

GEORGIA
RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONIRE ON
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

PART ONE

Overview of trends in achieving equality and women's advancement.

1. • The major achievement policies and programmes for gender equality and advancement of women:

The State Commission on Elaboration of State Policy of Women Development was created by the Order of the President of Georgia №48, 20.02.1998 (English translation is enclosed).

The Plan of Action for Improving Women's Conditions was approved by the Order of the President of Georgia №308, 18.06.1998 (English translation is enclosed).

The joint project of government of Georgia and UNDP "Women in Development" had been implemented (1997-1998).

• The sectors not covered by the national action plan education and training of women, violence against women, women and media, women and environment, the girl child – are problems quite well regulated by Georgian legislation and practice. At the present moment these problems don't emerge as problems demanding emergency measures.

• As a country in transition Georgia has a lot of social, political problems, the problem of territorial integrity so we are not ready to pursue the goals of gender equality and advancement as priority. At the same time the government has taken important steps in regard gender policy, the protection of human rights is proclaimed as priority in the country. This means that since the protection of woman's rights is the part of human rights sphere, therefore it is a priority.

• In terms of the critical areas of concern of the Platform of Action the country's priorities are the problem of poverty since the social situation is very hard, women and armed conflict since Georgia overcame the tragedy of totalitarian system, civil war and domestic conflict. There are 250000 IDP-s from Abkhazia (Georgia) and Tskhinvali Region in Georgia; among them 150000 are women and children. Priority is health condition of women; serious projects are underway.

• In the retrospective of Georgian culture and history a woman is traditionally considered as a protector of family, social and cultural values. It is said, that woman is in great respect in

Georgia, what we can clearly see in historical masterpieces, arts, literature and especially in the richest Georgian poetry and Georgian folklore. In these masterpieces the woman occurs to be not only the mother of a family, but also a politician, defender of motherland. At the same time the worship formed in Georgian society is mainly associated with a woman-mother. It's clearly represented in Georgian language – motherland (earth), mother-idea (gist), mother-tongue (Georgian language), Mother's Day is a holiday in Georgia (March 3), etc.

But traditionally in Georgian society the men play the dominant role. Despite that there is no discriminative statement in Georgian legislation toward women, the asymmetry of men and women social positions on the behalf of men priority is obvious. For example, according to the research results of the sociologists, women who work, approximately have no free time. Housekeeping labour is a heavy burden for them. Men devote much less time to home than women.

On September 22, 1994, Georgia joined "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women", by that the country is responsible to exercise all the articles of the convention. The main state bodies, who work on the problems given in the convention, are the Ministries of Health, Education, Internal Affairs, Social Security, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.

According to Article 43 of the Constitution of Georgia, the institute of Public Defender (Ombudsman) was established to supervise the protection of human rights and freedoms all over the country, naturally including the rights of women.

In the Parliament of Georgia the Committee for Human Rights and National Minorities pays a serious tribute to this problem. The Subcommittee of Mothers and Children participates seriously in adoption of legislation on women and exercises a serious control over its implementation.

The President founded a specific position of the Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council of Georgia on Human Rights Issues in the executive branch of the government and mandated it with a wide controlling power. There is established a Department on Human Rights Issues, the Head of the Department is obliged to work on women's rights problems.

Approximately 60 NGO's activities are bound to women problems. Their field of activity is various (charities, labour arrangement, cultural and educational activities and etc.). There are no purely feministically orientated organisations in Georgia. Such organisations are not to be expected taking into consideration the traditions and culture of the country.

- The attention to gender equality and advancement of women has changed since 1995. Creation of Commission, approval of the National Plan of Action and steps taken for implementation of this Plan show that the government is seriously interested in gender problems. The project "Women in Development" has provided great activities in this direction. Some problems were connected with the difficulties of communication with women, especially in regions. The interest of mass media on gender issues is low. Women's image formed by media is either stereotypical or negative. Economic and financial situation has influenced on socio-economic conditions of women. Women in Georgia have a very high intellectual potential. High level of unemployment decreased the use of this potential. Women face the obstacles in business, credit system. But those problems occur to be common for both genders.

Since 1995 the interest of population on gender issues has increased. Seminars and meetings organised by the UNDP project attended by representatives of Government, Parliament, NGO-s and society were rather useful in this regard.

