



MOLDOVA

Moldova (pop. 2.7 million), located in the Southeast of Europe, is a lower middle-income country. Since the proclamation of its independence in 1991, the country went through a transition period in which the average income has increased and the economy has been transformed from a centralised to a market economy.

The citizens of Moldova have equal rights of access to primary, secondary and continuous education in the mainstream national education system. In the health care sector however, women continue to face discrimination

and difficulties in accessing health information and care, especially women from rural areas and from ethnic minorities [1].

In September 2015, the Republic of Moldova committed to the United Nations Agenda 2030. One month later, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration launched the national promotion programme of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in collaboration with the United Nations. The National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development was created in 2016. Since then, the SDG targets have been updated to the national



Map of Moldova and neighbouring countries

context. Despite the progress in sustainable and inclusive development, almost half of the adopted SDGs and indicators still lack sex and age disaggregated data. Moreover, at a local level the SDGs are still not familiar to the public and policy makers. Thus, more awareness should be raised amongst youth, minorities, and local authorities.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

In the past years, the Republic of Moldova has made progress in the field of gender equality, as is reflected in the different state reports (Sixth periodic report submitted by the Republic of Moldova under article 18 of the CEDAW [2]; National Level Review on the Fulfilment of Commitments taken under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Beijing+25 [3]). According to the figures of 'The Gender Gap Report' (2014-2018), the country's evolution in terms of human rights and gender equality is overall positive, but uneven and not as rapid as in other countries: on the Gender GAP Index the country was ranked 52nd in 2013, 26th in 2015, but 35th in 2018 (out of 149 countries).

Regarding the political empowerment of women, the legal framework has been amended with the introduction of the 40% representation quota of both sexes in the

political and public decision-making processes, as well as the distribution of women and men on the party list in the electoral rolls (out of 10 places, at least 4 candidates of each sex, with sanctions for the parties that do not comply with these provisions).

The implementation of different programmes such as 'Women in Politics' implemented by the United Nations Development Programme/UN Women has ensured a higher participation rate for women from disadvantaged groups. Women running for local and parliamentary elections attended trainings on political empowerment. Within the programme, 82 women of which 39 Roma women were empowered on political participation. As a result: 6 women with disabilities and 4 Roma women were elected into local councillors. Within the Academy for Female Leadership (Women 4 Leadership programme) 120 women were

trained, of whom 86 registered in the electoral process. Corruption, manipulation and unstable political situation in the country are a motivation for women with disabilities and Roma women to run for local elections to take action against this.

The implementation of the National Strategy for Employment 2017-2021 has contributed to a greater integration of women in the labour market, for instance by launching programs to support entrepreneurship among women, such as the "Women in Business" Program.

However, challenges remain, such as insufficient women's economic empowerment, still a low representation of women in public and political decision-making spaces, and the persistence of gender stereotypes, domestic and gender-based violence, and human trafficking.



WOMEN2030 IN MOLDOVA

In the framework of the Women2030 programme Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) cooperated with Gender-Center and WiSDOM to organise different activities. Both organisations have produced a gender assessment by collecting and analysing community-based data on gender inequalities, and used that data for this alternative 'shadow' report on the implementation of Agenda 2030 in Moldova. The findings of these reports have been discussed with different policy makers, women's groups, and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and stakeholders. In 2018, Gender-Center, WiSDOM Rural Environmental Women's organisation, Eco-TIRAS Intl., WECF and UNEP organised a national workshop in Moldova. The topic of the workshop was

the Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on environment, health and gender. Representatives of the Government, the Parliament, state agencies, academia and Non-Governmental Organisations from Moldova actively participated.

Furthermore, in February 2019, as a part of the Women2030 programme and in cooperation with UNEP, a regional workshop was organised in order to raise awareness on the interlinkages between environment and health with representatives of state agencies and NGOs from Moldova, Georgia and Azerbaijan. These activities contributed to policy monitoring, enhanced participation of women's groups, advocacy and outreach on the 2030 Agenda.



