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United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



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Sverige

## UN JOINT PROGRAMME FOR GENDER EQUALITY MPTF OFFICE GENERIC ANNUAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup> NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2017

<p><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Title: <b>UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality</b></li> <li>• Programme Number (if applicable): 00097295</li> <li>• MPTF Office Project Reference Number:<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results<sup>2</sup></b></p> <p><i>Country/Region: Georgia</i></p> <p><i>SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 16; UNPSD Outcome 2 (focus area 1 - Democratic Governance) and Outcome 4 (focus area 2 - Jobs, Livelihood and Social Protection)</i></p>
<p><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <p>UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA</p>	<p><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <p>The programme is directly implemented by UN agencies UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA and in partners with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (GEC)</li> <li>• Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GE/VAW Commission)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p><b>Total approved budget as per project document:</b> USD 8,177,048 (SEK 70,000,000)</p> <p><b>MPTF/JP Contribution:<sup>4</sup></b> <i>Government of Sweden (pass-through)</i></p> <p><b>Other Contributions</b> <i>Government of Sweden</i></p> <p><b>TOTAL:</b> USD 8,177,048</p>	<p><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <p><b>Overall Duration:</b> 61.5 months <b>Start Date:<sup>5</sup></b> 16 November 2015 <b>Original End Date:<sup>6</sup></b> 31 December 2020 <b>Current End Date:<sup>7</sup></b> 31 December 2020</p>
<p><b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b></p>	<p><b>Report Submitted By</b></p>

<sup>1</sup> The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>4</sup> The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>6</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>7</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

**Final Evaluation**

Yes     No    **Date:** 2020

**Mid-Term Evaluation**

Yes     No    **Date:** 2018

- Name:
- Title:
- Participating Organization (Lead):
- Email address:

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AVNG	Anti-Violence Network of Georgia
AWF	Association of Women Farmers
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPoG	Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia
CSB	Civil Service Bureau
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women
DV	Domestic Violence
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBA	Georgian Bar Association
GBSS	Gender-Biased Sex Selection
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GEC	Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia
GEOSTAT	National Statistics Office of Georgia
GE/VAW Commission	Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
GIA	Gender Impact Assessment
GoG	Government of Georgia
GRU	Georgian Rugby Union
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
KRDF	Kakheti Regional Development Foundation
LEPL	Legal Entity of Public Law
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia
MoJ	Ministry of Justice of Georgia
MoLHSA	Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament

MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MSPA	Municipal Service Providers' Association
NAP	National Action Plan
NCDC	National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Probation Agency of the Ministry of Corrections and Probation of Georgia
PDO	Public Defender's Office of Georgia
PUNO	Participating UN Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRH&RR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights
State Fund	State Fund for Protection and Assistance of Victims of Human Trafficking
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNJP	UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality
UNPSD	United Nations Partnership for Sustainable Development (Framework Document 2016-2020)
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
VAWG/DV NAP	National Action Plan on the Measures to be Implemented for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Protection of Survivors
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WHO	World Health Organization
WIGs	Women Initiative Groups

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality (UNJP) accomplished substantial results leading to the achievement of the programme's planned outcomes.

During the reporting period, the UNJP continued to strengthen synergies between the three outcomes of the programme, focusing on the following key areas: joint advocacy, capacity-building, research and awareness-raising.

As a result of joint advocacy and support by the participating UN organizations (PUNOs), an institutional mechanism on gender equality, women's empowerment and violence against women and girls (VAWG) has been established within the executive branch of the Government of Georgia (GoG). The Charter of the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GE/VAW Commission) was approved on 12 June 2017, as per Governmental Decree No. 286.

The UNJP has further facilitated advocacy for the adoption of temporary special measures, resulting in the adoption of the constitutional guarantee of meaningful equality between women and men. The advocacy by the UNJP and the Task Force on Women's Political Participation has also focused on the amendment to the Election Code of Georgia on mandatory quotas. Given the gender-based stereotypes on women's role in public life, in addition to the hidden barriers women face when entering politics or getting promoted within political parties, the special measures aim to facilitate the elimination of the glass ceiling for women in politics. The bill, supported by more than 37,000 citizens of Georgia under the umbrella of the Task Force on Women's Political Participation, applies to both national and local elective bodies and would ensure the representation of women in the Parliament of Georgia to at least 26 per cent by 2020. The three parliamentary committees passed the legislative initiative in the fall 2017 session, and it will be scheduled for plenary hearings in spring 2018.

Furthermore, as a result of continued advocacy efforts by the UNJP, the Parliament endorsed the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) on 4 April 2017 and adopted a milestone legal framework aimed at aligning the domestic legislation with the Istanbul Convention. This framework, adopted on 4 May 2017, was a package of amendments to some 23 laws and was developed by the Ministry of Justice of Georgia (MoJ) with UNJP's technical support.

Following the public awareness-raising campaigns, the number of elected women in local councils has slightly increased from 11.6 per cent to 13.4 per cent. However, there is only one directly elected woman mayor out of 64 municipalities, and all nine governors are men.

The UNJP stirred the public debate on the economic inequalities between women and men, and two studies launched in 2017 identified gaps in policies, both at the national and local level, in advancing women's economic empowerment (WEE) agenda. The primary challenge to be addressed is the lack of gender considerations in various state programmes aimed at stimulating the economy. The Task Force on WEE, established in 2017 and co-chaired by UNDP and UN Women, will facilitate the policy dialogue to that end. In addition, the public awareness-raising campaign supported by the UNJP highlighted some of the inequalities women face in economic activities, such as labour relation, access to health care, and sexual harassment as a means of economic violence against women.

The prevention and elimination of harmful practices against women and girls has remained at the centre of UNJP interventions during the reporting period. The quality knowledge resources generated with UNFPA's support served as a solid foundation for advancing advocacy efforts on the prevention of early/child marriage, female genital mutilation, son preference and gender-biased sex selection. In addition, the Task Force on

Harmful Practices, co-chaired by the chairperson of the GE/VAW Commission and UNFPA, has developed a set of policy and operational recommendations, specific measures and activities of which have been integrated into the 2018-2020 National Action Plans on Gender Equality and Violence Against Women, through UNFPA's technical support.

Several strategically focused communication and advocacy campaigns were launched that targeted public perceptions and attitudes towards harmful practices against women and girls and male involvement for attaining gender equality. These efforts triggered public discourse, including in media, which ultimately will contribute to a positive change in social norms and public perception on gender equality.

The strategic cooperation with the Public Defender's Office of Georgia (PDO) to integrate the monitoring of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights within the national human rights monitoring system has resulted in the PDO producing the first important milestone in this direction: The Country Assessment in relation to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Well-being. The findings and recommendations address and will support the country's efforts to meet its international obligations in this area by strengthening national policies and plans and monitoring frameworks that, among others, will be reflected and measured through the Universal Periodic Review process.

In 2017, the PUNOs under the UNJP jointly entered into a Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) and the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoLHSA) aimed at strengthening the ministries' capacity to implement gender mainstreaming in their policies and operations and delivering specific services.

## **I. Purpose**

The overall goal of the programme is to promote gender equality and women's empowerment by strengthening capacities in the Government, civil society and communities. Achievement of the overall goal will be realized via the following outcomes:

1. Enhanced women's political and economic empowerment (led by UNDP)
2. Creation of an enabling environment to eliminate violence against women, especially sexual and domestic violence (led by UN Women)
3. Advanced gender equality and reproductive rights, including for the most vulnerable women, adolescents and youth (led by UNFPA)

The joint programme directly supports the further realization of the commitments to women's rights and gender equality undertaken by Georgia at both the international and national levels. As such, the UNJP intends to scale up the results achieved by Georgia with the support of the international community, including UN agencies, in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment through innovative initiatives.

The UNJP is fully aligned with national priorities in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment and the stated goals and priority areas of the 2016-2020 UN Partnership for Sustainable Development (UNPSD Outcome 2: focus area 1 - Democratic Governance; and Outcome 4: focus area 2 - Jobs, Livelihood and Social Protection), as well as the Results Strategy for Sweden's Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey (2014-2020). The UNJP is further in line with Georgia's commitments under the nationalized Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 1 (target 1.4), Goal 3 (targets 3.1 and 3.7), Goal 4 (targets 4.3.a and 4.7), Goal 5 (targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.6 and 5.c) and Goal 16 (targets 16.1, 16.3, 16.7 and 16.b).

## **II. Assessment of Programme Results**

### **i) Narrative Reporting on Results**

#### **OUTCOME 1 – Enhanced women’s political and economic empowerment**

Within the UNJP, UNDP has been taking the lead of the women’s political and economic empowerment component and has been responsible for the implementation of activities and achievement of results under Outcome 1 and all its outputs therein.

UNJP has been providing support to public institutions across the executive, legislative and judicial branches, as well as to the local self-governance authorities of Tbilisi and the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo, to strengthen their capacity, stimulate policy change and establish gender-sensitive service delivery at central and local levels. Given the 2016 parliamentary elections, the primary focus of UNJP’s activities within the women’s political empowerment component has been institutional strengthening of the new Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia (GEC) through UNDP’s in-house expertise and local and international consultants and the subsequent advocacy for a greater number of women running for local offices in the lead-up to the 2017 municipal elections. UNJP has been contributing to this objective via active engagement with the Task Force on Women’s Political Participation supporting the legislative initiative aimed at introducing temporary special measures and creating greater demand for women candidates by launching the “We Need Equality” public awareness-raising campaign. UNJP’s coordinated efforts within the Task Force and advocacy for legislative tools to increase women’s representation in elected offices, in combination with other initiatives, led to a slight increase in the number of female members in the Sakrebulo from 11.6 per cent to 13.4 per cent.

To enhance women’s economic empowerment (WEE), UNJP has launched two studies to facilitate the evidence-based policymaking. The comprehensive review of state policies and the programmes funded by international organizations as well as the private sector from 2006 to 2016 has identified lessons learned, as well as the lack of gender-sensitive policies at all levels. The review of legislation and policies led by the GEC has revealed the gaps vis-à-vis gender equality international obligations and best practices, including in the WEE area. In addition to facilitating the policy dialogue, UNJP scaled up its interventions in the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo with efforts to enhance the employability of rural women, equip them with income-generating skills and expose them to various funding and resource opportunities. The activities aimed at the increased participation of women in economic life have been coupled with empowerment interventions to build women’s self-confidence and enhance their participation in local decision-making processes. As a result, more than 50 per cent (22 out of 41) of submitted project proposals developed by women trained under the UNJP for the state programmes received their funding, and rural women successfully advocated the adoption of local initiatives by municipal governments (70 per cent of total initiatives). UNJP has also supported the targeted professional development courses at vocational education and training (VET) colleges for women in Kakheti and Samegrelo, facilitating the employment of 286 female students.

The UNJP interventions aimed at women’s political and economic empowerment have been complemented by the robust public awareness-raising campaign “We Need Equality”. The campaign aimed to link the lack of women in decision-making positions with the inefficiency to resolve various issues faced by women of different needs and backgrounds. The campaign involved both women and men and targeted the entire nation by placing the public service announcements on national television, in addition to rolling out on-the-ground activities in Kakheti and Samegrelo. In 2017, the number of media pieces adequately reflecting GE and women's rights issues significantly increased (by 273 per cent) when compared to 2014; it amounted to 2,474 media pieces, including the coverage of the “We Need Equality” campaign on national and regional television.