- The Global financial crisis, especially crisis in Russia has effected Georgia. In autumn, 1998 financial crisis resulted lack of resources to pay pensions and salaries to the people working in budget institutions. Teachers and doctors mostly women didn't receive their salaries several months. At the end of 1998 and in the beginning of 1999 the situation has improved, but great difficulties are remaining.

PART TWO

Financial and institutional measures.

2. Women's problems are not significantly addressed in budget. 70000 USD was put in 1999 budget as cost-sharing in the UNDP project "Gender in Development". There are no extra funds for the implementation of tasks included in the plan of action. These tasks are to be financed from the state budget through the appropriate ministries, regional governments and state institutions. Attempts should be taken to seek funds from other sources.

3. a) -----

b) -----

c) NGO's role in planning and shaping the follow-up activities are very high. NGO's, regional forums of women are very actively involved in the implementation of the National

Plan. The Government recognised NGO's as an important partner in solving women's problems. The co-operation between government institutions and NGO's emerges as new factor of political and economic transformation in Georgia. 9 members of NGO's are members of the State Commission.

PART THREE

Implementation of the critical areas of concern of Beijing Platform for action.

A. Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices.

4. • To establish a Department on Women Issues and create gender units within the governmental structures are considered by the Government of Georgia. It is very important but at the present moment budget difficulties don't allow to decide these issues. Information on gender equality to the society is provided through seminars, debates, publications, forums and mass media by NGO's and UNDP project. Ministry of Justice evaluates all laws and bills from gender perspective. The Department of Statistics collects and analyses the statistic data reflecting women and men's conditions.

• Women's role and participation in the decision-making processes is not satisfactory. There are 16 MP's, 2 women-minister (trade and ecology), 5 deputy ministers (foreign affairs, education, health, social affairs and culture), Deputy Secretary of Ombudsman and Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council on Human Rights Issues are women. Local elections were held in Georgia in 1998 and 30 women became members of local authorities, 70 judges are women. The situation has the tendency to improvement.

• Promotion of women's economic independence, economic activity is a long, heavy process. In the process of privatisation women were not able to become the owners of any large economic object. They are mostly the owners of small enterprises in the service managing economic policy. They have no opportunity of receiving large credits. The need of considering the gender factors in the state economic policy at the transitional stage is obvious. It implies gender aspects in fiscal policy, salary policy, labour market regulations and social policy. In order to implement this policy, it is essential to work out a state programme for development of enterprising managed by women. The leitmotiv of the programme should be support of women

engaged in business, including small business and creation of favourable conditions – like soft credits and tax benefits, for starting such business.

- The poverty growth among women in transitional period mostly depends on the economic situation in the country. Ministry of Agriculture and Food is working out the programme on eradication of poverty among women in rural areas, Ministry of Economy – projects supporting increase of women family income. The Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law on High Mountain Regions establishing benefits for doctors, teachers and employees in high mountain regions. The problem of poverty is a very painful problem for population of Georgia.

- Georgia overcame domestic conflicts in Abkhazia (Georgia) and Tskhinvali region. 250000 Citizens were forcibly expelled from their homes. Thousands were killed; women and children among them. Budapest Summit recognised that there was ethnic cleansing of Georgians in Abkhazia. The State takes all necessary measures to support IDP's, but their living conditions still remain hard. The Government develops policy and mechanisms excluding any forms of violence against women. The territory of Abkhazia is not under Georgian jurisdiction so the Government has no mechanisms to protect the Georgians living in Abkhazia. The process of political settlement is underway, but real results are vague.

- Women health and family planning is the priority of government policy. The Ministry of Health worked out programmes, which are underway. Free emergency aid is provided for population. Programme for free treatment of unemployed persons and vulnerable woman is being worked out.

- The Constitution of Georgia recognises the following rights and freedoms: the right to life (Article 15), the right to personal development (Article 16), inviolability of a person's dignity and prohibition of torture (Article 17), the right to speech, thought, conscience, religion and belief (Article 19), the right to inviolability of every individual's private life and place of personal activity (Article 20), the right to inheritance and property (Article 21), the right to free movement within the territory of Georgia and free choice of residence; the right to leave of Georgia and free entry for citizens of Georgia (Article 22), the right to receive and disseminate information (Article 24), the right to free public assembly (Article 26), the right to labour (Article 31), the right to education (Article 35) and etc. If we take into consideration Article 14

the Constitution of Georgia according to which "everyone is born free, is equal before the law regardless of race, skin colour, language, sex, religion, political and other beliefs, national,

ethnic and social origin, property, title of nobility or place of residence", it is obvious, that all above counted rights are equally available for both women and men.