Women's NGO's in parliament



Subregional workshop to raise awareness on the interlinkages between environment and health (February, 2019)



Capacity building workshop

DEMOGRAPHIC

There are more women than men in Moldova, with 93 men for a 100 women. This ratio differs significantly per age category. Women live – on average – 8 years longer than men, with a life expectancy of 77 years for women and 69.4 years for men [4]. This gap is due to higher level of premature mortality of men, especially those of working age. Women marry earlier than men, approximately at the age of 25.7 compared to age of 28.5 for men. Furthermore, the mortality level per 1000 men is higher than for women, 11.6 men compared to 9.5 women [5].

The levels of awareness of a healthy lifestyle, reproductive health and family planning

among teenagers and young women, especially those living in rural and remote areas is very low. The total maternal mortality rate was 15.3 in 2018; in rural areas there are 24.3 (per 100.000 live births) more female deaths during pregnancy or childbirth than in urban areas, a huge difference [6].

Moldova ranks 112 out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI). The 2017 female HDI was 0.701 in contrast to 0.698 for males, resulting in a Gender Development Index value of 1.005. Having a high equality in HDI achievements between women and men, Moldova is placed in group 1 of the Gender Development Index.



Life without violence against women

95%

of the victims of violence are women and girls

Source: UNDP Moldova



Women against Gender Based Violence



LIVING CONDITIONS

Not every household in the Republic of Moldova is connected to the natural gas network. In urban areas more households are connected than in rural areas. Due to low incomes, in the cold period of the year, most of the households rely on wood-fired stoves, that may have an impact on health, particularly on women and children that spend more time at home, as is shown by the results of focus group discussions, organised by WiSDOM during the gender assesement. This affects the living conditions of the inhabitants of Moldova. The experience of the NGO "Renaşterea Rurală" showed that the use of solar panels is a big necessity for rural communities because they make women's work easier by offering a free and ecologically clean water-heating solution [7].

25%

of the population in rural areas is connected to piped water



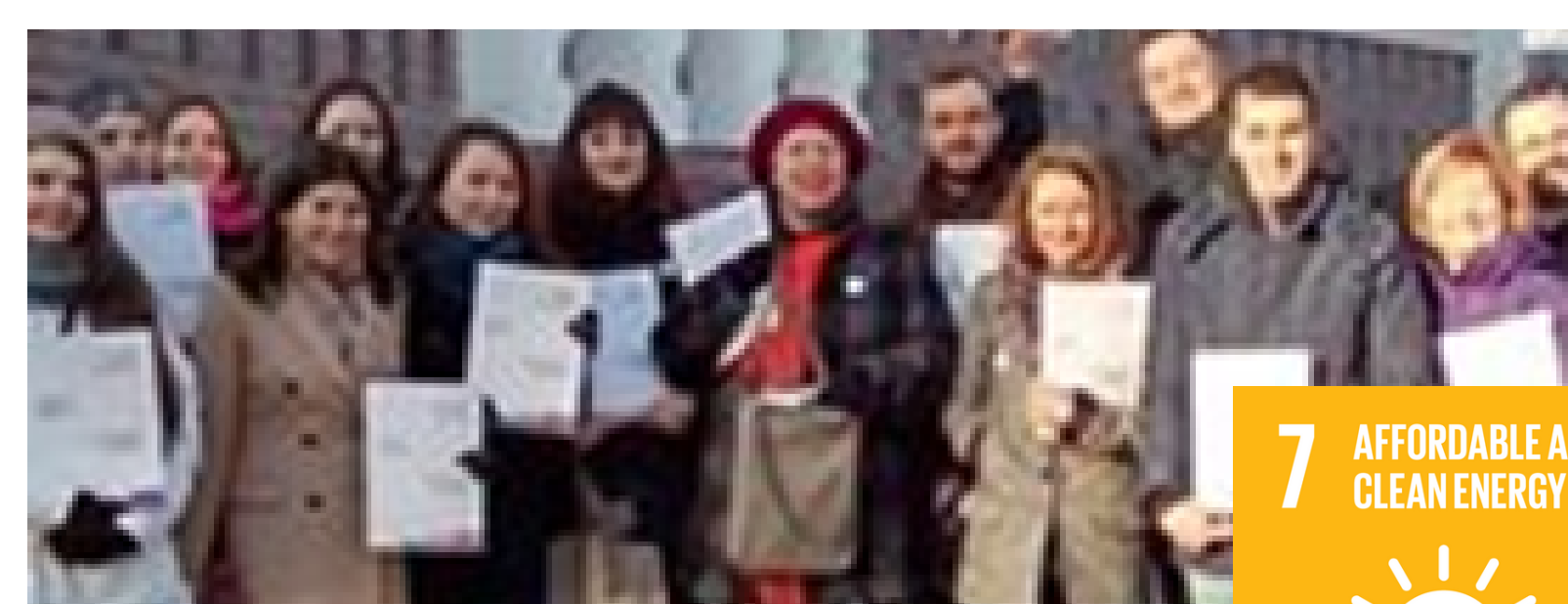
Forum on the implementation of Agenda 2030

