
RESEARCH REPORT ON PERSPECTIVES FOR WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SECURITY AND PEACE PROCESSES IN ARMENIA

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The project is implemented by OxYGen Foundation in partnership with WomenNet NGO and Mughdusyan Art Center.

The report summarizes the results of the research conducted with participation of representatives of Armenia’s Tavush, Syunik, and Vayots Dzor marzes (territorial-administrative units) during the months of October through December of 2022.

“Without peace and security, we will not have sustainable development, and without women, we will not achieve peace and security.”

Sima Bahous
Director
UN Women

2023
YEREVAN

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CEDAW | UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CLASS | Community Level Access to Social Services |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| CSSF | Conflict, Stability and Security Fund |
| EU | European Union |
| GNWP | Global Network of Women Peacebuilders |
| IWPR | Institute for War and Peace Reporting |
| LSG | Local Self-Government Body |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NK | Nagorno Karabagh |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| RA | Republic of Armenia |
| RA NSS | RA National Statistical Service |
| SMARTG | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound. and Gender-sensitive indicators |
| UN | United Nations |
| UN SC | United Nations Security Council |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNIFEM | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WAVE | (OSCE) Women against Violence Europe |

INTRODUCTION

The research on Perspectives for Women’s Participation in Security and Peace Processes in Armenia has been implemented within the framework of the “Women Empowerment for Peace and Security in Armenia” project.

The goal of the project is to promote women’s participation in security and peace processes in Armenia’s borderline regions. The project beneficiaries are CSOs operating in Tavush, Syunik, and Vayots Dzor marzes, local self-government representatives and women (including displaced) residing in the borderline communities. The project has two main directions: awareness raising and meaningful participation.

THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES include:

- **Comprehensive research**, which follows, as well as
- **Interactive awareness activities.** publication of ten journalistic articles based on stories of women, who have played a role in ensuring security and peace, and demonstration of three theatrical performances in the target marzes. At the marz-level, local discussions will be organized, the aim of which is promotion of policy dialogues on women’s participation in security and peace processes outlined in Armenia’s second National Action Plan based on UN Security Council resolution #1325.
- **Formation of a women-security-peace partnership/network** comprised of female activists of the above noted three target marzes, representatives of local self-government bodies and CSOs, and experts. The aim is to ensure, through utilization of the local potential, most participatory and localized implementation of the 2022-2024 National Action Plan for fulfilment of the provisions of Resolution #1325.
- **Capacity building and awareness raising meetings** in the marzes will provide an opportunity for the network members to enrich their knowledge of the National Action Plan provisions and their implementation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives

The objectives of the research on *Prospects for Women’s Participation in Security and Peace Processes in Armenia* are:

- To examine the processes of implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution #1325 and their progress in Armenia.
- To study the perceptions of women residing in the borderline communities, LSG representatives and CSOs operating in Tavush, Syunik, and Vayots Dzor marzes, LSG representatives about the main directions of the UN Security Council Resolution #1325 and about the RA second National Action Plan (NAP) of 2022-2024 for the implementation of the provisions of the UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, as well as the prospects of women’s participation in the implementation of the NAP.

- To support the implementation of the 2022-2024 RA second National Action Plan for implementation of the provisions of the UN SC Resolution #1325 on Women, Peace, and Security by making recommendations on a comprehensive monitoring framework for it.

Methods and tools of information collection

The following three methods were used to collect information for the goals and objectives of the given assessment:

- Document analysis;
- Focus group discussions with participation of CSOs operating in Tavush, Syunik, and Vayots Dzor marzes, LSG representatives and women residing in the borderline communities;
- Interviews with experts.

The method of document analysis was applied to study the following groups of documents:

- International and national documents on gender equality;
- Relevant UN SC Resolutions;
- Programmatic documents, legislative acts and governmental decisions regulating the area of concern;
- Annual plans on implementation of the gender policies and performance reports;
- Reports by the RA National Statistical Service (NSS);
- International documents related to gender equality and reports on the implementation of the RA obligations in this area;
- Reports on sociological research related to the area of concern;
- Electronic mass media and websites.

The noted documents served as a basis for describing the relevant context in the Republic of Armenia, collecting statistics on representation and distribution of the sexes, as well as for measuring the level of implementation of the activities outlined in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 on realization of the provisions of the UN SC Resolution #1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. The list of the studied documents is provided in Appendix 1.

With a view to validating the results of the document analysis with respect to the assessment goals and objectives, conducted were **focus group discussions** and **expert interviews**, as well as an analysis of the combination of qualitative and quantitative information.

Four focus group discussions were held within the framework of the project:

- With participation of CSOs operating in Tavush marz, LSG representatives and women residents of the borderline communities;
- With participation of CSOs operating in Syunik marz, LSG representatives and women residents of the borderline communities;
- With participation of CSOs operating in Vayots Dzor marz, LSG representatives and women residents of the borderline communities;

- With participation of youth residing in Tavush, Syunik, and Vayots Dzor marzes and borderline communities.

Participating in the focus group discussions were 65 young people, middle-aged and senior women, including persons with disabilities.

The tool applied for collection of data through the method of focus group discussions was a semi-standartized questionnaire, compiled based on the five main directions outlined in the 2nd National action plan on realization of the provisions of the UN SC Resolution #1325 on Women, Peace, and Security:

- Participation
- Protection
- Prevention
- Post-Conflict Relief and Recovery
- Cooperation

The selection of experts was carried out in a purposeful manner to ensure the principles of participatory assessment. The overwhelming majority of the experts were those with relevant experience of many years, as well as members of the Public Council for implementation of the RA National Action Plans for realization of the provisions of the UN SC Resolution #1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.

During the discussions with experts, it was proposed to create a network of experts on implementation of the UN SC Resolution #1325 for the purpose of exchanging information and experience.

PART 1. UN SC RESOLUTION 1325 PROCESS IN THE WORLD AND ARMENIA

The bases for contemporary perceptions of the women, peace, and security agenda were laid one century ago, when, during the world war, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was created.¹ With formation of the system of women's rights protection, the issues of women's participation in security and peace processes became an inalienable part of all basic documents making up that system, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and Sustainable Development Goals (2015).²

In particular, the Women, Peace, and Security agenda was discussed within the context of the concept for equal rights and equal opportunities at the World Conferences on Women held in Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), and Beijing (1995).

The discussions of and approaches to the topic were comprehensively formulated under the *marked out critical area of concern "Women and Armed Conflict"* within the framework of Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

The Platform outlined six strategic objectives for the relevant area, as well as activity recommendations for their attainment addressed to governments, civil society, and other responsible structures.

In five years after Beijing, these recommendations became the basis for adoption of a separate document by UN Security Council. A turning point in terms of pushing forward the Women, Peace, and Security agenda was **the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution #1325** (hereinafter Resolution 1325)³ on October 31, 2000, the main purpose of which is to engage women's potential in creating a safer and more secure world.

The resolution has a historic significance since with its adoption gender equality, which before that had been part of development processes, was affirmed also within the global system of ensuring peace and security.

With the adoption of the resolution, women were no more featured as helpless victims, but

Beijing Platform for Action

Strategic objectives of the critical area of concern "Women and Armed Conflict"

1. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
2. Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.
5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
6. Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

¹ <https://wilpfus.org/story/history>

² Goal 5. Gender equality; Goal 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions

³ https://havas-ar-infohub.am/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2_UN_SCR_1325_ARM.pdf

were recognized as having an active role in ensuring peace and security, which was a revolutionary approach for the 1990s.

Resolution 1325 is also important for its two key approaches:

- It recognizes *the special impact of armed conflict on women* and, in this context, highlights all those challenges, which women have to confront with during armed conflict, and
- At the same time, emphasizes *the need for women's full and active participation in all efforts for promotion of peace and security* and, in this context, the importance of women's involvement in decision-making with regard to peace and security.

The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in negotiations on conflict prevention and resolution, security and peace reinstatement processes, peacekeeping and mediation missions, as well as in post-conflict situations and recovery work. It emphasizes the need for equal participation of women and men in maintenance of peace and security.

Although the experience demonstrates that in emergency situations, women assume the most important mission of providing for family livelihood, participate in military actions as combatants, actively promote establishment of peace and organization of humanitarian assistance, they are absent from decision making processes related to conflict management and resolution, peace reinstatement and reconciliation agreements.

Since 2000, in the period between 2008 and 2019, the UN Security Council, within the scope of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda and in addition to Resolution 1325, adopted **ten more resolutions**, which reaffirmed women's role in establishment of sustainable peace, the necessity of expanding women's participation in all stages of the peacemaking process and touched, in a more detailed way, on the protection of women and girls from sexual violence during conflicts, assistance to refugees and the displaced, and other issues.

According to the UN data,

Between 1992 and 2019, women were, on average, 13 per cent of negotiators, 6 per cent of mediators, and 6 per cent of signatories in major peace processes worldwide. About seven out of every ten peace processes did not include any women mediators or women signatories.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>

Other resolutions regarding the Women, Peace, and Security agenda

Resolution 1820 (2008)

Recognizes sexual violence in situations of war as a war tactics and weapon of war.

Resolution 1888 (2009)

Provides for effective implementation of Resolution 1820 and creation of the institute of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for issues of sexual violence in military zones.

Resolution 1889 (2009)

Incorporates a strategy of increasing women's participation in negotiation processes and calls for creating assessment indicators of effectiveness of implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1325.

Resolution 1960 (2010)

Reaffirms obligations on sexual violence prevention taken up in the preceding resolutions and mandates combating the atmosphere of impunity.

[Resolution 2106 \(2013\)](#)

Calls on all stakeholders, including the SC, to take more steps towards implementation of the provisions of the earlier adopted resolutions and reduction of the atmosphere of impunity.

[Resolution 2122 \(2013\)](#)

Introduces stronger methods for increasing women's involvement in conflict resolution processes. Reaffirms the irreplaceable role of women in establishing sustainable peace.

[Resolution 2467 \(2019\)](#)

Calls upon conflicting parties to stop using sexual violence as their tactics and to develop special mechanisms to punish offenders.

[Resolution 2493 \(2019\)](#)

Calls upon Member States to support the exercise of their rights by women, encourages creation of secure conditions for the activities of women rights defenders, and calls for full implementation of all the preceding resolutions.

[Resolution 2242 \(2015\)](#)

Relates the Women, Peace, and Security agenda to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Touches upon the role of women in the struggle against extremism and terrorism.

[Resolution 2272 \(2016\)](#)

Provides means for the struggle against sexual exploitation and abuse during peaceful actions.

Women's participation in conflict management and peace reinstatement is also emphasized in **UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015)**⁴ on the role of youth, **UN Security Council Resolution 2282 (2016)**⁵ and **UN General Assembly Resolution 70/262**.⁶

The Women, Peace, and Security agenda is also in the permanent spotlight of another basic document on women's rights – **the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women/CEDAW (1979)**. Adopted back in 1992, **CEDAW General Recommendation #19** on violence against women makes a special reference to women's protection from prostitution, trafficking, and sexual harassment during wars, armed conflict, and occupation of territories.⁷ After the adoption of Resolution 1325, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women adopted two special documents related to the topic, i.e. **CEDAW General Recommendation 30, 2013** on the role of women in conflict prevention and overcoming the consequences⁸, as well as **CEDAW General Recommendation 32, 2014** on gender issues of asylum seekers.⁹

In its Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Armenia published in November of 2022, the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against

⁴ [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250\(2015\)&referer=/english/&Lang=E](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250(2015)&referer=/english/&Lang=E)

⁵ [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282\(2016\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2282(2016))

⁶ <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/262>

⁷ CEDAW General Recommendation #19: Violence against Women (1992). [https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/f8d998/pdf/&ved=2ahUKEwi4r8KY2dX#:text=Specific%20recommendations&text=\(b\)%20States%20parties%20should%20ensure,should%20be%20provided%20for%20victims](https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/f8d998/pdf/&ved=2ahUKEwi4r8KY2dX#:text=Specific%20recommendations&text=(b)%20States%20parties%20should%20ensure,should%20be%20provided%20for%20victims)

⁸ https://havasari-infohub.am/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/9_CEDAW_GR_30_women-in-conflict-prevention_2013_ENG.pdf

⁹ https://havasari-infohub.am/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/10_CEDAW_GR_32_refugee-status-asylum_2014_ENG.pdf

Women (CEDAW committee) expresses concern about the consequences of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict and continuing military activities, which are a challenge to implementation of the Convention.