#### **Output 1.1. Duty bearers and rights holders are better able to advance gender equality**

UNJP has successfully advocated the adoption of gender equality provisions during the revision of the Constitution of Georgia. The Task Force on Women’s Political Participation (hereinafter Task Force), co-chaired by UNDP and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), ensured the consolidation of the voices of civil society and provided a platform for the exchange between the GEC and the Task Force, in addition to providing technical expertise on the wording of the provision. As a result of joint advocacy, the Constitution now contains a provision on meaningful equality between women and men, including the obligation of the State to undertake special measures to that end.

UNJP continued its advocacy for the adoption of important changes to the legislative framework enabling duty bearers to further advance the gender equality agenda in Georgia. The Task Force, co-chaired by UNDP and NDI, initiated a draft bill on the mandatory gender quotas that was supported by more than 37,000 citizens of Georgia. The legislative amendment to the Election Code of Georgia was registered at the Parliament of Georgia in June 2017, and it enshrines the introduction of mandatory gender quotas to the proportionate system of elections. If passed, the representation of women in Parliament would increase to at least 26 per cent by 2020. Three parliamentary committees passed the bill with almost unanimous support in the third quarter of 2017, with plenary hearings scheduled for the spring 2018 session. In December 2017, UNJP and the Parliament co-hosted a high-level conference “Leaving No One Behind” dedicated to women’s political participation. The representatives of the Government and Parliament – the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Speaker of the Parliament, Mayor of Tbilisi, and head of the Georgian Dream Parliamentary Majority – as well as leaders of parliamentary and non-parliamentary parties almost unanimously recognized the need for immediate and bold actions to eliminate the gap in politics, publicly endorsing the adoption of mandatory gender quotas.

UNJP contributed to the empowerment of duty bearers to better advance gender equality by launching a study on barriers to women’s political participation. The research – *Women in Political Parties: Deconstructing Myths* – was carried out by a local civil society group, Union Sapari, and examined the obstacles faced by women while striving for a political career and dispelled some existing myths on women’s political participation. Its conclusions are based on a qualitative survey, conducted among the top and middle management of parliamentary political parties in Georgia – “Georgian Dream”, “United National Movement”, “European Georgia” and “Patriots’ Alliance of Georgia”. The qualitative data was complemented with the reports of personal experiences of female politicians and activists. The study has stirred important discussions among political parties and the general public on the invisible barriers women face and the means to eliminate them, including via temporary special measures.

UNJP’s interventions have contributed to strengthening the national machinery of gender equality (GE), creating GE mechanisms at the local level and fine-tuning the legislative framework. To that end, UNJP worked closely with the institutional mechanism at the Parliament, namely the GEC, in finalizing the implementation report of the 2014-2016 National Action Plan (NAP) on Gender Equality. The report focused on Georgia’s achievements during this three-year cycle on the way to realize GE in all aspects of political, economic and social life, as well as on the challenges faced by the country in this area. The public discussion of the report provided an important forum for stakeholders and civil society organizations to share essential feedback on further strengthening the GEC’s role in advancing gender equality, especially in light of the changes to its mandate. By virtue of the amendments to the Gender Equality Law passed in 2016, the GEC is responsible for setting the gender equality agenda in the country while a new institution at the executive level – the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GE/VAW Commission) – will be responsible for developing various national action plans and ensuring their respective implementation by state institutions.

UNJP’s additional efforts to strengthen the capacity of the GEC included facilitating the drafting of its operational plan for 2017 and, more importantly, providing support during its implementation. UNJP, along with NDI and the USAID Good Governance Initiative, facilitated the conduct of the first ever gender impact



assessment (GIA) of the legislation, led by the GEC. GIA is a set of indicators used to foresee how specific policies and laws may affect men and women, as well as how these policies can be used to promote gender equality. The Drug Policy Reform and Amendments to the Labour Code of Georgia were the first two pieces of legislation that underwent the GIA in Georgia.

The successful advocacy of UNJP PUNOs – UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA – resulted in the creation of a separate institutional mechanism on GE at the executive level – the GE/VAW Commission. Chaired by Ms. Sopio Japaridze, Assistant to the Prime Minister of Georgia on Human Rights and Gender Equality Issues, and co-chaired by Mr. Gocha Lortkipanidze, Deputy Minister of Justice, the Commission was approved on 12 June 2017 as per Governmental Decree No. 286. The first meeting of the Commission was held on 2 August 2017. All three agencies within the UNJP provided technical assistance to the Commission in drafting the continuation of three national action plans (NAPs) for the period from 2018 to 2020: (1) the NAP on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence; (2) the NAP on Women Peace and Security; and (3) the NAP on Gender Equality. The latter will be integrated into the 2018-2020 National Action Plan on Human Rights as one of its chapters. For the sake of efficiency and reduction of reporting obligations under the same themes, the respective chapter on gender equality and women’s empowerment will become more comprehensive. All three NAPs were pre-finalized by the end of 2017 and adopted by the Government of Georgia in the first quarter of 2018. However, the budgeting of the NAPs will take place later in 2018 and will apply to the years 2019 and 2020 only.

To contribute to the general public’s increased awareness on GE issues, UNJP launched a robust outreach and communication campaign, “We Need Equality”. It aimed at promoting women’s political and economic empowerment, specifically highlighting and addressing key challenges women face in politics, entrepreneurial activities and the workplace; addressing the gender-driven stereotypes in relation to women as leaders in businesses and public life; and positioning women as capable leaders in all professions and fields. In the lead-up to the 2017 municipal elections, and in the post-election period, the campaign focused on the need for having a greater representation of women in politics and decision-making. Apart from the general idea of equality based on democracy, the campaign provided rational arguments on how the electorate from different social classes, ages and educational backgrounds – such as IDP women, women with disabilities, mothers of children with disabilities, survivors of sexual harassment and many others – could benefit from the equal representation of women and men in politics. The campaign was grounded on evidence and various studies conducted by UNDP and other stakeholders that were vastly referenced, thus strengthening the case for equality. To highlight the engagement of men striving for equality, male politicians, opinion leaders, writers and “influencers” participated in a number of short videos on the importance of women’s political participation and gender-driven roles. The campaign was rolled out nationwide, and both interviews and campaign materials were aired on national television as public service announcements. The campaign was launched in the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo following the kickoff event in Tbilisi to ensure better coverage of the target population in the target regions. The Facebook platform *Sheitsvale Azri* (Change Your Mind) was created within the first phase of the project and was actively used for the distribution of e-materials.

UNJP facilitated more gender-sensitive reporting by engaging with the representatives of Georgian media, especially TV stations, in a consistent manner. The intervention consisted of three elements: (1) training for reporters and editors; (2) facilitating an off-the-record discussion between media representatives and female MPs/politicians on covering GE issues with a focus on women in politics; and (3) monitoring the TV media coverage in the lead-up to the October 2017 municipal elections and during the post-election period. A core group of influencers have been identified at major TV stations who have been acting as advocates for better coverage of GE issues in their respective outlets. At the same time, women politicians and journalists had a unique opportunity to share their professional experience and discuss the ways of improving the media coverage from both perspectives. The report on the monitoring of TV stations provided a well-sampled picture of both the improvements and the challenges existing in media in terms of gender-sensitive reporting.

## **Output 1.2. Gender-responsive policies implemented by national and local authorities**

UNJP contributed to the creation of gender-sensitive national and local policies by supporting the GEC in conducting a comprehensive review of Georgian law and policies vis-à-vis gender equality. The study – *Gender Equality in Georgia: Barriers and Recommendations* – was finalized in 2017 and will be released in early 2018. It identifies the remaining legislative and policy gaps related to gender equality across a range of fields, including political participation, economic empowerment, violence against women, labour relations, health, education, peace and security, and sport and culture, as well as the cross-thematic Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Laws.

UNJP additionally contributed to facilitating a dialogue on national policies on WEE by identifying gaps and entry points. The research, carried out by Union Sapari, highlighted key obstacles that hamper women's economic advancement in Georgia. It analysed Georgian policies and examined women's empowerment programmes undertaken from 2006 to 2016. The research is based on the qualitative survey and in-depth interviews with representatives of national institutions, the private sector and international and local non-governmental organizations, as well as on interviews with the specific programmes' beneficiaries. It provides recommendations to all involved parties, including national and international institutions and organizations and the private sector.

UNDP and UN Women have established a thematic task force on WEE under the broader Gender Theme Group to coordinate the efforts towards the advancement of women's participation in economic life and to advocate for policy changes. The first meeting took place in December 2017, with plans to accelerate its pace in 2018.

Institutionalizing GE mechanisms at the local level was one of the priority areas for UNJP during the first half of 2017. A local civil society organization, Women's Information Center (WIC), worked closely with Tbilisi municipality on the creation of a gender equality council and development of a GE strategy and action plan. Due to municipal elections in fall 2017, the council was created but its respective documents were not officially endorsed by the city council. UNJP will expand its efforts to support GE machinery at the local level in 2018 following the presidential election, with a focus on Tbilisi and the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo.

UNJP also scaled up its interventions with local governments to ensure adoption and implementation of gender-sensitive policies at the local level. UNJP, with the assistance of the local NGO Municipal Service Providers' Association (MSPA), continued supporting the Forum of Women Councillors and its elected task force, established during the first phase of the programme. Some 108 elected women councillors from all regions of Georgia gathered for the 4th annual Forum in July 2017 to advocate for gender-sensitive local governance and better living standards within their communities. The Forum, attended by MPs and representatives of the Government, served as a platform to advocate for greater involvement of women in local politics and decision-making processes, for the implementation of local governance reform in Georgia, and for gender budgeting as a tool for more gender-sensitive local policymaking. MSPA continued providing support to the Forum's task force, which sustained its advocacy of pre-school education reform before the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES).

To facilitate the election of more women to local councils, MSPA conducted The Leadership School Certificate Programme for 30 women council members from Kakheti and Samegrelo regions who decided to run for local elections in 2017. The training included a series of sessions on election techniques aiming to provide the knowledge and skills to better plan, organize and deliver the pre-election campaign, formulate the key messages and better communicate with the community. The technical assistance involved both group and individual consultations.

UNJP facilitated the gender mainstreaming of the civil service reform that was taking place during the reporting period. Civil service reform is part of the Public Administration Reform process, and the adoption of gender equality principles would ensure the sustainability of the UNJP interventions. To ensure the gender mainstreaming of the civil service reform, the UNJP provided technical assistance to the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) within which 11 important pieces of draft legislation were analysed. This included by-laws to be adopted by CSB as well as draft laws on remuneration and legal public entities. CSB took into account the majority of the recommendations and findings of the assessment of draft legal acts and adopted more gender-sensitive by-laws in summer 2017. The changes ensure greater protection of women from gender-based biases during recruitment and promotion processes, as well as establish a safer work environment by introducing the concept of sexual harassment in the workplace. In 2018, UNJP will work with CSB on efficient implementation of by-laws by training the respective HR employees on the new regulations and increasing awareness among civil servants and applicants on the new safeguards.