46%

of the population of Moldova indicated to have no decent sanitation and hygiene conditions at home



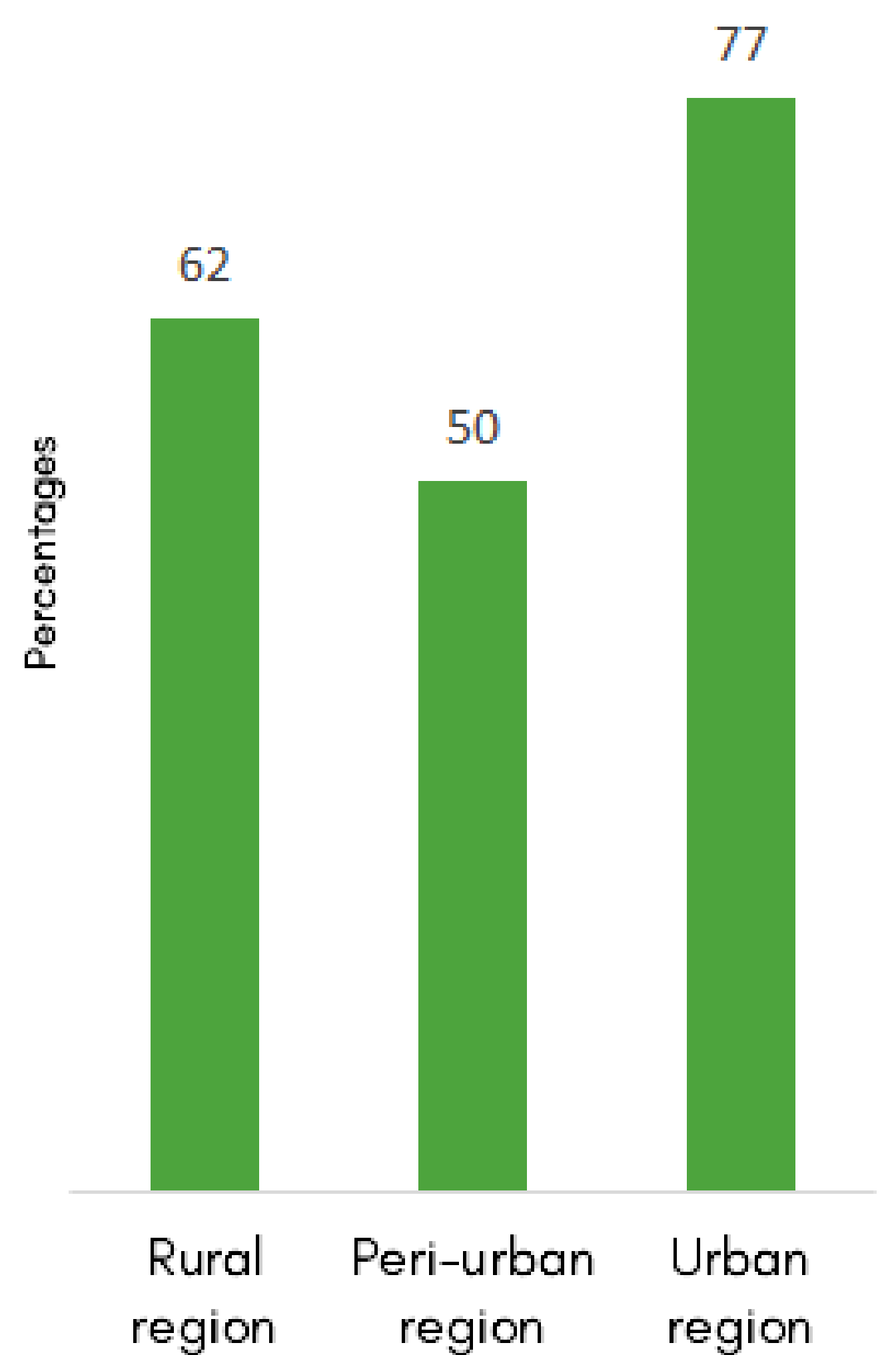
Meeting for Platform for Gender equality