Nevertheless, the Committee considers that “implementation of the Convention, especially at times of conflict, is the most effective means of safeguarding full respect for and the realization of, women’s rights, given that women are a driving force of the country’s socioeconomic development.”

Making a special reference to the *Women, Peace and Security* agenda, the Committee describes the adoption of the first and second National Action Plans on implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) as a positive development, reminds its General Recommendation 30 and presents a number of recommendations to the Government on taking into consideration the entire spectrum of the *Women, Peace and Security* agenda in its activities.

“The Committee highlights as critical the meaningful and inclusive participation of women at all stages of peace and reconstruction processes so that women’s priorities and experiences of the armed conflict are fully integrated into those processes, as required under the Convention and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), with a view to achieving a lasting peace.”

From Concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the seventh periodic report of Armenia¹⁰
November 1, 2022

In 2020, in the Political Declaration¹¹ adopted at the conference devoted to the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Conference, the UN member states reaffirmed their commitments to women’s full, equal, and constructive participation in peace processes and mediation efforts at all levels of decision-making, including leadership positions.

In regard to implementation of the provisions of Resolution 1325, the efforts of the international community gathered new momentum especially within the framework of the conflict erupted in the Ukraine in 2022. The **Brussels Declaration**¹² adopted by UN Women and the European Union structures in 2022 is one of the recent international documents that touches upon the issues of protecting women from sexual violence in conflicts and expanding women’s participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace establishment processes.

According to the data of the survey on “the role of parliaments in NATO member countries in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda,”

- *Ninety-one per cent of NATO 30 member countries have informed that in their parliaments women hold important positions related to peace and security issues.*
- *Sixty-one per cent of the parliaments of the organization’s member countries have stated that they have acted upon NATO political recommendations on cooperation with civil society organizations and other countries.*

¹⁰ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3999851?ln=en>

¹¹ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020/session-outcomes>

¹² Brussels Declaration on Actions to Empower Women in Conflict <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/fr/press/press-releases/2022/06/09/brussels-declaration-on-actions-towards-empowering-women-in-conflicts/>

Initiatives and documents emphasizing the responsibility of parliaments and civil society are also important for implementation of Resolution 1325.

In particular the *Women, Peace and Security Agenda for Parliaments* handbook published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2019 contains lessons learned from the UNDP *Global Project on Parliaments and Civil Society as Partners Supporting the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, as well as international best practices and actual examples of different countries, which demonstrate how parliaments can help expand women's participation in peace and security processes.

The participation of civil society in implementation of Resolution 1325 is best featured in the handbook on *the 2020 Civil Society Roadmap on Women, Peace and Security*,¹³ which was developed by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security/NGOWG of a coalition uniting 18 international NGOs in the lead-up to the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution.

National Plans of the Republic of Armenia

For the purpose of creating the necessary mechanisms for implementation of activities envisioned by Resolution 1325, in 2005, the UN Security Council charged member states with the task of creating National Action Plans.

- *As of 2022, 104 (54%) of the UN member states already have National Action Plans.*
- *Fifty-four countries have developed one national action plan, 27 have developed two plans, 17 three and 6 countries are at the stage of implementing their fourth national action plan.*

The National Action Plan is the toolkit, which enables the state to localize and implement the provisions and objectives of Resolution 1325.

In 2016, in its Concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Armenia, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that the state party “finalize and adopt the national action plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, in cooperation with women's organizations.”¹⁴

On February 28 of 2019, the RA Government's decision N 197-L endorsed the 2019-2021 national action plan for implementation of the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the timeline for implementation of the plan.¹⁵ Armenia became the 80th UN member state that had adopted a national action plan.

In August 2020, in the lead-up to the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, an informational booklet on the National Action Plan was published.¹⁶

On April 23 of 2020, the RA Prime Minister, by his decision N490-A, created a commission

¹³ <https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-Civil-Society-Roadmap.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N16/402/28/PDF/N1640228.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁵ <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?DocID=128902>

¹⁶ https://www.mfa.am/filemanager/un_brochure/brochure_arm_WEB.pdf

dealing with monitoring and implementation issues in connection with the 2019-2021 national action plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

In May of 2021, the Conceptual Framework on State Management of the RA Migration¹⁷ adopted by the RA Government was an important step for effective assistance provision to 90 thousand displaced persons (the majority being women and children) that found refuge in Armenia because of the 2020 war.

On June 2 of 2022, the RA Government adopted the second, 2022-2024 national action plan for implementation of the provisions of UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the timeline for implementation of the plan.¹⁸

The main difference between the first and second plans is determined by a drastic change of the situation in the Nagorno Karbagh conflict zone, i.e. by the war that broke out in 2020 and post-war realities.

In terms of its structure, the second plan, as the first one, is based on the principle of the four pillars of Resolution 1325, i.e. **participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery**.

The plan also touches upon **ensuring cooperation** with all local and international platforms within the framework of Resolution 1325, as well as includes a section on **monitoring and evaluation**, which implies presentation of annual reports by an interdepartmental commission responsible for implementation of Resolution 1325.

The National Action Plan clearly defines the objectives, the necessary measures to achieve the objectives, implementation timelines, result indicators, responsible implementing/co-implementing entities, as well as funding sources.

The plan notes that it is consonant with other strategies of Armenia on women's advancement and gender equality, which allows to correctly calculate and use possible human and financial resources. The plan takes into consideration the international obligations taken up by Armenia in regard to women's rights and gender equality, including those assumed within the framework of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Sustainable Development Goals 2030, the Universal Periodic Review process, and other documents.

¹⁷ <https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=152909>

¹⁸ <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docID=163530>

PART 2. PECULIARITIES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN SC RESOLUTION 1325 IN ARMENIA: BACKGROUND AND CURRENT CHALLENGES

It is difficult to underestimate the significance of Resolution 1325 for the South Caucasus region, which has been the target of conflicts since the 1990s, including for Armenia in the context of the Karabagh conflict settlement.

It was expected that the adoption of the resolution would open up new possibilities for engagement of women in peace processes and in terms of different initiatives targeting reestablishment of peace, however, their realization has been largely impeded and continues to remain impeded conditioned by a number of factors:

- ✓ The narrow format of the negotiations process for the Nagorno Karabagh conflict settlement and its evolvement behind the closed doors;
- ✓ Low representation of women at the decision making level in the conflicting countries, women's alienation from peace and war related decision making;
- ✓ Azerbaijan's attempts, since 2016, to resolve the conflict through the use of force and threats, which led to the resumption of a large-scale 44-day war in 2020;
- ✓ The expansion of the conflict zone after the 44-day war with the drawing in of Armenia's borderline regions and armed activities of Azerbaijan against those regions;
- ✓ Minimal ties and absence of cooperation between civil societies of the countries engaged in the conflict and pressures exerted on CSOs in Azerbaijan, especially over the recent years;
- ✓ Azerbaijan's consistent state propaganda aimed at reinforcing "an image of enemy";
- ✓ After the war, continuous violations of international humanitarian law and of human rights of the peaceful population of Nagorno Karabagh and Armenia's borderline regions, blockades of roads with the aim of causing a humanitarian disaster, and absence of an adequate response of the international community to these actions carried out by Azerbaijan.

In particular, although since 1994 the status quo maintained in the conflict zone has created opportunities for women's engagement in the negotiations process, this has not happened since the negotiations have always taken place at the level of Armenia and Azerbaijan's heads of state or foreign ministers, and women have never held the positions of the RA President and Prime Minister, as well as the positions of heads of foreign affairs or power structures.

Women have to some extent been involved in inter-parliamentary delegations, within the composition of some European structures, however, the situation is such that interactions at these platforms have almost always proceeded in accordance with the rules of information wars and this trend has been maintained up to date. Even the dramatic increase in the number of women, thanks to the quota, in the composition of the RA National Assembly of the eighth convocation (according

to the 2022 data, 35.5%) has not changed this reality, due to the tension on Armenia's borders and continuous threats voiced by Azerbaijan.

At the same time, absence of women in the RA National Assembly leadership positions – the positions of Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons – limits women's opportunities for active participation in the parliamentary diplomacy. Meanwhile, women's representation at decision making levels, including in the leadership positions of parliaments, is viewed, within the framework of Resolution 1325, as an important indicator of women's influence on peace and security processes. The number of female ambassadors within Armenia's diplomatic corps has never exceeded 15%¹⁹ and women have never occupied key positions in the area of foreign policy.

Women are not engaged in the composition of the RA Security Council, although the National Security Strategy²⁰ adopted in 2020 mentions ensuring women and men's equal opportunities among the national goals.

The significant part of the state's efforts towards implementing Resolution 1325 has been aimed at programs promoting women's involvement in power structures – Armed Forces and Police, and these programs have been implemented with support of international organizations, in particular, within the framework of cooperation with NATO and OSCE.

These programs have brought about certain changes not only in terms of women's involvement in power structures, but also in terms of their receiving relevant education by expanding opportunities for girls to study at military higher education institutions and the Police Academy. Some steps were taken, thanks to which women got involved in different subdivisions, including their participation in peacekeeping missions.

A number of initiatives have been undertaken aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for women and protecting women's rights within the RA defense system. In particular, a relevant guidebook²¹ was developed with support of the UN Population Fund.

Nevertheless, according to the 2021 annual report by the Human Rights Defender,²² which includes a section on "Women in the Armed Forces," servicewomen are largely deprived of advancement opportunities, they are not sufficiently represented in top positions, and there are societal stereotypes about women as decision makers.

The same can be stated about the Police system. Although the number of women serving in different subdivisions of the RA Police and holding senior positions is continuously increasing, women are not

According to the information provided by the RA Defense Ministry,

As of 2021, servicewomen make up 9.5% of the general number of contractual servicepersons within the RA Armed Forces and 3.8% of them are officers.

<https://www.ombuds.am/images/files/022666474d87ff84a86acf39be58bec8.pdf>

¹⁹ Women and Men in Armenia, 2022 <https://www.armstat.am/am/?nid=82&id=2530>

²⁰ National Security Strategy, 2020 <https://bit.ly/3UPugNF>

²¹ <https://mil.am/en/libraries/39>

²²

[Annual report by the Republic of Armenia Human Rights Defender as a national prevention mechanism on the 2021 activities](#)

involved in the top positions within the system. In particular, only one out of 19 female employees that occupy leadership positions in the system holds the position of Deputy Police Chief and one woman is in the position of a department head, the rest are at lower positions on the official scale. Although the Government views the 2019-2021 National Action Plan on implementation of Resolution 1325 as an inseparable part of its gender policies, “the 2019-2023 strategy for implementation of the RA gender policies envisions no activities related to the resolution, with the exception of one priority out of the five, namely, ‘ensuring equal participation of women and men in governance and decision-making.’” The above noted statistical data demonstrate that efforts exerted in this direction have not yet produced the anticipated results.

After the 2018 power change, the campaign “Women for Peace” initiated by the wife of the RA Prime Minister Anna Hakobyan, which reopened the peace discourse removed to the background after the four-day war in 2016, captured the public’s attention as one of the activities aimed at implementation of Resolution 1325 and was perceived as a state initiative. It is noteworthy that the campaign was launched at the Eurasian Conference of Women²³ held in Moscow in July of 2018, and later an attempt was made to internationalize it during the Prime Minister’s wife’s meetings with First Ladies and diplomats of other countries.

According to an expert analysis²⁴ about the campaign results, the internalization was not accompanied by regional expansion: no involvement of the most important party, Azerbaijani women, took place. According to observations of experts, the 2020 war put on the sidelines and marginalized the “Women for Peace” campaign, as well as the role of women in peace reinstatement by reserving the function of the peace agenda to the government.

Without delving into the subjective and objective reasons for the freezing of this initiative, one can state that the campaign messages brought about conflicting moods in the public perceptions and, against the background of the losses suffered in the war, underwent much criticism rather than helped appreciation of the role of women in peacebuilding processes.

During the 44-day war and in the post-war period following it, the continuous violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including the provisions of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, committed by Azerbaijan with respect to the peaceful population of Nagorno Karabagh and Armenia’s borderline regions, as well as the apparent incidence of Azeri war crimes have always been in the center of attention of the RA Human Rights Defender, who operatively responded to them in their extraordinary reports and communications. In particular, in their reports, the Human Rights Defender condemned the cases of

“The war transformed the role of women calling for peace, contributing to the peace process in one way or another, to the role of fighting women...After the war, the social roles attributed to the wives, mothers, and sisters of the victims were enforced again...By and large, the [symbolic] campaign for peace was replaced by a means of providing humanitarian and social support to war-affected families.”