### **Output 1.3. Local women empowered economically and politically through capacity-building and engagement in local decision-making**

UNJP continued supporting the vocational education trainings in Kakheti and Samegrelo through partner education institutions: the Community College “Aisi” in Kachreti (Kakheti); the Vocational College “Pazisi” in Poti; and the Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi (including its Senaki branch for agricultural professions). With a 99 per cent graduation rate overall, 565 women and 130 men have successfully completed short-term vocational education courses for 30 different professions across all partner institutions. The vocational courses opened in November 2016 and continued throughout 2017. For this reason, there were no employment statistics for participants enrolled in 2016 in the previous annual report. The average employment rate upon graduation in 2017 has seen a 5 per cent increase over the 2016 figure: 286 of the 565 women participants in 2017 were employed (51 per cent), compared to 173 of the 373 women participants in 2016 (46 per cent). Apart from the training courses, women are actively engaged in consultations provided by the Community College “Aisi” and the Senaki branch of the Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi. In total, 443 women and 170 men who have start-ups or ongoing businesses obtained information-consulting services from the qualified staff and visiting experts of these institutions. Among the beneficiaries of vocational trainings and consultations are members of the Association of Women Farmers (AWF). The training courses in agricultural professions are closely linked with the information-consulting service of the colleges. This service contributed to the improvement of participants’ qualifications and the sustainable management of their farms. After completing the training courses in agricultural professions, four new farm businesses were established and a total of 135 women farmers gained valuable knowledge from the cooperation with the Community College “Aisi” and the Senaki branch of the Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi.

The AWF continued to expand its activities into other regions of Georgia. So far it is present in six regions: Adjara, Kakheti, Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Djavakheti, and Shida Kartli. During the reporting period, the members of the AWF met with 410 women and 242 men farmers. With the support of the AWF, 62 women farmers submitted 41 project proposals to state-financed programmes, and 22 of the projects have already been funded (Produce in Georgia: 27 applied, 13 funded; Plant the Future: 7 applied, 2 funded; Agro Credit: 7 applied, 7 funded). One fruit and berry-producing agricultural cooperative “Guna” (in Adjara) and one agricultural company “Chkviani Tkhili” (in Tbilisi) were established, and four ongoing businesses have been expanded (one in Adjara, two in Kakheti, and one in Shida Kartli). A total of 46 women have received benefits (6 in Adjara, 27 in Kakheti, 3 in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, and 10 in Shida Kartli). Registration documents to establish three new companies and five agricultural cooperatives (one trout-growing, two berry and fruit-producing, and two borderline women farmers) have already been prepared and will be completed in 2018. As of 31 December 2017, 156 women farmers are members of the AWF, and applications for 19 individuals and one legal membership are under examination.

The AWF organizes a number of advocacy meetings with local authorities on the problems faced by women farmers in the regions. It should be emphasized that both women and men farmers utilize the AWF for assistance.

In the framework of the UNJP-supported project “Empowering Women for Change” – implemented by the Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia and with its partner organizations Atinati (Samegrelo) and the Georgian Civil Development Association (Kakheti) – 588 women leaders took part in 7 two-day trainings, 4 seminars, 9 workshops and 2 experience-sharing meetings conducted for 24 previously existing and newly established Women Initiative Groups (WIGs). Fifteen groups are relatively older and have a longer history and more experience, while nine groups are relatively newly established. In 2017, WIGs implemented 320 different activities and initiatives. They included sports, cultural, educational and other types of activities, with about 34,937 people having participated. Apart from cultural and social activities, WIGs were involved in local issue-based advocacy. As a result, 59 of the 86 most critical problems identified and presented to respective municipalities were considered in local budgets. Women leaders had monitored locally specific actions that are implemented by local governments to solve respective problems. Fifteen micro-projects for local problem-solving were implemented with funding under two different grant competitions. The projects covered a variety of issues, including fixing the sewage and water supply of a village kindergarten, organizing local offices for WIGs, providing training courses and study tours to other municipalities, and building and renovating recreation areas. All projects were successfully completed. Seven projects were implemented by the newly established groups, while the relatively older WIGs implemented eight projects.

In order to empower women living in Pankisi Gorge in Akhmeta Municipality (Kakheti), UNJP supported the project “Empowering women in Pankisi Gorge for a Change”, implemented by the Kakheti Regional Development Foundation (KRDF). In order to achieve the goal, the project worked in a number of directions, starting from women’s economic empowerment, broader awareness-raising among the population of Pankisi on gender issues and women’s rights, and women’s political participation. For its economic empowerment component, the project identified a special target group of women who are perceived to be socially vulnerable or are single mothers and helped these women start their own home-based or small-scale business. Women were provided with special guidance and training to write business plans and run funded projects. As a result, 10 women obtained grant financing, and about 70 women received benefits from that businesses. Women have already presented their agricultural products to different exhibitions and fairs. One of the businesses has already expanded, and five other women plan to develop their businesses in 2018. The project’s awareness-raising component was focused on the broader gender awareness of gender roles. Around 300 women in Pankisi Gorge were involved in different activities, and about 140 women were engaged in the “16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence”. The young generation of Pankisi Gorge was also engaged in the activities. The main emphasis was placed on how women and men are equal and able to share roles and responsibilities.

UNJP contributed to women’s active engagement in social life and their leadership by supporting the 2017 Kato Mikeladze Award, which aims to recognize distinguished women’s rights advocates in Georgia. The annual award is managed by the Women’s Fund in Georgia. Ketevan Khidasheli, a rural women’s rights defender residing in Guria, became the award recipient in 2017. The award also serves the purpose of reclaiming the ownership towards gender equality and remembering the history by celebrating one of the first Georgian feminists, Kato Mikeladze. UNJP supported the participation of the award recipient in the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York as its priority theme in 2018 was the empowerment of rural women and girls.

## **OUTCOME 2 – Creation of an enabling environment to eliminate VAWG, especially sexual and domestic violence**

In line with its mandate and scope of work within the UNJP, UN Women has aspired to enhance gender equality by contributing to the creation of an enabling environment to eliminate VAWG, especially sexual and domestic violence (DV). Efforts were targeted at further improvement of relevant policies and laws as well as further development of services for VAWG/DV survivors provided by both state and non-state actors (such as shelters, crisis centres, access to justice, career advice and job placement).

As mentioned above, as a result of a number of years of joint advocacy efforts and support by PUNOs, an institutional mechanism on gender equality, women's empowerment and VAWG/DV has been established within the executive branch of the Government. The GE/VAW Commission is now the key partner of the UNJP in the executive branch of the Government when it comes to the development, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of national policies around ending violence against women and domestic violence.

As a result of continued advocacy efforts by the UNJP, the Parliament of Georgia endorsed the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on 4 April 2017 and adopted a package of legislative amendments (some 23 laws) on 4 May 2017 aimed at the alignment of domestic legislation with the Istanbul Convention. The package was developed by the MoJ with UNJP's technical support through a participatory consultation process with civil society organizations and relevant government agencies.

During the reporting period, in order to increase capacities of service providers to VAWG/DV survivors and to ensure the sustainability of the UNJP's capacity development results, UN Women contributed to the improvement of the institutionalized training curricula for police officers, prosecutors, judges and lawyers.

The UNJP continued to place great emphasis on the prevention of VAWG/DV. Strategic and well-targeted awareness-raising initiatives, including public information campaigns, have been implemented. Such initiatives have contributed to a shift in the public perceptions and attitudes that have long perpetuated inequality and discrimination. One concrete and measurable result thereof is the increased disclosure of and response to the instances of VAWG/DV.<sup>8</sup> Findings of the *National Study on Violence against Women*, conducted in 2017 by UN Women and GEOSTAT with financial support from the EU, allow for further conceptualization of outcome-level results. Namely, the study found that 18 per cent of women who have ever experienced intimate partner violence have appealed to the police for support,<sup>9</sup> compared to only 1.5 per cent in 2009.<sup>10</sup> The study has further found that some 33 per cent of female respondents still tend to agree that intimate partner violence is a private matter and that others should not intervene. However, 78 per cent of female respondents agreed to this statement in 2009.<sup>11</sup>

### **Output 2.1. National laws and policies on VAWG, especially on sexual and domestic violence, improved in line with international commitments (DEVAW, CEDAW, BPfA, Istanbul Convention)**

UNJP has continued to aspire for further enhancement of the respective policies and laws in the area of combating VAWG/DV.

As a result of consolidated advocacy efforts by a multitude of actors led by UN Women, the Parliament of Georgia has endorsed the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and adopted a package of legislative amendments aimed at aligning domestic legislation with the Istanbul Convention. The package was developed by the MoJ with technical support from UN Women through a broad participatory process. Consisting of some 23 laws, it expands the scope of the legislative framework on domestic violence and relevant protection

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<sup>8</sup> Number of restrictive orders issued by year: 2,726 in 2015; 3,089 in 2016; 4,370 in 2017 (Source: MIA). Number of protective orders issued by year: 173 in 2015; 178 in 2016; 180 in 2017 (Source: Supreme Court of Georgia).

<sup>9</sup> UN Women, GEOSTAT and the EU, *National Study on Violence against Women: Summery Report* (2017), pp. 12-15.

<sup>10</sup> UNFPA and ACT, *National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Georgia* (2009).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

mechanisms to also cover violence against women in general, taking into consideration the gendered nature of domestic violence and addressing the phenomenon of VAWG in a holistic manner. New articles, inter alia, criminalizing stalking, forced sterilization and female genital mutilation have been added to the Criminal Code of Georgia.

As a result of the technical support provided to the Government of Georgia in establishing an institutional mechanism on gender equality and violence against women and girls within the executive branch, relevant legislative amendments establishing the GE/VAW Commission have been adopted and its charter approved on 12 June 2017 as per Governmental Decree No. 286. The GE/VAW Commission has been established in the Prime Minister's Office and comprises line ministries and relevant governmental agencies on the deputy ministerial level. The mechanism is tasked with policymaking in the area of gender equality, women's empowerment and VAWG/DV. It further coordinates and monitors the implementation of these policies.

During the reporting period, the GE/VAW Commission, with technical support from UN Women in collaboration with UNFPA, drafted the 2018-2020 National Action Plan on the Measures to be Implemented for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Protection of Survivors (hereinafter the VAWG/DV NAP). Results-based management principles were applied to develop the new VAWG/DV NAP with indicators on the outcome and output levels to allow measurement of results. The draft plan aimed at supporting the implementation of Georgia's key international commitments, in particular those deriving from the Istanbul Convention. The draft also built on the lessons learned from the implementation of the previous national action plans, recommendations by relevant UN treaty bodies and special procedures and from the Public Defender's Office of Georgia (PDO). Furthermore, the VAWG/DV NAP is aimed at contributing to the achievement of the relevant nationalized targets under SDG 5, as its impact-level results. The draft NAP underwent extensive consultations with civil society and other development partners as well as VAWG/DV survivors and is expected to be approved by the GoG in the beginning of 2018.<sup>12</sup>

## **Output 2.2. Capacity of key policy and service delivery institutions strengthened to promote and protect women's human rights to life free from sexual violence, VAWG and DV**

An enabling institutional environment that allows survivors of VAWG/DV to disclose their suffering and freely seek protection and assistance is the main result of the UNJP's work at the institutional level under its Outcome 2. Capacity development work has been carried out targeting different service providers in the field of VAWG/DV towards increased quality of, and demand on, services with an ultimate goal to increase survivors' trust in these institutions.