DECISION-MAKING

Despite of positive trends in women's involvement in decision-making processes, women remain under-represented. As a result of parliamentary elections the share of women elected as members of parliament increased from 20.8% at previous elections of 2016 to 25.7% in 2019 [8]. The local elections in 2019 also noticed an increase in women's participation. The share of women mayors increased from 18.0% in 2011 to 21.8% in the elections of 2019. The share of women local councillors increased from 28.6% in 2011 to 36.5% in 2019. The share of women municipal and regional councillors increased from 17.4% to 27.1% during this same period [9]. The best opportunity for women to engage in decision-making processes is at community level, as the public trusts in people they personally know. Still, it is not easy for women to be part of the process due to the fact that every candidte needs money for the

elections. In general, men have more money and more political support.



Percentages of interviewed women in rurla, peri-urban and urban regions who indicate to have influence on political processes on a national level

41.8%

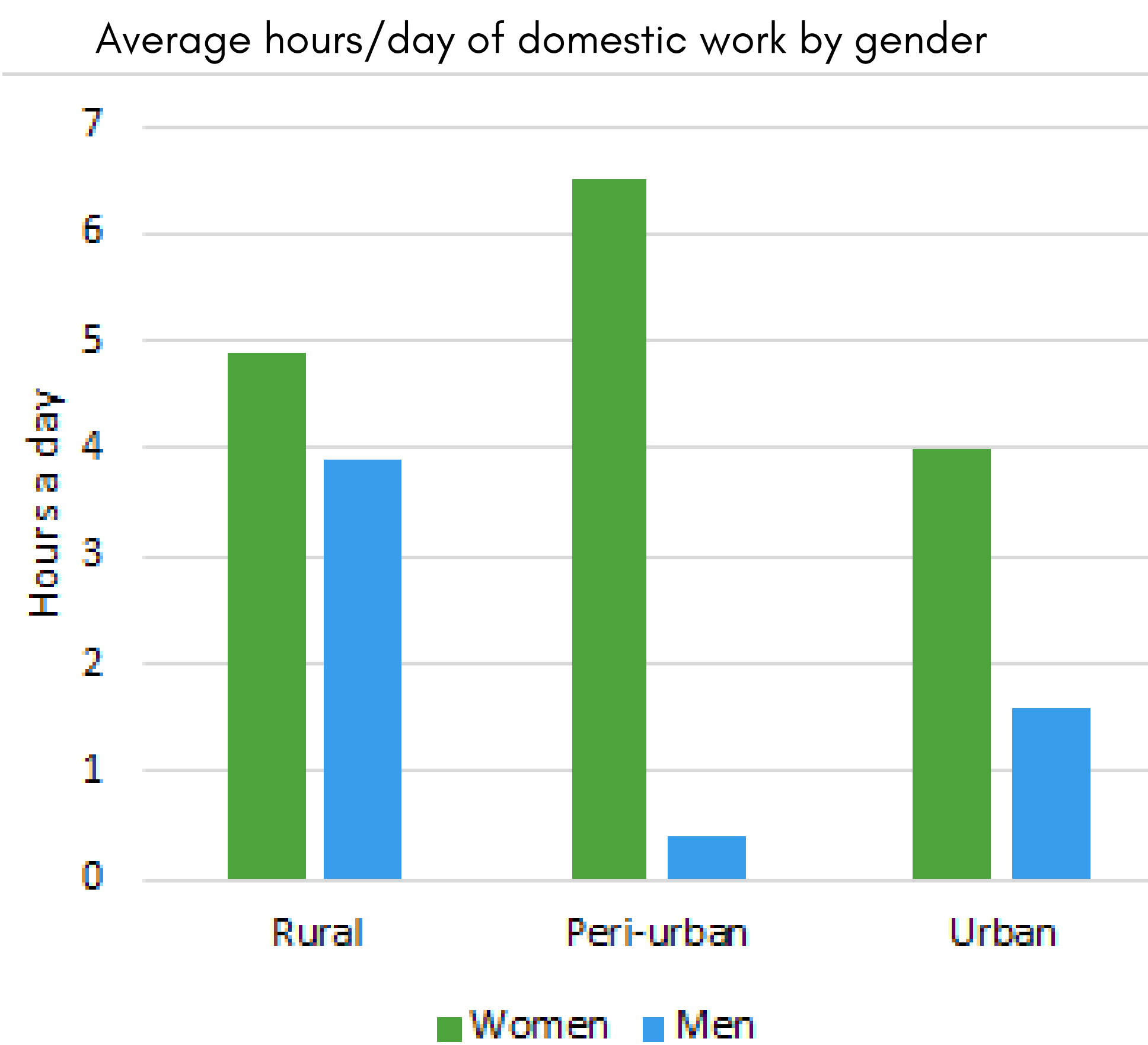
of the registered candidates for the parliamentary elections of 2019 were women