<https://socioscope.am/archives/3347>

²³ Eurasian Conference of Women: Anna Hakobyan called for joining her campaign for peace <https://bit.ly/3hgozdV>

²⁴ The War from a Woman’s Perspective: on the “Women for Peace” Campaign <https://socioscope.am/archives/3347>

violence, humiliation and especially cruel treatment of Armenian servicewomen by the Azeri Armed Forces because of their nationality and sex during Azerbaijan's military assault on Armenia in 2022 and assessed them accordingly and adequately, anticipating punishments for their commitment.

Meanwhile, Security Council Resolution 1325 stresses "the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls," and emphasizes "the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible, from amnesty provisions."

Civil society initiatives for implementation of Resolution 1325

"Atrocities committed by the armed forces of Azerbaijan substantiate the extremely dangerous nature of violence based on gender hatred, especially during international armed conflicts. It is particularly worrying that news about gender and ethnic hate crimes was approved and encouraged by thousands of real Azerbaijani users during and after the military attack unleashed by Azerbaijan on Armenia on September 13-14 of this year."

From the statement of the Human Rights Defender on the occasion of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

Since the adoption of Resolution 1325, Armenia's women's participation in conflict settlement and peacebuilding processes took place mainly on the civil society plane, under the auspices of international organizations. Women's organizations dealt with the fates of those missing in action during the first Karabagh war, return of prisoners of war and other humanitarian issues. In this regard, especially active were women's organizations in the period immediately following the adoption of Resolution 1325, in 2001-2005, when cooperation between representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan's women NGOs was promoted within the framework of the UNIFEM project on *Women for Prevention of Conflicts and Establishment of Peace in South Caucasus*, through coalitions for peace created in the countries of the region.

The project was unprecedented as meetings of coalitions' members were held not only in Georgia, but also in Armenia and Azerbaijan. Similar meetings in the territories of the conflicting countries were exceptional, were held under security guarantees by international organizations and gradually ceased to take place after the completion of the UNIFEM project. Although the development of online technologies created new opportunities for cooperation, Azerbaijan's women's organizations were under serious pressures when establishing or maintaining ties with Armenia's NGOs.

In fact, after 2005, the direct ties between Armenia and Azerbaijan's women NGOs began to regress in terms of joint meetings and continued only in mediated formats on international platforms, for example, within the framework of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)²⁵ uniting more than 100 women's organizations in the world. To some extent, the cooperation has moved to the media field and has continued between representatives of the journalistic community of the conflicting countries, again with support of international

²⁵ <https://gnwp.org/about-gnwp/>

organizations. In the recent years, similar examples include Chai Khana multi-media platform,²⁶ which unites journalists of the entire region, is run by women and aims at providing an open discussion space for Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and women, ethnic, racial and religious minorities of the conflict areas, as well as for conflict-affected persons and other marginal groups. Georgian Women4peace.net media²⁷ platform is part of IWPR (Institute for War and Peace Reporting) regional project *Women Connecting for Peace – The Voice of Change* and covers issues and problems of women living in the South Caucasus countries.

Projects aimed at implementation of Resolution 1325 are carried out also with support of UN Women, OSCE, EU, USAID, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and its Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF), the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, and other international donors.

Some of the noteworthy initiatives of the recent years include:

- *The International Young Women's Peace and Human Rights Award*²⁸ after human rights activist and peace builder Anahit Bayandur, which has been granted by Armenia's *Democracy Today* NGO since 2011 up to date in recognition of the exceptional role and leadership capacities of young women in peacebuilding and of their most important role in conflict prevention.
- *Development of the National Action Plan on "Women, Peace and Security" Agenda: Training Module* developed by the *Society without Violence* organization in 2018 with a view to contributing to creation and implementation of a national action plan on UN SC Resolution 1325 in Armenia.
- In 2018-2019, the project *Dialogue for Peace and Development: Women's Perspective* was implemented by Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Armenian Committee in cooperation with the Civic Initiatives Center located in Nagorno Karabagh.
- The analysis of the critical area of concern *Women and Armed Conflict*²⁹ within the framework of monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Armenia conducted by *OxYGen* Foundation for Protection of Youth and Women Rights in 2020.
- In 2022, with participation of the Sexual Assault Crisis Center, the toolkit on *Preventing and responding to gender-based violence during the war and in post-war settings*³⁰ was published within the framework of the OSCE project *Women against Violence Europe* (WAVE). The toolkit was developed based on the experiences and recommendations of women NGOs in a number of conflicting countries.
- In 2022, the project *Building Resilience in the Eastern Neighborhood* (BREN) was launched to support civil society and women rights protection organizations in the

²⁶ <https://chaikhana.media/en>

²⁷ <https://women4peace.net/>

²⁸ <https://www.democracytoday.am/peace-award>

²⁹ https://oxygen.org.am/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Beijing25_Analysis-of-3-Areas_of_Concern_ARM.pdf

³⁰ <https://www.osce.org/hy/secretariat/532499>

countries of the Eastern Neighborhood, including Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The project is implemented through cooperation of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) and Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) with funding from the United Kingdom Government's *Conflict, Stability and Security Fund* (CSSF).

During the war and in the post-war period, the greater part of women NGOs were involved, as volunteers or organizers, in different initiatives on provision of social-economic and psychological assistance to forcibly displaced persons, the majority of which are women and children. The problems of approximately 90 thousand persons displaced because of the war continue to remain in the focus of attention of international organizations implementing humanitarian assistance and development programs in Armenia. They include the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and other UN agencies, the Armenian Red Cross Society, World Vision Armenia, *Armenian Caritas* Benevolent NGO, Armenian branch of the Fund for Armenian Relief, and Armenian General Benevolent Union.

Within the context of Resolution 1325, noteworthy is the research on policy and practice of assistance provided to people displaced from Nagorno Karabagh, especially women and girls carried out by World Vision Armenia within the framework of the *Women, Security, Peace* component of the USAID-funded project on *Community Level Access to Social Services* (CLASS).

In general, after the 2020 war, security issues were brought to the forefront in public perceptions, which is confirmed by the results of sociological surveys³¹ on issues of priority concern to the population of Armenia. This trend continues to dominate in public moods up to date, changing the emphases in the *Women, Peace, and Security* agenda to security provision as the main guarantee and precondition of peace.

Considering the possibilities of implementation of Resolution 1325 in Armenia from 2000 onwards, one can state that they have largely depended on the political situation in the Karabagh conflict area and from that perspective, two periods can be distinctly identified:

- ✓ Years 2000-2020, i.e. the period following the adoption of the resolution when the negotiations process mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group held out hope for non-violent, peaceful settlement of the conflict.
- ✓ From 2020 to present, i.e. the period following the large-scale war in the conflict area, which is today characterized not only by the necessity of overcoming the war consequences, but also by the tension in contact zones, including on Armenia's borders, and continuous danger of resumption of military actions.

Therefore, if, before 2020, the concept of peaceful settlement of the conflict and post-war peacebuilding was pivotal to the processes of implementation of the resolution, security provision became dominant in the new realities emerging after the 2020 war.

³¹ MPG LLC, GALLUP International Association in Armenia, <https://gallup.am/reports/page/2/>

PART 3. PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE RA SECOND, 2022-2024 NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UN SC RESOLUTION 1325 AND ITS PROVISIONS

The focus group discussions held in three marzes – Syunik, Vayotz Dzor, and Tavush – within the framework of this research have revealed public perceptions about the RA second, 2022-2024 National Action Plan on implementation of the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (hereinafter National Action Plan on Resolution 1325), including both successes and obstacles that came to light recently.

The analysis of the discussion results, as well as the questionnaire that guided these discussions are based on the logic of Resolution 1325 and the structure of the National Action Plan and cover the four directions lying at their basis, i.e. participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery. The observations by the participants in the marz-based focus group discussions have been compared to the opinions expressed during the focus group discussion with experts.

Women's participation

The observations on women's participation and their important role in emergency situations were pivotal during all focus groups discussions and deliberations on all four directions, be it security provision, information provision, protection or relief and recovery , and cooperation. In fact, two important circumstances were evident to all the participants, irrespective of the degree of their awareness about the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, with the first being that all problems under consideration are more than timely and pressing for Armenia and the second being that these problems cannot be effectively resolved without women's participation. In the same context, the participants emphasized the necessity of involving women at decision-making levels. However, taking into consideration the composition of the discussion participants, this issue was touched upon based only on marz- or community-level examples.

- *Women's role is extremely important in any area of activity. We have a stereotypical mentality believing that security provision is men's job and only men are responsible for that. However, when during the war, we felt the danger on our own back and 60-70 per cent of men were called up for military service, we realized what big and important role women had. Men were on the frontline, and women had to shoulder the burden of providing safety to their families, children, and the elderly. Even if we look at things from this perspective only, women should be informed and have relevant knowledge. In general, to my thinking, women's role in decision-making is also important because there is a difference in mentalities.*

The necessity of measures aimed at expanding women's participation as envisioned by the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 was visible to a part of participants in focus group discussions. They brought numerous examples of women's formal and informal leadership in emergency situations, as well as of women's self-organization. According to expert assessments, these examples confirm the fact revealed through different research that even if in times of peace women are rather passive, in emergency situations when they feel heightened responsibility not only for care of their family

members, but also for their very survival, women become active, come to the forefront and come up with numerous initiatives. In these situations, stereotypes and barriers that impede women's activism under ordinary conditions are removed to the background, although focus group discussion participants have noted the chilling effect of stereotypes on women's activism.

- *I believe that stereotypes adversely affect our security systems impeding women's participation. Women's presence will contribute to order and improvement of the system.*

Highly evaluating the role of women volunteers that are active in emergency situations, as well as that of informal leaders helping women's and population's self-organization, focus group participants believe that this potential of women can be utilized in a much more effective way without waiting for emergency situations. Special training seminars can be organized for women; their level of awareness can be raised. To be brief, they can be prepared ahead of time for explanatory work with broad circles of society and activities in this direction should be started as soon as possible:

- *"For no known reason, we remember about training courses and other activities belatedly, only at the moment when we come across a problem."*

According to participants, women's self-organization processes have often been directed and assisted by community administrations. However, cases when women have self-organized and showed initiative triggered by immediate danger are not few either, in their own words, "since our kinsfolk were at the forefront." As a rule, schools and teachers' collectives come up with initiatives:

- *In Goris, during the 44-day war, we provided shelter, psychological support, and food acting in a very united way, like one fist. I am saying this both as a participant and as witness.*
- *As a resident of a borderline village and head of a business structure, I collected information for myself and I believe that the mere fact that we created a small shelter and ensured, to some extent, the security of our employees is a progress.*
- *We ourselves have created a shelter for our organization's employees and also for provision of security to children since we have a daycare center where 20-30 children are present on any single day.*
- *I volunteered, we worked with families displaced from Artsakh. We visited them and tried to alleviate the burden of women, but not by doing household work, we dealt with educational issues for children. There were qualified psychologists among us.*
- *There were many people displaced from Jermuk. Their children were attending school here, masters and teachers worked in a very united way. We also provided them with stationery and schoolbags.*

According to experts, there are lessons to be learned from the Goris experience where, with direct guidance of female deputy community head, residents of the town and nearby locations, young volunteers and representatives of civil society extended a helping hand to thousands of families displaced from Artsakh.

It is noteworthy that importance is attached to women's participation in all stages of the conflict, including during military actions. Women from "frontier" settlements demonstrated not only their willingness to stand by men in case of necessity, but also presented their experience:

- *During the battles, we saw how women were helping men, how they chilled the drinking water and arranged them in a car in a second to take to the frontline. This was done in the rear, but women can help also at the frontline.*
- *During and after the war, when they directly felt the danger, many young women began to attend training courses on the Art of Staying Alive. This process is continuing now too.*

In this context, noteworthy is the observation on women's participation in the military defense of their communities made by the former administrative head of Shikahogh (presently, Deputy Governor of Syunik) Nare Ghazaryan, who participated in the defense of the village³²:

- *I can see the role and impact of women at all stages of the conflict and, first of all, before the emergency situation. It is my subjective opinion that it is time for the Armenian woman to take up the arms to stand by her husband, parent and defend the borders of the homeland. The land does not recognize woman-man division, love of the homeland is not conditioned by sex, and we too have this duty. If we manage to reach such a high level of consciousness in our country, which is under military conditions, we will succeed and during the martial law, we will have people that not only will not be leaving towns and villages, but women too will consciously stand by the men of their families and take up arms to protect their land and homes.*

The National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 envisions activities in the section on *Participation* aimed at engagement and advancement of women in different subdivisions of the Armed Forces and the Police System.

