interests are considered as a criminal offence. Thus, the violation of Article 14.1 of the Constitution is criminalized under the mentioned article.

The Family Code of the Republic of Armenia (adopted on 9 November of 2004 and entered into force on 19 April of 2005) states the legal equality of spouses in the family, mentioning that each of the spouses is free in choosing the work, occupation, profession and place of residence (Article 24). According to “Family Code of the Republic of Armenia" which have defined the age of 17 as a marriageable age for women and the age of 18 for men was revised and defines the age of 18 as a marriageable age for both women and men.

According to the Law of the RA "On medical assistance and services to the population" adopted in 1996, both men and women enjoy equal rights to medical assistance. Maternal and infant health care has been identified as a principle priority, which is under the auspices of the state.

According to the Resolution of the Prime Minister of the RA No 213-A of 30 March 2010, an Inter-agency
Commission on Combating Gender Based Violence was established. The mandate of the Commission is to raise the effectiveness of measures, compile information and establish information exchange mechanisms aimed at preventing gender based violence and, as a matter of priority, to develop a National Action Plan on Combating Gender Based Violence.

With the view of achieving the goals predetermined by the Strategic Action Plan each year the Government of the RA approves annual gender policy action plans. The measures included in the given action plans are aimed at introducing the gender component in the field of administration and at the level of decision-making, in the policy development process at national and regional levels in social and economic, education, health, cultural and public information fields and in the political practice, as well as are aimed at overcoming gender inequality in all spheres of public life, irrespective of gender, and obtaining equal rights and opportunities.

The Government of the RA adopted the National Action Plan on Combating Gender Based Violence, the 2011-2015 Strategic Program Against Gender-based Violence on 17 June 2011. These Programs are implemented in three directions: early detection, prevention, support.

It should be mentioned that legislative reforms are ongoing. Notwithstanding the steps taken, the RA still continues to focus on issues, such as more participation of women in the political and public life, promotion of women's participation in the economy, poverty reduction, strengthening of the institutional mechanisms for gender equality, a number of issues on social and health sectors.

However, there still exist issues that need to be addressed, including those related to ensuring rights of more vulnerable groups of women (women with disabilities, refugee women, women in poverty, etc.). Among the most important and critical areas requiring further and urgent concentration of efforts are sexual and reproductive health rights and combating HIV/AIDS, gender equality, gender-based/domestic violence and gender selective abortion, needs and rights of aging and young people, persons with disabilities and children, disparities between rural and urban settlements.

Strengthening of gender-based legislative tools in the country once more highlighted the importance of making available an accurate, reliable and comprehensive data on women and men.

Gender segregation is taken into consideration in the data collection as far as possible. The legal base for it is the State Statistical Annual Work Program. As a result, numerous statistical publications of the NSSRA contain gender component, where it's possible. The approach is similar for both regular (Statistical Yearbook, Labour Market in Armenia, Armenia in Figures, Poverty and Social Snapshot in Armenia, Social Situation in Armenia, Demographic Handbook etc.) and irregular publications (prepared on the results of ad-hoc surveys). Though, the primary publication for gender statistics is annual statistical booklet “Women and Men in Armenia”. The latest statistics regarding the matter is posted on the following website: http://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=82&id=1487.
2. Improvement of statistical instruments

As mentioned above the gender statistics plays a key role in mainstreaming gender into policies of the state and serves as a tool to adequately assess and reflect the situation of women and men in economic, social and political spheres of the society. Gender statistics allows increasing public awareness about the status of women in relation to that of men and conducting systematic study of gender issues.

The NSSRA as a leading actor of whole gender statistical system of country since 1999:

- coordinates and develops gender-based statistical tools following international standards, guidelines or recommendations in the field to the possible extent
- identifies ways of integrating a gender perspective into the Annual and Three-year Programs of State Statistical Works;
- coordinates and implements data collection through various types of statistical surveys, studies;
- revises concepts and methods used in the collection of official statistics;
- meets needs of the national and international data-users;
- on a regular basis produces and disseminates gender statistical data, reports, booklets containing regular series of basic indicators in all statistical relevant areas.

So, NSS RA takes gender issues into account in all stages of data production, analysis and dissemination as much as possible.

