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GƏNCLƏR VƏ İDMAN NAZIRLIYI



AVROPA İTTİFAQI



BMT-nin ƏHALİ FONDU

# HANDBOOK FOR JOURNALISTS

## TO INCREASE GENDER SENSITIVITY OF MEDIA IN AZERBAIJAN





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The United Nations Population Fund: Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

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This handbook was prepared by Ayşe Karabat, the international media expert from Turkey, with contributions of Azerbaijan Press Council, Semin Gümüşel Güner and Aygün Asımqızı. The handbook contains detailed information and guidance for media representatives on increasing gender sensitivity and equality in the preparation and presentation of news in the Azerbaijani media, as well as promoting the value of girls and women.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Gender preference? Really?

Only well-informed societies can make wise decisions about their day-to-day and future issues. The burden of providing these societies with fact-based information falls mostly on the shoulders of journalists. As journalists, this responsibility should always lead us to do better and to produce high-quality journalism.

However, as the co-writers of this Handbook and as journalists with more than 20 years of experience, we know very well that carrying out this duty is not at all easy. We have all learned, and continue to learn, from our mistakes.

We are also members of the societies in which we live and are naturally the products of years of socialization, of our upbringing and of our individual life experiences. We have all grown up in societies with instilled gender stereotypes, such as “girls are timid and boys are brave.” We were taught the behavioural code of being “good girls” and “good boys,” but our life experiences, especially as journalists, began to paint a different picture of what the future held for us.

We have witnessed more girls excelling at school and becoming the top of their classes; more women getting jobs and accessing education, money and resources and more women holding positions of authority and making great strides in all professional fields.

As journalists, it is our responsibility to tell their stories.

Sadly, however, some women and girls were not given the latitude to live up to their potential. We have a responsibility to show the public that because we did not allow them this freedom, not only they, but society and, indeed, humanity has missed a golden opportunity.

Women are too often considered a burden while, in reality, they are an asset. Thus, telling their stories is crucially important.

Instead of repeating the gender-related clichés and stereotypes, we should spotlight the heightened sense of responsibility that girls have towards their families and their aspirations, as evidenced by the fact that it is predominantly girls that achieve awards of excellence in exams.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Psychology Professors Daniel and Susan Voyer, University of New Brunswick, undertook an analysis of 369 samples of academic grades of over one million boys and girls from 30 different nations. Their study, which was based on research from 1914 through 2011, revealed that girls have achieved consistently higher grades for decades. <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2014/04/girls-grades>

Girls are as capable as boys, equally able to achieve excellence in all fields. They excel in every aspect of life. Because girls and women face numerous difficulties and struggles during their lifetimes, this makes them quickly gain experience and become mature and teaches them many important lessons early on in life.

As journalists, we should be able to demonstrate to society that girls are the women of tomorrow and empowering them means empowering our future society. Girls can effect change, and by encouraging them to live up to their potential today and ensuring they learn the right values and receive quality education, parents can initiate this change and raise potential trailblazers. Women are unique providers for their families because they are multi-taskers; they can handle roles previously occupied by men, like becoming CEOs and entrepreneurs, while also managing their household.

But how do we achieve this?

The answer lies in producing good and ethical reporting. Good reporting includes being gender sensitive, as noted by the Azerbaijan Press Council on 1 November, 2018,<sup>2</sup> in the amendment to its Code of Professional Ethics, wherein the Council described the “protection of the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination” as a basic principle of journalism. Ethical journalism includes the equal representation of the actions, opinions, concerns and goals of women around the world. Gender-sensitive reporting helps to create more inclusive, fair and equal societies. It is an essential element to ensuring a more balanced representation in society, because having healthy relationships between people of all genders at all levels of society depends on the respectful and dignified representation of all actors. It provides an appropriate space for diverse voices.

In this Handbook we will discuss how we believe we can improve our reporting as it relates to gender sensitivity. We will share some ideas and tips which we hope will contribute to your understanding and awareness of the issue.

Although we do not point fingers at ourselves as news people, we try to be self-critical. We also realize that individual journalists may not necessarily have a particular gender bias, but the policy and editorial line of the media outlet that they work for might. Media outlets can force their journalists into less expensive, minimally-investigative reporting with no field visits and little or no verification. They might be after low-grade, sensationalist stories which have little depth and ignore related issues such as the rule of law, gender, or human rights. Nonetheless, we need to improve our reporting in terms of awareness about gender issues. We must also understand how to avoid gender-biased reporting and ensure more attention is drawn to gender balance in the news.

We should keep in mind that journalism is the power to influence others, and we should only accept that power if we also accept the huge responsibility that comes with it.

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<sup>2</sup><http://presscouncil.az/az/code-of-professional-ethics-for-journalists-in-azerbaijan>

As journalists, by being gender sensitive, we can help improve the quality of the media and the direction it takes.

## **Gender issues are everywhere, so they must also be covered in the news**

Gender is a word that refers to the social roles attributed to men and women.

However, it is a relatively new phenomenon not only for the public but also for newsrooms, which usually take pride in being well-informed and up-to-date.

However, as experienced journalists we have often seen the word “gender” raising eyebrows in newsrooms. We have noticed editors, predominantly male, reacting with displeasure or boredom when we discuss gender or anything related to the concept, such as gender equality or gender imbalance in newsrooms. They tend to uphold the belief that any suggestion of a gender-related matter as a potential news article, with the exception of International Women’s Day, is a waste of resources for a news organization.

Some slightly more progressively-minded editors believe gender issues, while newsworthy, should be published in women’s magazines or the women’s section of newspapers, next to cooking recipes, or on morning TV shows, broadcasted for women who are not employed outside of their house but working at home as unpaid domestic workers.

But gender issues are everywhere.

Here, we would like to draw your attention to the similarity between the concepts of gender and gravity.

Gravity has always existed, but humanity had to wait until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when an apple hit Sir Isaac Newton’s head as he sat under a tree, for its conceptualization and the theory of gravity to emerge.

This is the same with gender. Gender was, and is, everywhere. Societies are composed of men and women and throughout history different cultures have attributed different social roles, limitations and privileges for men and women. However, the conceptualization of gender is relatively new.

Gender is originally an English word the interpretation of which has changed over time. Decades ago “gender” had the same definition as sex. For some, the word “gender” has become associated with women’s issues and feminism. Some even argue that it implies exclusion or a hatred of men. But gender is not a word that should be associated with these or with something of little importance. It is a neutral term, neither good nor bad.



Due to a male-dominant culture, an unwillingness and disinterest in learning, linguistic interpretation and sometimes the pretext of lack of time, trying to explain the meaning and importance of the concept of gender and gender-related issues can take time, even in newsrooms. But here is a tip: Do not give up! Our experience has shown us that convincing editors and colleagues to add gender angles to news stories pays back well most of the time. It brings new readers, audiences and followers. To become the voice of the voiceless brings occupational satisfaction and to do things differently than competitors ensures advantages in the journalistic race.

## Greater awareness means better journalism

Words and concepts are the production tools of journalism. By applying concepts and words, we execute our responsibility to the public and individuals by ensuring their right to information; a fundamental right that contributes to the well-being of society.

Journalism is our livelihood and words are at the heart of our job. When we increase our knowledge and use of words and concepts, we achieve greater awareness. Awareness leads to sensitivity which, in turn, brings a new and fresh look at the subject matter, and this results in more issues being found which then make the news.

For example, if you are aware of the needs of people with disabilities, you can produce news items on the subject and, by raising the awareness of the public on the issue, you can contribute to paving the way for improving conditions and for better legislation to be enacted on the issue. You can attract more readers thus increasing your audience and can go to bed at night with the knowledge that you have fulfilled your responsibility as a journalist.

The world of journalism is rapidly changing, like everything else around us. We are required to adjust ourselves to new technologies and these new technologies and the fast-changing world are changing our profession too. While the decades-old professions of courtroom correspondents, economic reporters and diplomatic affairs writers remain and flourish, we now have environment correspondents, technology reporters and travel writers.

But if you look at all these issues from a slightly different angle, gender can be found in both the conventional and the new areas of journalism. Stories about the effect of climate change on women and children, women-friendly mobile phone applications, or tips for women travelling alone, are among the most read or most watched news items.

Gender concepts are found in all aspects of life, including journalism, because our profession covers all aspects of life. When the concept of gender is understood, society will become healthier and more equal.

But first things first; let us start by defining and breaking down the word “gender.”

Gender refers to the aspects that a society or culture establishes as masculine or feminine. It is carefully distinguished from the biological notion of sex. Gender involves the socialization of boys and girls and the roles conferred to men and women. These definitions may differ in each society and through history. Thus, gender is not necessarily fixed, dogmatic or binary, like sex.

### BOX 1:

#### GENDER AND MEDIA IN AZERBAIJAN

##### Some statement examples based on sex:

Women give birth to babies, men don't.

Men's voices break at puberty, women's do not.

##### Some facts based on the gender concept:

Most construction site workers in Turkey are men.

The World Health Organization estimates that 35% of women across the world experience intimate-partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetimes.

##### Some gender-biased statements:

Little girls are fragile and boys are tough.

Women are bad drivers.

### Some definitions about the concept of gender<sup>3</sup>

#### Empowerment:

This refers to increasing the personal, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. The empowerment of women and girls relates to women and girls gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, the expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. The core of empowerment lies in the ability of people to control their own destiny. This implies that to be empowered women and girls must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), but they must also have the mechanism to use these rights, capabilities, resources and

<sup>3</sup>As applied by UNICEF through the Agency's Glossary of Terms and Concepts:  
<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file>

	opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (as provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions).
<b>Gender balance:</b>	This is a human resource issue calling for the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work. Achieving a balance in staffing patterns and creating a working environment that is conducive to a diverse workforce improves overall effectiveness.
<b>Gender-based constraints:</b>	Constraints that women and/or men face which are based on their gender. For example women farmers might lack the title to their land, or be excluded from male-dominated cooperative membership, thereby becoming tied to their homes and preventing their access to services.
<b>Gender-based violence (GBV):</b>	The United Nations defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life". The nature and extent of specific types of gender-based violence and discrimination varies across cultures, countries and regions. Examples include sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution, domestic violence, trafficking, forced/early marriage, honour killings, etc.
<b>Gender bias:</b>	Making decisions based on gender that result in favouring one gender over another which often results in contexts that favour men and/or boys over women and/or girls.
<b>Gender-biased sex selection:</b>	Sex selection can take place before a pregnancy is established, during pregnancy through prenatal sex detection and selective abortion, or following birth through infanticide or child neglect. Sex selection is sometimes used for family balancing purposes but far more typically occurs because of a systematic preference for boys. The biologically normal sex ratio at birth ranges from 102-106 males per 100 females. However, ratios higher than normal – sometimes as high as 130 – have been observed.
<b>Gender blindness:</b>	The failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of men/boys and women/girls are given to them in specific

social, cultural, economic and political contexts and backgrounds. Projects, programmes, policies and attitudes which are gender blind do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs, they maintain the status quo and will not help to transform the unequal structure of gender relations.

**Gender equality:**

The concept that women, men, girls and boys should be given equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is society's application of equal values for the similarities and differences of men and women and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in the home, community and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men and girls and boys are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups and that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes and prejudice about gender roles. Gender equality is a matter of human rights and is considered a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

**Gender equity:**

The process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls, and importantly the equality of outcomes and results. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles or norms or differences between the sexes. Equity ensures that women and men and girls and boys have an equal chance, not only at the starting point, but also when reaching the finishing line. It is about the fair and just treatment of both sexes, that takes into account the different needs of men and women, of cultural barriers and (past) discrimination of the specific group.

<b>Gender neutral:</b>	Anything – a concept, an entity, a style of language – that is unassociated with either the male or female gender. The nature of systemic and embedded or internalized bias is such that, unfortunately, what is often perceived to be gender neutral is in fact gender blind.
<b>Gender stereotyping:</b>	Ascribing certain attributes, characteristics and roles to people based on their gender. Gender stereotypes can be negative (i.e., women are bad drivers, men can't change diapers) and benign (i.e., women are better caregivers, men are stronger). Gender stereotyping becomes harmful when it limits a person's life choices, such as training and professional path, and life plans. Compounded gender stereotypes occur when layered with stereotypes about other characteristics of the person, such as disability, ethnicity or social status.
<b>Gender-roles:</b>	Social and behavioural norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex. These often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to men, women, boys and girls. Gender-specific roles are often conditioned by household structure, access to resources, the specific impact of the global economy, occurrence of conflict or disaster, and other locally relevant factors such as ecological conditions.
<b>Gender discrimination:</b>	<p>"Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field" (United Nations, 1979).<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Discrimination can stem from both law (<i>de jure</i>) and practice (<i>de facto</i>). For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>de jure</i> discrimination - in some countries a woman is not allowed to leave the country or hold a job without the consent of her husband.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup>Article 1, United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cedaw.aspx>

- *de facto* discrimination - a man and woman may hold the same job position and perform the same duties, but their benefits may differ.

The CEDAW Convention recognizes and addresses all forms of discrimination, whether contained in laws, policies, procedures or practice.

**Son preference:**

The practice of preferring male offspring over female offspring, most often in poor communities, that view girl children as liabilities and boy children as assets to the family. This can result in families instilling superiority in male children and inferiority in female children, manifested in such actions as sending boys to school, especially to higher levels, and not girls, or household practices where boys are fed better than girls. The extreme manifestation of son preference is female feticide and sex-selective abortions; in some countries, this has resulted in skewed sex ratios in the population, with related problems such as increased trafficking of females and greater prevalence of sex workers.

**International Day of the Girl Child:**

On 19 December 2011, United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 66/170 declaring 11 October the International Day of the Girl Child to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world, and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights.

**Patriarchy:**

A patriarchy is a social system in which men hold the greatest power, leadership roles, privilege, moral authority and access to resources and land, including in the family. Most modern societies are patriarchies.

**Positive parenting:**

Educating parents on children's rights and development to improve parenting practices, with the goal of ending violence, abuse and exploitation of children. Helping parents improve their skills to manage their children's behaviour. Positive parenting is the foundation for curbing violence at home and in the community. It encourages the engagement of fathers and men and considers the various stages of a child's life cycle.



# GENDER SENSITIVE REPORTING AND OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS JOURNALISTS

## Gender sensitive reporting according to basic questions of news journalism

We are all aware that each story we write must answer the “5W’s and 1H”: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How? The same questions can be applied to gender-sensitive journalism, as outlined below, based on documentation from the United Nations (which can be found in “Other Sources and Useful Links”).

- What?**
- To be more aware of gender issues and integrate this awareness into our work.
  - To be sensitive to gender inequalities, to portray and treat women and men in a fair and just manner.
  - To produce coverage that is complete and diverse; it is essential that the news mirrors the world as seen through the eyes of women as well as men.
- Why?**
- Gender-sensitive reporting is essential to contributing to a more balanced representation of society.
  - Gender equality is an integral part of freedom of expression.
  - Fair gender portrayal is an ethical aspiration, like respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty.
- How?**
- By being aware of the language used, by being open-minded and fair, and through careful selection of the story and the sources.
  - The nature of news, the choices made about what is newsworthy and the way the story is reported must change. Women need to be used more as the sources and subjects of stories. They need to be interviewed as commentators and experts.
- Who?**
- All journalists, both female and male, can play a role in changing attitudes toward women and gender-based stereotypes.

**Where?** Newspapers, TV, news media. In short, in all forms of media at the managerial level where the general directions are made; in the editorial department where decisions are made about stories to be covered; and in the field, when information is being gathered.

**When?** From now onwards.

## Gender-sensitive newsrooms

“If you want to change the world, start with yourself,” Mahatma Gandhi once said. Taking a cue from this, if we want to have gender-sensitive journalism, we must create gender-sensitive newsrooms, and will need to persuade our editors to support this and pave the way for future generations of journalists.