Although not all focus group participants were well aware of the policy on involving women in the police and armed subdivisions, the attitude of all of them towards the steps undertaken by the state in this direction was unequivocally positive.

- *I have heard that women can be engaged in the activities of the armed subdivisions, but we do not have definite, clear information about that. However, I can say that we come across uniformed women more frequently in our daily life, shops, and other public places.*
- *In the past, girls selected linguistics, medicine as their profession, but today there is quite a number of girls that choose police and military spheres, and this should be encouraged.*
- *I can see that the number of servicewomen in the Armed Forces has increased, but it is difficult to tell whether and how they participate in decision making.*
- *I myself work in the Armed Forces, I am an officer. I have chosen this path lovingly and am ready to do anything possible for my people.*

³² Source: <https://womennet.am/nare-ghazaryan-marzpeti-techakal/>

- *I know women who serve in the Armed Forces and the Police and as far as I know they perform their work very well.*
- *In all structures where there are women and men, they have a restraining effect on each other. I have studied criminal police and I fancy myself in the police, but not in the Armed Forces. However, many women, who see themselves in these systems, are often impeded by stereotypes.*

According to focus group participants, in addition to stereotypes, the engagement of women in the Armed Forces is hindered by the absence of specially adapted conditions:

- *Yes, in these areas, both women and men are unequivocally needed. One of our girls wishes to continue her education at a military higher education institution, however, her parents are against that and there is a struggle in the family. However, these educational institutions, and the system of Armed Forces in general, have no specially adapted conditions for women.*
- *The policies seem to have been developed, but, in my opinion, there is a need for reforms consonant with the policies in both Armed Forces and the Police System. Over the past one-two years, there has been a noticeable activism of women in the police system. We can see certain developments; however, more is needed to be done. As for the subdivisions of the Armed Forces, to be frank, I have no idea, I do not know.*

Positively assessing the state policy on engagement of women in the RA Armed Forces, the main objectives, directions and development prospects of which are summarized in the *Guide on Protection of Women's Rights and Creation of Equal Opportunities in the RA Defense System*³³, experts identify a number of problems related to obstacles to women's advancement in the Armed Forces, as well as to guarantees for married or pregnant women and other issues. Referencing the annual reports by the RA Human Rights Defender (HRD), they have noted that problems related to women's rights in the Armed Forces are in the focus of the constant attention of the Human Rights Defender. In particular, a specialized subdivision of the HRD Staff, the Department for Protection of the Rights of Servicepersons and Members of Their Families, has carried out a study, the purpose of which is to protect and promote women's rights in the Armed Forces. The study resulted in recommendations for legislative changes, which were forwarded to the National Assembly and the Ministry of Defense.

According to expert observations, some women NGOs have alternative opinions about the issue of engagement of women in power structures. In particular, organizations speaking within the scope of certain feministic discourse describe the processes of involving women in the Armed Forces as militarization, which, in their opinion, contradicts the feministic ideology and objectives of Resolution 1325.

One of the main counterarguments to this position is that under tense situation in the region, women's involvement in the Armed Forces is a justified step from the perspective of security

³³ Guide on Protection of Women's Rights and Creation of Equal Opportunities in the RA Defense System <https://mil.am/en/libraries/39>

provision. In addition, the state and international documents view the issue within the context of equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men, and in this regard, women's engagement is considered a step forward along the path to gender equality. Overall, the state policy on engagement of women in the Armed Forces is based on the RA Constitution, the RA Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the requirements of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other relevant resolutions, as well as on the RA-NATO, the RA-OSCE cooperation and international best practices.

In this direction, the Council of Europe is cooperating with the RA Government based on the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe Recommendation 2010 (4) on *Human Rights of Members of the Armed Forces* and PACE Resolution 2016 (2120) on *Women in the armed forces: promoting equality, putting an end to gender-based violence*. This cooperation has resulted in development and publication of the manual *Women in Armed Forces: Be Informed*.³⁴

The RA Ministry of Defense is developing a draft law³⁵, in the event of adoption of which female representatives will be able to join the mandatory military service in the Armed Forces on a voluntary basis for six months.

It is envisioned that after undergoing a military service women will receive a payment of honor in the amount of 1.5 million drams and they will have the opportunity, after the six-month-long military service, to undergo a longer-term military service based on the rationale of the *Defenders of Homeland* program.

The bill is being developed with a view to making the defense system more inclusive and expanding opportunities for female citizens to participate in the RA defense.

Protection

With respect to activities outlined in the section on *Protection* of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, the focus group discussions evolved around three issues:

- Organization of community protection
- Availability of shelters
- Provision of protection to women and girls victimized by violence during and as a consequence of the conflict.

Based on their own experience of living in an emergency situation and their perceptions about civil defense, the focus group participants clearly pointed to those main activities, which had already been implemented in their communities, and to the problems that need to be addressed to ensure the protection of the peaceful population. Emphasized were the role and initiatives of women for effective organization of the population's protection.

³⁴ The publication of the manual was carried out within the framework of the Council of Europe project "Human Rights and Women in the Armed Forces of Armenia." The project was funded by the Government of the United Kingdom <https://rm.coe.int/women-in-armed-forces-final-march-2020/16809e1977>

³⁵ After the completion of the report, it became known that on February 9, 2023, the RA Defense Ministry put into circulation the RA Draft Law on *Introducing Additions and Changes to the Law on Military Service and the Status of Servicemember* and the RA Draft Law on *Introducing Additions to the Law on Defense*. <https://www.e-draft.am/projects/5344/about>

It is noteworthy that public perceptions and concerns about protection issues were different in different marzes, which is conditioned by the security situation in a given marz after the war.

In Syunik marz, after the 2020 44-day war, Goris and adjacent rural settlements practically became the frontline, the target of borderline attacks. Consequently, the civilian population of the marz finds itself under the threat of possible aggravation of the conflict and lives in uncertainty and psychological stress. For this reason, the security issues are especially acute here. Conditioned by these factors, during the marz discussions, problems requiring short-term, urgent solutions came to the forefront, and problems implying long-term impact and gender-sensitive approaches were removed to the background:

- *As far as I know, the five-year development plans of communities include construction, creation or furnishing of shelters as a mandatory point, however, in practice very little work is done as a mandatory point. We do not even need to talk about relevant adjustments to the needs of women and men now since there is no shelter.*

As for Vayots Dzor marz, security issues are especially pronounced in Jermuk. In spite of that, it is noteworthy that in regard to security provision issues, the focus group participants in this marz proposed strategic, future-oriented solutions. For example, they emphasized the need for coordination of actions and development of a relevant strategy as a priority:

- *Security needs assessment is at an abstract level for us. I have not noticed any systematized steps. Different organizations do some things, but, unfortunately, we cannot state yet that in time of war, people and especially women know where they and their children can shelter themselves.*

Unlike residents of Syunik and Vayots Dzor, who for many years felt protected thanks to their “security zone,” residents of Tavush marz and especially of the town of Berd and surrounding villages have always felt danger from the border and as one respondent from the focus group has aptly pointed out “it seems the population here has already got used to the constant danger.”

- *This region has been in the situation of war for 30 years...That has become a way of living for us, we have lived all this. Today too, danger is a reality in the borderline communities, daily routine, ordinary occurrence: people cultivate their plots, but they do not know whether they will have the opportunity to collect the harvest because they might be shot at.*

At the same time, despite years-lasting insecurity, the population of the marz’s borderline villages does not leave their communities. People continue to live and work in their communities and women play an important role in this.

- *The people living in our villages have a very high level of self-esteem, they are firmly established on their land and nobody goes to Berd. On the contrary, there are people coming to the villages. Say, they return to the villages from the Russian Federation. By and large, the population of this area lives in their villages and does not leave.*

The analysis of the focus group discussions demonstrates that participant women have a clear understanding of factors determining the effectiveness of protection measures.

Firstly, they support coordinated systematized approaches:

- *The most important thing is of course education, but everything should be systematized and coordinated. Every person should know what to do; proper division of work is needed so that there is no panic. Women can do a lot: make recommendations, get educated, educate others, oversee, etc.*

Secondly, they attach importance to the leading role of state structures:

- *Of course, the work of NGOs is very important, but without the state raising these issues and attempting to solve them nothing will work. These should be daily work for community administrations and state structures. All this should definitely be within the realm of care of the state.*

Thirdly, women attach importance to and are ready to show initiative for provision of community security and organization of protection:

- *The first step is to master the use of maps, the better we know our hidden places, which can serve as shelters and observation posts for us, be useful to reconnaissance work, the more protected we will be. We should teach our children, establish support groups, conduct training courses and, if need be, help men too.*
- *We raised awareness through home visits, and afterwards people came and thanked us saying that our information provision was helpful. A resident of Artsvaberd saw a fragment of a weapon in the field and escaped danger thanks to proper handling.*
- *During the July confrontation in 2020, we cleaned up the basement of our building together with some residents, we removed two large trucks of waste, then we fixed the floor and bought some cloth for the walls so that we could use it as a shelter. Of course, it is not safe because there is no ventilation, it has one entrance, but still it is something...*

The focus group discussions demonstrate that women of borderline rural areas have clear understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities in the area of protection of their communities: they are seriously concerned about the availability of shelters and their furnishings, lack of equipment, condition of infrastructures, which are not adapted to emergency situations, etc. Voiced among the numerous needs was also the necessity of training heads and staff of community structures on civil defense. However, the most frequently mentioned issue was that of shelters:

- *I believe that the absence of shelters is one of the vulnerabilities of our state. There are almost no shelters corresponding to required standards and with conveniences, even for one day of living.*
- *Many communities have no shelters. For 30 years, they have had to confront the enemy, but do not know where to go in the event of firing. I raised this issue in Yeghegnadzor during the 44-day war. The war was going on and there was a possibility of danger, they were looking for a shelter. They said that they would stand behind this wall. The war stopped and everybody became complacent.*

According to the focus group participants, a marz-level survey conducted among tourism sector entrepreneurs, the majority of whom are women, has demonstrated that hotels, cafes and other service enterprises are not prepared for force majeure situations either and do not have any idea what actions should be taken. Educational institutions have the same problems, not all of them have shelters.

- *None of them has an evacuation plan, none of them has fire-extinguishers and those that have are not usable. Hotels do not have shelters and even do not know how they should be furnished.*
- *Recently, one of the schools in Goris has been completely rebuilt and renovated , however, no shelter has been built.*

The focus group participants are concerned not only about insufficient number of shelters, but also about their proper furnishings, though not all of them have clear understanding or information about the standards. Residents of private houses consider the basements of their houses as shelters, which serve as short-term hiding places, and their safety is questionable. As a rule, residents of multi-apartment buildings do not have a place to use as a shelter and, as they noted, shelter rules attached to the walls are “formality” in the absence of shelters.

- *We have not seen sanitary arrangements in any of our shelters, there are no conveniences for women and children, the problem with water is not addressed. Our office shelter also lacks sanitary arrangements. When employees of the Ministry of Emergency Situations came and assessed the place as quite safe, it was proposed that septic lavatories be installed, and these are rather expensive. They should be ventilated, have two entrances, etc.*
- *We have very few shelters. However, after the 2020 war, people began to think that basements, rooms in school basements, which were built as shelters, can be cleaned and furnished. However, I do not know how reliable they are, especially in the event of using drones.*
- *My kids are schoolchildren and I see that they simulate evacuation. Teachers come with children to a structure located in the center of the village, which is supposedly a shelter, but there are no proper conditions there. God forbid, if there is a war, it will be impossible to survive there. On the other hand, we have been informed that, if need be, we should go to a shelter located at such-and-such address. But it is the neighbor's basement, where they keep canned food. The place is small even for the owners of the basement, let alone we go there with our family.*

Overall, although positive examples are few, they enable to develop an idea about shelter standards and possible quick solutions to the problem:

- *We have a shelter in the school, newly built...the entire bottom floor of the hotel will be a community shelter, the new kindergarten, which is under construction, will also have a shelter in line with the new standards and proper conditions for food provision and stay.*

- *Our village has acquired pre-fabricated shelters, one has already been bought, and, if need be, it will be installed next to the preschool building.*

The section on *Protection* in the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 envisions steps to ensure protection of women and girls subjected to violence during conflicts.