Number of changes has taken place in the various areas of gender statistic outputs in terms of data sources and domains. Over the years the concepts have been revised and instruments have been improved, new surveys have been done, framework of indicators has been broadened. The progress has been achieved as a result of intensified cooperation between relevant international organizations, data producers and data users.

The brief overview of several statistical works has been done by NSSRA is provided below. Basic achievements of recent years in various fields of gender statistics are related to improvement of existing tools as well as application of new measurement instruments that hadn’t exist before in a country.

1. Time use sample survey in the Republic of Armenia 2008 October 1-31

“Time Use Sample Survey in Armenia” program (henceforward “Time Use Survey”) is a project component of “Armenia Social Statistics II” cooperation program, financed by the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency, (between Statistics Sweden and NSSRA. “Armenia Social Statistics II” program is the continuance and completion of the earlier implemented “Armenia Social Statistics” program. The pilot time use survey was carried out in 2004. Within this program main time use survey is carried out in Armenia for the first time. “Guidelines on Harmonized European Time Use Surveys” (HETUS), developed by Eurostat, have been used (http://www.armstat.am/file/article/time_use_09e.pdf).

The main objectives of time use sample survey in Armenia are: a) to improve time use and gender statistics indicators; b) to make available the time use information distribution for RA population, which is in a transitional period, taking into consideration gender standpoints, as well as differences between the regions, cities and villages; c) to improve the system of social statistics indicators.
The results of time use survey enabled to develop a database on the basis of which the indicators of the population time use were calculated according to the gender and settlement. There are also international comparisons brought in the report. The brief report of survey results was prepared by NSSRA.

Time Use Survey enabled to answer a number of questions, particularly, time used on the productive activity (paid and unpaid work, study), availability and use of free time, gender and other issues of time use, which couldn’t be revealed through the other surveys.

2. Nationwide Survey on Domestic Violence Against Women in Armenia 2008-2010

The Nationwide Survey on Violence against Women conducted in 2008 by UNFPA in the framework of “Combating Gender-Based Violence in the South Caucasus” project (UNFPA CGBV) and the NSSRA. The survey is one of a kind because of its scope, scale, methodology and the status of the obtained results [http://armstat.am/file/article/dv_executive_summary_engl.pdf].

The objectives of the survey were as follows: a) to produce accurate and reliable official and internationally comparable baseline data on prevalence and incidence of major forms of intimate partner and non-partner violence against women and thus to obtain valid estimates about the scale and scope of the phenomenon in the country; b) to identify some reasons of intimate partner violence; c) to get an estimate of sexual abuse of children of under 15 years of age; d) to identify and assess the risk and protective factors for intimate partner violence; e) to explore the association of intimate partner violence with outcomes for women’s physical, mental and reproductive health; f) to identify and assess effectiveness of coping strategies, mechanisms and services that women (may) resort to when subjected to violence; g) to probe attitudes towards violence against women; h) to make a detailed and in-depth data-based analysis and to draw conclusions; i) to contribute to strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to protect women from violence; j) to make recommendations with a view to helping relevant government agencies design more effective and better-targeted policies and interventions to address the problem of violence against women; and k) to trigger public discussions and to stimulate further research of the phenomenon and its prevalence in Armenia.

The report prepared based on contains both a descriptive level and a more in-depth and detailed as well as complex analysis of the survey findings, in which case data are placed in a broader socio-economic and cultural context and reviewed from the perspective of the current gender situation. The primary objectives of the report are to convey the survey data and the results of the analysis of the survey findings to policy-makers, international organizations, NGOs, the media and the general public, to raise their awareness with regard to prevalence of violence against women in this country and thus to enable them to make better informed policy decisions and choices and to make a more effective response, including better-targeted campaigns to combat gender-based violence.

The report suggests that all major stakeholders, such as the Government entities, civil society organizations and international organizations, should focus both on legal reform, policy changes and advocacy campaigns. For this purpose other types of surveys (methodologies) are needed to adequately assess the scope and scale of gender-based violence as one of the most socially important and culturally and politically sensitive issues.

Survey aimed at assisting the implementation of the part of an interregional project that coordinated by the UNEC for Latin America and the Caribbean. UNECE has developed and tested this survey module on violence against women, as part of its activities in the United Nations Development Account project "Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women through networking of local knowledge communities". The survey was implemented by NSSRA with the technical support provided by UNECE.