First, we need more women in newsrooms, TV stations, websites and news media channels. It is true that the inclusion of more women does not mean an automatic change in the media’s gender perception and gender-sensitive coverage, but it is the first, essential step for several reasons.

Obviously, women’s life experiences are different. When this fact is incorporated in all the different stages of news production, it helps to produce more comprehensive and inclusive news stories. As the authors of this Handbook, we have repeatedly witnessed that when women actively contribute to news planning meetings, fresh news ideas and news from different focus angles emerge. As we all know, a variety of different angles and perspectives make the news stories more interesting and appealing.

Moreover, having more women journalists means the fulfilment of one of our main responsibilities: being the voice of the voiceless. Think about this and recall that the sources and subjects of the news, especially those whose rights were violated or who are members of disadvantaged groups, prefer to be interviewed by women journalists.

## Increasing the number of women journalists is not enough

Although the number of women in journalism is growing, they seem to be confined to the lower echelons of our profession and are given softer jobs or write for magazine/feature programmes focusing on fashion, celebrity and domestic topics.

Women are given fewer opportunities to engage in the core journalistic activities, namely reporting from the field, interviewing, writing and editing. Conversely, most TV presenters are women, though the appointment of women as TV anchors reflects a recurrent theme of promoting physical looks over intellect. Thus, women journalists are not placed in charge of peak-hour programmes, especially live news talk shows and phone-in programmes.

This is the case in many countries, including Turkey and Azerbaijan, where more women should be given placements in newsrooms and journalism schools.

Women need to be at the managerial level; they need to be given the opportunity to cover “hard” news, such as politics, security, finance and crime.

Women can hold leadership positions everywhere, of course, including the media, but they should be given opportunities, something not only they, but readers, audiences and society, also deserve. Including more women in the decision-making process of journalism will bring diversity to the team.

The exclusion of women in the media at senior levels means that the opportunity to harness and promote diversity is lost and the perspective of media coverage will be inadequate due to the presence of male-only opinions on news issues.

## Do women want to have decision-making positions?

Some argue that women do not want to hold decision-making posts. Some argue that women do not have the skills to occupy editorial posts, in which many hard decisions must be taken around the clock, leaving almost no time for family life. There are also arguments suggesting that the stress of being in decision-making positions in the news world is not something women want to experience.

As journalists, we have the responsibility to ask questions on behalf of the public and question things as they begin to unfold. These arguments might be true at first glance, but when you think critically and investigate further, you will notice that all features attributed to women in the news production world, including lack of adequate experience, inability to use their full potential and lack of leadership qualifications, actually derive from a lack of mentors and role models, exclusion from information networks, and assignment to positions which do not have promotion prospects. How can you expect a woman journalist assigned to “soft interviews with celebrities” to become an editor-in-chief in the future?

Some argue that this type of position should not be granted to someone just because of their gender, but should be based on merit. Certainly, this argument should be considered, but only if the competition for these positions is fair and equal.

**Tip:** *Another case that we confront sometimes is women in media who assume, consciously or unconsciously, the male-dominant approach and narrative. At least one of us has had to say “yes” to the use of a woman's photo for an irrelevant subject on a newspaper's front page or had to agree to reject a GBV news article because most of the newsroom thought the story was not worth covering; many similar examples exist .... Fighting against a well-accepted approach is not easy, we all know, but adopting a male persona and with it immersion into the male-dominant language, is not the way to win this battle!*

## We need measures to empower women journalists

Specific measures need to be put in place to remove the current barriers. This may be achieved through the introduction of regulations within media organizations (perhaps with pressure from journalistic associations, government incentives, or the best option, reader-audience pressure). These regulations should guarantee the balanced representation of women and men at all levels, such as ownership, business management, board positions, editors-in-chief, editors, heads of departments and heads of desks.

It would be equally encouraging if women could work in media organizations that endeavour to establish gender policies for their institutions. Gender policies are important tools as they guide the conduct of both managers and employees. The expectations of the institution are made known through its policies. The gender policy should send a clear message that gender-based discrimination is not tolerated.

Practical measures can also be introduced in news producing workplaces to foster women's advancement. These measures<sup>5</sup> can be: trainee positions specifically for women; leadership training for women; gender equality awareness training for staff, work-life balance (policy of flexible working arrangements, availability and accessibility of quality child care and support facilities for all staff members, etc.). News-production organizations could develop policies on gender equality or perhaps establish gender desks or gender officers to monitor and evaluate gender equality in the workplace.

**Tip:** *Yes, we know it takes time to change the attitude of news organizations. But there are things we can do initially, like establish a network of women journalists for solidarity and act as mentors for young female journalists; this would be a good start.*

### BOX 2:

#### WHO MAKES THE NEWS IN AZERBAIJAN?

The following statistics have emerged from a survey jointly conducted by the International Federation of Journalists and the Journalists Union of Azerbaijan. A similar survey was last conducted in 2010.

According to the survey results the portion of women in news producing agencies is as follows:

- about 40-45% of employees of national broadcasting TV channels;
- about 25-30% of employees of regional TV channels;

<sup>5</sup>Guidelines for Gender Sensitive Reporting, prepared by Anita Ramsak

[http://www.ekvilib.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/en\\_GUIDELINES\\_FOR\\_GENDER\\_SENSITIVE\\_REPORTING.pdf](http://www.ekvilib.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/en_GUIDELINES_FOR_GENDER_SENSITIVE_REPORTING.pdf)

<sup>6</sup><http://juhi.az/yeni.pdf>

- about 30-35% of employees of national broadcasting newspapers;
- about 25-30% of employees of regional newspapers.

A further survey on women's representation in decision-making bodies of media organizations was also conducted in 2011. Of the 90 media outlets involved in the survey only 10 were headed by women, while of the 15 heads of popular journalist organizations in Azerbaijan only one is a woman.

## Checklist<sup>8</sup>

The checklist found below is to help news organizations understand the extent to which gender is mainstreamed across their organizational structure. Ideally, the answers to each of the questions should be “Yes” but we do not live in a perfect world and there can be “No” responses – but hopefully not too many. Any “No” response is a call to action. The more “No” responses your organization has, the more pressing it is for your organization to combat gender-based discrimination.

- Does your media house have a programme on diversity and representation of women at the senior management level?
- Does your organization have a policy to equip women so that they can be considered for senior positions?
- Does your organization have a policy on sexual harassment, procedures and processes for dealing with complaints?
- Does your organization have a gender policy and is this well known to all employees?
- Does your organization regularly sensitise staff on gender bias, stereotypes and discrimination on the basis of sex?
- Would your organization be interested in receiving assistance to develop a gender policy?

<sup>7</sup><http://juhi.az/yeni.pdf>

<sup>8</sup><http://www.womeninnews.org/survey>

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/womeninnews-dev/resources/1496060549uDwZ2C.pdf>

# CAREFUL USE OF LANGUAGE

Journalism is our life. We make a living by telling stories and we bear in mind that for good reporting, well-researched information is not enough. Whatever our medium, be it newspaper, TV, radio, social media or the web, we have to use words appropriately and ensure stories are told carefully.

We all experience the daily difficulties of journalism; we grapple to choose the right word in stories and make sure every word we pick conveys the correct message. We often ask ourselves whether the word we use reflects the truth, exaggerates the situation or underestimates it, whether it harms the innocent, feeds into clichés or reproduces gender stereotypes.

Gender-sensitive journalism requires us to be careful not to feed into the cycle of sexist news-making. We, as media people, did not create the gender imbalance of the societies that we live in, but we do have a responsibility to not reproduce it with our use of words, expressions and ways of storytelling, which might inadvertently reflect and even reinforce gender power dynamics and stereotypes.

As the UNESCO Guidelines on gender-neutral language emphasize: “Language does not merely reflect the way we think: It also shapes our thinking. If words and expressions that imply that women are inferior to men are constantly used, that assumption of inferiority tends to become part of our mind-set. Hence, we need to adjust our language when our ideas evolve.”<sup>9</sup>

## First focus on words

Sexism is inherent in many expressions in almost all languages. We should refrain from using them and search for alternatives. There are many widely-used sayings which are used unconsciously and denigrate the role of women.

Here are some examples from Azerbaijani:

**“Qız almaq, qız vermək”** – This reflects the practice of treating girls as a commodity to be traded and marrying them off. Boys are not treated this way.

**“Arvad kimi hərəkət etmək”** (to behave (act) like a woman) This expression is used as it depicts women as timid and weak and when men demonstrate cowardice or weakness in a situation, the expression is used to describe their behaviour.

**“Qız kimi ağlamaq”** (to cry like a girl) - Crying is just a reaction, but in many cases it is perceived as weakness. Many parents try to calm their boy children down by using such

<sup>9</sup>[https://en.unesco.org/system/files/ge\\_guidelines\\_for\\_publications\\_-\\_annex\\_4.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/system/files/ge_guidelines_for_publications_-_annex_4.pdf)



sentences when they are crying at a young age, meaning they should not be weak. This means children are taught from an early age that only girls can demonstrate weakness in certain situations and cry as a reaction. Boys are strong, they shouldn't cry.

**"Kişi işi"** (men's affair) – this expression implies that there are some occupations which are only suitable for men, and women cannot work in these areas because of their lack of physical and intellectual power. However, in many cases women are just as able to work in those fields and to succeed.

**"Qadın işi"** (women's affair) – this expression is applied to occupations where only women can work. However, men also work in those fields.

**"Kişi kimi qadın"** (a woman like a man) – this is about women who are fearless, brave and keep their promise. It is as if these features are exclusively for men, and if a woman has these characteristics, then she is like a man.

**"Qadın kimi qeybət etmək"** (to gossip like a woman) – this expression relates to gossiping, which is considered bad, and a characteristic of women. When men gossip, the phrase "you gossip like a woman" is used. In reality, men are also known to gossip.

**"Kişi sözü"** (men's word) – Those who want to be sure of each other's words sometimes use the phrase "give a man's word". This suggests that only men can be trusted to keep their word.

**"Kişi qızı"** (a man's daughter) – This expression is similar to the phrase "a woman like a man". It is used for women who are strong-willed, confident, and capable of demanding their own rights. When they cope with a very difficult job, they say, "She did it like a man's daughter."

However, while she is also the daughter of a woman, these positive traits are considered to have come from the father.

**Tip:** *Always question the words and expressions you use; trace their roots. Many expressions you've been hearing and using for years may contain sexist implications that you had not noticed until now.*

**Tip:** *It is always useful to discuss the language with your editorial team and your colleagues. Common expressions you use without thinking could in fact be gender-biased.*

**Tip:** *While writing the news, using active sentences instead of passive, is always important. Pay close attention to doing so particularly when writing stories about women.*

**Tip:** *Don't use wordplay. Don't reinforce social prejudice or joke about tragedies. Find alternatives to discourse that discards, patronizes, or trivializes women.*

**Tip:** *If you use the right term in your news piece, the reader/viewer will also learn it and get used to it.*

## Journalists should know what to omit

When we write our stories or tell them in audio-visual mediums, we don't mention everything. One part of good reporting is to know and decide on which information to exclude. Determining what is necessary is also important for gender-sensitive journalism.

For example, if you mentioned someone's gender, ask yourself if it was necessary to do so? If you identify someone as a female engineer, do you (or would you) refer to someone else as a "male engineer?"

If you point out that the woman is an attractive blonde, mother of three, do you note that the man is a muscular, dark-haired father of four?

So, unless gender and related matters, such as appearance, clothes, and parenthood, are relevant to your point, leave them out.

**Tip:** *Do not use patronizing words like "little lady."*

## Fight against clichés

We once played a game in a newsroom with a group of our colleagues, asking them to write down clichés that we have used in our stories. When we saw their list, we were embarrassed, because it was much longer than we had expected.

Good storytelling and gender-sensitive journalism should avoid clichés, because most of them are actually gender-related. Look no further than stories in Azerbaijani media, especially football ones, where sexist clichés are common.

But gender clichés are everywhere. Here are some examples:

➤ *"The couple's friends were by their side on their happiest day."*

Stories with such headlines are always about weddings. But are we sure that the wedding day is the happiest day of our lives? Isn't it such a cliché to imply that marriage, especially for women, is a life goal?

- “It is every girl’s dream to wear a white [bridal] dress.”

Are we sure about that? A woman may dream of writing a book, another may want to become a doctor, or the leader of her nation?

- “Women’s fight against cellulite.”

This cliché implies that women are obligated to conform to beauty norms which are widespread worldwide.

## Judgemental language

Another common mistake is the use of judgmental language. This is a major issue we need to tackle for the sake of gender-sensitive reporting.

As we all know, accuracy is fundamental to good journalism, but we also know that it is not an easy task to achieve. Research must be done carefully and facts must be checked and even cross-checked. Whenever possible, we should collect information first-hand by being there, but when it is not possible we should talk to those who were there. It is, however, important to be aware of the differences between primary and secondary sources.

When we are listening and reporting based on information from a secondary source, we must keep in mind that our sources are telling the story through their own eyes which can be inaccurate or sometimes gender-biased.

We should also guard against forming our own opinions and judgments, through listening to those associated with the case, and then reflecting these in our write-up of the story. We must remain neutral in our reporting.

We must also make sure that we do not reflect exaggerations and gender-biased judgments. Thus, we should be committed to being objective in our reporting.

## Clichés surrounding prominent women

Many news items about prominent women focus on their appearance, which implies that a woman’s appearance is more important than what she has to say. These women often have important jobs, and we should therefore listen to what they say about their areas of expertise.

Journalists also have the tendency to ask female politicians about women’s issues only.

The news coverage of women in power circles is quite condescending. The coverage is dichotomous, providing no middle ground. Women are on either side of the extreme. They are considered the caring and side-lined sex or the tough, masculine women who betray

their femininity. The female partners or spouses of male heads of state and other prominent male leaders are subjected to a different type of media attention than the male partners and spouses of female leaders (Michelle Obama and Barack Obama for example versus Joachim Sauer and Angela Merkel).

The media tends to focus on their merit, or lack thereof, as beauty icons during both the election and their tenure. Women candidates are also subjected to extra scrutiny in comparison to male ones.

We must therefore ensure that we avoid using all these outdated expressions when reporting on women politicians or other public figures.

## Fighting another phenomenon: Stereotypes

Stereotype is a term used to define all people of a certain group as having a certain behaviour or characteristic, usually negative. Stereotypes are often wrong and can lead to discrimination. They oversimplify the reality and usually form the basis of prejudice<sup>10</sup>.

We often make automatic assumptions based on what we think is true, such as automatically thinking that surgeons are men. This instant decision-making leads us to erroneously believe certain things to be factual. As journalists, our work must be based on facts, thus we should be very careful about stereotypes.

There are many stereotypes attributed to gender. Here are some of the common female and male stereotypes:

Dependent	- Independent
Weak	- Powerful
Incompetent	- Competent
Emotional	- Logical
Implementers	- Decision-makers
Housekeepers	- Breadwinners
Fragile	- Protectors
Fearful	- Brave
Peace makers	- Aggressive
Cautious	- Adventurous
Soft-spoken	- Out-spoken
Cooperative	- Competitive

<sup>10</sup>Gender Balanced Journalism Guidelines, Breaking Gender Stereotypes, <https://genderinmyanmarnews.org/en/gender-balanced-journalism-guidelines>

We journalists are naturally members of our own societies and have been shaped by that culture. We might therefore apply our cultural stereotypes to our news items without thinking, thereby inadvertently reinforcing them, deepening inequality and paving the way for stigmatization and prejudice.

**Tip:** *We have an obligation to challenge these stereotypes and to do so we must first confront our own biases. We can only recognize stereotypes in society if we acknowledge our own stereotypes.*

## The most common stereotypes we reproduce in our stories

### ➤ Portraying women as extreme if they do not fit the stereotype

If a woman behaves in a way that does not fit society's stereotypes, and hence norms, she is represented as "extreme." For instance, a woman who leads a charity organization is usually portrayed as an "angel" rather than a professional person. An unmarried woman who is sexually active is portrayed as a sinner. A woman who challenges a man is represented as someone deviating from the norm.

