



Azerbaijan Human Development Report 2007

Gender Attitudes in Azerbaijan : Trends and Challenges



A. Background

- Findings derived from a national survey of gender attitudes of 1,500 Azerbaijani men and women conducted in November, 2005 and from interviews with experts and focus groups
- Conducted by a national research company and analysed by national experts with support from an international gender expert
- Believed to be the first national survey of gender attitudes in a CIS country
- Supported by UNDP, the Government of Norway and the State Committee for Family, Women's and Children's Affairs
- Report seeks to stimulate a public debate on gender equality in Azerbaijan based on the analysis of the survey of gender attitudes

B. Principal Findings

1. General

- Equality of men and women guaranteed under the law reflecting a State commitment to equality
- Discrepancy between equality under the law and the reality of inequalities between men and women in the economic, social and political spheres
- Inequalities often due to negative attitudes and stereotypes which have their source in private life and inter-personal relations

2. Employment and Living Conditions

- Unemployment is higher for women than for men and property ownership and business are dominated by men
- Society tends to see men as the "breadwinner" and women as the "homemaker" which restricts female engagement in economic activity and decreases their job choices
- Traditional gender roles are being challenged by an urgent need for women to generate income, particularly when men are unemployed
- Women's increased participation in the economy is reducing their dependence on men and empowering them in the economy and the family

3. Education and Health

- Education highly valued by both men and women
- Significant gender prejudice still exists when it comes to the educational development of girls, women's choice of professional training and female access to information, especially the Internet
- Health problems are an issue for both men and women and access to health services is perceived to be limited by lack of financial resources
- Men are seen to partially dominate women on decisions relating to reproductive health such as birth control

4. Marriage and Family

- The Azerbaijani family is a valuable social asset that is being transformed by economic changes
- Family size is decreasing
- Gender division of labour and male authority remain resistant to change within the family

5. Violence

- Domestic violence is the most common type of violence against women in Azerbaijan
- Most women do not disclose information about incidents of domestic violence
- Domestic violence is only partly condemned by men and women
- Gender inequality, when a man has sole control over material resources and decision-making in the family, remains the primary cause of violence.

6. Social Life

- Insufficient female participation in politics and civil society due to gender stereotypes and traditional attitudes
- Positive attitude of most respondents to women's participation in political life is promising
- Media can play a role to increase awareness of gender equality