In order to improve police response to instances of VAWG/DV, the UNJP continued to partner with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (MoIA) and the NGO Anti-Violence Network of Georgia (AVNG). The working group organized by the AVNG has revised and updated the existing VAWG/DV training module for patrol and district police officers to reflect the relevant legislative amendments. In addition, the working group has started preparing a specialized training manual for criminal police on efficient response to sexual violence and domestic violence crimes. In total, 15 training sessions on the updated training module were conducted for 346 patrol and district police officers by the AVNG in Tbilisi and the regions.

UN Women has engaged in consultations with the MoIA to advocate for the establishment and development of a specialized unit or division to oversee investigations into and response to VAWG, in particular sexual violence and DV cases and analyse relevant data to inform policymaking. During the reporting period, the Minister of Internal Affairs made an announcement regarding the commitment to create such a department (this commitment was fulfilled in January 2018 with the establishment of the MoIA's specialized Human Rights Department). The commitment, among others, is reflected in the MoU concluded between UN Women

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<sup>12</sup> The 2018-2020 VAWG/DV NAP was approved by the Government of Georgia on 13 April 2018.

and the MoIA on 26 July 2017 in order to strengthen the capacity of the police force to promote and protect women's human rights to life free from violence, especially from domestic and sexual violence. The Human Rights Department (MoIA HRD) is tasked with overseeing the investigations into, inter alia, sexual and domestic violence crimes and administrative proceedings; identifying the challenges in this process; and issuing recommendations binding for police forces. In addition, the HRD will collect and analyse data to inform the internal policymaking of the MoIA.

To facilitate access to justice for the survivors of violence, the UNJP continued to work with the Georgian Bar Association (GBA) to revise the existing training module for lawyers on VAWG/DV issues to reflect recent legislative amendments. One TOT has been conducted for 12 trainers followed by two trainings for 52 Legal Aid Service lawyers in Batumi, Kutaisi and Tbilisi. In addition, seven trainings were conducted in total for 173 lawyers in Kutaisi and Tbilisi.

To enhance prosecutors' capacity to work efficiently on VAWG/DV cases, UN Women has continued to collaborate with the Chief Prosecutor's Office of Georgia (CPoG). During the reporting period, the CPoG, in cooperation with UN Women, organized a conference to present its analysis of the prosecution's response to domestic violence crimes and femicides. The trends, lessons learned and challenges in fighting domestic violence were meticulously discussed. The findings of the analysis illustrate that as a result of the preventive measures taken and the improvement of the quality of prosecutorial supervision, the disclosure of domestic violence by survivors and the rate of launching criminal prosecutions have increased significantly.<sup>13</sup> The findings of the analysis will inform the prosecutorial guidelines to further increase the quality of criminal proceedings against VAWG/DV perpetrators and increase conviction rates.

The policy towards the perpetrators has become stricter; the number of prosecutorial motions on pretrial detention as a restrictive measure has increased significantly, from 14 per cent in 2014 to 83 per cent in 2017. Cases of using alternative measures to criminal prosecution (e.g. juvenile diversion) have been minimized, and the number of plea agreements has decreased. Detection of psychological violence has also improved. The CPoG pays special attention to studying the perpetrator's history of violence as well as relevant administrative case materials involving the perpetrator, if any, for the purpose of detecting patterns of systemic violence.

The CPoG has further improved data collection on VAWG/DV and femicide cases. According to the CPoG data, in 2017, 26 women were murdered in Georgia, 14 of whom were killed as a result of domestic violence. In addition, in 2017, 15 cases of attempted homicide of women were registered, 12 of which were domestic violence cases.<sup>14</sup>

For the purposes of further developing prosecutors' capacity, based on the training module developed with the support of UN Women, a specialized five-day training was organized for 25 prosecutors, in addition to a coordination meeting between said prosecutors and relevant service providers.

A number of landmark cases of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) regarding VAWG/DV issues have been translated into Georgian for use by the CPoG to inform the development of special guidelines for prosecutors on VAWG/DV cases.

Moreover, due to the latent and sensitive nature of VAWG/DV crimes, law enforcement require special knowledge and skills to be able to handle these cases with care, prevent revictimization, ensure the safety of survivors and, ultimately, deliver convictions with proportional sanctions against perpetrators. For the last

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<sup>13</sup> In 2014, criminal prosecution over domestic violence was launched against 550 individuals. The number increased to 1,066 in 2015, and 1,356 in 2016. Throughout 2017, the number of persons prosecuted for domestic violence amounted to 1,986.

<sup>14</sup> In 2016, 32 women were murdered, of whom 14 were killed as a result of domestic violence. The number of attempted murder cases amounted to nine, five of which were domestic violence cases.

few years, therefore, UN Women has been advocating with the CPoG for the designation of VAWG/DV specialized prosecutors and investigators with specialized knowledge and skills.

In 2017, the CPoG made a public announcement on the introduction of DV-specialized prosecutors and investigators to further improve the quality of performance and efficiency of the CPoG in handling these cases. The specialization will occur in 2018.<sup>15</sup>

In 2015, in cooperation with USAID's EWMI/JILEP programme, UN Women and UNDP partnered with the High School of Justice of Georgia (HSoJ) to develop a comprehensive training programme for sitting judges on GE and VAWG/DV issues. UN Women was directly responsible for the development of the section on domestic and international legislation regulating domestic violence. During the reporting period, 90 judges and judicial assistants were trained on the basis of the training programme.

During the reporting period, a TOT was organized for four judges based on a separate training module for judges on VAWG/DV developed by UN Women and covering the recent legislative amendments as per the requirements of the Istanbul Convention. The TOT was followed by a pilot training programme for 15 judges. UN Women plans to support further training for judges and judicial assistants in 2018 as well as render support to judges in becoming familiar with best international practices, inter alia, on the identification and substantiation of a gender motive in the relevant judgments.

To inform the development of a uniform approach to VAWG/DV cases across the common courts system of Georgia, UN Women supported the Supreme Court of Georgia in studying 1,620 domestic violence cases (crimes foreseen under the articles 11<sup>1</sup> and 126<sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Code of Georgia) adjudicated by the common courts of Georgia in 2015 and 2016. The study was aimed at identifying common trends and challenges in the adjudication of such cases when it comes to testimonies, evidence, proportional sanctions and other considerations. The study will be finalized in early 2018.

In 2016, UN Women also supported the National Probation Agency (NPA) of the Ministry of Corrections and Probation of Georgia in the development and institutionalization of a VAWG/DV Perpetrators Rehabilitation Programme for probationers as a result of the Study Tour on Prevention and Response to Domestic Violence in Spain, organized by UN Women in November 2014 for representatives of the Go G. The programme is operating throughout Georgia and is built on the Spanish model “GBV – Intervention Programme for the Rehabilitation of Perpetrators” (PRIA), selected by NPA in consultation with UN Women as one of the most successful models of its kind worldwide. In 2017, 67 probationers convicted of perpetrating domestic violence participated in the programme.

In December 2017, in the framework of the partnership between UN Women and the State Fund for Protection and Assistance of Victims of Human Trafficking (State Fund), a crisis centre in Kutaisi was refurbished, equipped and opened to provide psychological and social assistance and rehabilitation, medical and legal services to the survivors of VAWG/DV. In addition, the title to two rooms in a residential building were transferred by the local municipality to the State Fund for the establishment of a crisis centre in Gori. Renovation works are ongoing and are expected to be completed in early 2018. The process of identifying a relevant space for a crisis centre in Batumi is in progress.

During the reporting period, 2,135 beneficiaries received consultations through the nationwide VAWG/DV hotline 116006. The conferencing-mode system – allowing the immediate involvement of an interpreter for Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani, English, Persian, Russian, and Turkish to ensure communication with

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<sup>15</sup> The specialization was fulfilled through the CPoG Decree N26-m on 20 February 2018 stipulating that, as of 1 May 2018, DV cases will be handled exclusively by DV-specialized prosecutors and investigators, having completed a special advanced course. The Decree further spells out requirements for regular capacity development of specialized prosecutors and investigators on DV.



minorities and foreigners – became operational on 23 February 2017. The interpretation service was used by 31 survivors in 2017.<sup>16</sup>

In 2017, 307 survivors used shelter services, and the Tbilisi crisis centre served 121 beneficiaries.

To standardize the psychological services provided to survivors of VAWG/DV across all state-run shelters and crisis centres, the State Fund has developed rehabilitation guidelines and standards on psychological services, with 20 employees of the State Fund taking the relevant training.

UN Women supports the State Fund in expanding the domestic violence services to survivors of intimate partner and non-partner sexual violence. To that end, a concept on the Standards for Psycho-Social Services for Victims of Sexual Violence and a training module for the State Fund's relevant staff on the issues of sexual violence have been developed. Four rounds of training based on the aforementioned training module aimed at capacity-building for the provision of services to survivors of sexual violence were held for a total of 134 participants.

On 9 June 2017, in order to further strengthen capacity of the MoLHSA and the State Fund around GE and VAWG/DV issues, UN Women and UNFPA have entered into an MoU delineating the framework for cooperation through the end of 2020. UN Women – as the convening agency for UNJP – has led the process. The MoU, inter alia, foresees the MoLHSA's commitment to take over funding the services established within UNJP (crisis centres).

UN Women has continued its partnership with the Public Defender's Office of Georgia (PDO). During the reporting period, the Gender Equality Department of the PDO completed monitoring the implementation of the 2016-2017 VAWG/DV NAP. Throughout the monitoring process, focus group meetings and interviews were held with the different target groups (160 participants in total). The PDO has also conducted information meetings on VAWG/DV issues in different cities reaching out to more than 500 students and representatives of local communities. The PDO also held two meetings on sexual harassment with 80 representatives of different municipalities. The Human Rights Academy of the Public Defender of Georgia trained 20 employees of the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeals, City Courts and High Council of Justice on collecting and analysing statistical data on VAWG/DV.

On 24 November 2017, the PDO together with UN Women organized an international conference *Femicide Watch – Monitoring Tools and Mechanisms* in Tbilisi, Georgia to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, observed every 25 November. As a result of the global call by the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Dubrakva Šimonovic, to Member States in 2015, the PDO committed to undertake the role of a “femicide watch” or “gender-related killings of women watch” in 2016. In the framework of this initiative, the PDO started to collect and publish data each year on the number of femicides and analyse each case in order to identify any failure of protection with a view of improving and developing further preventive measures. The conference aimed to advance the methodology for monitoring femicide cases by taking into consideration international best practices and experiences and reviewing the draft of Georgia's first femicide watch report. At the conference, the PDO presented preliminary findings of the femicide watch report, which offered an analysis of all femicide cases that took place in 2016. The final report, reflecting the views and recommendations shared with the PDO at the conference, will be released in the first quarter of 2018.