**Tip:** *Of course, women who work in male-dominated professions are always newsworthy, but it is crucial that their stories are told without clichés or stereotypes. In principle, these women should not be asked questions that differ from those you would normally ask a man in the same profession. There is, however, nothing wrong with portraying those women as role models or achievers. For example, a woman scientist on the team that develops an algorithm that captures an image of a black-hole should never be ignored; her achievements should be celebrated and reported.*

### ➤ Double standards

Another common stereotype is that of double standards. For instance, a man who abandons his children is simply bad or irresponsible, while a woman who abandons her child is portrayed as ruthless and inhuman.

### ➤ Sex objects

Many studies have proven that the media frequently portray women as sex objects for men to look at and fantasies about. In news and advertising, images focus on women's bodies and their looks; the impression is that women have nothing else to contribute to society. Additionally, the image presented is that of a perfect woman, based on generally accepted beauty norms that apparently every woman should fit into.

**Tip:** *Do not express surprise when you see an attractive, professional woman.*

### ➤ Portraying women as victims

In humanitarian crises, women are presented as “suffering victims.” Women do suffer, but many also perform heroic acts, rescuing the elderly and children. Portraying them predominantly as victims diminishes their role in society.

## BOX 3:

### SOME BAD EXAMPLES

Here are some examples from headlines. Can you see the problem with them?

Blonde beauty wins song contest!

Top job goes to former model.

## Headline not clickbait

Headlines are intended to capture the content of the story. We try to make them as catchy as possible but there is always the risk that the gender stereotypes in the headlines might slant the intended focus of the story.

Using the headline “My kids won’t have to say: Our mom died of cancer” to introduce an article about the actress Angelina Jolie and her decision to remove her ovaries and fallopian tubes is an example of a ‘clickbait’ title. Jolie had written the article for the New York Times to share her experience and the reasons behind her decision to undergo preventative surgery in order to focus on women’s health. Most of the related stories circulating globally at that time dramatized the issue, thus misrepresenting Jolie’s original purpose in telling her story.

It is true that the first things the reader sees are the title and the photo, and what gets a story read is its title. However, if you think thoroughly, you can find appropriate and inviting headlines and our experience has shown that using sexist, discriminatory visuals and titles eventually deters the reader.

**Tip:** *Avoid clickbait at all costs. Don't ask questions in the headline to trick the reader. Don't feature in the title any elements that aren't in the piece in the hope of getting clicks.*

## Stereotypes and clichés in visuals

Gender also plays an important role in visual communication. Stereotypes and clichés can be found in photographs and explanatory graphic. They should not be encouraged or approved through hasty decision making.

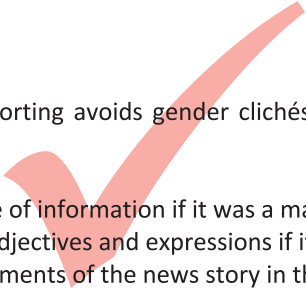


When we choose pictures for publications we must be aware of certain aspects to ensure we avoid them. For example, picturing a woman in a business suit or in a cooking apron sends two totally different signals. That's why, when choosing visual materials, aspects such as clothing (business, leisure, etc.), position (who is sitting/standing, active/passive), the arrangement of people (foreground/background), picture details (picture size, facial expressions, colour), surroundings (men at work, women with family), are extremely important.

## **Checklist**

### **Are you in doubt?**

If you are not sure if your reporting avoids gender clichés and stereotypes, ask yourself these questions:

- 
1. Would I report this type of information if it was a man?
  2. Would I use the same adjectives and expressions if it was a man?
  3. Would I present the elements of the news story in the same order?

# MAKING WOMEN EXIST AND VISIBLE IN NEWS

The media and, unfortunately, we journalists ourselves, discount women even though they constitute half our society. We do this in many ways, such as mentioning them only as someone's wife or daughter. We present them as though they do not have identities of their own, despite their having accomplished so much. The media does not acknowledge them unless they are standing beside a man. Despite the fact that women continue to excel in every field of life, be it politics, commerce, science or sports, we condescendingly relegate them to the fashion and entertainment arenas.

The imbalance in terms of representation remains an ongoing issue, as it is predominantly men whose opinions and expertise are heard on “serious” issues such as security, foreign policy and finance. The opinions and expertise of women are more likely to be heard in the “softer” areas such as beauty, family and how to raise children or on specific, problematic gender issues such as gender violence and sex trafficking.

The 2015 Report of the Global Media Monitoring Project revealed that women make up only 24% of those heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news, exactly the same percentage found in 2010. According to the Report, “Women’s relative invisibility in traditional news media has crossed over into digital news delivery platforms: Only 26% of the people in Internet news stories and media news Tweets combined are women”.<sup>11</sup>

## Women as news sources

Open your telephone book and note how many women you have listed as sources. Try to remember the last time you quoted a woman expert. A look through the news will reveal that most sources are men and naturally the perspectives given in those stories are male.

However, there are many women who are specialists in their field; they are economists, lawyers, doctors, engineers, politicians and social experts, all of whom are able to provide professional comment for media stories. Women are likely to be quoted as sociologists or psychologists, when the subject of the news is related to the status of women in society. But when it comes to politics, the economy or medicine, they are less likely to be cited as sources. When women are quoted as a source of the news, it is limited to what are considered less important issues or is wrapped in gender stereotypes.

<sup>11</sup>Global Media Monitoring Project 2015:

[http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports\\_2015/highlights/highlights\\_en.pdf](http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2015/highlights/highlights_en.pdf)

Often, the way we shape our questions does not do justice to the female expert, because when we ask her a question such as “As a woman lawyer, what is your take on this legislation?” we ask her a question we would not have asked a man. This is a gender-biased question.

The 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project underlines that the journalistic gender lens in source selection is not only male-centred, “but it is also skewed to a certain kind of masculinity when selecting interviewees for all types of views,”<sup>12</sup> from “expert” opinion to an “ordinary” person’s testimony. We have to change this situation.

## Do not give up!

You could assert that the reasons fewer women appear as guests on TV shows or as news sources is that women are camera/media-shy, that you haven’t had enough time and are in a rush to invite those people that respond the fastest. We understand, because we’ve been there too.

But we have learnt over time that once you do this, it becomes convenient and thus easily repeated on a daily basis. But be persistent, please, and do not give up. Maybe it will take you a bit more time, but you can always find someone other than a man to use as a source. You could perhaps even try and convince your media organization to make the same effort, and promise that this will attract more women customers and make your coverage in every field more inclusive.

**Tip:** *It can be a good idea to try to prepare databases that compile contact information for women experts and share it with your colleagues, like the Women’s Media Center SheSource<sup>13</sup> list and the Brookings Institution’s Women in Tech Source list.<sup>14</sup>*

## How to create your own agenda

Being aware of gender issues, deciding to find and combat your stereotypes while not following society’s stereotypes, paying attention to the language used in news that you produce, using a gender-neutral language, including the voices of women in all the news you make, and trying to pass your values to news organizations and colleagues, is a great start for gender-sensitive journalism. But there are a lot more things to that can be done.

We set the agenda every day for the public, but if the agenda has no input from one section of the public or that one section is ignored entirely, it means the agenda may not be representative of the aspirations of the entire population.

<sup>12</sup>Global Media Monitoring Project 2015:

[http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports\\_2015/highlights/highlights\\_en.pdf](http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2015/highlights/highlights_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup>Women’s Media Center SheSource - <http://www.womensmediacenter.com/shesource/>

<sup>14</sup>Brookings Institution’s Women in Tech Source list - <https://womenplus.sourcelist.org/experts.html>

As a result, many issues that are significant to women are relegated because the dominant voice deems them trivial. It is therefore important to repeatedly consult women citizens both to measure the pulse of society and to reflect it. We must also keep in mind that there are hundreds of unreported stories about the issues affecting women's lives. One of the best things you can do is to give a voice to those stories, and for this you need to talk to women - all sorts of women.

Many stories will be more balanced and more interesting if they include women's perspectives. Sometimes news is not covered properly simply because the journalists involved did not even consider asking women for their opinions.

Take this story as an example: "In March 2019, 87.8% of limited liability companies with local capital were registered online in Azerbaijan."<sup>15</sup> The story is about the continuing work being undertaken in Azerbaijan to simplify doing business in the country and, in this regard, the efforts made to simplify the legalization process. It would be interesting if the article also presented information on how many of these companies are owned by women and on whether these simplification efforts have had an effect on the number of firms owned by women.

Or take this story for instance: "Azerbaijan has set a goal to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide emissions." It would be interesting to know the opinions of women regarding carbon dioxide emissions, what their concerns are and whether they are interested or care about reaching the country's goal.

So, in short, you shouldn't wait for 8th March and International Women's Day, or for 11th October and the International Day of the Girl Child, to produce news with a women's angle. You should, instead, consider every day as women's day and every day as the day of the girl child.

**Tip:** Always ask yourself the question "Where are the women in this event and this news story?" - it will help you find the women's angle. If women are nowhere to be found in the subject of a piece, that is also newsworthy, for example "no women were in the group holding the press conference" or "all of the award winners were men."

**Tip:** Ask yourself how this event will affect women. The answer to this question will give you the gender angle. Look at sex-segregated data. If data does not exist, try to create it, and if data shows an issue that affects women and men differently, ask why.

**Tip:** Simply asking whether there's a women's perspective to the story also helps. Try to find the "women's angle" in the story. It won't work all the time, but it often will.

<sup>15</sup><https://menafn.com/1098397115/Number-of-people-registering-business-online-up-in-Azerbaijan>

**Tip:** Look at women's rights struggles. Follow civil society organizations which are working for women and girl children and draw attention to their efforts.

### Checklist

- There should be at least two sources for every story, both male and female.
- Find experts and spokespersons of both sexes.
- Use the same criteria for men and women in deciding whether to mention personal appearance. (Would you mention the colour of the eyes if the subject of the news was a man?)
- Be consistent in how you quote male and female sources – directly or indirectly.
- Women have the right to be treated in the media as individuals rather than as someone's 'other' (wife, mother, grandmother or sister). As such, they should not be depicted as the possessions of husbands or fathers.

# SOME GOOD EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD<sup>16</sup>

We all recognize that the issues we have talked about, especially the ones about gender-sensitive media organizations, may seem difficult to address at first glance. But when you look closely, that's not really the case.

There are many good illustrations of this. Here are some:

## **Bloomberg's promising move for gender equality**

Bloomberg, as one of the biggest finance-focused global media networks – TV, radio, the web, magazines - decided to take action after noticing the fact that gender-biased approach dominated its media network as well. For instance, the management figured out that only 10% of their sources were women. So, as Laura Zelenko, Senior Executive Editor for Diversity, Talent, Standards, and Training in Bloomberg News noted, they have rolled out a global plan to boost the number of women that they quote in stories, invite on TV or radio and feature in their event panels. At the beginning of 2018, women represented 10% of the total number of external guests interviewed on Bloomberg TV, however towards the end of the year this number was already 15%, while the number of women panelists at Bloomberg events had almost doubled.

Bloomberg also encouraged its editors to tag stories on the web that quoted women, so these could be counted and a reference list created to find relevant sources for the newsroom. As Katie Hawkins-Gaar, who runs the Poynter's Leadership Academy for Women in Digital Media, pointed out in her article "Journalism has a gender representation problem. Bloomberg is looking for a solution."<sup>17</sup> The company also boosted its global database of women experts from 500 names at the start of 2018 to more than 2,300 by the end of the year.

A new policy was also introduced that states that Bloomberg journalists can only join panels that have gender diversity. The network started preparing a Gender-Equality Index which tracks the performance of the public companies most committed to advancing women globally.

<sup>16</sup>Best practices in European Journalists' Unions: A Handbook on Gender Equality Best Practices in European Journalists' Unions.

[https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Gender/Gender\\_documents/Gender\\_Equality\\_Best\\_Practices\\_Handbook\\_-\\_English\\_version.pdf](https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Gender/Gender_documents/Gender_Equality_Best_Practices_Handbook_-_English_version.pdf)

<sup>17</sup><https://www.poynter.org/business-work/2019/journalism-has-a-gender-representation-problem-bloomberg-is-looking-for-a-solution/>

Bloomberg also launched the New Voices Initiative to assist top women executives in finance and business, to prepare them for TV interviews on media channels.<sup>18</sup>

## German broadcaster ARD quota for women

Since 1989 the German state broadcaster, ARD, has had a quota for the number of women in the decision-making process. Before that, only one third of the employees of the ARD were female, 80% of whom held posts in the lower pay grades. The situation for male employees was completely different; 80% were paid very well and advanced quite quickly. Additionally, no broadcasting service was led by a woman at the time. Today, the percentage of women in the broadcasting industry ranges between 44% and 55.2%. They earn more money and advance to decision-making positions more quickly. There are female directors, editors-in-chief and correspondents.

ARD job advertisements must be drafted in such a way that they appeal to both women and men. They are analyzed for any covert discrimination against women, especially concerning their skills. Selection committees must be composed of both women and men. Women are encouraged to participate in training programmes for decision-making positions. Part-time and flexible working agreements are also included to provide a better balance for family and work life, while returning to work must be an easy process for both parents.

## The Angela Watch

When a woman in the German Chancellor's office asked what kind of stereotypes existed in news reporting, the German network union "Journalistinnenbund" involved more than 500 female journalists in a monitoring project called "Angela Watch". More than 300 articles and photos were analyzed and through anecdotal research some interesting stereotypes were discovered. The reporting was found to be highly inconsistent. The German Chancellor does not correspond to the expectations that are often demanded from a woman, but she is considered and valued first and foremost, as a woman. In the beginning, her physical appearance was a topic. Now journalists focus more on Angela Merkel's handling of power. They describe her as a hesitant person, procrastinating, undecided, unable to issue an order, struggling, unable to lead, as having no power base, as simpatico, or girlish. On the other hand, she is also described as cold-hearted, as power-loving, or as a killer of men.

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<sup>18</sup><https://weserve.org/newvoices/> and <https://www.bloomberg.com/company/press/bloomberg-marks-launch-of-new-voices-initiative-to-diversify-newsroom-sources/>

## Equal representation

The Swedish Television regional news programme, “Västerbottensnytt”, has set a gender standard for their work. According to their website, their goal is that those interviewed in the main, evening broadcast, should reflect society; namely that there should be 50% women and 50% men. The editors count the gender representation each day, compile the numbers each week, and mail it out to everyone in the newsroom. This means that Västerbottensnytt staff always know the gender balance of what they produce on TV. While they rarely reach their 50:50 target, they continually strive to achieve it. Each month they do succeed, the editorial department celebrates with cake.

## Parents-Child-Rooms for journalists

The German Broadcasting station “SWR” has established workrooms for parents and their children, called Parents Child Rooms. There are two rooms, one for employees with two desks, computers, laptops, telephones and printers, and a small area for meetings. The other room, separated by a child safety gate, is for babies, with nappy changing facilities and space for mothers to feed their children. There is also a cot. The rooms were set up for special circumstances, for example when the nanny is ill, grandparents are not available and/or the kindergarten is closed.

## Some other pioneering projects

The International Women’s Media Foundation has a number of pioneering projects that support women journalists. A handful of programmes have emerged with a specific gender focus, like France 24’s “The 51%”.

The BBC’s Outside Source ensures that at least 50% of its experts are women, something it ensures through self-monitoring. In Poland, a website called Newsmavens collates news from across Europe and reframes it from the perspective of women journalists.



# COVERING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

## What to pay attention to when covering gender-based violence

We need to be extremely careful when producing news items related to gender-based violence. All the points we have made so far are equally important, but this issue requires extra sensitivity because our input can result in irreversible consequences.