Georgian legislation contains no discriminative norms limiting equality of men and women. The knowledge of human rights is not satisfactory. So there is the need to conduct training on human rights and women rights among them for governmental structures, mass media, secondary schools, institutes of higher education, law enforcement institutions and population.

B. Obstacles encountered.

5. It is difficult to overcome the mentality of men of dominating in society. They aren't eager to recognise that women have the same right to participate in all processes of political and social life of the country.

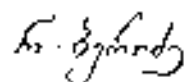
C. Commitments to further action and initiatives.

6. All steps described above have been taken after the Beijing Conference.

New commitments are listed in National Action Plan and we hope to implement them.

8. The Government intends to establish the Department on Women Issues after presidential elections (April 2000).

9. The role of women will be increased in the new millennium. We hope that the major problem which was formulated on IV World Conference of Women in Beijing: more women in Parliament, Government, local bodies, in the field of economy, governmental delegations, leading positions, higher positions in civil labour, political parties, foreign policy, diplomatic activities, higher positions in the fields of education, employment and health security will become reality all over the world, as well as in Georgia.



Rusudan Beridze

**Deputy Secretary of the National Security Council
of Georgia on Human Rights Issues,
Chairman of the State Commission on Elaboration of
State Policy of Women's Development**



**ORDER
OF THE PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA**

**ABOUT CREATION OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON
ELABORATION STATE POLICY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN**

№ 48

February 20, 1999

Tbilisi

Having signed the final document of the IV World Conference held in Beijing the Government of Georgia has the obligation to implement the recommendations of the Conference.

In order to support and improve the condition of women in Georgia it is necessary to elaborate State policy and strategy, to work out plan of action.

For the implementation of resolutions taken at the Conference in Beijing the following persons are appointed to be the members of the State Commission:

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| Rusudan Beridze | - Deputy Secretary of the National security Council of Georgia,
Head of the Commission |
| Tamar Abashidze | - Member of UNDP Project "Women in Development" |
| Teimuraz Basilia | - Assistant to the President on Economic Reform Issues |
| Vaja Beridze | - State Chancellery, Head of Department |
| Helen Gogvadze | - Head of Department on Human Rights Issues of the National
Security Council of Georgia |
| Khatuna Gogorishvili | - Head of the Apparatus of Parliament |
| Tamar Goderdzisvili | - Deputy Minister of Finances of Georgia |
| Zviad Gonadze | - State Chancellery, Head of Department |
| Medea Gotsiridze | - Deputy Minister of Education of Georgia |

- Nelli Gurgenzidze** - Vice-President of E. Shevardnadze's Fund "Democracy and Revival"
- Nana Devdariani** - Editor of newspaper "Samshoblo-Forte", Head of the NGO "Business Women"
- Eka Ebralidze** - State Chancellery, State Adviser, the National Director of UNDP Project "Women in Development"
- Nino Kiguradze** - NGO "Tbiliseli"
- Nino Kobakhidze** - Deputy Minister of Culture
- Giorgi Maisuradze** - Member of UNDP Project "Women in Development"
- Irina Jhvania** - Member of UNDP Project "Women in Development"
- David Salaridze** - Public Defender (Ombudsman)
- Eka Sepashvili** - Member of UNDP Project "Women in Development"
- Marina Gudushauri** - Deputy Minister of Health of Georgia
- Odjo Karaulashvili** - State Chancellery, Sociological Service
- Zaza Shengelia** - Deputy State Minister of Georgia
- Nino Chkhobadze** - Minister of Ecology
- Nani Chanishvili** - Member of the Parliament of Georgia, Head of Women Parliamentary Club
- Darejan Charbadze** - Deputy Minister of Post and Communication
- Manon Khachidze** - Head of Apparatus of Ministry of Social Affairs
- Nino Javakhishvili** - President of Women's Council, Member of the Academy of Science of Georgia
- Charita Jashi** - Co-ordinator of UNDP Project "Women in Development", General Director of E. Shevardnadze's Fund "Democracy and Revival"

E. Shevardnadze

ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA

**ON APPROVAL OF THE PLAN OF ACTION
FOR IMPROVING WOMEN'S CONDITIONS
IN GEORGIA FOR 1998-2000**

№ 308

18 June, 1998

Tbilisi

1. To approve the enclosed Plan of Action for Improving Women's Conditions in Georgia for 1998-2000.
2. To address International Organisations to assist the Government of Georgia in implementation of the activities considered in the enclosed Plan.
3. To entrust the Government Commission on Elaboration of the State Policy for Women's Development (R. Beridze) to monitor implementation of the present Order.