During the reporting period, the UNJP responsible party NGO Women's Consultation Center Sakhli (Sakhli) engaged in consultations with the municipalities of Telavi and Zugdidi on the allocation of administrative buildings to be rehabilitated and equipped by Sakhli for VAWG/DV crisis centres. As a result, the Telavi and

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<sup>16</sup> Interpretation services were requested by 27 persons into Russian, 2 into Armenian and 2 into Azerbaijani.

Zugdidi municipalities have allocated relevant buildings. Renovation works are in progress and will be completed in the first half of 2018. The crisis centres will be operated by Sakhli until 2020 and then will be taken over by local municipalities. Due to the fact that the building provided for Zugdidi's crisis centre is larger than initially planned, additional funding from the Polish Embassy has been allocated to NGO Sakhli to complement UNJP resources in order to complete renovation works and furnish the full 400 square metres of the crisis centre.

During the reporting period, Sakhli has discussed and agreed to the framework of the supervision system (professional burn-out prevention system) to be developed for the employees of the State Fund, as presented by the chair of the GE/VAW Commission and the State Fund. Moreover, Sakhli invited a professor of the Vilnius Psychology Institute to conduct a three-day training for Sakhli staff on the issues of supervision, focusing on the planning and implementation processes.

In the framework of the "16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence", Sakhli organized workshops with the participation of 33 representatives of Telavi and Zugdidi municipalities on VAWG/DV issues.

In addition, UN Women trained 35 representatives of Tbilisi Municipality and Assembly on VAWG/DV issues in 2017. The trainings aimed at familiarizing the representatives of the local government with the legislation and best practices in preventing and responding to VAWG/DV and their role in promoting gender equality and providing services to VAWG/DV survivors.

UNJP has continued to support the Women's Employment Support Association Amagdari in terms of the socioeconomic rehabilitation of DV survivors. The database operated by Amagdari comprises 929 beneficiaries seeking employment; among them are 346 women DV survivors. Amagdari has identified beneficiaries for vocational education courses and employment support and conducted assessments of their background, qualifications and needs. As a result of their engagement in vocational education courses, 18 beneficiaries have been recruited as interns and 41 beneficiaries have been employed. In total, 67 beneficiaries were trained in English and the so-called "general skills" test, as well as social and economic rights.

On 20 September 2017, an MoU was signed between the representatives of Amagdari and the GBA Training Center for an unlimited period of time delineating a framework of future cooperation. Under the MoU, DV survivors will have, inter alia, the possibility to participate in the seminars and trainings organized by the GBA Training Center as well as the preparatory courses for bar exams free of charge as part of their socioeconomic rehabilitation. In the framework of the MoU, the GBA has recruited six beneficiaries as monitors at the bar exams. Three beneficiaries attended different trainings, and two other beneficiaries enrolled in and completed a three-month preparatory course for the bar exams.

### **Output 2.3. Public awareness raised to support prevention and disclosure of the instances of VAWG, particularly sexual violence and DV**

The work under this output aims at supporting prevention as well as disclosure of VAWG/DV instances, specifically targeting (a) increased awareness among the target audiences of the problem of VAWG/DV; (b) encouraging disclosure of the instances of VAWG/DV and promoting the use of the existing victim support services; and (c) preventing violence from occurring in the longer run by promoting zero tolerance with regard to VAWG/DV.

To build the capacities of the MoES and ensure sustainability of the results of UNJP's engagement with the ministry, on 5 May 2017 an MoU was signed between the MoES and UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA. The MoU covers gender mainstreaming and supporting the integration of healthy lifestyle and reproductive health issues in three main areas: (1) formal education in schools; (2) non-formal education, including optional courses and parents' education; and (3) vocational education and training. To support implementation of the

MoU, UN Women has hired an expert to join relevant working groups under the MoES to ensure gender mainstreaming into the revision process of the national curricula and standards for different subjects that are mandatory for public schools.

During the reporting period, 137 trainers of the Teachers' Professional Development Center (TPDC) – the official teacher training agency under the MoES – underwent intensive training on GE issues during eight sessions organized jointly by UN Women and Millennium Challenge Account - Georgia. The trainers will apply their newly acquired knowledge to further educate public school teachers and principals throughout the country. It is also expected that the newly acquired knowledge will support the revision process of public school curricula, planned for 2018 and beyond.

In 2016, supported by the UNJP, the PDO designed and institutionalized a training module in its Human Rights Academy for journalists on gender-sensitive and ethical reporting with a focus on VAWG/DV. During the reporting period, 39 journalists took the training.

During the reporting period, the Kakheti Regional Development Fund (KRDF) reached out to 970 boys and girls to raise their awareness on GE and VAWG/DV issues and promote existing services for survivors in the Kakheti region's Pankisi Gorge, an area densely populated with ethnic and religious minorities. KRDF has conducted different types of sports activities (for 193 participants in total); excursions and camps (140 participants); meetings (130 participants); trainings (160 participants); movie screenings (160 participants); a photo contest (70 participants); and a green plant action and flash mob (114 participants) for local Kist, Chechen and Georgian children aged 14-16 aimed at raising their awareness on GE and VAWG/DV. In addition, 50 promotional posters for the DV hotline have been distributed throughout the villages of Pankisi.

The documentary *Speak Out!* on VAWG/DV issues, produced by UNJP in cooperation with the Georgian National Film Center, has been screened to different professionals as part of VAWG/DV specialized training modules (to more than 100 participants in total).

Events organized by UN Women in the framework of the 16 Days of Activism campaign resulted in 38 pieces of media coverage. The total extent of media coverage on the problem of VAWG/DV focusing on the activities under UNJP amounted to 143 during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, UNJP has continued its partnership with the Georgian Rugby Union (GRU). In the framework of this cooperation, on 12 March 2017 at the Tbilisi Dinamo Arena, the national rugby teams of Georgia and Russia once again expressed their support for UN Women's solidarity movement for gender equality – HeForShe – and devoted the match to this campaign. The match was attended by over 52,000 rugby fans. Moreover, to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the rugby match between Georgia and the United States held on 25 November at Mikheil Meskhi Stadium was dedicated to the campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women.

Hosted by Georgia, the World Rugby U20 Championship 2017 saw its participating teams and the World Rugby Organization declare their support for HeForShe. An official ceremony, which took place on 10 June 2017 at the premises of the MoJ's National Archives, served as the venue to affirm the partnership between UN Women and World Rugby within the framework of the championship. A special report regarding the event was posted on World Rugby's social media and website, which was seen by more than 20 million viewers over the course of the World Cup. During the finals of the championship, a fan zone was organized at the stadium promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through sport.

During the reporting period, the GRU reached out to 1,900 children in different regions of Georgia through workshops to raise their awareness regarding GE and the inadmissibility of VAWG/DV.

UN Women has also supported the GRU in mainstreaming GE and VAWG issues into the Rugby Academy's manual for rugby players and management, as well as into the media guide for the rugby players.

Finally, the UNJP's awareness-raising and capacity development initiatives have significantly contributed to positive shifts in public attitudes towards VAWG/DV, as well as to the improved response to cases of VAWG/DV. Increased awareness and strengthened capacities is evidenced by the increased disclosure of VAWG/DV instances. For example, in 2016, the emergency management centre 112 received 18,163 calls about domestic violence resulting in 3,089 restraining orders, while in 2017, 24,300 calls were received resulting in 4,370 restraining orders. Moreover, in 2017, 290 persons were imprisoned for committing domestic violence crimes, 549 placed on probation, 186 assigned community service, 15 fined and 41 acquitted. In 2016, however, only 112 persons were imprisoned, 518 placed on probation, 175 assigned community service, 7 fined and 11 acquitted.

### **OUTCOME 3 – Advanced gender equality and reproductive rights, including for the most vulnerable women, adolescents and youth**

In 2017, UNFPA continued to support the Government of Georgia to respond to the international commitments in the area of gender equality and reproductive rights. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR), covering the full range of human rights, has been identified as one of the key instruments for leading advocacy and policy dialogue with the governmental counterparts on core issues. The analysis of Georgia's second review (10 November 2015) documentation showed that, of the 203 recommendations made to Georgia, 70 (34 per cent) were raised in relation to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (SRH&RR). Of these 70 recommendations, Georgia accepted 69. These recommendations present several opportunities for the UNJP to assist the Government of Georgia in designing specific plans and actions for implementation in order to ensure that the follow-up is holistic and human rights-based. Recommendations on the prevention or elimination of early marriage and the availability, accessibility and affordability of SRH services and information to all women and girls, including in rural areas, are particularly well suited to benefit from UNFPA's expertise.

In the reporting period, under Outcome 3 of UNJP, UNFPA continued to support the Government to effectively respond to these recommendations. In 2017, UNFPA supported and/or initiated various interventions to prevent or eliminate harmful practices of early/child marriage, son preference and gender-biased sex selection (GBSS); to support the advancement of SRH&RR for youth and women; and to foster male involvement for attaining gender equality by supporting policy dialogue and providing technical assistance to strengthen coordination, integrate respective measures in government action plans and mobilize social support. The quality knowledge resources generated by UNFPA during the reporting period served as a solid foundation for leading advocacy and policy dialogue on the issues within UNFPA's mandate, including such harmful practices as early/child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), son preference and GBSS, as well as issues regarding paternity/parental leave.

At the same time, UNFPA together with the other two PUNOs in the UNJP strengthened and expanded strategic partnerships with the MoES and the MoLHSA, triggering effective changes in the system. The cooperation with the MoES is targeted to ensure inclusion of gender equality, healthy lifestyles and SRH&RR principles and issues in the formal education system. In 2017, UNFPA successfully provided technical assistance to upgrade school subject standards (Biology, Civil Education) for the basic education level (grades VII-IX). On the other hand, cooperation with the MoLHSA yielded institutional changes by refining medical forms for the documentation of VAWG/DV cases.

Furthermore, in the reporting period, UNFPA managed to establish a new strategic cooperation with the PDO to reinforce the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in monitoring SRH&RR. The first major milestone

is undertaking a country assessment in relation to the sexual and reproductive health and well-being, including a set of recommendations for action. Thus, within the framework of the UN Joint Programme, UNFPA strategically supports the country's efforts to meet its international obligations and SDG targets related to gender equality and reproductive rights by strengthening national policies and plans and monitoring frameworks that, among others, will be reflected and measured through the UPR process.

In order to change public perceptions and trigger social change, UNFPA successfully expanded three issue-based communication campaigns focused on harmful practices and the importance of male involvement for attaining gender equality. Due to UNFPA's interventions, these issues have become topical in society, generating heated public discussion that ultimately will contribute to a positive change in public perception on gender equality.

### **Output 3.1. Strengthened evidence-based policy advocacy to advance an enabling environment for gender equality and reproductive rights and the prevention of violence and harmful practices against women and girls**

Under Output 3.1, UNFPA Georgia aims to strengthen a legal framework and policy environment conducive to enhancing gender equality and reproductive rights by leading evidence-based policy advocacy on issues related to GE, VAWG/DV, SRH&RR and harmful practices. In response to the above-stated goal, UNFPA supported several important initiatives in 2017.