The aim of the module was to help country to collect a minimum set of information to measure the prevalence of physical, sexual and intimate partner violence. Survey brings out some peculiarities of violence against women in Armenia.


The NSSRA applied the mixed survey through the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) Regional Technical Assistance. Data collection was implemented in 2009 while data processing, validation, and analysis were performed in 2010 (http://armstat.am/file/article/informal_sect_2010e.pdf).

The primary aims of the survey to contribute to the increase in evidence-based policy making for poverty reduction by (i) providing NSSRA with a cost-effective and good strategy for collecting data from the informal sector; (ii) supporting the integration of informal sector survey results into the compilation of national accounts statistics; and (iii) enabling agencies involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluation of poverty-related policies to have a better understanding of the relationships between poverty and the informal sector.

The summarized key results of the survey able to (i) distinguish informal employment from formal, (ii) determine the extent of social protection, and (iii) identify household unincorporated enterprises with at least some market production (HUEMs) were included in the Integrated Living Conditions Survey.

In addition to various range of crucial indicators, the survey results were highlighted the significance of the gendered dimensions of the informal economy in the country. Furthermore, compared to the male informal workforce, women in the informal sector are more likely to be own account workers and contributing family workers and are less likely to be owner or paid employees of informal enterprises. These gender-based differences in employment status within the informal sector have implications for relative earnings and poverty levels. The gender gap in income/wages appears higher in the informal sector than in the formal sector and exists even when women are not wage workers.

As a conclusion, the survey examines the evidence on the linkages between gender, informality, poverty, and growth; postulates some possible explanations of these linkages.

The measurement of informal sector, as well as informal employment, aimed at helping policy makers for better understanding the areas of concern, so that they could enact or revise laws or review regulations, as needed, promote worker-centered economic policies, and improve the economic and social development in Armenia.
5. Demographic and Health Survey (ADHS)

The 2010 Armenia DHS is a nationally representative sample survey designed to provide information on population and health issues in Armenia. ADHS was implemented by the NSS and the Ministry of Health of the RA. The funding for the ADHS was provided by the USAID. Additional support for the 2010 ADHS was received from the UNICEF, the UNFPA, and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

The purpose of the 2010 ADHS was to collect national and regional data on fertility and contraceptive use, maternal and child health, adult health, and AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases. Thus, much of the information collected in the survey represents updated estimates of basic health and demographic indicators first reported in the 2000 ADHS and the 2005 ADHS. The survey obtained detailed information on these issues from women of reproductive ages and, on certain topics, from men as well. Data are presented by region when sample size permits. When possible, the 2010 ADHS data are compared with the 2005 and 2000 ADHS data.

The survey findings provide estimates for a variety of demographic indicators. The 2010 ADHS results are intended to provide the information needed to evaluate existing social programs and to design new strategies for improving health and health services for the people of Armenia. The 2010 ADHS also contributes to the growing international database on demographic and health-related indicators [http://www.armstat.am/file/article/dhs_pr_2010_eng.pdf].

6. School-to-Work Transition Survey (SWTS)

The Armenian SWTS is a two-round nationally representative sample survey designed to provide information on youth labour market issues in Armenia. SWTS implemented by the NSS RA in 2012 with a second round conducting in 2014. The funding for the SWTS was provided by the ILO and MasterCard Foundation. 2012 survey’s data analysis was performed in 2013-2014.

The indicators generated from the survey present more detailed picture of youth in the labour market than usually exists through standard surveys, including labour force surveys [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_314022.pdf]. The SWTS detects the individual characteristics of young people, gives information on the various obstacles that influence young men and women while they are making the transition to working life. It provides a basic description of gender differences in the duration from leaving education to obtaining a first job. So, one of the crucial aspects of SWTS is to examine the extent to which there is gender differentiation in various characteristics of youth. Gender differences in the transition from school to work can stem from various reasons, not only in relation to the gender differences in the educational level differences, but also educational field of study, orientation and work.