Always keep in mind that with stories like these we are reporting on traumatic events which happened to actual people. You need to pay extreme attention to how you cover the story, as the way you present the news item will either encourage individuals and society to fight against gender-based violence or make them accept it as normal.

Journalists need to expand their awareness on the issue, so they know exactly what they are talking about.

Respecting the rules and ethical principles regarding GBV news coverage is not an obstacle to the news becoming the most-read or most popular. In other words, a journalist is not obliged to make a choice between writing/preparing popular news or gender-sensitive news, it is possible to achieve both. GBV news stories, prepared in accordance with gender-sensitive principles, can be catchy, informative, simple and straightforward.

So, let's start with the definitions.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is defined as “any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will, and that is based on socially-ascribed differences between males and females.”<sup>19</sup>

But GBV serves as an umbrella term, which contains many acts like rape, sexual assault, domestic violence or child marriage. Besides the ignorance surrounding the term GBV, another problem that is widely faced is the effort being made to not name the act for what it is, such as using different phrases instead of rape.

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<sup>19</sup>Inter Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Act 2015

## The terminology and the definitions

<b>Rape</b>	Non-consensual penetration (however slight) of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis or other body part. Also includes penetration of the vagina or anus with an object. Rape includes marital rape and anal rape/sodomy.
<b>Sexual Assault</b>	Any form of non-consensual sexual contact that does not result in or include penetration. Examples include: Attempted rape, as well as unwanted kissing, fondling, or touching of genitalia and buttocks.
<b>Sexual Exploitation</b>	This means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Some types of “forced prostitution” can also fall under this category.
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	The term means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
<b>Physical Assault</b>	An act of physical violence that is not sexual in nature. Example include: Hitting, slapping, choking, cutting, shoving, burning, shooting or use of any weapons, acid attacks or any other act that results in pain, discomfort or injury.
<b>Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence</b>	Intimate partner violence refers to violence that takes place between intimate partners (spouses, cohabiting partners or boyfriend/girlfriend). Domestic violence is often used interchangeably with intimate partner violence, but also can include violence by family members other than a spouse. This type of violence may include physical, sexual and/or psychological abuse, as well as the denial of resources, opportunities or services.
<b>Forced Marriage</b>	Forced marriage is the marriage of an individual against her or his will.
<b>Early or Child Marriage</b>	Early or child marriage (marriage under the age of legal consent) is a form of forced marriage as the girls are not legally competent to agree to such unions.

<b>Psychological/ Emotional Abuse</b>	Infliction of mental or emotional pain or injury. Examples include: Threats of physical or sexual violence, intimidation, humiliation, forced isolation, social exclusion, stalking, verbal harassment, unwanted attention, remarks, gestures or written words of a sexual and/or menacing nature, destruction of cherished things, etc. Forms of sexual harassment may be included in this category of GBV.
<b>Denial of Resources, Opportunities or Services</b>	Denial of rightful access to economic resources/assets or livelihood opportunities, education, health or other social services. Examples include a widow prevented from receiving an inheritance, earnings forcibly taken by an intimate partner or family member, a woman prevented from using contraceptives, a girl prevented from attending school, etc. "Economic abuse" is included in this category. Some acts of confinement may also fall under this category.
<b>Trafficking in Persons</b>	The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.
<b>Harmful Traditional Practices</b>	Cultural, social and religious customs and traditions that can be harmful to a person's mental or physical health. It is often used in the context of female genital circumcision/mutilation or early/forced marriage. Other harmful traditional practices affecting children include binding, scarring, burning, branding, violent initiation rites, fattening, forced marriage, so-called "honor" crimes and dowry-related violence, exorcism, or "witchcraft."
<b>Gender-biased sex-selection</b>	Sex selection typically occurs because of discrimination against women and girls and a systematic preference for boys. This can lead to neglect and/or discrimination

against girls in access to care, food and other resources and in extreme cases to female infanticide.

(NOTE: In some documents, this is referred as 'Female Infanticide' but we think that it's better to use 'gender-biased sex-selection' because these words generate emotions that position women against her pregnancy or fetus, rather than promoting clarity.)

**Source:** *Inter Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Act 2015*

## How to begin

The number of GBV cases is quite large. From sexual violence to child marriages, all these matters should be discussed under GBV. We will examine some of the items in detail in the following sections, but let's start with the basic principles.

## Basic principles

As journalists, we should never forget that the individuals we speak with are all survivors who have suffered from trauma or a harmful act and are therefore vulnerable. It is our responsibility to treat them very carefully when we write their stories.

**Tip:** *Never forget empathy*

While covering gender-based violence news, there are certain terms that we should be very careful about using. "Victim" ("qurban" in Azerbaijani) is one of them. The person subjected to GBV is often described in the news as a victim, but this is wrong. Let's imagine the effect on the person when she hears she's described as a victim. Using the word "survivor" ("zərər çəkmiş şəxs" in Azerbaijani) instead of "victim" is a much better choice. Portraying these people as victims instils an image of hopelessness for the rest of the society, and may negatively affect the ambition of the interviewee, and potentially other GBV survivors, to persevere and move forward with their lives.

**Tip:** *Word choice: 'victim' – No; 'survivor' – Yes.*

While starting to work on a story, first identify its focus. What is the real purpose behind reporting this story? Which details are ignored, which are unnecessarily highlighted?

If this is a GBV story, it should not be reported as ordinary crime news. To succeed in raising awareness on the issue, undertake further research, gather information from officials, NGOs, etc., and add information to the story to show the viewer/reader the bigger picture regarding GBV. Try to see all news from a gender-sensitive perspective and highlight the frequency of GBV cases.

**Tip:** *Do not miss the focus, make your own roadmap.*

As journalists, we all know the ‘5W1H’ rule. But when covering GBV news, we can sometimes put this rule aside. Writing the name of the survivor who preferred to keep their identity confidential, giving detailed information which could reveal his/her identity or sharing the address of a women’s shelter in a piece on male violence could lead to serious and irreparable consequences. The name, age and location should be changed to protect the survivor. Sometimes the survivor might explicitly want to share his/her identity, or it may be the contrary. However, always obtain the survivor’s consent, even if it is not legally necessary.

**Tip:** *Always respect privacy. Never share all the details.*

## Rules you must obey

When developing GBV news, we could be affected by the weight of the story or become lost in the words while writing the story, finding ourselves in the position of psychologist, judge or storyteller. But this is not our duty! We are only newsmakers.

Our stories should never include expressions that use gender roles and moral values as excuses. There should be no confusion about where the blame belongs for an assault, it rest with the person who committed the offense. Avoid using information that could give the impression that the survivor deserved the violence. Wearing a mini-skirt, being on the street at midnight, having sexual intercourse with someone you are not married to, being a sex worker, and other such actions cannot be cited as excuses for violence.

**Tip:** *Never assume the role of psychologist or judge.*

In GBV cases, the information you have received might be unclear and based on speculation and gossip. As journalists, our mission is to try to gather the most accurate information when covering the news; we do this by checking different sources.

Never write the news based solely on the perpetrator’s testimony. Using one-sided information may reinforce old prejudices or create new ones.

**Tip:** *Make your story accurate.*

While the details of the violence will probably be explained as a story, the narrative and language used in GBV news should be impartial - far from the language used in tabloid journalism.

The story should not be written in a sensationalist way, should not be dramatized, pornographized or romanticized. Terms like “secret love,” “crazy love” and “forbidden love” must be avoided as well.

Unnecessary details of sexualism or violence have no place in the news. Otherwise, the news can become a tool that helps reproduce GBV.

Using sentences that could justify the violent act or that empathize with the aggressor is another risk that journalists should be aware of. However, depicting an aggressor as a monster is also not a preferred option, because this can instill a lynching sentiment among the public. While portraying the perpetrator as a “monster” can marginalize him, you must remember that in most cases the perpetrators of GBV acts are relatives of the women involved and the act can be ‘normalized’ through an ‘insanity’ plea.

## Attention! How to make sexual violence news

The basic principles for covering GBV news should also be used for sexual violence news. But there are some distinct and specific points that need to be highlighted.

Acts of sexual violence are defined as crimes committed without consent. Sexual violence can also include pornography, Internet abuse, sexual harassment, and other forms of harm that may not necessarily result in physical injury.

The more common form of sexual assault is that carried out by an acquaintance or family member. Sexual violence transform lives forever and the media has an important role to play in covering sexual violence news.

## How to interview a sexual assault/rape survivor<sup>20</sup>

Journalism is not an easy job, it can include many difficult situations, and interviewing a sexual assault survivor is certainly one of the hardest tasks. So, here are some tips that can help:

- **Do not interview anyone who is hysterical or in shock; rather, interview a friend or family member, and go back to the rape survivor later.**

<sup>20</sup>Reporting on sexual violence: A Guide for journalists: <http://www.speakupspokeout.internews.org/?q=section-2-concepts-skills-and-tools/interviewing-people-who-have-been-raped>

- It may be difficult for female survivors to tell their stories to men and for male survivors to talk to women. If the interviewer cannot be a person of the same sex, make sure that the survivor is comfortable talking with someone of the opposite sex.
- Be sympathetic, but keep it short. Start the conversation with something simple, like “I’m sorry about what happened to you.”
- Identify yourself and the media outlet you work for and indicate who the likely audience will be. Tell the survivor why you are there and what it is that you want. Ensure they understand that you plan to publish or broadcast a report based on the information you obtain from them.
- Explain that you will not use the survivor’s name unless they specifically want you to. Stress that you will protect his or her identity.
- Explain what “on the record” and “off the record” mean. Tell the interviewee to use that phrase at any time during the interview so that you will know which information not to publish.
- Start with an open-ended question, such as “Tell me about your experience.”
- Look the survivor in the eye. Do not become emotional even if the details are shocking. Take breaks for you or the interviewee to rest or to recompose.

**Tip:** *As journalists, we are well aware that it can sometimes be very challenging to talk about sensitive issues without creating problems. It is very difficult to report about rape, because when the story is published, the rape survivors may face exclusion from their community. News professionals will therefore need to work through these challenges and invent their own creative ways to cover these critical issues.*

Never use expressions such as “shock” for murder, “disgusting act” for sexual violence, or “shameful case” for child abuse. This approach makes violence look like an exception, drawing public attention to certain cases while hiding others. This normalizes violence, since murders that aren’t “shocking murders” don’t receive public reaction.

## How to cover femicide news

Violence against women comprises a wide range of acts – from verbal harassment and other forms of emotional abuse, to daily physical or sexual abuse. At the far end of the spectrum is femicide; intentionally killing females (women or girls) simply because they are female. If you are still in doubt, ask yourself this question: “Would she have been murdered if she were a man?”

When covering femicide news, the basic principles for covering GBV news are applicable, but there are some specific issues that we would like to focus on.

Here are some points to pay attention to:

- News regarding femicide should be clearly identified as ‘femicide news’ and presented in a specific way, such as under the same main heading, using a special logo. The aim is to identify the crime as GBV to raise awareness in society.
- The source of the story should not only be official police records and the testimony of the murderer, especially since the murdered woman is not able to answer the claims of the perpetrator.
- Never use phrases like “jealousy killing”, “honour killing”, “he said he loved her a lot”, “he went on a rampage when she rejected his proposal to reconcile”. Be wary of empathizing with the killer/perpetrator. Remember, there are no love killings, there is only a violation of the right to live. Romanticized violence legitimizes murder.
- We should also avoid describing the perpetrator as “mentally unstable.”
- Violence and murder following systematic male violence is not an instantaneous event. We must consider whether the murder was preceded by any prior incidents, like beatings and/or assault. Calling it “a frenzy of rage” would be misleading. It is important to mention previous episodes and to note if the relevant state officials fulfilled their duties.
- While writing about femicide or GBV news, we should keep in mind that this is the public’s problem. The fact that public authorities are responsible for protecting women or children in danger should be emphasized in the news coverage. Following and reporting on specific lawsuits is an effective way to keep GBV issues on the agenda.
- GBV survivors are very vulnerable people and professional assistance can really help them. NGOs and institutions dealing with GBV survivors should also be mentioned in the news.

## How to interview a child

It is fundamentally better not to interview a child, however, in certain circumstances journalists might choose to do so. If such an interview is required, it must never take place without the presence of an adult, who could be the parent or custodian or in some specific cases a teacher or someone working for a children’s protection agency.

## How to cover child marriage news

Child marriage is a violation of human rights. Young married girls face many difficulties, such as early pregnancy. We must remember that every person under the age of 18 is



considered a child unless stated otherwise in the applicable national legislation. Child, early and forced marriage are considered GBV.

When covering child marriage news;

- Emphasise in our stories that child marriage is a “crime.”
- Phrases containing sexism or sexist approaches must be avoided.
- Life stories are important for convincing the public of the existence (prevalence and depth) of the problem of forced marriages, however it can be painful for women and girls to recall their experiences.
- Publishing stories of girls who were forced to marry at an early age and were able to extricate themselves from the marriage can inspire other women. But the story should not give the impression that all girls in this position will have the same experience.

## How to make gender-biased sex selection news

Gender-biased sex selection is the discrimination against the girl child before she is even born. However, when reporting on it, we must be sure we do not undermine the right of women to access safe abortion services.

As underlined in the report by the Center for Reproductive Rights regarding India, sensitive, informed and balanced reporting of gender-biased sex selection can be helpful in addressing deep-rooted gender violence and discrimination and can help ensure women’s access to safe abortion services.<sup>21</sup> This type of carefully prepared reporting also informs and increases the public’s awareness of reproductive health terminology.

The knowledge and use of appropriate terminology is a key step to effectively portraying the issue. When we report on gender-based sex selection there are some words that should be avoided, like “feticide” or “murder,” because these words generate emotions that may position a woman against her pregnancy or fetus, rather than promoting clarity. It is also not wise to say “unborn child.” This phrase also leads to the personification of the foetus and is not a recommended term from a rights perspective.

Another term that should be avoided is sex-selective abortion, because this definition connects sex determination to abortion and often leads to the interpretation that all abortions are for sex selection, which is not true. Instead we should use the term gender-biased sex selection, because this phrase highlights the social dimension of sex selection.

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<sup>21</sup><http://populationfirst.org/PDF/6-Media-Kit-Style-Guide.pdf>

It is also important to remember that the language used to cover news about gender-biased sex selection should not cause a negative attitude regarding women's access to safe abortion services.

The focus of such news items should be on gender bias and patriarchal values. It is important to frame gender-biased sex selection in the context of son preference, gender discrimination and GBV. Linkages to the value of the girl child and women should also be explored.

**Tip:** *Abortion is a safe medical procedure when performed by trained and certified personnel. It is therefore important that stories on maternal health, maternal mortality or even declining child sex ratio, clearly highlight that in Azerbaijan abortion is legal for a broad range of conditions, but that gender-biased sex selection may cause many kinds of problems.<sup>22</sup>*

**Tip:** *A woman and her partner may decide to terminate a pregnancy for a variety of reasons. Abortion should not be described as an immoral act, as making this type of correlation will lead to the further stigmatization of abortion and of women seeking abortion.*

**Tip:** *When reporting on abortion the focus is frequently on the woman or the mother-in-law, while son preference is driven by strong social or family pressure, in which men and women both play a role.*

## How to make lifestyle news

Lifestyle news is the most colourful and possibly the most read/watched news among the general audience and, irrespective of the content, constitutes a huge part of the gender-sensitive journalism landscape.

- While covering lifestyle news, the rights of the individual should not be violated. Private lives and privacy must be respected.
- The sexist narrative in respect of women's bodies should be avoided at all costs.
- Lifestyle news that uses images focussing on specific parts of the female body, such as breasts, lips, legs, does not equate to reader interest and may, in fact, produce the opposite result.

<sup>22</sup>For more information: [https://azerbaijan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBSS\\_Azerbaijan\\_ENG.pdf](https://azerbaijan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBSS_Azerbaijan_ENG.pdf)

- Clichés are everywhere, but we perhaps encounter them most in lifestyle news. Journalists should avoid using clichés which produce news that is shallow.
- To increase the awareness of gender-sensitivity in society, a gender-sensitive perspective should be included with every piece of news.