Aiming to strengthen national policies and systems for the advancement of gender equality and reproductive rights, UNFPA joined its efforts with other PUNOs to update the three-year NAPs on Gender Equality and Violence against Women/Domestic Violence for the period from 2018 to 2020. The process of drafting the NAPs was proceeded and informed by the findings and recommendations of the desk research spearheaded by the GEC, entitled "Gender Equality in Georgia: Barriers and Recommendations." UNFPA has closely cooperated with the research team and provided technical and substantive inputs to ensure that the issues of sexual and reproductive health and well-being; the harmful practices of early/child marriage, FGM, son preference and GBSS; and the respective policy and operational recommendations were included in the document in order to inform further policy and programme planning.

Further, the specific capacity-developing, issue-based workshop(s) were organized with the participation of the gender focal points from the relevant line ministries. Among other issues, participants received substantial information from UNFPA on the concepts, impact and consequences of SRH&RR and the harmful practices of early/child marriage, FGM, GBSS and others. Therefore, with UNJP's technical assistance, draft action plans were developed by the GE/VAW Commission during the reporting period. The documents broadly cover the issues within UNFPA's mandate and prioritized by the UNJP, namely, prevention mechanisms for the harmful practices, promotion of SRH&RR, integration of GE, inclusion of SRH&RR principles and issues in the formal education system, and advancement of the health-care system's response to VAWG/DV, among other issues. UNFPA spearheaded the policy dialogue on promoting paternity/parental leave in the country. As part of a broader effort to increase male engagement for advancing gender equality and the social and economic participation of women, UNFPA partnered with the NGO EMC - Human Rights Education and Monitoring Centre to produce an in-depth comparative analysis about the best practices related to paternity and parental leave in European countries. The document also analyses Georgian legislation on the subject and contains recommendations for addressing it. The analysis was presented to the GEC and discussed within its working group on labour rights issues; the potential steps for its further institutionalization were outlined. Based on the initiative, UNFPA plans to continue policy advocacy on promoting paternity/parental leave in 2018 as an integral part of the Demographic Policy Concept adopted by the Parliament in 2016.

Generating knowledge resources for further policy advocacy and programming has been one of UNFPA's priorities in 2017. Acknowledging the grave consequences of harmful practices, UNFPA in cooperation with

UNICEF supported the nationwide qualitative research initiative on the harmful practices of early/child marriage<sup>17</sup> and FGM in partnership with the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC). The qualitative research initiative explored local attitudes, beliefs and practices of the phenomenon, as well as examined risks and protective factors, root causes and consequences of harmful practices. UNICEF provided technical assistance for the integration of FGM in the research instrument in response to the emerged needs in the country. Fieldwork was preceded by an extensive training of interviewers on the methodology and instrument of the research. The interviewers also received in-depth issue-based information in order to increase their sensitivity and preparedness for the fieldwork.

Before commencing the fieldwork, the research instrument was discussed and validated by the Task Force on Harmful Practices that is co-chaired by the chairperson of the GE/VAW Commission and UNFPA. NCDC spearheaded the fieldwork in the capital and in 10 regions of the country, ensuring the desegregation of data according to rural/urban, ethnic and religious affiliation. In total, 96 in-depth interviews, 34 focus group discussions and 12 key informant interviews were conducted, encompassing 342 participants. The data were analysed and the report was drafted with the technical support of Promundo US in collaboration with NCDC. The preliminary findings of the research were presented and discussed at the extended meeting of the Task Force on Harmful Practices in December 2017, which was jointly organized by UNFPA and UNICEF. It opened a forum to discuss and generate comprehensive policy and operational recommendations for preventing and eliminating harmful practices in the country by targeting three critical areas imperative in the process: (1) an enabling policy environment to prevent and eliminate the harmful practices; (2) the coordinated response of various governmental institutions to prevent and eliminate the harmful practices; and (3) increased public awareness on the root causes and the consequences of the harmful practices in order to change social norms. The agreed recommendations will become an integral part of the research final report that will be published and widely disseminated among the relevant stakeholders in the beginning of 2018. Moreover, the Task Force members reflected on the best practices of addressing the harmful practices, as well as familiarized themselves with the examples of planning and implementing a communication strategy pivotal for triggering social change on such sensitive issues as the harmful practices of early/child marriage and FGM.

One of UNFPA's priorities has been to support strengthening the body of evidence for the formulation of rights-based policies through cutting-edge analysis on population dynamics and its interlinkages with sustainable development. The issue of unbalanced sex ratios at birth in Georgia, which has attracted a lot of attention in recent years, has been addressed in a separate study, *Trends in the Sex Ratio at Birth in Georgia – An Overview Based on the 2014 General Population Census Data*. Like its eastern neighbours Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia has long been characterized by inordinate levels of birth masculinity mirrored by a skewed sex ratio at birth (SRB). Of particular interest is the hypothesis of a recent SRB decline in Georgia, already detected in the previous study (UNFPA, 2015). This hypothesis is linked to the acknowledgement that the country has witnessed transformations in its social and political system in the last 15 years. However, the potential influence of these changes on gender discriminatory behaviours is still to be examined. The relevance of Georgia's trends in birth masculinity goes well beyond its borders, since recent changes appear unique and could serve as a reference for other countries affected by the same forms of discrimination. Thus, this study offers suggestions that can be of use elsewhere in Eastern Europe. The findings and recommendations of these studies were disseminated through a conference organized in partnership with the GE/VAW Commission, thus ensuring high-level advocacy for the integration of these issues into the national policies and action plans. The initiative was undertaken in cooperation with UNFPA's Census Project funded by Sweden.

The knowledge resources created by UNFPA during the reporting period were distributed to the governmental and non-governmental partners and widely disseminated through specifically created factographs and videos, ensuring that these data and findings will be used in subsequent policymaking and/or programming on the

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<sup>17</sup> The generation of quantitative data on child marriage has been delegated to MICS Round 6, to be undertaken in 2018 by GEOSTAT in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA's technical and financial contributions.

relevant issues. The findings were used in the development of the NAPs and in spearheading advocacy on the issues within UNFPA's mandate.

In order to support participatory platforms to advocate for increased investment in marginalized adolescents and youth to advance gender equality, youth information and advocacy sessions were organized in the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo. These sessions attracted the participation of 85 young people, including young activists and representatives of youth and youth-led organizations, including young people with disabilities. Participants had the opportunity to receive in-depth information and engage in discussions around three topics: (1) challenges faced by young people with disabilities, including in the area of SRH; (2) the prevention of risky behaviour among youth (including youth SRH and HIV prevention within young key populations); and (3) the role of the education system (formal and informal) in addressing the challenges faced by adolescents and youth. Participants shared their concerns and challenges and developed recommendations for the local and central government in the realization of their rights. They also stressed the importance of strengthening youth advocacy skills in order to bring their voices and recommendations to decision makers. In response to the need to strengthen youth advocacy skills and enable them to advocate for their rights and needs, the workshop "Advocacy for Youth Rights – Supporting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Youth" was organized for 25 active youngsters from Tbilisi and the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo. Participants were equipped with relevant skills and resources to advocate for their rights and needs on the local government level.

Further supporting youth development and their empowerment to advocate on youth SRH&RR issues, UNFPA contributed to the work of the 86th International Session of the European Youth Parliament in Tbilisi by engaging UNFPA's national consultant, a representative of ASTRA Youth and a member of the NGO Real People Real Vision to provide expert knowledge and input for the work of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), consisting of 30 participants. The members of the FEMM committee discussed strategies that the EU and the countries of the European region should pursue to ensure that the sexual and reproductive rights of both women and men are upheld and protected, including freedom of choice, access to effective education on reproductive health issues and access to sexual and reproductive health care.

### **Output 3.2. Strengthened capacity of public organizations and national human rights institutions to advance gender equality and reproductive rights and prevent gender-based violence and harmful practices**

During the reporting period and within the framework of the MoU signed with the MoLHSA, UNFPA continued to direct its efforts towards strengthening the health system's response to gender-based violence, thus responding to the commitments undertaken within the framework of the Istanbul Convention. In cooperation with the local implementing partner – the State Fund, an LEPL operating under the MoLHSA – some major achievements were attained during the reporting period. Several key normative acts regulating the health-care system – specifically, Documentation for Ambulatory Care (MoLHSA Ministerial Decree N01-41/n) and Regulations for Documentation for Stationary Hospital Care (MoLHSA Ministerial Decree N108/n) – were amended, enabling primary health-care professionals to document cases of VAWG/DV appropriately.<sup>18</sup> The amendments include standardized forms (as well as guides on how to fill them in) that will be used for documenting VAWG/DV cases in health-care settings. They gather the most relevant information about individual VAWG/DV incidents and the case history. The forms provide a common set of indicators as the means of collecting consistent data on VAWG/DV, especially the victim/survivor's profile (residence, sex, age, dependent children, etc.); details about the incident (frequency, location, type of violence, object used by a perpetrator, etc.); relationship between the victim/survivor and perpetrator; the perpetrator's profile (the same information as for survivors plus a history of mental disorders, substance abuse and criminal history); and the type of service provided and steps indicated or undertaken. The forms also include steps for

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<sup>18</sup> The documentation forms were approved and officially adopted by the MoLHSA in January 2018.

the provision of post-coital interventions to prevent pregnancies, post-exposure prophylaxis PeP to prevent HIV, and testing and care for sexually transmitted diseases for victims of sexual violence. It is noteworthy that the forms will become mandatory across the country as of January 2019. Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) for health system workers to respond to cases of VAWG/DV – including to cases of sexual violence that fixes the legal grounds for the implementation of the medical forms countrywide – will be adopted by the organizational decree of the MoLHSA in 2018. However, it should also be mentioned that the adoption of the National Referral Mechanism for Revealing, Protecting, Assisting and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence against Women/Domestic Violence (NRM), which is the key document triggering all of the subsequent legislative amendments in the aforementioned acts, is still pending. The State Fund is closely following up on this process together with the MoLHSA; it is anticipated that 2018 will be a decisive year in this process. Meanwhile, the medical forms will be introduced throughout the pilot phase in Kakheti.

Moreover, the State Fund developed a risk assessment tool and integrated it into the VAWG/DV documentation form for ambulatory settings. The tool enables health-care providers to identify high-risk cases of violence and take appropriate measures to prevent or refer cases to specific services.

Furthermore, a baseline study to assess knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) was conducted prior to the implementation of the pilot programme. The study determines the level, scope and type of capacity-building needed for different health professionals, as well as establishes a baseline for use in future assessments and guides the project's successful implementation. The study captures the level of VAWG/DV knowledge of health-care professionals, the prevailing attitudes and current practices, and the barriers to the adoption of the SOPs. The survey was conducted in Tbilisi and the Kakheti region, targeting the primary health-care professionals.