The SWTS serves as a principal tool for monitoring the impact of policies and programmes outlined in the national employment policy and strategy. Identification of characteristics of the specific youth employment challenges, SWTS intend to support policy-makers in designing adequate instruments to support the transition of young people into employment, taking into account deficit of decent jobs in national labour market. For efficiency of policy and programs implemented, gender-based specificities should be taken into account.
7. Integrated Survey on the Migration of the RA Population 2007-2013 (ISMRA)

Armenia is a country with a wide-range of migration. The ISMRA is the most comprehensive nation-wide specialized survey on migration in Armenia. In implementation of the national survey on migration in Armenia, the IOM partnered with the NSSRA and the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University. Data analysis was performed in 2014. ([http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=41_7&products_id=1400](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=41_7&products_id=1400)).

The purpose of the Survey is to evaluate changes in migration trends in 2007-2013 caused by socio-economic reforms implemented in the country. The 2013 Migration survey addressed the: (i) general features of migration in Armenia; the reasons for migration (ii) main types of migration in Armenia; (iii) characteristics (socio-demographic, socio-economic/skill profile) of migrants compared to the overall population; (iv) impact of migration (health, financial well-being, career development, social impact, migrants’ savings and remittances and their usage); and (v) migration’s development effect on population and households. These objectives formed the core of the survey methodology which is based on international and EU standards for migration data collection and sharing in Armenia.

In this survey a special attention has been given to gender differences which contribute to data for producing key gender indicators in this domain.

In many cases that is a combination of factors, which plays out differently for women and men. Gender roles affect who migrates and why, how the decision is made. Gender roles and expectations in countries of origin and countries of destination have an effect on the decision of migration and sex composition of various types of migration flows. In many cases, men make autonomous decisions to migrate, while women migrate as part of family strategies. Obviously women and men are at different risks.

Valuable lessons can be learnt from this survey across a wide range of issues as well as gender differences and gender equality issues. The data would be a vital contribution to the research and policy making communities.

**Summary conclusion**

All the mentioned surveys not only have enriched statistical database of the respective field, have enlarged framework of the indicators, but also:

- Have attested already renowned patterns of the gender differences in social behavior and gender roles or existence of the gender inequality in various spheres of life;
- Many phenomenon illustrating gender issues have become statistically measurable and accessible;
- Gender problems that never claimed have been revealed.

These studies have generated large interest amongst a lot of users and are still relevant. In addition to aforementioned, those have solved some other problems as well. Particularly, they had educational nature by contributing to raising public awareness of the gender problems amongst Armenian society, reformulating gender bias, revising perceptions associated with the gender equality, have stood as a prove for processing of evidence-based legal acts, have been used in many scientific researches, have alarmed about changes in legislation and about an urgency of processing new legal acts or new administrative methods.

Meantime, all surveys in various field of life presented above, still have a huge potential for comprehensive gender-oriented analysis. Only multifactor analysis of each surveyed domain (in terms of differences
between behaviors of men and women) can lead in designing adequate instruments to areas that require urgent attention.

In all cases for evidence-based policy making is essential to use statistical relevant sources in possible extent, which not only contributes in making “viable” decisions, but also makes more efficient and reasonable all efforts and resources spent. Finally, evidence-based policy-making is the only way of achievement of fundamental progress in problematic areas. However, for evaluating and monitoring of the state policy and programmes one of the important issues is permanency of relevant statistical data and surveys sustainability over time.

3. Practice of user-producer relationship toward development of gender statistics

As mentioned above, for the straightening of gender statistics and better respond to predominate needs of data users, the NSSRA is in close collaboration with the data providers, policy-makers, relevant State agencies and other government entities, public scientific, educational and other organizations, juridical and legislative bodies, banking system, mass media, business and citizens, non-governmental organizations, expert community, statistical services of CIS and other countries, international organizations and etc.

The draft Programme of the Stat Statistical Annual Works, which contains all mandatory statistical works performed by NSSRA in a regular basis as well as ad-hoc projects expected to be done, prior to adoption by the State Council on Statistics is distributed among the main data users and data providers within the country, as well as among the public through its official website. Statistical information users are requested to make comments and recommendations to the Draft.

The monitoring of user needs is performed by the Statistical Information Dissemination and Public Relations Division. All the relevant changes made according to the monitoring are considered in the Draft.