The opinions of the participants in the focus group discussions were divided on this issue. Part of the participants, although they pointed out the problem of possible increase in family violence due to stress, were not well informed in terms of specific data and actions taken in this regard. They were not sufficiently informed about cases of violence against women displaced during the military activities either and noted only the necessity of providing psychological support and that, according to their observations, there were problems related to organization of such support.

In the opinion of other participants, after the war, cases of violence against women have, quite the contrary, decreased, “fear of loss has strengthened family ties,” “people began to better appreciate each other,” and the so called “postwar syndrome” manifestations have smoothed down thanks to patience shown by family members:

- *Soldiers, those, who returned, were in psychologically very tense situations. Violence –no, however, they had conflicts with family members. These obstacles were overcome thanks to women’s patience, psychologists, and priests.*

According to expert assessments, contradictory opinions about violence against women can be explained by lack of public awareness of the problem, as well as by the hidden nature of the phenomenon. Research demonstrates³⁶ that the majority of women do not sound alarm about the problem or report anywhere on the facts of violence committed against them.

Referencing the toolkit on *Prevention of and Response to Gender Violence during the War and Postwar Period*³⁷ published in 2022, which includes the experience and recommendations of women NGOs of Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine, experts note that during and after the war, the main actors responsible for protection of women and girls are governmental bodies, public institutions and civil society organizations, which have the competence to implement measures and policies aimed at prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. This topic is specially touched upon in Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the seventh periodic report of Armenia.

“Adopt a model of substantive equality that addresses gender-based violence and discrimination against women, including intersecting forms of discrimination, particularly against internally displaced women, women in a refugee-like situation, refugee women and conflict-related widows.”
Concluding observations³⁸ of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the seventh periodic report of Armenia,

November 1, 2022

³⁶ https://armstat.am/file/article/gbv_report_arm.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0BcfLA5sKKGZxz_CakXU0Ulr3dWML6lrn26SwycEVZkVAbI3uF-wBo_9tA

³⁷ <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/3/532499.pdf>

³⁸ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/ARM/CO/7&Lang=en

Experts have also noted the extraordinary report³⁹ of the RA Human Rights Defender on the consequences of the attack by Azerbaijani armed forces against the Republic of Armenia in September of 2022, according to which, there were cases of violence, humiliation and especially cruel treatment committed by the Azerbaijani armed forces against Armenian servicewomen because of their nationality and sex.

“Servicewomen were targeted not only because they were servicepersons, not only because they were Armenian, but also because they were women and the report on this particular cruelty has been properly presented to all competent international bodies.”

The RA HRD press conference⁴⁰

September 19, 2022

Although these cases are gross violations of the international humanitarian law and human rights and contradict the recommendations of Resolution 1325 and related other resolutions, they have not yet been assessed properly at the international level, which, according to the Human Rights Defender, “will reinforce a sense of impunity of any criminal person for crimes committed based on gender and ethnic hate, irrespective of the nationality of victims.”

Prevention

The activities in the section on *Prevention* of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 are focused mainly on awareness raising issues. Within the context of the postwar realities, security provision issues are prioritized by the republic’s population, however, the public awareness of Resolution 1325 and the National Action Plans on its implementation in Armenia, which are directly related to security issues, is rather low.

According to expert assessments, the problem of public’s lack of awareness of international and even local documents relates not only to Resolution 1325 and has the same roots as the problem of generally low literacy and legal awareness. In this context, according to expert observations, the Government’s publication of an informational booklet⁴¹ presenting the first National Action Plan in the lead-up to the twentieth anniversary of Resolution 1325 is a commendable initiative. However, it is not enough to address the awareness problems.

Although the discussion participants have the same opinion about the necessity of women’s participation in solving security problems of concern to them, however, they do not relate that to the existence of specific documents. At the same time, they express willingness to receive the necessary information on them:

- *I know that there is such a resolution, but have not heard about anything implemented within the framework of that resolution, or, perhaps, it is just me who has not heard. In any case, I believe that it is not widespread.*

³⁹ <https://ombuds.am/images/files/88015d8ec9e48d869bd8b706233613dd.pdf>

⁴⁰ <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32040990.html>

⁴¹ https://www.mfa.am/filemanager/un_brochure/brochure_arm_WEB.pdf

- *Although we are specialists actively working with society, we belong to groups that are interested in implementation of the National Plan within the scope of that resolution. However, unfortunately, I have to say that in our marz, though it is borderline, information is not widespread.*
- *In reality, I have heard about the plan only recently and decided to participate in this discussion to be better informed.*

Experts are convinced that awareness raising about the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 can help dissemination of information on security provision. The focus group discussions demonstrate that the population of borderline residential areas does not always know what to do in case of danger and who to turn to in an emergency situation. In this respect, the existence of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 is an important tool for filling up the gaps in public awareness of security issues.

The implementation of the activities envisioned in the section on *Prevention* of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 assumes the involvement of state structures and local authorities in their implementation. According to the focus groups, awareness gaps are to a significant extent addressed thanks to projects implemented by state structures, local authorities and NGOs, including women's NGOs through the support of a number of international organizations. Within the framework of these projects, carried out are awareness raising activities on security issues, training courses on first aid provision and military preparedness, defense and evacuation drills. It has been noted that the greater part of these projects targets the entire population; however, there are also projects, which target specifically women and girls. The participants mentioned numerous successful examples within the framework of the NGO-international organizations-local government cooperation format and, although the participants noted that there had been quite many such projects, they spoke only about the programs and activities that they had heard about or had personally participated in:

- *At present, the Red Cross and other organizations are trying to raise awareness of the entire population and they target also young girls. Specifically in the community of Tegh, after the 2020 war, there have been many awareness raising activities on first aid provision, the danger of mines and other similar topics.*
- *Recently, I too have participated in the training course on mines conducted in our community. Participants included people of different age, from schoolchildren to the elderly, people, who work in the fields and deal with agriculture.*
- *The Red Cross, NGO Hayordi and other organizations – are implementing awareness raising and defense programs in cooperation with community administrations. Specifically, the community administration organizes defense and evacuation drills, informs about the drill day and the school and everybody in the community participate. I am the organizer for the school and am informed that community residents clearly know what place, what shelter to go to in the event of threats to their security.*

- *The UN Office together with Women's Resource Center are implementing a project, which involves all schools, different organizations and the topic is mine clearing, what to do if you come across a mine and similar other problems.*
- *The response of international organizations was significant, they helped with organization of training courses, construction of shelters, and provision of hygienic items. They did what we requested based on needs assessment results.*

Attaching importance to the fact that state structures (Ministries of Emergency Situations, Economy, Education, Science, Culture and Sport, Territorial Administration and Infrastructures, Labor and Social Issues, and Health) and local self-governments are involved in awareness raising activities, the participants in the focus group discussions noted that awareness raising activities are implemented “spontaneously” and are not properly systematized. In addition, according to expert assessments, projects implemented in the regions are more of a rapid response type than preventive in their nature.

- *It is unfortunate that everything is done spontaneously. Every organization decides priorities for itself and does something without taking into account the needs of people, from bottom to top. Perhaps, there is a need for a more systematized approach by relevant bodies, large NGOs, local self-governments, schools so that those people are selected, who can disseminate the necessary information. Twenty to forty-five year old women should be empowered on these matters, although, of course, there are women, who voluntarily participate in the courses of the Art of Staying Alive, but their number is not big.*

Within the framework of preventive activities, the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 envisions awareness raising activities in the area of cybersecurity. Moreover, a demanding goal is set to create a national center of excellence in cybersecurity. The focus group discussions have demonstrated that certain steps are being taken for attainment of the set goal and the perception of the problem is more acute in borderline localities, the residents of which are more cautious about this matter than residents of areas located far from the border. Overall, all participants highly appreciate the necessity of carrying out activities for cybersecurity, irrespective of the fact whether they have taken part in similar activities or have just heard about them. Particularly, importance is attached to women's special role in cybersecurity provision, as well as to introduction of digital and media literacy elements into school curricula.

- *The 2022 44-day war was the most striking evidence that the system of cybersecurity is very weak in our country and the people are not protected. During those days, women were the most vulnerable since they constantly waited for some news, call, and information and ended up as targets of manipulative materials, videos disseminated through different Azerbaijani websites... We do not always realize how we endanger ourselves by smartphones, videos, telephone conversations, and dissemination of pictures through social pages. I am sorry to say that dangerous information was especially leaking from families, among whose members there were servicepersons. We are all human, maybe he just spoke a few words with his wife and very quickly this*

information spread through telephone networks and caused a damage to them and their children. In this regard, our situation with cybersecurity is in a state of neglect.

- *We conducted media literacy training courses in the Information House of Vayk, twelve extensive courses were held and participants received certificates. We also disseminated materials on media literacy through the Info house page, which has 4000 followers.*
- *From 2023 we will have educational programs with new standards at our schools, with one of them being digital and media literacy. This will not be just one school subject, it is envisioned that both information science and social science, as well as a number of other subjects will have elements of digital literacy.*

Cases were pointed out when women, attaching importance to the issue of cybersecurity, tried to fill up the gaps in their knowledge through self-education and engaged in that also other women in their midst:

- *There is a media literacy program on Public TV and I often watch it and advise others in my midst to do the same.*

Looking at the attitude of the focus group participants towards the issue of cybersecurity from the perspective of age differences, one can state that young people, who are the main and more active and progressive users of online domain, attach more importance to that issue than older people, who, due to the lack of skills, are more cautious and passive in the virtual domain.

Relief and recovery

The section on *Relief and Recovery* of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 envisions needs assessment of forcibly displaced women, as well as of those women, who are in danger of displacement, and, based on the assessments, provision of psychological and legal support, development and implementation of recovery (rehabilitation) and integration programs.

Accordingly, the focus group discussions proceeded in line with this logic and with two main emphases:

- Needs assessment, socio-psychological and legal support,
- Implementation of programs on expansion of women's economic opportunities and on integration/rehabilitation of the displaced.

Although all these issues are timely and pressing for all borderline marzes that were affected by military actions, Syunik marz is pivotal in terms of information and experience since it has received especially great numbers of the displaced from Artsakh, mainly women and children, and has come to confront numerous problems that need to be addressed, including both first aid provision, problems with housing and employment, and integration into the local community.

“Ensure that internally displaced women and girls and those in a refugee-like situation have adequate access to justice, education, health care, food, shelter, freedom of movement, official registration, social benefits and sustainable employment opportunities.”

Concluding observatons of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against

According to the focus group participants, thanks to the joint efforts of local authorities, international and local organizations and individuals, these problems have been mitigated to a significant extent, however, the imperatives of a comprehensive needs assessment, expansion of psychological and legal aid, and, generally, introduction of systematized and gender sensitive approaches continue to be still on the agenda. The question is not only about the displaced from Artsakh or borderline regions, but also about all vulnerable groups of the population adversely affected by military activities.

- *People are in need of psychological assistance and there are no psychological services of rapid response adapted to this situation. There are cases when due to lack of knowledge people confuse psychologists with psychiatrists and refuse psychological assistance even though they need it. Social workers too need to be retrained. I do not know if similar topics are incorporated into their educational programs.*
- *I can tell from my own experience and mention deplorable cases; legal and advocacy services are rather inaccessible for our people, especially for socially insecure vulnerable groups. The displaced families have the same problem. Our social workers exert efforts to be able to help to some extent. The need for legal services is very big and we must suggest to the state that it provide free services at least for the socially insecure.*

As a positive development, the participants have pointed out that in all the marzes, there are state-funded Centers for Support of Persons Subjected to Domestic Violence that offer psychological and legal assistance. In this context, they emphasized the guiding role of community administrations in social assistance provision, which is their function defined by law, as well as cooperation with local self-governments and NGOs in the area of assistance provision to and needs assessment of the displaced families:

- *NGOs periodically come up with such initiatives within the framework of their programs...targeting also women, displaced families living in frontier communities, war victims, etc. During and after the known events in Jermuk, they organized psychological rehabilitation camps for children of school age. The purpose of these camps was also to alleviate the burden of the displaced families by taking over the care of children for a few days.*
- *NGOs send a letter to the community administration and the community administration provides lists of registered people, who are then enrolled in given training courses, afterwards they are given tools, etc. That is to say, there is cooperation between NGOs and the community administration.*
- *It was the community administration that organized such a thing. Social workers registered those families and those who needed it, addressed organizational issues and*

⁴² https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/ARM/CO/7&Lang=en

carried out work. Those displaced from Artsakh and people of Jermuk were included.