With UNFPA's technical assistance, the State Fund conducted eight training sessions – using UNFPA's regional training module tailored to the country's context – for the capacity development of emergency and family doctors from the Kakheti region. Overall, in 2017, 136 medical professionals (58 from Tbilisi and 78 from the Kakheti region) were targeted to effectively respond to VAWG/DV.

CEDAW Concluding Recommendations after reviewing Georgia's combined fourth and fifth periodic reports (July 2014) call on the country to take specific measures to integrate SRH&RR in the curricula of all educational levels (recommendation 26.e). In 2017, UNFPA continued its strategic support to the MoES within the framework of the MoU concluded with the UNJP.

In order to ensure building expertise on the subject matter within the ministry, the participation of the head of the General Education Unit under the MoES in the international conference held in Berlin, Germany was facilitated during the reporting period. The conference served as a platform for the facilitation of a scientific and technical exchange on the latest research results and examples of best practices in the field of comprehensive sexuality education. The event aimed at providing an overview on trends and the current state of sexuality education in the WHO European Region, identifying current challenges related to the implementation and improvement of sexuality education, as well as future strategies and approaches to address them.

The resources and the experience obtained from the conference were used to shape the MoU between the MoES and the UNJP, outlining the scope and details of cooperation until 2020. Within the framework of the MoU, UNFPA committed to provide technical assistance to the MoES to enhance the formal, non-formal and vocational education systems of the country by integrating the issues of healthy lifestyles, SRH&RR and gender equality principles. The signing of the MoU was an indication of a clear commitment from the Government to respond to the emergent need for ensuring the healthy and harmonious development of the younger generation.



Based on the MoU, in 2017 UNFPA provided technical assistance to the ministry through an implementing partner, NGO Tanadgoma, to revise and enhance the subject standards of “Biology” and “Civic Education” for the basic education level (grades VII-IX). Based on the WHO and BZgA framework on the Standards of Sexuality Education in Europe, as well as UNESCO recommendations on the matter, the aforementioned subject standards include dedicated themes to the topic, ensuring provision of the age-appropriate information to the pupils. The standards are finalized and agreed with the ministry; however, since the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia was replaced at the end of 2017, the standards are anticipated to be approved in 2018. Moreover, in the reporting period, UNFPA launched working consultations with the relevant entities at the MoES regarding the preparation of the teacher training module on healthy lifestyles and SRH&RR. Background materials and resources were compiled for the module in 2017, and it will be finalized once the ministry has a clear vision on the accreditation of the modules.

As stated previously, the UPR that covers the full range of human rights has been identified as one of the key instruments for leading advocacy and policy dialogue with the governmental counterparts on core issues in Georgia. The analysis of Georgia’s second review (10 November 2015) documentation showed that, of the 203 recommendations made to Georgia, 70 (34 per cent) were raised in relation to SRH&RR. Of these 70 recommendations, Georgia accepted 69. These recommendations present several opportunities for UNFPA to assist the Government of Georgia in designing specific plans and actions for implementation in order to ensure that the follow-up is holistic and human rights-based. Therefore, UNFPA established a strategic partnership with the PDO that holds “A” status according to the Paris Principles and is primarily responsible for supervising the protection of human rights and freedoms within its jurisdiction on the territory of Georgia. UNFPA collaborated with the PDO to build its capacity for monitoring SRH&RR within the national human rights monitoring system; as the first major step in this direction, the PDO has been equipped to conduct a country assessment as a systematic review of information and data compiled through secondary sources to identify and understand the country's main human rights problems related to sexual and reproductive health and well-being and the efforts undertaken (or lack thereof) by the State (as the main duty bearer) and other non-state actors to address these problems. The assessment enables the monitoring and assessment of national legislation and state strategies vis-à-vis the international commitments assumed by the country in relation to SRH&RR. The PDO will integrate the information elicited from the assessment in its parliamentary report, as well as prepare a specialized report on the issue for general public scrutiny. The ultimate goal of the collaboration is to integrate reproductive rights monitoring into the national human rights monitoring framework under the competence of the PDO. During the reporting period, an MoU was signed between UNFPA and the PDO in order to institutionalize the initiative. According to the MoU, a country inquiry on the same issue will be conducted through UNFPA’s technical assistance. Moreover, the PDO commits to taking ownership of the process in the subsequent years and funding the position of a staff member dedicated to this initiative from its own resources.

### **Output 3.3. Strengthened public advocacy for enhancing de facto gender equality and promoting SRH&RR**

During the reporting period, UNFPA supported strengthening social supports for key advocacy and communication issues, including preventing harmful practices, strengthening male support for gender equality and promoting youth SRH.

In order to support youth sustainable development, UNFPA promotes a peer education methodology aimed at equipping the young generation with relevant knowledge and skills, enabling them to make informed decisions on their reproductive health and reproductive rights. In order to provide age-appropriate information to youngsters, UNFPA provided technical assistance to tailor specific modules to fit the interests and development stages of two groups of youth, aged 14-16 and 17-19. Among other issues, the module for the 17-19 age group contains information on the country context on current SRH services available, relevant legislative norms, reproductive rights, family planning services, HIV prevention services, confidentiality

issues and parental consent while receiving different services. Based on the updated standardized module, UNFPA reached 3,196 young people in the capital and in the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo. Through TOTs or cascade training sessions, participants received information on sexual and reproductive health and rights, STIs, HIV/AIDS, puberty, sexuality, gender equality, domestic violence and other topics. Georgia is one country in the region where the steady increase (25 per cent) in HIV incidences has been observed in recent years.

In 2017, UNFPA initiated and/or expanded three issue-based advocacy and communication campaigns. The campaign on son preference and GBSS was rolled out in two regions of the country. The campaign in the Kakheti region was initiated in close partnership with the World Bank within the framework of the UN Joint Programme, while the one in Kvemo Kartli was launched under the EU-funded Global Programme. UNFPA selected relevant implementing partners to spearhead the campaign and designed specific communication materials. Two brochures were prepared and published in Georgian and Azerbaijani languages – one for medical professionals, the other for the general public – containing information on the phenomenon of son preference and GBSS, as well as its implications and consequences. Moreover, a special animation video was produced on the subject, highlighting the prevailing stereotypes related to son preference and the importance of attributing equal value and care to girls and boys. The animation was based on the preliminary focus group discussions, from which the information regarding the stereotypes was elicited and the communication messages tested. Furthermore, the campaign was rolled out in the Kakheti region through piloting the information sessions, invitation protocol and research instrument for impact evaluation. The campaign in Kakheti will continue to unfold and reach its full force in 2018.

On the other hand, the campaign was extended in Kvemo Kartli under the UNFPA Global Programme for the Prevention of Son Preference and GBSS (funded by the EU). As part of advocacy and communication work, the programme targeted medical professionals to increase their sensitivity on the issues and strengthen their involvement in the prevention of this harmful practice. This was accomplished through the dissemination of special brochures and through discussions with professional facilitators on the ethical use of sex-detection technologies in the capital and regions. Moreover, a TOT was conducted to prepare the cadre of facilitators for the information sessions to be deployed in Kakheti and Kvemo Kartli. Ten information sessions were conducted in the Kvemo Kartli region with the target population (couples aged 19-39) in partnership with the Public Service Development Agency under the MoJ, which provided meeting spaces free of charge at the Public Service Community Centers in villages.

The advocacy and communication campaign continued on the prevention of the harmful practices of early/child marriage. As part of the broader campaign, the documentary photo exhibition “Girls from the Future” by the young photographer Dina Oganova was arranged on the International Day of the Girl Child. Through pictures and quotes, the photo project shared the stories of adolescent girls (aged 10-16) from different parts of Georgia. The project promoted the idea that realizing the full potential of girls – by creating equal opportunities and an enabling environment for them, as well as encouraging their access to education and health care – plays a crucial role in the advancement and development of the country. The speakers at the event reiterated the idea that every girl should be given the opportunity to complete her education and make informed decisions about her own life and health. The event received extensive media coverage and was attended by the representatives of the Parliament, the Government, international organizations, local civil society organizations and the general public.

During the reporting period, UNFPA Georgia continued working on Gender Transformative Programming through various advocacy and communication activities. This time, UNFPA established new strategic partnerships with both local institutions and private sector organizations. UNFPA joined the Gender Week celebration at the beginning of March to reinforce men’s support for achieving gender equality through an advocacy event hosted with the MenCare Campaign activists. The event brought together more than 100 participants and supporters of the Campaign, including the First Deputy Prime Minister, MPs, representatives

of the Government, professionals from the fields of art and science, athletes, writers, musicians, celebrities and representatives of private business companies. Activists of the Campaign spoke about the importance of men's involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being, gender equality and better health for mothers, fathers and children. The activists also shared success stories, as well as brought advocacy issues to the attention of the audience, such as introducing the official celebration of Father's Day (19 June) in Georgia and the promotion of paternity/parental leave. The event served as an excellent advocacy platform to demonstrate the commitment towards gender equality as an important issue not only for women but also for men and for society at large. This event facilitated the expansion of the network of like-minded people and engagement of more men in public discourse about achieving real equality between men and women. Moreover, within the framework of the MenCare Campaign, banners appeared in the streets of Tbilisi demonstrating campaign activists as the role models together with their children. By participating in the photo project, they encourage others to spend more time with their children and families and equally share responsibilities and tasks among the partners in the family. The banners were installed at 24 bus stops across the city. The MenCare Campaign was further rolled out through a masterclass organized at a barber shop. With the help of professional stylists and designers, fathers learned how to help their children take care of their hair and make the process fun and enjoyable. The masterclass aimed to encourage fathers to get involved in their children's everyday lives and to shatter the perceptions about masculine and feminine duties in the household. All of the advocacy and communication events conducted during the reporting period were extensively covered by various media sources, generating huge public interest and discourse.

The 2017 celebration of Father's Day was the second year that Georgia observed the holiday in the framework of the MenCare Campaign. Father's Day emphasizes the importance of involving fathers in family life and in the upbringing of children. This year, representatives of governmental agencies, international and non-governmental organizations and the private sector joined the Father's Day celebration. Several events organized by partners of the Campaign were held on 18 and 19 June. The central event of Father's Day was organized by UNFPA Georgia and the NGO We Care at Tbilisi's Mziuri Park, in cooperation with Tbilisi City Hall. During the event, the premiere of the new song "Father's Lullaby" by a famous Georgian male musician took place.

Moreover, in cooperation with the Georgian Football Federation, a Fathers and Children football championship was held at the sports complex "Arena 2". The championship was open for any father who registered prior to the game and assumed the role of a team coach. Fathers represented teams of four members comprising girls and boys aged 8-12. Participation of both genders in each team was mandatory. A total of 12 teams participated in the competition.