9.7%

increase of women municipal and regional councillors between 2011 and 2019



UNPAID CARE



2.0h In peri-urban areas women spend 2.0 hours less than men on leisure activities, and 6.1 hours more than men on domestic work.

0.7h In rural areas, women spend 0.7 hours less than men on leisure activities, and 1.0 hour more than men on domestic work.

1.0h In urban areas, women spend 1.0 hours more than men on leisure activities, and 2.4 hours more than men on domestic work.

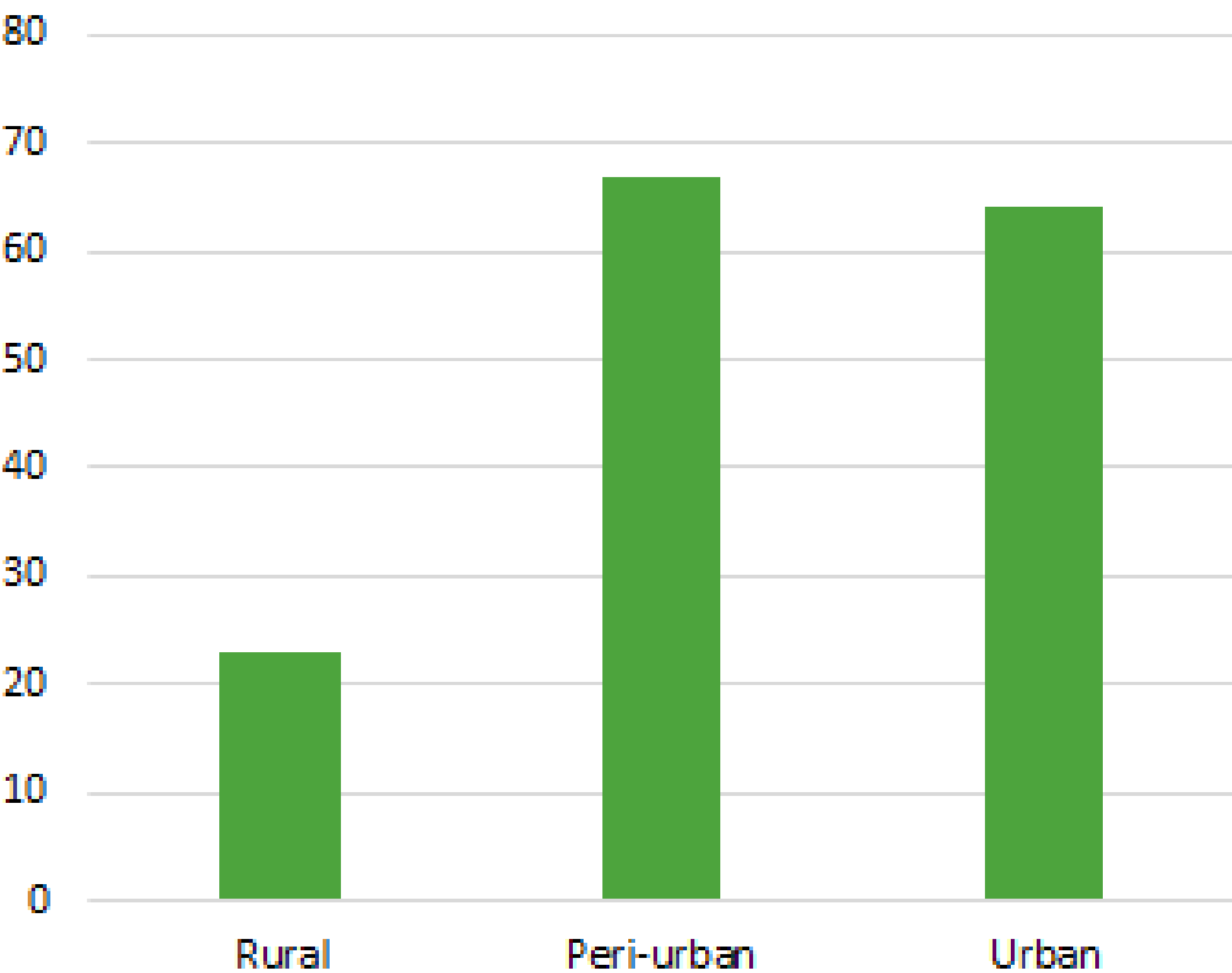
In the Republic of Moldova, unpaid work is mainly performed by women. The annual value of unpaid work would be equivalent to the value of a Gross Domestic Product. Whereas levels of education are the same between men and women, women spend twice as much time working in the household, engage more in volunteering work, and have less leisure time.



INADEQUATE HYGIENE

The Gender Assessment highlights that only 51% of the population of the Republic of Moldova is connected to piped water supply. There is a significant disparity between the water connection in rural areas and urban areas (Gender Assessment data). The lack of connection to piped water has an impact on sanitary facilities and hygiene conditions. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of hand-washing possibilities is finally becoming a greater policy priority. The tables show that significant numbers of girls do not have access to decent sanitation and hygiene conditions at school. Furthermore, in rural areas, women and men experience a lack of decent sanitation at home.

Percentage of respondents that indicate that their daughters/girls in age of puberty do not have decent sanitation and hygiene conditions at school



45% of the women in rural areas, 60% of the women in peri-urban areas, and 52% of the women in urban areas of Moldova indicate to have no decent sanitation at work

19% of the women in rural areas of Moldova indicate to have no decent sanitation at home





EMPLOYMENT

Distribution by economic sectors reveals a higher share of women employed in the services sector (57.8% women respectively 42.2% men). Fewer women are found in the agricultural (42.9%), industry (48.5%) and construction (8.7%) sectors, but pre-dominately in such economic activities such as trade (54.9%), hotels and restaurants (71.4%), education (81.9%), and health and social assistance (79.1%) [10].

The share of women entrepreneurs is 33.9% in 2017 [11], and women who want to open their own businesses face many barriers. Women's income is three quarter of what men earn. Female participation in the labour market is 38.1% compared to 43.1% for men. The employment rate of women depends on several factors,

including whether or not they have children under the age of 16. Thus, for women aged 25-49 with at least one child the employment rate is 49.2%. For women without children the employment rate reaches 54.1%. Women earn on average 13.5% less than men [12].