- *They got registered at local self-government bodies, which have everybody's data, on the needs of the displaced, what they should be helped with, etc.*

Judging from the responses of the focus group participants, one can state that the necessity of needs assessment was understood by everybody and in the regions, it was carried out first of all by community administrations, as well as by different organizations, including NGOs within the framework of their assistance programs.

- *We have conducted needs assessment to find out what women can do, their abilities and aptitudes so that we can help them develop their skills and find jobs. We did home visits, surveys, etc.*
- *All these organizations, which conduct needs assessments or organize training courses, do not do that without the state and local self-government bodies. They all work by coordinating their programs with regional administrations and local self-government bodies since these training courses are usually held at schools, etc.*

According to expert assessments, even though the needs assessments were coordinated with local self-government bodies or regional administrations, overall, the entire process was not systematized and was not carried out based on common methodology. Moreover, in many cases, the community programs were not readjusted taking into account the new realities revealed by needs assessments.

Experts have attached importance to and positively evaluated the rapid response activities implemented by the Government, including the existence of reception centers, the hot line, provision of temporary residences to displaced persons, organization of education for displaced children and other activities.

“After the 2020 44-day war, numerous programs envisioned in the area of protection of women’s rights in Armenia were revised taking into consideration the new realities. Eighty-eight per cent of the people displaced from Artsakh were women and children, who were covered by different support programs. Within the framework of the Government’s five-year activity plan for 2021-2026, a number of activities were developed with a view to continually expanding the assistance provided to women of vulnerable groups.”

From the statement by the RA Minister of Labor and Social Issues⁴³
at the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
March 15, 2022

Unlike the experts, not all participants of the focus groups were fully informed about the support programs implemented by the RA Government, which can be viewed both as a problem of lack of awareness and as a result of non-systematized activities. For example, the responses of the focus group participants allow concluding that there were problems with the united referral mechanism. Although under the conditions of the martial law, an informational hot line with the telephone

⁴³ <https://www.mlsa.am/?p=34095>

number 117 was operating, not everybody could call it to offer and receive social assistance; due to lack of awareness, both the local people and the displaced often did not know who and how they could turn to for assistance.

According to experts, one obstacle to ensuring united approaches was the problem of the imperfect database on beneficiaries and vulnerable groups. The problem was identified as such earlier during the Covid pandemic and existed before the war, so it could not but tell on the targeted assistance provision to the population affected by the military activities.

The experts have also noted that understanding of gender sensitive approaches is limited among both the population and the responsible persons. In this regard, only the necessity of distinguishing hygienic items intended for women is primarily mentioned.

The problems pointed out during the focus group discussions are confirmed by the results of other research. In particular, according to expert observations, within the framework of the research on *Policies and Practices Related to Assistance Provided to Persons Displaced from Nagorno Karabagh, particularly Women and Girls*⁴⁴, it was also pointed out that there was a need for creation of a united and comprehensive database on social service expansion, introduction of psychological services and humanitarian programs implemented by the displaced persons and organizations. Emphasized was also lack of full and reliable information on the functions of social assistance programs and state bodies and the necessity of developing and introducing monitoring and assessment mechanisms for social services provided by the state.

The main activities envisioned in the section on *Relief and Recovery* of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 are aimed at socio-economic integration of displaced women and solution to their livelihood, employment and self-employment, and income generation problems.

In this respect, the focus group participants mentioned numerous examples of successful programs, which are, as envisaged by the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, implemented with funding support of international organizations, in close cooperation with the Government and NGO involvement. The experts have evaluated this cooperation format as most effective.

According to the focus group participants, the list of demanded professions for training includes primarily hair-dressing, manicure, sewing, carpet making and cooking and it is developed in line with the wishes of training participants. According to organizers of similar programs, the results are undoubtedly positive, however, in some cases, a subjective factor is at play: “we conduct the same training course for different women, provide the same tools, but part of them integrate very quickly, find jobs, begin to earn their living, while others cannot manage to do anything.”

- *In Goris, WINNET Armenia is implementing very good programs for women. My mother has participated. The organization teaches different professional skills /hairdressing, manicure, sewing, etc./, provides tools so that the trainees can work. They have also provided work to displaced women at their center. At this moment, they have provided jobs to six women at their social enterprise.*

⁴⁴ The research was conducted by World Vision Armenia in 2022 within the framework of the component on *Women, Security, Peace* of the USAID-funded project *Community Level Access to Social Services (CLASS)*.

- *We too have participated in one of similar programs. We benefited from a program of support to women by World Food Programme. One of the conditions was that female individual entrepreneurs should apply to the program. We were provided construction materials and equipment to start a bakery. Now, we have already created it and are working. The program had been announced for women in borderline communities. As far as I know, the decision to implement this program was made after the war, aiming to solve the bread problem in borderline communities.*

The focus group participants have also pointed out examples of women's self-organization and mutual assistance for employment and income generation of displaced women, as well as those living in borderline communities. According to expert observations, that means that in emergencies women's activism and self-organization manifest themselves not only when they try to escape imminent danger and to protect their families and communities, but also when they demonstrate initiative in trying to solve different war-caused problems, including those related to women's economic opportunities.

- *I personally have got engaged in research and needs assessment through a certain program, have seen the problems and now I and a few other women like me are cooperating to create opportunities for women of some families in borderline villages by providing jobs to them at their homes so that they do not have to incur expenses to travel from their villages to the town of Berd and confront other problems. They are working reconciling work with their household duties to the maximum extent and, with minimal expenses, we have recorded perhaps very small, but nevertheless successes.*
- *Four young women from the village of Chinchin have turned to us for assistance in learning carpet making and developing this craft in their village and now they are already making carpets and passing on the tradition to their children. There are other similar examples.*
- *During the war, we provided displaced women with knitting needles, crochet hooks, and other things. They knitted socks, hats, and other needed things and sent them to soldiers. This way women felt useful, kept busy and got over their difficult psychological state.*

As it has been demonstrated by the focus group discussions, programs for displaced women are often part of the programs started before the war and aimed at ensuring economic development and sustainability of Armenia's marzes. The latter are implemented based on the same logic of women's economic empowerment, their employment and engagement in the labor market and enhancement of their competitiveness. These programs continued after the war with their beneficiaries being both displaced and native women, including those from borderline regions of Armenia affected by the war. This format, on the one hand, helps quicker integration of displaced women, and, on the other hand, affirms that programs for expansion of women's economic opportunities are of a permanent, continuous nature:

- *Many organizations carry out much research, work continuously with families. I can say that this work is of a permanent nature and covers different fields.*
- *We have a family where the wife does gardening and she has applied for a grant. Yes, it is difficult as women often remain in the shadow because of stereotypes. However, at present we can see that different organizations have changed their policies and assist women. We can see the steps of civil society targeting women's economic activation and we have an important point in our strategy.*

One of the important observations made during the focus group discussions is that programs on women's economic activation and expansion of their entrepreneurship not only make an important contribution to the development of a given locality, but are also directly linked to security provision issues. On the one hand, security is an important precondition for economic development and, on the other hand, any activity targeting economic development is a guarantee of security and postwar recovery.

- *Women should have a special opportunity to implement business projects. They themselves and the economy will develop; workplaces will open up, etc. The biggest issue, which will ensure development of different programs, is solution of security problems. This will promote development of the economy since people will realize that they can have long-term programs.*

Cooperation

Summing up the focus group discussions on the component of *Cooperation* of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, one can state that they proceeded within the scope of the logic of the activities envisioned by the plan and focused on the following:

- Cooperation with the state structures, NGOs dealing with the issue, and international organizations for implementation of Resolution 1325 at the local level,
- Cooperation with the UN and other international structures within the framework of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions for proper assessment of violations of the humanitarian law and human rights recorded during and after the war.

In essence, examples of cooperation at the local level were voiced during the entire process of the focus group discussions in connection with women's participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery. The foundation for cooperation was laid by the creation of a commission for monitoring issues in relation to the implementation of the 2019-2021 National Action Plan on Resolution 1325⁴⁵, which included not only representatives of state departments, but also those of international organizations and NGOs.

This format for the plan's co-implementing entities is envisioned by almost all activities outlined in the National Action Plan, and it is this very format that was mentioned by the focus group participants and assessed as effective by experts.

⁴⁵ <https://www.arlis.am/DocumentView.aspx?docid=141674>

For example, experts have mentioned the Armenia Inter-Agency Response Plan (IARP) implemented in cooperation with the UN Armenia Office in 2020-2021. Its main goal was to assist the RA Government to provide a rapid response to the war challenges through organization of humanitarian assistance. The Plan was implemented in close cooperation with the state and local authorities, regional administrations, as well as NGOs and was evaluated as a very successful cooperation effort by experts.

The IARP was designed and implemented as a complement to the efforts of the Government of Armenia and to comprehensively address the needs of 90, 000 persons who arrived in Armenia as a result of the conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabagh. The provided humanitarian aid included provision of housing, medical services, foodstuff, financial means and protection assistance.

From the UN Armenia website⁴⁶

It is noteworthy that the focus group participants were well aware not only of implementing organizations of the programs carried out in their communities, but also of funding international structures.⁴⁷

- *The Work and Homeland NGO has recently been implementing a program funded by the European Union. Within the framework of the program, families displaced from Artsakh or families whose members were killed or injured during the war participated in training courses, after which they could write small grant proposals to establish businesses or to develop them.*
- *The Red Cross called me as someone displaced from Jermuk, made inquiries for job placement and support. An American organization has provided a small grant.*
- *The Czech organization People in Need organized training courses in Vayots Dzor marz for those displaced from Artsakh. The courses were on different topics and families got registered for them selecting one topic. If not 100 per cent, at least 90 per cent of the displaced families have participated in these training courses. There were men too, but primarily female representatives of the families took part in the courses. Greater participation of women was probably due to the offered topics, they mainly selected culinary arts, etc.*

The RA Government's cooperation with NATO, OSCE, and Council of Europe on involving women in power structures was mentioned as a successful example. With a view to promoting women's participation in the area of defense, studies of international best practices, as well as research were implemented as envisioned by the Plan. The *NATO Week* events organized in Armenia since 2007 have always included public discussions on the topic *Women, Security, Peace* as a mandatory component.

⁴⁶ <https://armenia.un.org/en/196136-armenia-inter-agency-response-plan-final-report>

⁴⁷ Within the framework of this research, only those organizations are noted, the names of which were mentioned during the focus group discussions. The actual picture of cooperation is much more inclusive and includes much greater number of NGOs and international structures; however, it was not intended to present the entire list within the scope of this research.

The project *Building Resilience in the Eastern Neighborhood* (BREN)⁴⁸ launched in 2022, which assists organizations dealing with women rights protection in the countries of the Eastern Neighborhood, is one of those projects that create cooperation bases for implementation of Resolution 1325.

The second important emphasis made during discussions of the *Cooperation* component related to application of Resolution 1325 and other relevant resolutions to condemn and provide proper assessment of the humanitarian law and human rights violations recorded during the 44-day war in Artsakh and the postwar period in Armenia and Artsakh. According to experts, the resolution stresses the responsibility of all states to punish, without amnesty, those persons, who are guilty of genocides, crimes against humanity and military crimes, including crimes associated with sexual and other violence against women and girls.

The UN SC Resolution 1325⁴⁹ calls upon all parties of armed conflict to fully uphold the international legal norms associated with the rights of women and girls, especially as civilians, and, in particular, the obligations in regard to them according to the Geneva Convention of 1949 and its Protocols of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and its Protocol of 1967, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and its two Optional Protocols of May 25, 2000 and to take into consideration the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

According to expert observations, although numerous reports on the war crimes committed by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces have been prepared by fact-finding missions and the Human Rights Defenders of Armenia and Artsakh and presented to international structures dealing with these problems, these crimes have not yet been evaluated as actions of gross violations of the humanitarian law and relevant international conventions, as well as of Resolution 1325 and other related resolutions. According to experts, the toolkit of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions has not been applied to condemn the war crimes against women and civilian population within the context neither of the war, nor of the postwar developments. This means that much needs to be done in this direction by both the state and civil society.

PART 4. CONCLUSIONS

This analysis allows drawing the following conclusions regarding the processes of implementation of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Armenia, as well as regarding the desire, readiness, and prospects for women's participation in security and peace processes.