#### BOX 4:

### ETHICAL PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER WHILE COVERING A GBV STORY

#### ***Accuracy***

Journalists' interviews should be sensitive; they should also be sure that their reporting is factually correct.

#### ***Fairness***

Journalists should be fair and honest with interviewees. When speaking to those who have experienced GBV, journalists are responsible for protecting their potentially vulnerable sources.

#### ***Impartiality***

We are newsmakers, thus it is not our job to judge or discriminate. Journalists should be extremely careful when adding details that could unintentionally shift the focus of blame away from the aggressor.

#### ***Duty to inform***

Using an overabundance of personal details can sensationalize the news item; this should be avoided.

#### ***Respecting privacy***

To fully respect the privacy of GBV survivors and their loved ones, we should be careful how we present the information in order to avoid the possibility of “jigsaw identification”<sup>23</sup> taking place.

#### ***Sources***

The main principle of journalism, to protect our sources, is crucial for GBV news. For example, publishing the address of a women's shelter in a piece on male violence could have serious consequences. Particular attention should be given to coverage of “honour crimes.”

<sup>23</sup>Jigsaw identification relates to the ability to identify someone by using two or more different pieces of information from two or more sources, especially when the person's identity is meant to be kept secret for legal reasons.

**Do no harm**

This principle has three angles:

- Showing sensitivity to people who are traumatised, to victims, etc.;
- being aware that the subject or the interviewee may be inexperienced in dealing with the media;
- and understanding the balance between the public's right to information and the suspect's right to a fair trial.

While dealing with GBV survivors, we should always prioritise their best interests and adhere to the principles described earlier.

Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in the Syria Crisis<sup>24</sup>

## Picking the right photograph / video / visual

Every journalist, whether working online, in print media or for a TV station, would want their news to be included in the most-popular news list or to be shared widely on social media.

Our choice of pictures, graphics or footage is extremely important because these images strengthen the story and are sometimes more effective than the words. As journalists, we are also well aware that the catchier the visual, the more ratings, clicks or circulation we will get.

But if we want to develop our news stories from a gender-sensitive approach, there are some traps that we must be very careful not to fall into. There are also some ethical considerations that all journalists who claim to be sensitive on this issue should take into account.

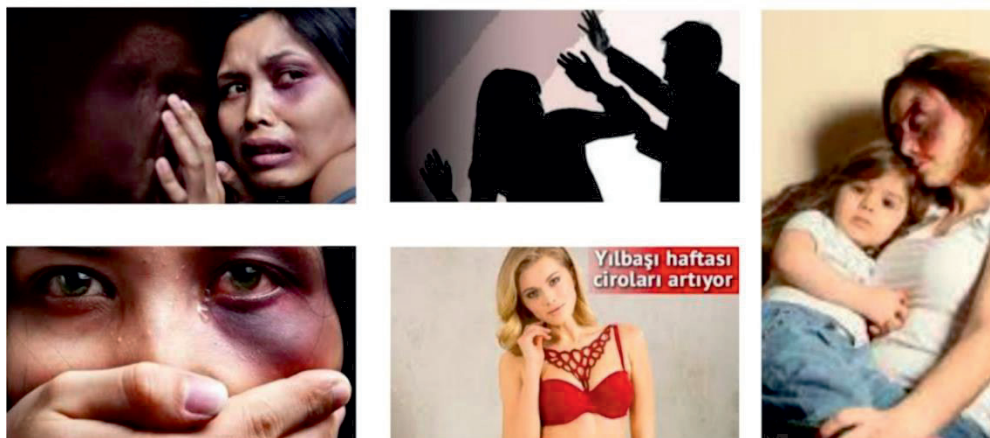
Keeping the identities of gender-based violence survivors confidential is the most important. Journalists should never publish photographs or film details that might reveal the survivor's identity without first obtaining informed consent.

However, we can frequently use other techniques on our visuals, such as using pixelated images or disguising voices. Again, we should be extra careful while using them because any overlooked detail may reveal the identity of the survivor. The results of such carelessness are irreversible.

**Tip:** *Always protect the anonymity of the GBV survivor.*

<sup>24</sup>Reporting on Gender-based Violence in the Syria Crisis: A Journalist's Handbook. UNFPA, 2014: <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA%20Journalsits%27s%20Handbook%20Small%5B6%5D.pdf>

## What not to do



When covering gender-based violence news, avoid choosing images that reproduce certain clichés. Using photographs of beaten women and images that show women as weak and displaying the violence with fictional photographs replays the violent act; it causes traumatized women to relive their experience, and further harming the image of the women and normalizing the violence.

**Tip:** Stay away from clichés and do not represent the woman as weak.



This photograph was published in one of Turkey's biggest newspapers, creating a huge discussion in Turkish media.<sup>25</sup> The chief editor's justification for the use of this photograph

<sup>25</sup>Habertürk, 7 October, 2011



was to shock society, which normally sees GBV as a woman beaten and with a black eye, and engender outrage and, through this, to increase the awareness of the fight against GBV.

Never use a photograph of the survivor, even if the intentions behind its use are good. If a photograph of the survivor/victim is required, use one taken before the violent act occurred, not after.

In GBV news stories, the body of the murdered woman should not be revealed, it is the perpetrator that should be exposed. We must avoid using photographs that normalize violence.

**Tip:** *Expose the perpetrator, not the survivor.*

In visual media, when covering sexual assault cases, illustrating the incident can aggravate the suffering of the survivor. There is also the risk that depicting the story in this way may inspire and guide people inclined to GBV.

We should not forget: Using photographs from the social media pages regarding the subject matter or from experts/witnesses both require consent.



**Source:** <https://sputniknews.com/asia/201904151074151436-pakistan-women-alleges-rape-policeman/>

Publishing GBV news or covering rape or sexual assault cases with photographs such as the one above is wrong. Using photographs containing “sexy poses” must also be avoided. Selecting a neutral photograph is always the better option.

**Tip:** Never use sexy or sexuality evoking photographs for GBV news.

Another common practice we frequently encounter is the reluctance in newsrooms to cover GBV stories, mostly from male directors, unless they are accompanied by striking pictures.

One example is from the Turkish media, where the story of a 70-year-old man marrying a 14 year-old girl, sold into marriage by her family, was not covered by the media despite the initiation of a judicial process brought about by complaints from neighbours. The reason given for the lack of coverage was that the girl was wearing a headscarf and was not beautiful enough.

When reporting violent incidents, earlier photographs or videos of the aggressor and the survivor, like a wedding photograph or one in which they appear in love, should not be published. These not only diminish the gravity of the issue and the effect of the violent act, they are also irrelevant to the actual incident.<sup>26</sup>

Extra effort must be made with gender-sensitive journalism to reshape the perception of women in society. Unfortunately, using photographs of naked woman that evoke sexuality and feed the sexist narrative against women in all types of news — lifestyle, economic, violence, etc., is a common practice in almost all media outlets.

## İç çamaşırı tüketimi 10 yılda 3'e katlandı

Yıllık iç çamaşırı satışı 2 milyon adedin üzerinde olan Dağı Geyim'in Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı Mahmut Nedim Koc, Türkiye'de tüketim alışkanlıklarının değiştiğini söyledi. Koc, "10 yıl önce tek seferde 1 çamaşır alırken, bugün 3-4 adet satıyoruz" dedi.

1982'te kurulan ve Türkiye'nin en köklü markaları arasında yer alan Dağı, 10 yılda cirosuna 10'a katladı. İlk mağazasını 1989'da İstanbul Sisi'de açan ve 2004'te el değistiren Dağı Geyim'in Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı Mahmut Nedim Koc, 8 mağazayla devrıldıkları Dağı'yı 47 mağazaya ulaştırdıklarını söyledi. Koc, yüzde 32,26'ı halika açık olan markanın 2013'te yüzde 25 büyümeye ve 50 milyon TL ciroyla kapıyı beldiğini belirterek, "Bu rakam 10 yılda 10 kat büyümeye denk geliyor. Pijama ve iç çamaşırında ürün çeşitliliğini artırarak, kadın koleksiyonuna önem vererek, son yıllarda mayo ile destekleyerek Dağı'yı güçlendirdiğimize inanıyoruz. 2012'de 1.4 milyon adet erkek, 625 bin adet kadın iç çamaşırı satıldı" dedi.



kıyaslınca bu durum çamaşırda da mayo, pijama, ev giyim kategorilerinde de benzerlik gösteriyor. Seçtiğiniz genelinde de bu yönde bir gelişim olduğuna söyleyebiliriz" dedi.

### HAFİF ATLET ÜRETİYOR

Az-Ge araştırma (geliştirme) departmanının yenilikçi ürünler üzerinde çalıştığını belirten Koc, hafif atlet geliştirdiklerini ve piyasaya sürmek için son dönemlerde çalışmalarını söyledi. "Normale bir atlet 30'a 1'likten üretilir. Ağır 100-110 gramdır. Biz 50'ye 1'lik 80 gramlık atlet ürettiğimiz" dedi. "Bu an dayandıkça acunlar yıkama testleri yapıyoruz. Bu atlet birer bir ten gili olacak" şeklinde konuştu.



### 'Pamuklunun yerine dantel istiyorlar'

"İç çamaşırı üretiminde neredeyse tüm üretim yüzde 100 pamuk ürünlerle ilgiliydi. Tüpe de öyleydi. Bu ürünler aynı zamanda ucuzdu" diyen Mahmut Nedim Koc, son yıllarda tüketicinin daha pamuk olan dantelli ürünleri yönünde olduğunu söyledi. Koc, "Tüpe iç çamaşırı ve pamuk ürünü kaptı. Pamuklu, düz bir çamaşır dantel eklenmesi, aksesuarlarla ve farklı stillerde giymeye beklentisi var. Özellikle kadınlarca geçretilen satılan yüzde 90'ı pamuklu değildiği için giyenlerin giyimlerinde terne döndü" dedi.

### 5 erkekten biri slip tercih ediyor

Senz Katip, iç çamaşırı seçerken en çok kükümlerin farklı renk ve modelleri yönünde olduğunu, ancak belki de en çok kükümlerin yavaş yavaş değiştiğini söyledi. Koc, "Türkiye'de erkeklerin yüzde 80'i boxer model iç çamaşırı tercih ediyor. Ancak yüzde 20'lik kükümler kükümler ve beyaz renkten payıyor" dedi.

## 3 YILDA 30 MAĞAZA İÇİN RUSYA KAPISINDA

Dağı Geyim Genel Müdür Yardımcısı Seniz Katip da 2013'te 51 kenti ziyaret ederek, 10'a yakın alıcıyla önemli üzere toplam 15 yeni mağaza açma planı olduğunu kaydetti. Türkiye'nin her birinde en az 1

mağaza açmak istediklerini belirten Katip, yurtiçi planlarını şöyle anlattı: "KTC, Irak, Dubai, Kazakistan, Azerbaycan, Suudi Arabistan'da mağazalarımız var. Yakın zamanda Rusya pazarına girmeyi düşünüyoruz.

Master franchise anlaşması yapmak için Rus bir grupe görüşüyoruz. 3 yılda 30 mağaza açma planımız var. Anlaşarak, birleşikçe çok fazla mağazalar açarak Dağı'yı ülke geneline yaygınlaştırmak istiyoruz. Sonra mağazaları açacağız."



<sup>26</sup>KADIN VE MEDYA, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitlikçi Haber Kılavuzu, Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti. [https://www.tgc.org.tr/images/kadin\\_ve\\_medya\\_kilavuz.pdf](https://www.tgc.org.tr/images/kadin_ve_medya_kilavuz.pdf)

The example above shows a news piece that analyses the increase in the purchasing consumption of underwear and is supposed to be an economic report.<sup>27</sup> The choice of photograph of a woman wearing underwear is totally irrelevant. As journalists, we must fight against this type of common practice.

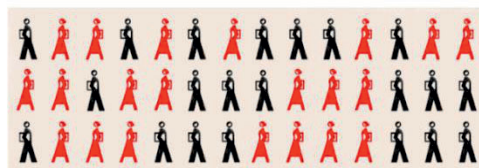
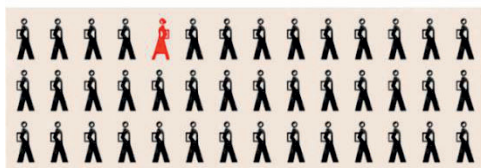
**Tip:** *Try to reverse this old sexist attitude, so do not use photographs of women in irrelevant news.*

## What to do

Even when the options seem limited, there will always be ways to use and choose photographs properly. Using visuals that reproduce violence is not the only option when talking about violence. As journalists, we should look for ways to be creative and find different solutions.

When you are unable to find appropriate photographs for covering GBV, utilizing stock photo platforms such as Burst and Pexels will help you think outside the box.

Include women when you prepare graphics for your piece. In graphics, using one type of human vector will only indicate men.



When covering GBV news, publish the perpetrator's photograph instead of the survivor's.

Choosing an image or a symbol against violence and using photographs or a video of a busy marketplace, public area or from a protest against GBV may also be harmless options.

**One very important note:** Photographs of child survivors must never be used.

<sup>27</sup>Haberturk



# GENDER-SENSITIVE JOURNALISM AND NEW MEDIA

The media has experienced a number changes during the last few years with the evolution of technology. Print media, newspapers, television, books and magazines have become conventional platforms, with some people even referring to them as the old media.

With the emergence of the new media, namely websites and social platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, conventional media has been sidelined.

We are more and more dependent on our smartphones and computers, and readers are increasingly obtaining information from the new media. Social networks encourage fast, constant and brief communication.

Social media, which has undoubtedly affected our lives, is a new challenge for journalists. It is a major news source and a useful tool which increases the accessibility of our news. But social media has to be handled very responsibly.

When we bring together social media platforms and gender-sensitive journalism, there are some significant aspects we should think about. First and foremost, prioritising a gender-sensitive approach, language and perspective to foster gender awareness. Second, be careful while reporting and sharing gender-based violence news and violence against women in the media and digital content. The rules that we have explained earlier are valid for social media, news websites and digital platforms.

## Social media: A major source of news or a ticking time bomb?

While social media has become a major source of news, it is also a ticking time bomb as it is rampant with unverified, distorted or fabricated information which can rapidly spread rumour and hatred.

But we journalists should always be the reference of truth. Even if the channels or platforms from which we gather our information or on which we share our information are different, our responsibilities remain the same – and are perhaps even greater. Therefore, as we do our jobs the same ethical rules and basic principles should be applied for social media.

Publishing and posting GBV news with a specific symbol, slogan or under a specific headline in order to shed light on them could have a huge effect on social media.

The information we obtain from social media may be misleading or false. Our minds should always be on “verification mode” regarding any digital content, to ensure the authenticity

of whatever is going viral. As it is easy to hide real identities, we must be cautious about the sources and the information they share. Posting unverified information or a rumour may have negative consequences on the women and girls involved and may also affect the journalist's credibility.

**Tip:** *Always double check sources and account owners. Contacting them directly and asking for more details is even better.*

We should again be very sensitive about the visual materials (photos and videos) that circulate on the web and that could reveal the survivor's identity or address.

Using photographs or visual materials from the social media accounts of survivors, witnesses or experts without obtaining their consent is a mistake. Protecting their privacy should be our priority.

Social media is fast; tweeting and posting are so easy. It is possible to see many examples of posts and shares that include pornography or photos that feed into sexist discourse, using the woman as visual material. Widely circulating pornography is one of the hidden agendas of digital platforms. Thus, before we tweet or post, while choosing visual materials or words, we should keep this in mind and avoid becoming a part of it.

**Tip:** *Think twice before posting or tweeting!*

## Creating gender-sensitive awareness through social media

Besides being a major source of news, social media is a very important tool for creating awareness and even for mobilizing communities. The wide use of social media by various segments of society provides the opportunity to spread gender-sensitive language and approaches.