E. Shevardnadze

Approved by the Order No_308
of the President of Georgia,
June 18, 1998

THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPROVING WOMEN'S CONDITIONS IN GEORGIA FOR 1998-2000

PRIORITIES	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	EXECUTORS	DURATION
1. Establishment of Institutional Mechanisms	1. Improve the level of awareness of gender problems, develop comprehensive knowledge concerning the problem; 2. Consider gender factor in the state policy and legislation	1) establish a Department on Women Issues; 2) create gender units within the governmental structures; 3) consider issues of gender equality while drawing up budget, implementing tax policy and training the staff; 4) supply information on gender equality to the society through seminars, debates, publications, forums and mass media;	1) the Parliament of Georgia, the Government of Georgia; 2) the Government of Georgia; 3) the Parliament of Georgia, the Ministries of Finance and of Economy; 4) Commission ¹ on Elaboration of State Policy for Improving Women's Conditions and joint Georgian Government - UNDP Project "Women in Development" ² ;	1999-2000 1998-1999 1998-1999 1998-1999
		5) evaluate all laws and bills from a gender perspective (gender expertise) 6) collect and analyse the statistic data reflecting women's and men's conditions; 7) publish works on existing conditions of women and men in the society.	5) Ministry of Justice, Young Lawyers Association; 6) State Department for Statistics, WID Project 7) WID Project.	1998-1999 1998-2000

¹Hereinafter Commission
²Hereinafter WID Project

<p>2. Increase the Women's role and Participation in the Decision-Making Processes</p>	<p>Increase women representation in the power structures</p>	<p>1) collect and publish information on women representation in every sphere of decision-making process; 2) train women on developing skills for leadership and political activity; 3) create women personnel reserve for participation at all levels of management;</p>	<p>1) Commission, WID Project, State Department for Statistics; 2) WID Project; 3) The Government of Georgia, Commission, WID Project;</p>	<p>1998-1999 1998-2000 1998-1999</p>
<p>3. Economic Policy</p>	<p>1. Promote women's economic independence 2. Facilitate access to the information on market economy and credits for small businessmen, small farmers and self-employed persons (especially women).</p>	<p>1) develop special programme for women engaged in private sector; 2) develop special programme on ensuring increase of income of women in rural areas; 3) develop mechanisms promoting women small and medium business; 4) consider gender parameters in development of an indicative plan.</p>	<p>1) Ministry of Economy; 2) Ministries of Agriculture and Food, Economy, Labour, Social Security and Employment Security, WID Project; 3) the Parliament of Georgia, Ministries of Economy, Finance, Agriculture and Food, State Property Management and Trade Unions; 4) Ministry of Economy.</p>	<p>1998-2000 1998-2000 1998-1999 1998</p>

4. Women and Poverty	1. Block the poverty growth among women in transitional period.			
		<p>1) analyse impact of macroeconomic, investment and taxation policy on the level of poverty from gender perspective;</p> <p>2) work out programmes on eradication of poverty among women in rural areas;</p> <p>3) work out and implement (through using macro-credits special projects supporting increase of women family income;</p> <p>4) study demographic processes and develop appropriate projects;</p> <p>5) study women migration and its impact on the national economy;</p> <p>6) develop projects on social assistance to single mothers, multi-children families, pensioners, handicapped women;</p> <p>7) develop new re-training programs;</p> <p>8) introduce changes into the legislation in order to strengthen defensive mechanisms, eradicate prostitution, beggary, famine, ensure health care service delivery and participation in the cultural life, develop new methods for elimination of illiteracy;</p> <p>9) establish benefits for doctors, teachers and employees of cultural institutions in high mountain regions.</p>	<p>1) Ministries of Economy, Finance, Labour, Social Security and Employment, State Department for Statistics, Trade Unions, WTD Project;</p> <p>2) Ministry of Agriculture and Food, WTD Project;</p> <p>3) Ministry of Economy;</p> <p>4) Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Employment, Institute of Demography;</p> <p>5) Ministry of Migration, Commission;</p> <p>6) Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Employment;</p> <p>7) Ministries of Labour, Social Security and Employment, Education;</p> <p>8) the Parliament of Georgia, Ministries of Labour, Social Security and Employment, Education, Justice, Health Care, Culture;</p> <p>9) the Parliament of Georgia.</p>	<p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1999</p>