- ✓ Women's activism is visible in all directions of the National Action Plan on implementation of Resolution 1325, i.e. participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery, and cooperation.

⁴⁸ The project is implemented through cooperation of *the Institute for War and Peace Reporting* (IWPR) and *the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders* (GNWP) with funding support from the United Kingdom Government's *Conflict, Stability and Security Fund* (CSSF).

⁴⁹ https://havas-ar-infohub.am/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2_UN_SCR_1325_ARM.pdf

- ✓ Women's participation is viewed as critical at all stages of the conflict, including especially the participation of women of frontier locations during the period of military activities: after the 44-day war, the women's participation has significantly increased in training courses on handling fire-arms and acquiring civil defense skills.
- ✓ The analysis of data on women's representation at decision making levels demonstrates that women are absent from decision-making processes and negotiations related to conflict management and settlement, which attests to the fact that women's potential is neglected in matters of national security provision.
- ✓ The public perceptions and concerns about protection issues vary from marz to marz, which is conditioned by the security situation in a given marz after the war.
- ✓ Women of borderline rural areas have a clear understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities in the area of protection of their communities, pointing out problems with availability of shelters and their proper furnishings, lack of equipment, the state of infrastructures, which are not adapted to emergencies, and other problems.
- ✓ The study reaffirms the fact lying at the basis of Resolution 1325 that women have an important role in emergencies brought about by conflicts by taking over the mission of providing for their families' livelihood and survival, by organizing themselves and actively engaging in ensuring security and protection of their communities and humanitarian assistance provision, and by participating in military activities as combatants.
- ✓ If before 2020, the concept of peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict and postwar peacebuilding was pivotal in the processes of implementation of Resolution 1325 and perceptions about the resolution, after the 44-day war, the issue of security provision has become a priority in the new postwar realities.
- ✓ Importance is attached to the issues of providing protection to women and girls affected by violence during and as a consequence of the conflict, however, due to the lack of awareness about the problem and the hidden nature of the phenomenon, public is not clear about what actions need to be taken in that direction, mentioning only the necessity of providing psychological support.
- ✓ The public positively evaluates the efforts of the Government within the framework of Resolution 1325, which are aimed at promotion of women's involvement in the armed forces, police, and peacekeeping missions.
- ✓ Still topical are issues of women's advancement in the Armed Forces, their representation in leadership positions and factual provision of equal rights and equal opportunities to women in the RA Defense system.
- ✓ Although, after the 44-day war, the republic's population prioritizes security provision issues, the public awareness of Resolution 1325, which is directly related to security issues, as well as of the National Action Plans on the implementation of the resolution in Armenia is rather low, which can be attributed to generally low level of legal awareness.
- ✓ In regard to implementation of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, the public clearly grasps the necessity of engaging local authorities and especially NGOs.

The public perceptions about the component of *Cooperation* in the National Action Plan on

Resolution 1325 are positive about the cooperation format of state structures-NGOs dealing with the problem-international organizations. However, some problems are recorded with respect to lack of proper assessment, within the framework of Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, by the UN and other international structures of the humanitarian law and human rights violations during and after the war.

PART 5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR THE RA SECOND, 2022-2024 NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON UN SC RESOLUTION 1325

Based on the above, as well as on the necessity of expanding women's participation, their readiness for and activism in these processes, the project's group of experts suggested the development of a **results-based monitoring and evaluation framework** for the national programs aimed at implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1325 in Armenia.

Monitoring and evaluation is a necessary component of any development program and its main purpose is to assess the effectiveness of the program's implementation and the degree of its performance, as well as its correspondence to the anticipated results.

In this case, the monitoring framework will aim to quickly reveal to the extent possible the program's actual and possible achievements and gaps, as well as to help correct and overcome the latter. On the one hand, it will allow formulating comprehensive indicators and, on the other hand, it will create an opportunity to augment the responsibility of the RA Government and participant structures and effectiveness of their efforts.

The results-based monitoring and evaluation emphasize results (program's long-term results, which are also noted as goals or objectives) and influence (broader changes in communities, organizations, society or environment, which are also called impact).

The results-based monitoring framework envisions six-step actions, including:

- Step 1. Development of a high-impact logical framework,
- Step 2. Identification of the tools to measure progress
- Step 3. Development of a monitoring and evaluation plan,
- Step 4. Implementation of monitoring,
- Step 5. Evaluation of the national action plan,
- Step 6. Use of the monitoring and evaluation information to improve the national action plan and to ensure major impact.

Development of a high-impact logical framework implies an inclusive and results-focused process, where the word "result" is important in terms of assuming changes and planning for them.

Identification of the tools to measure progress means determination of such indicators that are specific, measurable, accessible, relevant, time-bound and gender-sensitive and can help in assessment of successes. In this context, of great importance are both a) *the quantitative results of the performed work* – expressed by quantitative indicators, which show the volume of the

accomplished work, and b) *the qualitative results of the performed work* expressed by qualitative indicators, which record the outcomes and quality of the plan implementation.

Development of monitoring and evaluation plan has a number of advantages. It is the pivotal part of the monitoring and assessment system, it serves as a manual for the monitoring and evaluation processes, it facilitates the coordination and systematization, documenting all mechanisms, duties and resources related to monitoring and evaluation.

Methodology of monitoring implementation can include study of documents, observation, surveys, research, interviews, focus group and other discussions.

Evaluation of the National Action Plan helps determine the value and meaning of an action or objective and can include evaluation of the quality of the planning and implementation process. In those cases, when it is difficult to gauge results, evaluations can be entirely focused on issues associated with the process. The process of the NAP evaluation enables to ponder over the results and facilitates dialogues between participants.

Use of the monitoring and evaluation information to improve the national action plan and to ensure major impact. The use of the monitoring and evaluation information rounds off the monitoring and assessment framework by serving as a basis for designing and planning the next stage in the implementation of the national action plan, and, if the above noted approaches and toolkit were used correctly, the obtained information will help creation of a sustainable and functional monitoring system, enabling to continuously improve or adapt the plan, to create evidence of its results and impact, and to inspire design of high-impact national action plans of the next generation.

The current, 2nd national action plan already highlights the importance of monitoring and evaluation: “a) submission of annual reports by members of Interagency Commission on implementation of the UN SCR Resolution 1325; b) establishment of a working group comprised with the members of the Commission and NGOs (if expedient, to engage also international experts) in order to assess the presented reports and evaluate the effectiveness of the work accomplished.”

The plan’s strategic objectives and the proposed activities for attaining those objectives of course outline the scope of activities in support of policies, however, the plan includes almost no Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound and Gender-sensitive (SMARTG) indicators corresponding to its directions and activities. Hence, it is necessary to clearly define indicators in line with the envisioned objectives and activities and to incorporate a monitoring mechanism and methodological system in the future plans.

As we have already mentioned, the monitoring framework is usually created based on the conducted research, which is completely justified in this case, and the current research, as well as analysis of other researches in the field provide an opportunity to make the following expert recommendations.

The expert recommendations regarding the second, 2022-2024 National Action Plan on implementation of the provisions of UN SC Resolution 1325 on *Women, Peace, and Security* are presented in regard to the pointed out directions, objectives, and activities of the Plan, in addition

to the existing result indicators. The recommendations include a number of both quantitative and qualitative indicators, approaches and methodology on information collection and measurement.

1. National Action Plan direction: PARTICIPATION

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To promote policies aimed at engagement of women in different subdivisions of the Armed Forces |
| | ACTIVITIES | Awareness raising of the role of women serving in the Armed Forces |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of mechanisms for promotion of women's involvement in the processes on development of defense policies - Increase in the number of female applicants to the RA military educational institutions |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of female graduates from the RA military educational institutions - The number of women engaged in the subdivisions of the Armed Forces - The number of women in decision-making bodies of the subdivisions of the Armed Forces - The number of awareness raising activities on the necessity of involving women in different subdivisions of the Armed Forces - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in awareness raising activities |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - Satisfaction with the conditions created for women's service in the subdivisions of the Armed Forces |
| | METHODS | - Surveys and feedback |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To promote women's engagement and advancement in the Police system |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of involvement of female lecturers in and female applicants to the Police Academy - Awareness raising of decision makers in the Police system on women's issues and on equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Increase in the number of professional orientation sessions, including the number of training courses |

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| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of female graduates from the Police Academy - The number of female teachers working at the Police Academy - The number of women engaged in the Police system - The number of women in decision making bodies of the Police system - The number of training courses on equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men at the Police Academy - The number of participants in awareness raising activities |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfaction with the conditions created for women's service in the Police system |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys and feedback |

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | OBJECTIVE | To ensure involvement of women of borderline regions (including those in a new security situation) and of forcibly displaced women in discussions of security issues |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring participation and involvement of women in activities of local self-government bodies and elaboration of community development programs - Assessment of women's security needs - Incorporation of a security component into programs of NGOs, including Women's Resource Centers |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in the number of training courses and discussions on security issues for community women councilors - Reflection of the results of women's security needs assessment in all the RA strategies |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in training courses on security issues - The number of women of borderline communities and that of displaced women involved in security issues discussions - The number of women's initiatives aimed at security provision |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation of effectiveness of training courses (with the help of evaluation sheets) - Evaluation of the security situation of women in borderline communities - Study of the opinions of municipal councilors and LSG leaders covering borderline communities |
| | METHOD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey based on evaluation sheets - Assessment of the situation - Focus group discussions |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To ensure women's participation in decision-making processes and development of national and community programs on climate change impact mitigation and adaptability |
| | ACTIVITIES | Identification of economic areas and communities that are especially vulnerable due to climate change and development of programs with engagement of women's professional and public groups |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Ensuring equal opportunities for women's participation in national and community programs on relevant areas |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The number of community events devoted to climate change The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in community activities devoted to climate change |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The degree of awareness raising among women as a result of community events devoted to climate change |
| | METHODS | - Survey based on evaluation sheets - Focus group discussions |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To enhance the preparedness of women to overcome emergencies in borderline communities |
| | ACTIVITIES | Organization of training on civil defense issues and the population's protection in the event of emergencies in borderline communities |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Increase in the number of women in training drills |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - Presence of provisions related to emergency situations in the five-year development plans of borderline communities - The number of short-term training courses related to emergencies at educational institutions of borderline communities - The number of student girls and boys enrolled in these courses |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - Increase in knowledge about civil defense and the population's protection in emergency situations in borderline communities |
| | METHODS | - Survey based on evaluation sheets |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To raise awareness about the importance of women's role in the defense system |
| | ACTIVITIES | Organization of conferences and meetings with different circles of society on the role of women in the defense system, including events with participation of international experts |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Increase in awareness on the topic of women and security |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The number of implemented events - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in the events |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - Changes in perceptions on the importance of women's role in the defense system |
| | METHODS | - Surveys and feedback |

2. National Action Plan direction: PROTECTION

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To provide protection to women and girls affected by violence during conflict |
| | ACTIVITIES | - Capacity building of employees of the bodies responsible for displacement and accommodation issues - Enhancement of gender sensitivity - Training of legal bodies and judges - Improvement of referral mechanisms for women subjected to violence, including sexual violence - Localization of international best practices |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Implementation of research activities, if necessary - Organization of training courses and awareness raising (mechanisms of notification and protection of the rights of victims) - Training of about 100 persons included in the list of judges and candidates for judges and of about 250 persons included in the list of prosecutors and candidates for prosecutors during one year |

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| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of participants in awareness raising activities on violence, including sexual violence, as well as on referral mechanisms for women subjected to violence - The number of women and girls that have applied to prosecutor's office and court - The number of decisions made by courts on women and girls subjected to violence during conflict |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 50% awareness raising among women affected by conflict |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys and feedback |

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| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | OBJECTIVE | To provide special protection to women and girls in the event of wars, emergencies and epidemics |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction of shelters in borderline locations and adaptation of the existing shelters based on standards related to gender peculiarities - Ensuring gender sensitivity during introduction and application of response mechanisms necessitated by COVID-19 pandemic |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in the number of shelters and improvement of their quality 2. Availability of training courses on civil defense taking into consideration gender peculiarities |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of shelters corresponding to modern standards - The number of women applying for shelter |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of meeting the special needs of women in shelters |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expert assessment - Needs assessment through surveys |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To help the social adaptation of wives of servicepersons of military units deployed in borderline locations |
| | ACTIVITIES | Cooperation with national structures, local self-government bodies, and non-governmental organizations in ensuring the social integration of wives of servicepersons |