For example, the #MeToo movement<sup>28</sup>, although not started by the media, has raised awareness on gender equality by toppling the walls of fear among women who for years had kept secret the sexual assaults they had been subjected to.

So, what can we do as journalists?

First of all, we can use gender-sensitive language on social media. Language is a powerful tool that shapes our perception. Using gender-neutral language on social media and not using biased words, as explained in previous sections, would be a good starting point.

<sup>28</sup> A movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault in which the survivors share their own stories. It was started by a hashtag #MeToo on social media and began going viral in October 2017.

Preparing infographics that reveal gender statistics or short documentaries focusing on gender equality using new media techniques, would help to enlighten a large number of people.

It is easy to become angry and express feelings on social media. It is easy to find offensive, misogynistic, sexist, discriminative or hateful comments. Removing these would demonstrate that such opinions are not tolerated on social channels.

Visual materials are almost indispensable for digital platforms. Instead of using traditional gender stereotypes, such as a limited number of photos of women in positions of power or in careers like engineering or software development, utilize stock photo platforms.

Specific social media accounts, websites or YouTube channels promoting gender equality would be an effective means for fostering gender equality and awareness.

## Cyber violence against women and girls and cyber misogyny

The new media environment has exacerbated some existing problems and created new challenges that need to be addressed. Online and social media have become new and powerful vehicles for misogynistic threats and harassment for women. Online harassment is a different type of gender-based violence.

Cyber violence against women and girls (cyber VAWG) is a new and growing phenomenon. It includes sending aggressive e-mails or messages, sharing personal photos and videos without consent, trolling, hacking and cyberstalking.

To prevent this, journalists should be aware of this type of violence, report it and also try to raise awareness about it.

Women journalists are also threatened through cyber misogyny. A report by the OSCE found that “Female journalists and bloggers throughout the globe are being inundated with threats of murder, rape, physical violence and graphic imagery via email, commenting sections and across all social media...Male journalists are also targeted with online abuse, however, the severity, in terms of both sheer amount and content of abuse, including sexist and misogynistic vitriol, is much more extreme for female journalists.”<sup>29</sup>

In our struggle against cyber violence and gender-insensitive wording, we can utilise the social media platform to criticize this type of narrative, as we all should cooperate and support each other in order to raise awareness.

<sup>29</sup><https://www.osce.org/fom/220411?download=true>

# ANALYSES OF NEWS REPORTS FROM THE AZERBAIJANI MEDIA<sup>30</sup>

In this part of the Handbook, all the names of the survivors and perpetrators have been changed to 'Nigar Mammadova' and 'Azad Huseynov' which are among the most common names in Azerbaijan. Our aim here is to respect the privacy of the subjects of these news items.

## News 1

### UNHAPPY END OF LOVE DRAMA AND 20 YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT IN BAKU

A trial on the criminal case of Azad Huseynov, accused of killing Nigar Mammadova was held today at the Baku Court on Grave Crimes.

The sentence was announced by Judge Tamella Nasrullayeva.

Azad Huseynov's lawyer asked the court to give a relatively light punishment considering the fact that it was the defendant's first offence and he had admitted his guilt. Huseynov spoke at the trial, stating that he regretted what he had done. "I think about her every day, I did not want everything to be like this. I also die every day. I live in torment," Huseynov said.

The court sentenced Azad Huseynov to 20 years in prison. The murder took place in Baku's Nizami district on 30 April, 2015. Nigar Mammadova, 1998, was brutally murdered at Bahrz st. 1091. She was stabbed eight times in the back.

Following the investigation, Azad Huseynov, 1995, was found guilty of killing Mammadova. Mammadova was an 11th grade student at secondary school No. 58 in Khatai district.

In his statement, Azad Huseynov said that he had committed the crime because of jealousy. Huseynov loved Nigar Mammadova, but her feelings were not mutual. When Mammadova announced that she was going to marry her cousin, Huseynov stated "You will be either mine or nobody's" and killed her.

<sup>30</sup>In this part of the handbook, all the names of the survivors and perpetrators have been replaced with fictitious names to respect the confidentiality of the persons who were the subject of these news items. The nine news examples in this section were taken from Azerbaijan media.

***What is the problem ?*** The first problem is the title. The first things the reader sees are the title and the photo, which immediately influence the reader's perception of the story. Choosing romantic words such as “unhappy end of love drama” is wrong when covering femicide news. It belittles the seriousness of the incident.

We are talking about the life of a very young and innocent girl. Would she have wanted her name to be in the headlines; would she have wanted the details of her life disclosed, or the fact that she was going to marry her cousin; would she have wanted her address published? How will her parents feel every time they see their daughter's murderer's name and photograph in the newspapers or on the Internet? The principle of keeping the name of the victim anonymous should be respected in murder cases as well.

When reporting the murderer's testimony and writing that he “committed the crime because of jealousy” is a good example of romanticizing violence. We should not forget that jealousy cannot be a reason to kill someone. But reporting the murderer's statements, like “I think about her every day” ... “I did not want things to be like this” ... “I also die every day” ... “I live in despair” ... and mentioning the word “jealousy” are hidden ways of legitimizing violence.

Using the active voice is more effective than using the passive voice to stress that the perpetrator is responsible for the violent act.

The focus of the news should be the violent incident, but in this case the focus is mostly on the testimony of the murderer, which could make the reader empathize with him.

The photographs chosen for the news item are snapshots of happy moments in the lives of the victim and the perpetrator. This news story is reporting a violent act therefore happy visuals are not relevant and also have romantic connotations.

## 20 years of imprisonment for the murderer

A trial of the criminal case of Azad Huseynov, 20, who is accused of killing A.B. was held today at the Baku Court on Grave Crimes. Huseynov was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

The murder took place in Baku. Huseynov brutally stabbed A. B. N., 17, to death.

A. B. was a student of 11th grade at high school.

Huseynov, in his statement, claimed that he committed the crime when he learned that A. B. would marry someone else, because his and her feelings were not mutual.

A 2008 national survey on violence against women in Azerbaijan found that about a quarter of female respondents (24%) were exposed to various forms of violence by both intimate and non-intimate partners after the age of 15. According to another survey, about one in three men (32.5%) reported perpetrating physical violence, and 32.1% of women reported experiencing this type of violence.<sup>31</sup>

## News 2

### PERSON WHO COMMITTED HONOUR KILLING SENTENCED

*A criminal trial on the case of Azad Huseynov, accused of killing his wife, was held at the Baku Court on Grave Crimes, XYZ.com reports.*

*At the trial Huseynov was sentenced to 10 years and 6 months imprisonment.*

*The incident took place this year in the Binagadi district. Azad Huseynov killed his wife Nigar Mammadova. According to his initial statement, he committed the murder on honour.*

**What is the problem ?** The title of the news is problematic because of the usage of the term “honour killings.”

“Honour” is an excuse for the murder of a woman. As journalists, we have to be very careful using this language and these pretexts which can legitimize violence and, therefore, justify the murder. We should never use phrases or words like “honour killings.”

**Do not forget:** This type of news might well be submitted as evidence to a court as ‘unjust provocation’ remission.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> UNFPA/SCFWCA (2018) “Gender Equality and Gender Relations in Azerbaijan: Current Trends and Opportunities. Report on Findings from the Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)”, Baku, Azerbaijan

<sup>32</sup> Unjust Provocation; Article 29 (1) of the Penal Code of Turkey;

[https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/6453/file/Turkey\\_CC\\_2004\\_am2016\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/6453/file/Turkey_CC_2004_am2016_en.pdf)

## News 3

WOMAN IS BEATEN,  
HER HAIR IS CUT – HONOUR KILLING

A trial on the criminal case of Azad Huseynov, 1955, who is accused of committing an attempt to kill his daughter for reasons of jealousy in Samukh district, has started.

The defendant testified at the trial at the Ganja Court on Grave Crimes, XYZ.az reports.

According to the indictment, the incident took place at night on June 24-25, 2017. Mother-in-law and husband of Nigar Mammadova, 1988, found her with another man.

Mammadova's mother-in-law and husband, who claimed they found her with another man in the house, first beat her and then cut her hair. Later, Mammadova was subjected to violence by her father.

Azad Huseynov, who lives in the Nabiaghali settlement of Samukh district, was informed about his daughter's immoral actions. He went to Ziyadli village, where his daughter lives in order to clarify the issue.

Nigar Mammadova admitted to her father that she was guilty of immoral actions.

Later, Azad Huseynov brought his daughter to his house in Nabiaghali settlement and injured her with a blunt instrument and then tried to strangle her.

However, Huseynov failed to kill his daughter for certain reasons.

The injured daughter was immediately taken to the hospital.

It should be noted that Nigar Mammadova's husband was on duty during the day of the incident.

Azad Huseynov was charged under Article 29, 120 of the Criminal Code (Attempt to deliberately commit murder). Huseynov testified at the trial and admitted his guilt.

**What is the problem ?** The language used in this news text is very problematic: using the term “honour killing” in the title; providing full names and addresses; describing the violence in detail, such as “... injured her with a blunt instrument and then tried to strangle her”; and mentioning “moral values” as an excuse for the perpetrator.

The claim of “immoral actions” may be understood as the victim somehow provoking the incident. We should be careful about this, because victims should never be blamed for what has happened to them.

In addition, only one side of this news story has been told. We must avoid this.

## News 4

### MAN WHO FOUND HIS WIFE WITH ANOTHER PERSON: 'I DID NOT WANT TO KILL HER'

A man who killed his ex-wife in a motel with nine knife strokes spoke.

A person who murdered his ex-wife has been detained. Azad Huseynov's marriage, which led from happiness to disaster, lasted for 11 months. Huseynov, who has two children from his marriage with 26-year-old Nigar Mammadova, officially divorced his wife last year. However, the couple shared the same house.

According to Huseynov, the reason for the divorce was Mammadova's secret meetings with other men. On the day of the incident, Huseynov went for a walk to a park in Bilajari district where he lived. Then, he noticed his ex-wife Nigar in somebody's car.

Azad saw his wife in VAZ 2107, which belonged to another person. Then, he followed the car.

Later, Huseynov saw his ex-wife entering a motel. In order to prevent them from escaping from that motel, Azad punctured the tyres of the car in which he had seen his ex-wife. Then, he found the room they were in, but according to Azad, he did not mean to kill either his ex-wife, or the person who was with her.

Huseynov said that he saw Mammadova lying on the bed when he entered the room and killed her.

Employees of the Absheron District Police Office detained Azad, who fled the scene after the incident. Azad Huseynov, who was quickly detained, was handed over to the district prosecutor's office. The detainee, who says he regrets his deed, said that he gave his two children to his relatives.

***What is the problem ?*** The entire story is one-sided; only the claims of the perpetrator have been reported. Since the victim is not alive she cannot respond to these claims.

The title contains the murderer's reasons for committing the crime and his regret. None of this should be in the headline. The focus of the story is the crime. We should avoid using excuses made by the culprit.

All the names, details and places are clearly identified. The act of murder has been written like a thriller.

We should avoid using narrative that could reproduce violence.





## News 5

### THE PERSON WHO ATTEMPTED TO KILL HIS WIFE BROUGHT BEFORE A JUDGE. HE IS SAID TO BE INSANE

XYZ.com reports that Baku Grave Crimes Court has launched proceedings against Azad Huseynov who is accused of attempting to kill his wife.

According to data, A.Huseynov stabbed his wife during quarrel between them. She was hospitalised and her life could be saved. A. Huseynov was charged with Article 29.120.1 (Attempt to a crime) of the Criminal Code. Recall that in accordance with the investigation results A.Huseynov was in an insane state when he committed the crime.

**What is the problem ?** Painting the aggressor as “sick” or using clichés such as “he’s said to be insane” or was in “a frenzy or rage” are ways of legitimizing and normalizing violence. There is no reference to a medical report claiming that he’s insane. Even if a special mental condition exists, when we report this in the news we must include a reference to the official documents. The journalist should try to use the most accurate language possible.

## News 6

### FEMALE CORRESPONDENT OF CORRUPTION NEWSPAPER DETAINED DUE TO CORRUPTION

Ganja city resident, previously convicted Nigar Mammadova was detained 17 January by Astara District Police Office employees. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of Azerbaijan Republic, Mammadova, who presented herself as an employee of the Corruption newspaper, was detained while she was taking a bribe in the amount of 100 manat from the director of a village's secondary school, Azad Huseynov, while threatening him. An investigation is underway.

**What is the problem ?** Do you think our colleagues would write a story stating, “Male newspaper correspondent detained for corruption”?

It seems that the writer of this news item thinks it newsworthy to report that not only is it strange to have a woman correspondent, but believes it is even more interesting that she has allegedly taken a bribe.

Isn't this story feeding a stereotype, arguing that when women are professionals they make mistakes, including criminal ones? Besides that, don't you find the language of the story, especially the title wherein it presents the general concept of the "female correspondent", to be extreme?

The title itself unequivocally asserts that the female journalist is a correspondent for the newspaper. In the news item itself, we read that she introduced herself as a correspondent, but the writer of the news item did not conduct basic research and ask the newspaper if they had a correspondent called 'Nigar Mammadova'.

Other basic things are missing in this news report, like why did 'Mammadova' allegedly take the bribe?

The story is also one-sided as it is only based on information given by the MIA, as mentioned in the news above. This is not enough, especially in alleged crime stories.

## News 7

### NUMBER OF WOMEN MPS INCREASES IN MILLI MAJLIS (LIST)

The results of the election for the 4th convocation of Milli Majlis give basis to the fact that the number of women deputies in parliament has increased. It should be noted that 14 out of the number of MPs of the 3rd convocation of the Azerbaijani Parliament were female. As a result of the current election, 20 women have been elected to parliament.

**What is the problem ?** As we have discussed before, when you start looking at issues through a gender sensitive lens, you notice new angles in stories. This story underlines the increasing number of women MPs, which definitely deserves attention.

While it is good to note that female representation in parliament is growing, is it not important to also consider that, despite the increasing number, representation remains unequal? Half our society is female, so at least half the Members of Parliament should be women.

As journalists, we have a responsibility to remind people how things should be. However, we should fulfil this responsibility based on facts and not our opinions.

It would also be useful to obtain the views of experts and examine the results and consequences of the underrepresentation of women. It would be necessary to mention the efforts being made to increase it, too.

How can this news article be written from a gender-sensitive journalism perspective?

### WOMEN UNDER-REPRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT

According to the results of the Fourth Convocation, women only have 20 seats of the 125-seat parliament.

Although the number has increased from the previous Convocation (from 14-20), this still means that women, who make up 50% of society, only constitute 16% of parliamentary representation.

## News 8

### MUM ABANDONED HER CHILDREN IN SHELTER

In Binagady district of Baku a mother turned her back on four children and left them at the shelter, saying she was unable to look after them, reported Mehriban Zeynalova, chairwoman of NGO Clean World told Oxu.az. According to her, for a long time the parents had appealed to Binagadi District Executive Authority for the placement of children in the boarding school. "The mother is the victim of an early marriage and has had six children. The couple are divorced, and the father took care of only one of the children, saying that he only loves that child. The other five were left under the protection of the mother. She brought the children to the shelter and said she was not able to take care of them anymore. The youngest child was only six months old, so we could not accepted him too. The mother told me that there was an order on transferring children to the boarding school. Children will be taken to the orphanage when the order is brought." Mehriban Zeynalova noted that when the children were taken to the shelter, they were neglected. Three of them are boys, and one is a girl".

**What is the problem ?** As discussed earlier, some of the mistakes we make when reporting on gender issues are related to using judgmental language, applying double standards and stereotyping. On this news item, all three mistakes have been made. For example, "turning her back,"

is very judgmental language. Besides that, we learn from the story that the father has already left, yet the mother is the one being scrutinized in the story. His responsibility is not stressed, making these double standards, while the mother is almost demonized as she does not fit the generic stereotype of what a mother should be like.