<p>5. Women and Armed Conflicts</p>	<p>1. Involve women actively in every decision-making process;</p> <p>2. Develop policy and mechanisms excluding any form of violence against women during and after conflict;</p> <p>3. Elaborate mechanisms protecting women's rights during and after conflict.</p>	<p>1) engage women in peace building negotiations;</p> <p>2) develop special legal mechanisms and ensure women's participation in this process;</p> <p>3) settle the problem of separated families;</p> <p>4) develop mechanisms ensuring return of personal property lost during armed conflict;</p> <p>5) restore the right to free movement;</p> <p>6) design rehabilitation programmes for the victims of armed conflicts;</p> <p>7) involve NGOs in conflict settlement process.</p>	<p>1) the Parliament of Georgia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;</p> <p>2) the Parliament of Georgia, Ministry of Justice;</p> <p>3) Ministries of Justice and State Security;</p> <p>4) Ministry of Justice;</p> <p>5) Ministry of State Security;</p> <p>6) NGO's, Ministry of Refugees and Migration;</p> <p>7) Commission.</p>	<p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998</p> <p>1998</p> <p>1998-1999</p>
<p>6. Women and Health Improvement</p>	<p>1. Pay due attention to all aspects of women's health;</p> <p>2. Consider women's interests while developing health care programmes of Georgia as well as strategies for implementation of top priority objectives defined in the papers of the World Bank, UNICEF, UNHCR;</p> <p>3. Develop programmes for free treatment of unemployed and vulnerable women;</p> <p>4. Pay special attention to the women health protection issues while developing programmes and projects.</p>	<p>1) conduct training on issues concerning women's health for all professionals of the health care system;</p> <p>2) strengthen women's health protection;</p> <p>3) analyse the impact of the reforms in health care and social safety systems on women's health conditions;</p> <p>4) develop health care programmes for unemployed and vulnerable women;</p> <p>5) design programmes on preventive care of breast cancer;</p> <p>6) support and recommend programmes on preventing iodine deficiency among women and children;</p>	<p>1) Ministries of Health Care and Education;</p> <p>2) Ministry of Health Care;</p> <p>3) Ministries of Health Care, Labour, Social Security and Employment, Trade Unions;</p> <p>4) Ministries of Health Care, Labour, Social Security and Employment, Trade Unions;</p> <p>5) Ministry of Health Care;</p> <p>6) Ministry of Health Care;</p>	<p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p>

		<p>7) elaborate programmes on prevention and treatment of tuberculosis among women;</p> <p>8) regulate health protection of women at working places;</p> <p>9) ensure full health protection of pregnant women and young mothers;</p> <p>10) conduct prophylactic, educational, cultural works and trainings for women.</p>	<p>7) Ministry of Health Care;</p> <p>8) Ministries of Health Care, Labour, Social Security and Employment, Trade Unions;</p> <p>9) Ministry of Health Care;</p> <p>10) Ministries of Health Care, Education, Culture and Trade Unions.</p>	<p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998-2000</p>
<p>7. Women's Rights</p>	<p>1. Bring to compatibility Georgian legislation and functioning mechanisms;</p> <p>2. Eradicate all factors of gender discrimination.</p>	<p>1) conduct training on women's rights for governmental structures;</p> <p>2) translate and publish international conventions and the Beijing Platform for the Action;</p> <p>3) conduct trainings on women's rights for women NGO-s;</p> <p>4) develop special educational programmes on women's rights for secondary schools and institutes of higher education;</p> <p>5) conduct trainings on women's rights for law enforcement institutions;</p> <p>6) conduct special seminars on the issue of sexenot for mass media;</p> <p>7) conduct training on anti-discriminative issues.</p>	<p>1) Commission, WID Project;</p> <p>2) WID Project;</p> <p>3) Commission, WID Project;</p> <p>4) Ministries of Education, Health Care and Culture;</p> <p>5) Ministries of Justice, Internal Affairs, Office of Public Prosecutor;</p> <p>6) Commission, WID Project;</p> <p>7) Commission, WID Project.</p>	<p>1998-1999</p> <p>1998</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p> <p>1998-2000</p>