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|------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | RESULT INDICATORS | 3. Conduct of professional training courses with a view to ensuring the employment of wives of servicepersons |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of activities aimed at the social adaptation of wives of servicepersons in military units deployed in borderline areas - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in the activities |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of meeting the needs of wives of servicepersons in military units deployed in borderline areas - Level of the social adaptation of wives of servicepersons in military units deployed in borderline areas |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expert assessment - Needs assessment through surveys |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To conduct training courses aimed at development of first aid skills in emergencies and/or during war (paying special attention to women in borderline regions and displaced women) |
| | ACTIVITIES | Ensuring cooperation with local self-government bodies |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | Increase in the number of training courses for women and girls on first aid provision |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of women enrolled in first aid training courses - The number of women that successfully passed the test drills |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 50% capacity building of participants in training courses |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge assessment sheets |

3. National Action Plan direction: PREVENTION

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | Participation of women and girls in activities aimed at prevention of genocides, crimes against humanity, and war crimes |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigation, collection and awareness raising of cases of violation of the international humanitarian law and human rights of civilians (including as a result of the 2020 aggression against Nagorno Karabagh) - Study of the RA work aimed at prevention of genocide - Organization of special training for members of peacekeeping forces and military police |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and dissemination of training materials - Concise information on the work carried out by Armenia at international arena on the topic of genocide prevention |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in special training for members of peacekeeping forces and military police |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - Studies related to violations of the norms of the international humanitarian law and human rights with respect to civilians are gender-sensitive |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study - Gender mainstreaming |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | Awareness raising and skills development on the topic of Women, Security and Peace |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness raising of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and translation and dissemination of related resolutions - Translation of the second National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 into English - Ensuring broad awareness of international documents on women's rights |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in the number of women in training courses on awareness raising campaigns and skills development - Preparation of training materials on women's rights in Armenian |

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| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of borderline communities engaged in awareness raising activities on resolution 1325 - The number of women engaged in awareness raising activities on resolution 1325 |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of knowledge of residents of borderline villages about resolution 1325 and associated documents |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys with provision of the necessary sampling |

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | OBJECTIVE | Development of educational capacities, inclusion of information on resolution 1325 in educational programs |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion of training courses on protection of women's rights in the defense system or areas related to it and on provision of equal opportunities into curricula of higher education institutions - Incorporation of awareness raising materials in the modules for training of teachers |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of relevant training courses, educational materials and lectures in the curricula of the RA higher education institutions - Availability of relevant training courses, educational materials and lectures in the curricula of military higher education institutions - Availability of awareness raising materials in the modules of training courses for teachers and professorial staff - Availability of awareness raising materials in training courses for pedagogues |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of teachers (sex-disaggregated data) trained on resolution 1325 - The number of principals of schools and colleges (sex-disaggregated data) trained on resolution 1325 - Questions related to resolution 1325 are included in the questionnaire for attestation of school and college principals |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | Not any |
| | METHODS | |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | Awareness raising of the employees of the main military investigative department of the investigative committee and military prosecutor's office on protection of women's rights in the area of security |
| | ACTIVITIES | Organization of training seminars on protection of women's rights in the area of security for representatives of the investigative committee and military prosecutor's office |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | Increase in the number of training courses/seminars on awareness raising in military law enforcement bodies |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in seminars on awareness raising about resolution 1325 and the national action plan in military law enforcement bodies |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - High level of effectiveness of seminars/training courses on awareness raising in military law enforcement bodies |
| | METHODS | - Evaluation |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To reinforce confidence in digital solutions and to implement activities aimed at women's activism in programs on cybersecurity |
| | ACTIVITIES | To create a national center of excellence in cybersecurity |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | Development of cyber literacy, augmentation of struggle against cybercrimes, and protection of personal data taking into consideration women's special problems |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The number of training courses on cyber literacy - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in training courses on cyber literacy |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - High level of effectiveness of training courses on cyber literacy |
| | METHODS | - Evaluation |

4. National Action Plan direction: RELIEF and RECOVERY

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To provide psychological and legal assistance to forcibly displaced women and those exposed to the danger of displacement |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs assessment (will be carried out based on the January 25th, 2017 order N 6-A/1 of the RA Minister of Labor and Social Issues) - Development and implementation of rehabilitation (including psychological) and integration programs - Provision of rehabilitation and integration services and improvement of their quality |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Needs assessment of displaced women and girls, as well as those exposed to the danger of displacement and development and introduction of a corresponding integration plan |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of women that have applied for psychological and legal assistance - The number of assisted women |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - High level of satisfaction of women that have received assistance |
| | METHODS | - Evaluation |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To provide protection of social and economic rights of women and girls affected by the Nagorno Karabagh conflict, including those residing in locations subjected to force in 2016 and 2020, as well as those women that were displaced from Azerbaijan in 1988-1992 and found refuge in Nagorno Karabagh. |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of socioeconomic programs for women and girls affected by the Nagorno Karabagh conflict - To provide access for women to economic integration programs - Creation of a favorable environment and enhancement of women's competitiveness in the labor market |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revision of the socioeconomic programs - Engagement of women affected by the conflict in programs implemented by Women's Resource Centers - Adaptation of the environment and creation of workplaces |

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| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of women that have applied to economic integration programs - The number of women that have completed economic integration programs - The number of women that have participated in economic integration programs and have found jobs or have founded their own businesses |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Degree of satisfaction with economic integration programs |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation |

5. National Action Plan direction: COOPERATION

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | OBJECTIVE | To ensure cooperation of all local platforms within the framework of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 |
| | ACTIVITIES | Promotion of cooperation, implementation of joint programs, mutual visits, and exchange of experience |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | Increase in the number of mutual visits and implemented programs |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of women and organizations representing women's interests on local cooperation platforms within the framework of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High degree of effectiveness of the work of local cooperation platforms within the framework of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325 |
| | METHODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To ensure cooperation with countries that have National Action Plans on Resolution 1325, interested international organizations, and foundations dealing with women issues |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bilateral visits, experience exchange, engagement of experts - Convening joint conferences - Application of world's best practices - Joining the regional and international networks on Resolution 1325 |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening the knowledge - Strengthening the RA position on international platforms |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of international events in Armenia devoted to National Action Plans on Resolution 1325 - The number of participants (sex-disaggregated data) in international events in Armenia devoted to National Action Plans on Resolution 1325 - The representation/number of women's non-governmental organizations in the regional and international networks on Resolution 1325 |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - High level of effectiveness of participation in the regional and international networks on Resolution 1325 |
| | METHODS | - Study, evaluation |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To study international best practices and to establish cooperation with a view to promoting women's participation in the area of defense, including those women that were displaced from Azerbaijan in 1988-1992 and found refuge in Nagorno Karabagh and Republic of Armenia |
| | ACTIVITIES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study of experience of leading countries - Organization of visits - Cooperation with international structures dealing with the topic of Women, Peace, and Security |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - Development and presentation of recommendations based on the acquired knowledge and studies |

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | Not any |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | Not any |
| | METHODS | Not any |

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To ensure cooperation and experience exchange with the Nagorno Karabagh authorities and non-governmental organizations for implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions |
| | ACTIVITIES | - Organization of periodic conferences and thematic discussions, including those with participation of international experts |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | - To ensure a significant number of conferences and thematic discussions |
| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The number of international and national experts (sex-disaggregated data) that have participated in the conferences and thematic discussions - The number of participants and NGOs (sex-disaggregated data) from Nagorno Karabagh involved in discussions - The number of recommendations made as a result of conferences and thematic discussions - The percentage of adopted recommendations made as a result of conferences and thematic discussions |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | - The percentage of adopted recommendations made as a result of conferences and thematic discussions |
| | METHODS | Simple calculation |

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|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As set forth in the RA National Action Plan for 2022-2024 | OBJECTIVE | To establish cooperation with the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect |
| | ACTIVITIES | Study of the experience of the United Nations in prevention of and protection from mass atrocity crimes against women and girls |
| | RESULT INDICATORS | Engagement in international discussions on early prevention, peacekeeping missions, victim protection, justice administration and retribution |

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| EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS | QUANTITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | Not any |
| | QUALITATIVE RESULT INDICATORS | Not any |
| | METHODS | Not any |

The list and links to the documents and researches laid basis for the information presented on page 15, (Part 2)

1. In 1994, the OSCE Budapest Summit on resolution of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict established the institution of the Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship. The institution co-chaired by France, the Russian Federation, and the United States started its activities on February 14, 1997 and since then, all negotiations on resolution of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict have proceeded in this format, at the level of the Presidents and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Azerbaijan. <https://www.osce.org/mg>
2. The number of female ambassadors in the diplomatic corps of Armenia does not exceed 15%. Women are not involved in the Security Council since they do not hold key and leadership positions at the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, and Emergency Situations, as well as at the National Security Service and the Police. Women have never been engaged in negotiations on conflict resolution. Bulletin HAVASAR on *Women in Situations of Armed Conflict* <http://womennet.am/armed-conflict/>
3. The RA National Assembly statement on *Settlement of the Nagorno Karabagh Conflict*, April 29, 2008 <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=3201&lang=arm>
The RA MFA statement <https://www.mfa.am/hy/interviews-articles-and-comments/2022/09/27/mfa.stmnt/11654>
The RA National Assembly statement on *Condemning the Military Aggression Unleashed by Azerbaijan against the Republic of Artsakh on September 27, 2020*, September 28, 2020 <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=7328&lang=arm;>
Fact-Finding Report: Human Rights Violations during the Artsakh 44-Day War – Yerevan, 2022 https://www.osf.am/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Fact-Finding-Report_Final_ARM_WEB.pdf
4. The RA National Assembly statement on *Emergency Situation in Borderline Regions, in particular in Syunik and Gegharkunik, Problems and Ways of Their Solution, and Issues related to Provision of Defense and Security on the Borders*, May 14, 2021 [http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=7619&lang=arm ;](http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=7619&lang=arm;)
The RA National Assembly statement on the armed attack by Azerbaijan, September 13, 2022 <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=8270&lang=arm>
5. PACE Resolution 2184 (2017) The functioning of democratic institutions in Azerbaijan
6. “Armenophobia in Azerbaijan”, 2013 <http://stophatespeech.net/hy/index.html#;>
“Hatred, hatred, hatred for the enemy.” How “the cult of victory” turns out for Azerbaijani schoolchildren. BBC Russian-Language Service, December 26, 2022 <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-64077433;>

The RA National Assembly statement on *In regard to Passing On by Hungarian Authorities to Azerbaijan the Criminal Who Killed the Armenian Officer Gurghen Margaryan during the NATO Training Courses In Budapest in February of 2004 and the Azerbaijani President's Grant of Pardon to the Latter*, September 5, 2012 <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=4609&lang=arm>
Peculiarities of Formation of the Image of the Armenians as an Image of the Enemy, 2015 http://www.noravank.am/arm/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=13762
Azerbaijan's Anti-Armenian Information System, Yerevan, Noravank Scientific-Educational Foundation, 2009 <https://bit.ly/2TbVbUs>

7. The RA Prime Minister's speech on the situation in the Lachin corridor, December 15, 2022 <https://www.primeminister.am/hy/statements-and-messages/item/2022/12/15/Cabinet-meeting-Speech/>;

The RA National Assembly statement *On Condemning the Azerbaijani Policy of Impeding and Unduly Delaying the Repatriation of Prisoners of War and Civilians Taken Prisoner, including Women, that Are under Azerbaijan's Control*, March 3, 2021

<http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=7499&lang=arm>;

The statement of the Armenian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on Azerbaijan's blocking of the Lachin corridor and the gas pipeline to Artsakh and creating a humanitarian disaster, December 20, 2022 <https://bit.ly/3ZlLyoC>;

PACE Resolution Res. 2391 27/09/2021 Humanitarian consequences of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan / Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

<https://pace.coe.int/en/files/29483#trace-4> ;

Human rights defender of Armenia and Artsakh, Joint ad hoc public report. The humanitarian consequences of blocking the only road connecting Artsakh with Armenia and the world. Yerevan -Stepanakert, December 15, 2022

<https://www.ombuds.am/images/files/b91bbe990a6b67833cb531b6c07d18fd.pdf> ;

A special public report on the consequences of the Azerbaijani armed assault on the Republic of Armenia, September (updated), 2022

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