The story mentions the fact that the children who were abandoned are the children of an early-age marriage, however, it does not mention the family conditions that led to the mother leaving her children.

## News 9

### CHILD BENEFIT IS BEING RESTORED- GOOD NEWS FOR MUMS

The mechanism of child benefit for those under the age of 17 is applied in the majority of developed countries. "There are financial opportunity to restore child benefit in Azerbaijan as well." AzNewsXYZ.az reports, as stated by economic expert Vugar Bayramov. According to Bayramov, the mechanism drafted and presented to the public by the Center for Economic and Social Development is one of the most discussed issues on the agenda. "As the brain center, we are developing various mechanisms and proposals, and the adoption or application of these proposals is sent directly to the Government. To date, the Center for Economic and Social Development (CESD) has prepared a package of various proposals, not only for the Azerbaijani Government, but also in several other countries. While drafting the mechanism on child benefit we tried to make it realistic and rational. All age groups have been analysed, along with the determination of the required funding and its sources, optimising the effect of these payments on prices in the consumer market has been estimated as well. The peculiarity of our mechanism is providing the justification for the feasibility of monthly payments to 2.6 million citizens without placing a burden on the budget and breaking the price balance in the consumer market. In fact, after the devaluation in 2015, when the mechanism on application concessions on problem loans was presented to the Government and the public, many did not believe compensation would be paid for problem loans. However it has finally been carried out. We would like to believe that our proposal for the restoration of the child allowance will be admitted soon too. Following submission of the CESD mechanism, the issue of whether child benefit under the age of 17 exists in other countries or not, was one of the most discussed issues. Is there child benefit under the age of 17 in other countries? If so what is the mechanism?

Expert noted that while drafting the above-mentioned mechanism he used the experience of different countries: "Child allowance is paid in most developed countries. If we look at European countries, in Austria children to 3-years old receive EUR 105, ages 3-9 EUR 112

and children aged 9 to 17 EUR 130, respectively. In Ireland, all children under the age of 18 receive EUR 140 per month. In Finland, the first child is paid EUR 100 to the age of 17, the second EUR 110, the third EUR 141, and the fourth child EUR 162. The first and second child in Germany are paid EUR 194, the third EUR 200, the fourth and any further children EUR 225 per month. There are similar mechanisms in Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Norway, New Zealand and South Korea, as well as in Central and Eastern European countries, including Poland and Hungary. In some countries, the amount of child benefit is adjusted to the level of family income. For example, in Italy, families with an annual income of EUR 11,422 are paid EUR 250 monthly for each child. The amount of child allowance rises as family income changes. In Russia, EUR 8,000 is paid to families for the second child, which is called "maternity capital". These funds are used for the child's education and other priority purposes. As can be seen, the mechanism of child benefit under age 17 is applied in the majority of developed countries. Taking into account that the state revenues of our country increased since 2017, the financial resources exist for the restoration of child benefit in Azerbaijan. It means there is a financial base for reinstating child allowance.

***What is the problem ?*** We should keep in mind that it is the responsibility of the social state to provide child allowances, thus presenting it as good news for the mother is misleading. Apart from that, no information is provided regarding to whom this allowance will be paid - the mother, father or both? What happens if the couple divorce?

Another question which has to be asked, if the article was supposedly written with a gender lens, is how the result will affect the lives of other women.



# CHECKLIST FOR AVOIDING GENDER INSENSITIVE REPORTING<sup>32</sup>

- Are women's views and voices sought equally? Are male and female subjects treated equally?
- Have a variety of sources, representing a broad spectrum of views, been consulted?
- Does the coverage raise critical questions as to why women are not represented?
- Since it is difficult to reach some women, was sufficient effort and investigative journalism (asking "Why?" and "How the story is told") carried out?
- Does the coverage reflect a holistic and realistic view of women?
- Does the story challenge or reinforce stereotypes? Are these stereotypes blatant or subtle?
- Does the story exonerate the perpetrator?
- Are all subjects treated with dignity? Are the experiences and concerns of women belittled?
- Is your story fair, accurate and balanced? Is there adequate context and balance and analysis, which includes going beyond the event to highlight the underlying issues?
- Does the article contain language that is inclusive of men and women? For instance, are gender-neutral terms used instead of gender-biased terms?
- Are the adjectives that are used objective and relevant, and do they convey any biases or stereotypes? Does the language shun stigma and discrimination?
- Is relevant gender disaggregated data provided?
- Are women portrayed as survivors or victims? Are women portrayed as active or passive?
- Are women and men equally represented?
- Do images emphasize/exaggerate physical or sexual aspects?
- Does the image degrade the dignity of women?
- Do only women report on gender and women's issues in your newsroom?
- Is gender awareness and sensitivity built into all reporting requirements?
- Are sub-editors sensitized to gender with respect to editorial issues?

<sup>32</sup>Handbook for reporters on women, peace and security, UN Women: <http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/final-wps-reporting-handbook.pdf>

**BOX 5:****CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR GENDER EQUALITY  
IN AZERBAIJANI MEDIA**

On 1 November, 2018, the Azerbaijan Press Council amended its Code of Professional Ethics, which now envisages the following:

**PRINCIPLE 4.** Protection of the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination:

4.1. Journalists shall respect the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination, avoid language creating sexual discrimination or inciting sexist hatred, should not use sexist phrases; they should not emphasize the sex of the person, if the news content does not specifically require it.

4.2. Journalists should not promote gender stereotyping, they shall use gender stereotype-free images of men and women in the media.

4.3. Journalists shall be sensitive to media coverage of gender-based violence cases; they should not promote gender-based violence and shall raise awareness of its negative effects in society.

4.4. Journalist should not be discriminated against based on his/her sex in the media outlet, where he/she works or cooperates; equal rights and opportunities shall be provided for male and female journalists.

# LAWS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON GENDER ISSUES

## The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Gender Equality

### Article 1. The Purpose of the Present Law

The purpose of the present law constitutes ensuring gender equality by eliminating all forms of gender discrimination, creating equal opportunities for male and female participation in political, economic, social, cultural and other fields of social life.

### Article 2. Definitions

2.0. The following definitions are used in the present law:

2.0.1. Gender – social aspect of male and female relations in political, economic, social, cultural and other fields of social life;

2.0.2. Gender Equality- equality of male and female rights, equal opportunities to exercise their rights and equal social status in the society;

2.0.3. Equal Opportunities – equal conditions and provisions created for males and females to exercise human rights;

2.0.4. Gender Discrimination - sexual harassment, any distinction, exclusion or privilege curtailing or denying to exercise rights on the grounds of gender;

2.0.5. Sexual Harassment – immoral behaviour humiliating and abusing a person of opposite gender comprising of physical acts (touching, hand touching), offensive remarks, gestures, threats, disgracing advances or offers in employment or service relations.

### Article 3. Impermissibility of Gender Discrimination

3.1. All forms of gender discrimination are prohibited.

3.2. The following shall not be considered as discrimination:

3.2.1. compensations, privileges and fringe benefits for females specified by the Labour Code of the Azerbaijan Republic;

3.2.2. conscription of men to the active military (alternative) service;

3.2.3. differences in pension and marriage age for males and females specified by law;

3.2.4. curtailing the right of husband to demand divorce pursuant to Article 15 of the Family Code of the Azerbaijan Republic;

3.2.5. creating differing conditions for males and females in penitentiaries;

3.2.6. implementing specific measures with the purpose of ensuring gender equality.

### Article 4. Impermissibility of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is prohibited.

### Article 5. The Main Directions of the State Policy for Ensuring Gender Equality

5.0. The main directions of the state policy for ensuring gender equality are as follow:



- 5.0.1. forming, improving and developing normative (statutory) legal basis for ensuring gender equality;
- 5.0.2. gender expertise review of normative legal acts;
- 5.0.2. development and implementation of state programs for ensuring gender equality;
- 5.0.3. advocating the culture of gender equality.

#### **Article 6.** The Responsibilities of the State for Ensuring Gender Equality

The state takes measures for eliminating all forms of gender discrimination, creating equal opportunities for males and females, not allowing superiority of persons belonging to any gender in state governing and decision-making.

#### **Article 7.** The Responsibilities of the Employer

7.1. The employer shall ensure equality of males and females in workplace.

7.2. The employer has the following responsibilities:

7.2.1. treating employees equally regardless of their gender in employing, promoting, enhancing professional training, mastering new specialty and training aimed to increase qualification, assessing the work performance quality and dismissing, and creating equal opportunities;

7.2.2. creating the same working conditions for employees performing the same jobs regardless of their gender;

7.2.3. not applying different disciplinary penalties for the same breaches committed by employees regardless of their gender;

7.2.4. observing requirements of Articles 9 and 10 of the Present Law;

7.2.5. taking necessary measures preventing gender discrimination and sexual harassment.

#### **Article 8.** The responsibilities of the Employer in Eliminating Gender Discrimination

8.1. in case of unequal treatments of males and females in promoting at work, enhancing professional training, mastering new specialty and training aimed to increase qualification, assessing the work performance quality and dismissing, an employer, on an employee's demand, must justify the reasons of different treatment that not related to gender.

8.2. A job applicant who received refusal from an employer has the right to require written information on a person of opposite gender recruited for the job on his/her education, professional training, experience, professional qualifications and other advantages.

#### **Article 9.** Equal Labour Pay

9.1. Equal salary or wages, as well as bonuses and other motivating payments shall be paid to employees for performing the same job of the same value in the same working conditions, having the same qualifications regardless of gender.

9.2. In case of differing salary or wages, bonuses and other motivating payments an employer shall justify on demand of an employee that the reasons of difference are not on grounds of gender.

**Article 10. Advertisements Containing Gender Discrimination**

10.1. Different selection requirements for males and females, preference of any gender member, information on marital status or private life of the job applicants in job advertisements are not allowed.

10.2. Publishing advertisements containing humiliation, contradicting the principle of equal rights of males and females are prohibited.

10.3. Advertising vacancy only for one gender is not permissible.

10.4. Publishing advertisements specified in Article 10.3 of the Present Law is permitted in case gender of employee is stipulated due to the features of labour functions or female performance for such jobs is prohibited pursuant to the Labour Code of the Azerbaijan Republic.

**Article 11. Impermissibility of Any Pressure on Employees Exposed to Sexual Harassment**

Employees complaining about employer or supervisor on sexual harassment shall not be exposed to any pressure and persecution.

**Article 12. Termination of Labour Contract**

Labour contract of an employee exposed to sexual harassment is terminated starting from the date he/she applied to annul the labour contract.

**Article 13. Equal Opportunities for Exercising the Right to Education**

13.1. The state ensures creating equal opportunities for males and females to exercise the right to education.

13.2. The employer shall create equal conditions for males and females to exercise their rights to basic and further education, take a leave related to education.

13.3. The state ensures creating equal opportunities for males and females in admission to all educational institutions regardless of property form, providing students with stipend (scholarship), selecting educational plan and evaluating knowledge.

13.4. Textbooks shall be based on the principle of gender equality.

**Article 14. Gender Discrimination in Educational Institutions**

14.0. The following shall be referred gender discriminatory acts in educational institutions:

14.0.1. applying differing requirements for males and females in admission, compiling educational plan or evaluating knowledge;

14.0.2. creating differing opportunities for males and females in selecting field of education.

**Article 15. Ensuring Gender Equality in Economic and Social Relations**

15.1. The state ensures creating equal opportunities for males and females to exercise the right to property and to be engaged in entrepreneurship.

15.2. The state ensures creating equal opportunities for males and females to exercise the right to social security, receive targeted social aid and other social compensations.

**Article 16.** Ensuring Gender Equality in the Activity of Political Parties, Non-Governmental Organizations and Trade Unions

16.1. Equal conditions of admission shall be provided for joining political parties, non-governmental organizations and trade unions for males and females, and equal opportunities shall be created.

16.2. The requirements of Article 16.1 of the Present Law is not applied to a non-governmental organization established to protect particular interests of any gender.

**Article 17.** The Right to Demand Recovery of Damage

17.1. Damage to people exposed to gender discrimination shall be paid in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

17.2. Damage to employees exposed to sexual harassment shall be paid by an employer in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**Article 18.** The Liability for Violation of the Law

People violating the requirements of the Present Law are liable in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**Article 19.** Control over Ensuring Gender Equality

The control over ensuring gender equality is implemented by a relevant executive body.

**Article 20.** Annual Report of Relevant Executive Body Implementing Control over Ensuring Gender Equality

Relevant executive body implementing control over ensuring gender equality submits annual report on its activity to the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**Article 21.** Effectiveness of the Law

The Law herewith shall take effect since the date of its publication.

ILHAM ALIYEV

*President of the Republic of Azerbaijan*

*Baku, October 10, 2006*

*# 150-IIIQ*

## **The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Prevention of Domestic Violence**

This Law defines and regulates actions aimed at prevention from violence committed through abuse of close relative relations, or current or past cohabitation and its negative legal, medical and social outcomes; provision of legal assistance and social protection of persons aggrieved from domestic violence; as well as eradication of conditions giving rise to domestic violence.

# Chapter I

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Article 1

#### GENERAL CONDITIONS

##### Basic Definitions

1.0. The Law uses the following definitions:

1.0.1. “Domestic violence” - means a deliberate infliction of physical and moral damage by persons to others, covered under this Law, caused by abuse of close relative relations, current or past cohabitation;

1.0.2 A person aggrieved from domestic violence (hereinafter referred to as “aggrieved person”) - is a person who has been suffered physically or morally as a result of the deliberate actions against him/her, envisaged in Articles 1.0.3 – 1.0.6 of this Law, by a member of person’s family living together, a close relative, a person cohabiting in an informal marriage or a person previously cohabitated with him/her.

1.0.3. “Domestic physical violence” - denotes deliberate use of physical action by persons covered under this Law towards each other, i.e. using force to breach personal inviolability, beat, inflict injury or damage to health, torture, or limit the right to freedom.

1.0.4. “Domestic psychological violence” - denotes deliberate use of psychological pressure or actions aimed at producing intolerable psychological situation by persons covered under this Law towards each other; .

1.0.5. “Domestic application of illegal limitations of economic character” - means actions by persons covered under this Law towards each other aimed at deprivation of the right to own, dispose of or use property, or obtain income, or at creating, sustaining and abusing the situation of economic dependency.

1.0.6. “Domestic sexual violence” - denotes actions of sexual character committed against will by persons covered under this Law towards each other.

1.0.7. “Prevention of domestic violence” -means legal, social and deterrent measures performed to remove the threat of domestic violence.

1.0.8. “Support centres” - are public and non-governmental institutions established for provision of legal, medical, psychological, social and other assistance to aggrieved persons;

1.0.9. “Protective order” - denotes an act of limitations applied on contingent actions of the person who committed domestic violence against the aggrieved person.

### Article 2. Legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Prevention of Domestic Violence

The legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan Republic on Prevention of Domestic Violence consists of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, international agreements that the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party to, the present Law and other normative legal acts.

### Article 3. Main Principles in the Field of Prevention of Domestic Violence

3.0. Main principles of prevention of domestic violence comprise the following:

- 3.0.1. provision of basic human rights and freedoms to everyone as stipulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- 3.0.2. prohibition of discrimination against women;
- 3.0.3. inadmissibility of interference into anyone's personal and family life, except for cases and limits determined in the legislation;
- 3.0.4. observance of confidentiality for protection of personal and family privacy;
- 3.0.5. rehabilitation of infringed rights of persons aggrieved from domestic violence;
- 3.0.6. mutual cooperation of state bodies and non-governmental organizations in the field of prevention of domestic violence.