As a continuation of the campaign, the children's book "Lullaby for Lily", by well-known Georgian author Aleksandre Lordkipanidze, was designed and published in the reporting period. The fairy tale is gender sensitive and describes a family with three kids. The aim of the project is to give readers the sense of equality between the kids of different genders and shows the positive image of the involved father in the upbringing of the children. The book also touches upon the issue of people with disabilities, since the baby born in the family has hearing impairment. The book's presentation was arranged on 8 December 2017 and was attended by over 100 people. The event was widely covered by different media, as well as discussed on social media. Moreover, MenCare Georgia joined the "16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence" campaign by choosing 16 popular men in the country to record their opinions on gender equality and equal and involved parenthood. During the 16 days, these quotes were published by On.ge, one of the most reliable and popular news media outlets in Georgia. According to the media report, around 6,000 people read the quotes, and they were shared 2,900 times from the On.ge website. The quotes were also shared on MenCare Georgia's Facebook page and were seen by 50,000 users and shared by 890. Three videos were captured by MenCare Georgia for Christmas. In these videos, three popular men (e.g. a television presenter, a footballer, the president of the Georgian National Football Federation, a journalist, the director of Forbes Georgia, etc.) are talking about good fatherhood and sharing their experience on how to be involved fathers. The videos were

uploaded to the MenCare Georgia Facebook page and shown by two different Georgian television channels (Imedi TV, Public Broadcaster) as a social advertisement. In the reporting period, UNFPA also continued supporting the Men Talking to Men (MTM) training sessions based on the one-day module prepared in cooperation with Promundo US. This year, MTM was extended to the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo. In total, 26 sessions were conducted and 319 young men were reached. Participants were selected based on the open call announced on the official site [www.jobs.ge](http://www.jobs.ge), as well as through cooperation with the local NGOs and the local government institutions.

The MenCare Campaign was also successfully rolled out on social media platforms. The content posted on MenCare Georgia ranged from local videos, blogposts, photos and posters to international posts from various organizations and Facebook Pages. The Likes of the page has increased by 10 per cent and has now reached 35,000, with the biggest group aged 25-34 (44 per cent). The average daily reach of the page was 5,000 (meaning that 5,000 people saw the Facebook posts every day). The total engagement for 2017 included 41,000 reactions (Like, Love, Haha, etc.) and 306,000 video views; 230 posts have been published on the MenCare Georgia Facebook page. Overall, all three of the advocacy and communication campaigns received substantial coverage by media. In total, 173 media pieces were dedicated to this campaign in 2017, generating sufficient public interest and engagement.

To create an enabling environment for gender equality, UNFPA Georgia supported community-based organizations in the regions of Kakheti and Samegrelo to implement awareness-raising programmes with a particular focus on youth and SRH&RR, gender equality and early marriages at the grass-roots level. Through the selected implementing partners in each location, before implementing the awareness-raising programmes, UNFPA Georgia supported the NGOs in the selected regions to obtain new knowledge on the issues of GE, DV/GBV, SRH&RR, harmful practices (early marriage), male involvement, healthy lifestyles and other ICPD issues. In total, 12 NGOs from Kakheti and 16 NGOs from Samegrelo participated in the workshops organized at each location. NGO representatives were invited to participate in the Small Grant Competitions announced in each region. Fifteen NGOs submitted proposals from Kakheti, of which four awards were granted. In Samegrelo, 13 NGOs expressed interest and three were granted the award. Various activities were implemented within the framework of the small grants initiatives, including trainings and sessions on GE, youth reproductive health and rights, family planning, HIV and other STIs, gender-based violence, domestic violence and the importance of men's involvement as equitable, non-violent fathers and caregivers. Activities also included thematic movie screenings, World Café dialogues, debates, an essay and painting competition, a sports competition and Forum Theatres. In total, 392 participants from Kakheti were involved in these local initiatives, while 540 from Samegrelo participated.

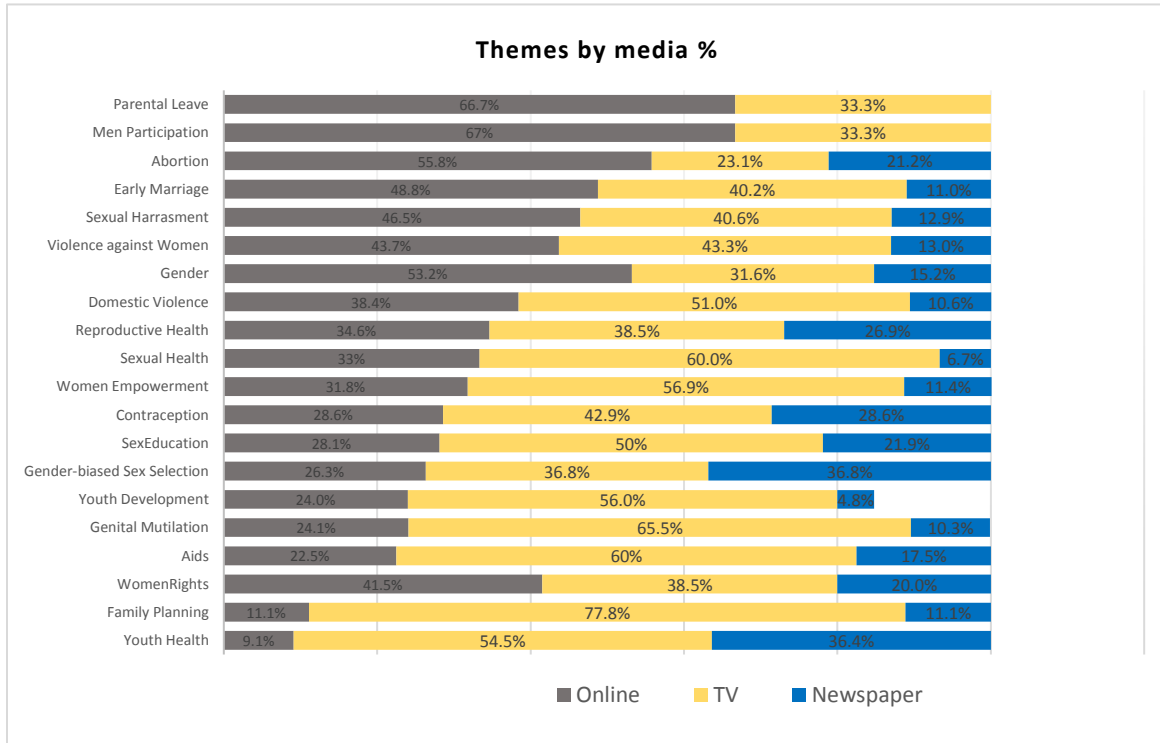
Pursuant to the request from the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civil Equality, UNFPA has supported the translation of IEC materials on youth SRH, GE, harmful practices and other topics into the most prevalent minority languages (Armenian and Azerbaijani). The brochures were reprinted by UNFPA, while the State Minister's Office distributed the materials through various activities in the regions.

In 2017, UNFPA, in the framework of UNJP, actively worked with Georgian media to communicate key messages and reach a wider audience. UNFPA continued its cooperation with the popular magazines "Indigo" and "Culinart". All of the aforementioned topics – early/child marriage, GBSS, men's engagement for achieving gender equality – were widely covered by the different media outlets, including television, radio, magazines, newspapers and web portals. All of the major events held in the framework of UNJP appeared in the news and in thematic television and radio programmes and were discussed in articles. Overall, the number of media mentions of UNJP activities reached 173.

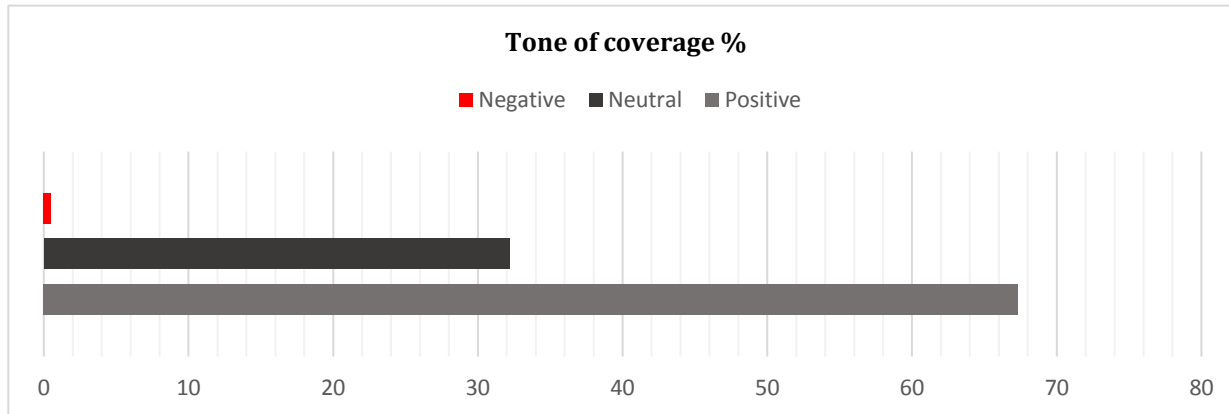
The monitoring of the UNFPA/UNJP thematic areas in Georgian media conducted by UNFPA in 2017 revealed interesting findings in terms of the coverage of topics within UNJP's mandate (see Figure 1). The

report also indicates that the tone of coverage for the majority of cases was positive, with very few mentions conveyed using a negative tone (see Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Themes sorted by media type**



**Figure 2: Tone of coverage**



To widen the audience and promote the work accomplished in the framework of UNJP, UNFPA’s communications team actively used social media in 2017, particularly Facebook and Twitter. Relevant hashtags, proper visual materials (photos, infographics) and texts adopted according to the social media standards make the content accessible and understandable for the audience, especially for target groups, with a special focus on young people. Along with the UNFPA social media platforms, the MenCare Georgia Facebook page should also be noted, which is always very active and popular among its followers.

In 2017, UNFPA Georgia participated in the UNFPA EECARO regional innovation project funded through the UNFPA Innovation Fund on engaging social media champions to increase its reach to the population with key advocacy issues for triggering social change. In total, 10 selected social media champions were involved in the project implementation; they have been communicating and advocating on male involvement, the elimination of stigma and discrimination against the elderly, and the prevention of harmful practices. The project proved to be quite effective and resulted in the independent spin-off awareness-raising activities initiated by social media champions addressing UNFPA advocacy issues. In total, it has been estimated that 500,000 people were reached through this project on social media platforms.

**Overall**, the progress towards the achievement of the UN Joint Programme’s outcomes has been significant in 2017. The most important achievements within the reporting period include the establishment of the GE/VAW Commission, ratification of the Istanbul Convention and adoption of the accompanying legislative amendments. Moreover, the adoption of the constitutional guarantee of meaningful equality and temporary special measures has laid an important foundation for further affirmative actions to close the gender gap. The advocacy on the adoption of electoral gender quotas has contributed to increased awareness of the need for greater inclusion of women in politics and decision-making processes. Furthermore, for the first time in the country, sexual and reproductive health and well-being have been placed within the human rights framework by undertaking a country assessment in partnership with the PDO in order to identify and understand the main problems related to sexual and reproductive health and the efforts undertaken by the State as the main duty bearer. Significant progress has been triggered in terms of the health-care system’s response to VAWG/DV through the introduction of regulatory changes in the health system that enable better identification, monitoring and management of cases of violence. Last but not least, a substantial breakthrough has been observed in terms of integrating healthy lifestyles and SRH&RR issues into the formal education system by reviewing and upgrading the school standards for grades VII-IX.

**ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

**See Annex 1**

**iii) A Specific Story (Optional)**

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