



## **Azerbaijan Human Development Report 2007 Gender Attitudes in Azerbaijan: Trends and Challenges**



### ***Men and Women of Azerbaijan Speak on Gender Attitudes Selected Quotations from the Report***

One female respondent in a focus group remarked, "A man has to work. He has to bring bread money home. A man has to take care of his family. Women don't have to work." (p.21)

One male respondent said, "... a woman works more than a man. She works both at home and outside." (p.22)

One female respondent explained, "There are more needy women than men. During economic transition women are first to become unemployed. Unemployment breeds poverty. Women's choice is more limited than men's. Under the present conditions, it is not women that select jobs – jobs select women." (p.23)

According to a male expert from a government agency, ... "Now women feel they are very independent. It wasn't like that before. Nobody hinders women any more – they have their economic liberty." (p.28)

In the view of a female activist, ... "Experience bears out that in the most difficult issues the mechanism of equal rights does not work. Laws on books are one thing, and reality is an altogether different thing." (p.28)

One young woman remarked "... if we had an education we would not be afraid of anybody, I mean of men. We could go and work." (p.36)

Another [man] supports this argument saying, "Today, finding the ideal husband is like winning the Jackpot in the lottery. Parents cannot be fully sure that their daughters will be happy in the future. That is why they make their girls study so that they can work in sanitary and proper jobs in the future." (p.36)

One male respondent explained, "In our families, power belongs to men. It has always been like this. Our traditions propagate this idea." (p.54)

One young woman remarked, "A woman carries the bulk of the housework. A man can do it as well. But they consider it a weakness. But we do not attempt to change it, because it is hard to change." (p.54)

One male respondent from Agstafa said, "Today who earns money has power within the family. In most families men do not work and women earn money which means that they have the power. This is not suitable for Azerbaijani mentality. Authority belongs to men. He has to work, earn money and rule the family." (p.58)

Another woman said, "There are men who do not earn anything. Women work and bring money but men treat them as if it is women's obligation and not a favour to men." (p.58)

One woman from Guba stated ... "His wife has to listen to him. Otherwise there will be disputes and the family will be divided. If one is fire, the other one has to be the water so they can live together." (p.60)

One woman from Baku said, "It seems to me that women have the last word. It is not matriarchy. It is true that the man's word is superior. But whatever he does, in the end he will do what his wife tells him to do." (p.60)

One female respondent said "women are born politicians. A woman deals in politics with her children, between her daughter and son and among her neighbours, ensuring there are no disputes." (p.76)