**Article 4.** Persons subject to the Law

4.0. This Law applies to the following persons:

- 4.0.1. close family members (husband, wife, parents, children, grandmothers, grandfathers, grandchildren, siblings, step brothers and sisters, adoptive parents and adoptees) as well as other relatives living jointly;
- 4.0.2. formerly married couples cohabiting or living separately after dissolution of marriage;
- 4.0.3. individuals appointed guardians or foster parents, as well as persons under guardianship or in foster care;
- 4.0.4. men and women cohabiting in informal marriages, as well as close relatives living jointly with persons cohabiting in informal marriages.

## Chapter II

### PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Article 5.** State Bodies Responsible for Review of Complaints Related to Domestic Violence

5.1. Complaints related to domestic violence are reviewed in the manner defined in the criminal-procedural legislation, in case such complaints contain information about committed or premeditated crimes.

5.2. Complaints related to domestic violence are reviewed by relevant executive authorities if such complaints do not contain elements of composition of crime. The procedure of reviewing the complaints related to domestic violence with absence of elements of composition of crime is defined by relevant executive authorities.

**Article 6.** Examination of Complaints about Domestic Violence

6.1. The following are considered as grounds for conducting an examination related to domestic violence:

- 6.1.0. a complaint by an aggrieved person or his/her family members;
- 6.1.2. a petition received from natural or legal persons, state and local self-government authorities, including educational or health institutions, non-government organizations, means of mass media;

6.2. Complaints about cases of committing domestic violence received by officials of state and local self-government authorities, commissions for affairs and protection of rights of juveniles, guardian and foster care bodies, educational and health institutions, and support centres during performance of their official duties shall be submitted to relevant executive authorities defined in Article 5 of this Law.

6.3. Complaints related to domestic violence are reviewed only with consent of an aggravated person or his/her legal representative if such complaints do not contain elements of composition of crime;

**Article 7.** Measures to be taken along with Criminal Prosecution where the Crimes Related to Domestic Violence Examined as Defined in the Criminal-Procedural Legislation

7.0. After confirmation of the information related to domestic violence, along with duties related to prosecution of crimes defined in the relevant legislation, the measures to be taken shall be as follows:

7.0.1. provide an aggrieved person with immediate medical aid, temporary shelter in a support centre, clothing and food at public expense, as well as forward information about the aggrieved person to the relevant executive authority for conducting a course of psychological rehabilitation;

7.0.2. clarify circumstances that have caused to provoke domestic violence, and take measures to preclude them;

7.0.3. ensure prevention of violence and its non-recurrence, and provide for security of the aggrieved person during the examination;

7.0.4. assist in normalization of relations between parties and resumption of family affairs during the period of examination;

7.0.5. ensure registration with preventive purposes of persons who have committed domestic violence, and conduct educational and deterrent works with them;

7.0.6. explain to family members suffering from domestic violence their rights and the use of remedies established by the state and determined by this Law;

7.0.7. make a decision about issuance of a protective order as established hereunder;

7.0.8. if grounds for initiation of criminal case have not been defined as a result of examination of a complaint related to domestic violence, forward the complaint to the relevant executive authority;

7.0.9. as necessary, assist other state entities conducting examination of complaints about domestic violence.

**Article 8.** Duties of the State Related to Domestic Violence Not Examined as Defined in the Criminal-Procedural Legislation

8.0. Duties of the state related to domestic violence not examined as defined in the criminal-procedural legislation consist of provision of the following:

8.0.1. accept the information received in relation with domestic violence in the manner determined by law, register it, carry out examination of the information in the shortest time feasible, in relevant cases, conduct examination immediately on spot, and hear parties separately;

- 8.0.2. if a complaint received contains information indicating information about committed or premeditated crime, forward the complaint further accordingly;
- 8.0.3. explain to a complainant his/her rights and the matter of responsibility for persons committing domestic violence as well as the procedure for bringing a suit to the court;
- 8.0.4. take measures to prevent repetition of actions causing the complaint and violence;
- 8.0.5. take measures to provide for security of the aggrieved person during the period of examination;
- 8.0.6. as necessary, provide legal assistance to the aggrieved person, provide him/her with shelter in a public support centre, clothing and food, medical and psychological aid, and to take measures to provide him/her with education, a job, vocational retraining and to ensure his/her social protection;
- 8.0.7. take actions to protect rights and legal interests of juveniles suffering from domestic violence;
- 8.0.8. assist in normalization of relations between parties and resumption of family affairs;
- 8.0.9. serve a person who has committed domestic violence a warning of non-recurrence, and control execution of this warning;
- 8.0.10. take actions related to calling the persons to account who committed domestic violence;
- 8.0.11. take actions to issue a protective order to an aggrieved person;
- 8.0.12. organize actions stipulated in Article 13 of this Law;
- 8.0.13. establish a databank and organize collection of statistic information related to domestic violence, considering the requirements of legislation on confidentiality of information;
- 8.0.14. implement normative regulation in relation to activities of non-governmental support centres and provide their accreditation;
- 8.0.15. co-operate with international and non-governmental organizations in the field of prevention of domestic violence;
- 8.0.16. render assistance to other state entities in their actions in the field of prevention of domestic violence.

**Article 9.** Decision on Results of Examination of Complaints on Domestic Violence in the Manner Envisaged in Article 5.2 of this Law

9.0. One of the following decisions shall be made depending on the results of the examination of the complaints in the Manner Envisaged in Article 5.2 of this Law:

- 9.0.1. serve a person who has committed actions associated with domestic violence a warning of non-recurrence with explanation of responsibility established by law and give a short-term protective order to the aggrieved person
- 9.0.2. apply to the court for termination or restriction of parental rights of a person who has committed actions associated with domestic violence in the manner established by law;



- 9.0.3. apply to competent state authorities for bringing a person whose actions contain corpus deficit or material elements of an administrative offence to criminal or administrative account in the manner established by law;
- 9.0.4. apply to the court to issue a long-term protective order to an aggrieved person;
- 9.0.5. provide an aggrieved person with shelter in a support centre.

**Article 10. Protective order**

- 10.1 A short-term or long-term protective order may be issued to an aggravated person of domestic violence in accordance with this Law.
- 10.2. Short-term protective order may forbid a person who has committed domestic violence to:
  - 10.2.1. commit violence again;
  - 10.2.2. search for an aggrieved person if his/her whereabouts are unknown to him/her;
  - 10.2.3. take other actions causing nuisance to an aggrieved person;
- 10.3. Long-term protective order may include the following along with specified in Article 10.1. of this Law:
  - 10.3.1. rules for the communication of a person who has committed actions associated with domestic violence with his/her under-age children;
  - 10.3.2. rules for the use of accommodation or shared property;
  - 10.3.3. terms for covering expenses related to medical and legal assistance rendered to an aggrieved person by a person who has committed domestic violence;
  - 10.3.4. information on explanation regarding the responsibility for non-compliance with the protective order in accordance with legislation.
- 10.4. A protective order is executed in the manner established by the legislation related to execution of court orders. An individual failing to comply with a protective order bears criminal responsibility in the manner established by the legislation regarding non-compliance with court orders.

**Article 11. Warning of non-recurrence of domestic violence and issuance of short-term protective orders**

- 11.1. If actions of such person do not amount to criminal responsibility, but infringe the rights and legal interests of an aggrieved person, the relevant executive authority may serve a written warning of non-recurrence of these or similar actions to a person who has committed domestic violence and issue short-term protective order to an aggrieved person;
- 11.2. The relevant executive authority shall serve a warning to the person who committed a domestic violence within 24 hours of application and immediately shall issue a short-term protective order to an aggravated person for a period of 30 days. A complaint may be lodged at the court about issuance of a warning.
- 11.3. Disregard for the short-term protective order's requirements by a person who has committed actions associated with domestic violence may be the grounds for issuing a long-term protective order.



**Article 12.** Rules for Issuance of Long-term Protective Order

12.1. If a person who has committed actions associated with domestic violence disregards a warning of non-recurrence, an aggrieved person or the relevant executive authority is entitled to apply to the court for obtaining a long-term protective order.

12.2. A long-term protective order is effective for a period of 30 to 180 days. A court decision on the issue of a long-term protective order is made in the manner determined by the legislation.

12.3. To prevent disclosure of the parties' personal and family secrets as well as to support interests of juveniles, a case about issuance of a long-term protective order may be heard at a closed session of the court in the manner established by law.

12.4. A decision on the issuance of a long-term protective order comes into force and its term is counted in accordance with legislation. A decision to issue a protective order is forwarded for execution in accordance with legislation.

12.5. A decision about issuance of a protective order may be disputed by lodging a complaint with the court in the manner established by law. An appeal to a court of higher instance shall not cease the execution of the decision about the protective order.

12.6. Each party shall be provided with a copy of the long-term protective order on the day it is issued.

## Chapter III

### PREVENTIVE ACTIONS AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Article 13.** Types of Preventive Actions against Domestic Violence

13.1. Preventive actions against domestic violence comprise the following types:

13.1.1. legal actions, i.e. examination of cases of domestic violence, and calling persons who have committed domestic violence to account;

13.1.2. social actions, i.e. actions concerning social protection of aggrieved persons suffered from domestic violence, including provision at public expense of temporary shelter, legal and medical assistance and socially-oriented measures;

13.1.3. informative actions, i.e. raising awareness of negative legal, medical and social consequences of domestic violence to the public and other public education activities related to prevention of domestic violence.

13.2. State programs are adopted with respect to preventive actions against domestic violence conducted by the relevant executive authority.

**Article 14:** Legal Actions in the Field of Prevention of Domestic Violence

14.0. Legal actions in the fields of prevention of domestic violence comprise the following:

14.0.1. criminal prosecution related to domestic violence;

14.0.2. calling persons to account who have committed domestic violence;

14.0.3. protection of the rights, freedoms and legal interests of aggrieved persons, provision for their security during the course of the examination;

14.0.4. legal assistance to aggrieved persons at public expense;

- 14.0.5. execution of court decisions regarding cases of domestic violence;
- 14.0.6. supervision of execution of a warning issued with regard to domestic violence;
- 14.0.7. termination or restriction of parental rights of persons who have committed actions associated with domestic violence in the manner established by law;
- 14.0.8. collection of statistical data on domestic violence;
- 14.0.9. ensuring confidentiality of domestic violence information in the manner established by law;
- 14.0.10. execution of normative regulation of activities of non-governmental support centres and their accreditation;

#### **Article 15. Social Actions in the Field of Prevention of Domestic Violence**

- 15.0. Social actions in the field of prevention of domestic violence comprise the following:
  - 15.0.1. organization of social protection of aggrieved persons, assistance to them in obtaining relevant documents and social allowances in the manner determined in the legislation;
  - 15.0.2. assistance to aggrieved persons in continuing education;
  - 15.0.3. assistance to aggrieved persons in finding employment and their vocational retraining;
  - 15.0.4. medical aid to aggrieved persons at public expense;
  - 15.0.5. organization of psychological rehabilitation courses for aggrieved persons;
  - 15.0.6. establishment of support centres for aggrieved persons;
  - 15.0.7. measures to provide social care to aggrieved children;
  - 15.0.8. other measures for protection of aggrieved persons.

#### **Article 16. Informative Actions in the Field of Prevention of Domestic Violence**

- 16.1. Informative actions related to domestic violence aim to prevent domestic violence, establish normal relations in the families, and eradicate circumstances that give rise to domestic violence and negative legal, medical and social consequences they cause.
- 16.2. Informative actions in the field of prevention of domestic violence comprise the following:
  - 16.2.1. public education activities against domestic violence;
  - 16.2.2. raise awareness of circumstances that give rise to domestic violence and negative legal, medical and social consequences they cause;
  - 16.2.3. raise awareness of means used to prevent domestic violence;
  - 16.2.4. promotion family relations based on high culture and mutual respect among population;
  - 16.2.5. examination and analysis of circumstances that give rise to domestic violence, elaboration of programs and recommendations aimed at prevention of domestic violence, organization of educational activities;
  - 16.2.6. registration with preventive purposes of persons who have committed domestic violence and conducting discipline-preventive work with them;
  - 16.2.7. explaining of responsibility for committing domestic violence defined in the law;

16.2.8. serving a warning of non-recurrence to persons who have committed domestic violence;

16.2.9. conducting surveys on domestic violence;

16.3. guidelines for registration with preventive purposes of persons who have committed domestic violence and conducting discipline-preventive work with them shall be determined by the relevant executive authority.

#### **Article 17. Ensuring Confidentiality in Assisting Aggrieved Persons**

17.1. A fact of domestic violence against an individual as well as personal and family information obtained while rendering assistance to aggrieved persons is considered confidential.

17.2. Confidentiality of information obtained during the examination of domestic violence complaints, collection of statistical data on domestic violence and rendering assistance to aggrieved persons as well as prevention of disclosure of personal and family secrets shall be guaranteed.

17.3. Confidentiality of domestic violence related information collected in a databank is ensured by the relevant executive authority maintaining the databank. Domestic violence information may be disclosed only in cases and guidelines provided in the legislation. Statistical data on domestic violence shall be disclosed on the anonymous basis.

17.4. Officials who failed to ensure confidentiality in examination of domestic violence complaints bear responsibility in accordance with law.

#### **Article 18. Domestic Violence Databank**

18.1. The domestic violence databank is created by the relevant executive authority.

18.2. The databank includes information on occurrence of cases of domestic violence, individuals who complained to state bodies about cases of domestic violence, examination and results of examination of cases of domestic violence, criminal and administrative offenders with regard to cases of domestic violence, court orders, including orders on termination and restriction of parental rights, as well as restoration and removal of restrictions of parental rights, information about accredited support centres and their activities, etc.

18.3. Guidelines on organization and performance of the databank are set by the relevant executive authority.

18.4. State bodies and support centres shall provide information about cases of domestic violence to the relevant executive authority.

18.5. The relevant executive authority shall prepare summaries and analytical documents on the basis of domestic violence information contained in the databank.

#### **Article 19. Support Centres**

19.1. Public support centres for aggrieved persons are established by relevant executive authority. Services rendered by public support centres are free of charge.

19.2. Support centres shall:

19.2.1. provide legal and medical assistance to aggrieved persons;

- 19.2.2. assist aggrieved persons in finding employment and their vocational retraining;
- 19.2.3. arrange a psychological rehabilitation course for aggrieved persons;
- 19.2.4. assist aggrieved persons in preparing relevant documents with respect to social protection and in obtaining social allowances;
- 19.2.5. provide aggrieved persons with emergency shelters;
- 19.2.6. take measures to restore normalcy in families of aggrieved persons;
- 19.2.7. carry out informative actions with regard to domestic violence;
- 19.2.8. organize mutual support groups of aggrieved persons;
- 19.2.9. implement other activities related to social protection of aggrieved persons.
- 19.3. Support centres, as necessary, shall provide shelter to juveniles suffered from domestic violence for up to three months and to other aggrieved persons for up to two months.
- 19.4. Support centres may be established by local self-government authorities and non-governmental organizations. Apartments of individuals, with their consent, may be used as support centres on charity bases.
- 19.5. Non-governmental support centres must be accredited by the relevant executive authority.
- 19.6. Guidelines for activities of support centres and accreditation procedures for non-governmental support centres are elaborated by the relevant executive authority.

## Chapter IV

### FINAL PROVISIONS

#### **Article 20.** Responsibility for Violation of Law

Persons breaching provisions of this Law and other legislative acts on domestic violence bear responsibility in the manner established by law.

*Ilham Aliyev*  
*President of the Republic of Azerbaijan*  
*Baku, 22 June 2010*

# OUR SOURCES and USEFUL LINKS

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Gender Sensitization Manual on Media Reporting On Gender-Based Violence - CARE

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Reporting On Sexual Violence: A Guide for Journalists  
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Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Act 2015

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[http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/learning\\_resource\\_kit/learning-resource-kit-book-1-eng.pdf](http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/learning_resource_kit/learning-resource-kit-book-1-eng.pdf)

Pratigya Campaigning for Gender Equality and Safe Abortion  
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Newsweek: Handbook for reporters on women, peace and security, UN Women  
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