Women occupy only 31% of jobs in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector and only 19% of digital professions. Only 4.6% of the girls studying in higher education choose STEM (Science, Technologies, Engineering and Mathematics) as their study profile. As a result, women get jobs with a lower level of qualification and, respectively, of remuneration in this sector. Women's salaries in ICT are by 33% lower than of men [13].

33.9%

of the entrepreneurs in the Republic of Moldova are women

13.5%

lower salaries for women compared to men

54.1%

employment rate for women without children, compared to 49.2% with one or more children

BEIJING+25

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) Moldova has made progress in relation to sustainable and inclusive development. For example, in terms of poverty the country has made economic progress, compared to the 1990s, mainly due to large economic migration. Furthermore, progress is made in the field of health care, with improving services including sexual-reproductive health. Moldova is one of the first countries in the East European region to adopt a national programme on sexual and reproductive health and rights[14]. Women from rural areas of the country, from ethnic minorities and with special needs, however, continue to face discrimination and difficulties in accessing health information and healthcare. More progress is

made in the field of education and gender. Despite the progress in this field, challenges regarding gender stereotypes and segregation continue to exist in the Moldovan education system, especially in higher levels of education.

It is recommended that the government of Moldova should mobilise all political will and resources to ensure implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should ensure the monitoring of the process, with a strong focus on strengthening women's capacities to work at national, regional and global platforms. Thus, making connections between reporting mechanisms for the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW

and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Scoring progress since 25 years

Gender equality & ...	
Poverty	▲
Education	▲
Health	▲
Armed conflict	▲
Economies	▲
Power	▲
Institutional mechanisms	↔
Human rights	▲
Media	▲
Climate	▲
Girl child	▲ ▼

Source: WiSDOM





RECOMMENDATIONS

In Moldova the localization process of SDGs has involved a variety of CSOs. At the same time, many citizens from marginalised groups and from rural areas remain out of the 2030 Agenda process. In the past years the country has taken measures taken to improve the position of women with a national legislative framework for equality between women and men, that is in line with international commitments.

However, implementation lags behind and women still face discrimination and inequality in social, economic, and political life, and women lack effective opportunities for participation in decision-making in public and private sectors. The government should therefore empower (rural) women to engage in capacity building especially on topics such as climate change and entrepreneurship, to improve women's political leadership and participation in decision-making processes.

In order to improve gender equality in living conditions, employment and unpaid work, structural changes have to be made. It is highly recommended that the Moldovan government carries out gender analyses in all fields of policy making before implementing a law or policy.

Moreover, the government must eliminate all forms of ill treatment, discrimination and violence towards women in all sectors. Lastly, the government, in cooperation with CSOs and NGOs, should improve living conditions and employment by offering technical and financial support for energy and agricultural cooperatives led by women, and making these funds accessible to local groups.

More specific recommendations in the field of work and employment include more gender-equality in public-private partnerships, involving women entrepreneurs by offering access to adequate funds; removing gender inequalities on access to ICT positions; stimulating corporate social responsibility programs for women (including on taxation), focusing on intersectionality, diversity and inclusion. This would enable women to have broader access to education, health and social services, and would contribute to their economic independence and integration.

Furthermore, the Moldovan government should take action to promote a healthy lifestyle. To do so, it is recommended to focus on improving access to

family planning and reproductive health programmes for women in rural and remote areas; implementing more efficient state programs on cancer prevention, and accommodation measures for women who suffer from cancer; ratifying the Istanbul Convention; and securing sustainable support and services for victims, for their protection, rehabilitation, enabling, empowerment and for access to justice.

Lastly, sex-disaggregated data and focused research is needed on interlinkages between gender and environmental issues, including on the link of gender equality and biodiversity, energy, water, climate change, and women's contribution to the SDG implementation. In addition to this, public recognition of environmental equity as a transversal determinant is needed to guarantee sustainable and safe livelihoods for the country's population. This can be done through the development of campaigns, especially targeted at youth, to raise awareness on the intersecting issues of gender equality and sustainable development, and by supporting grassroots initiatives which contribute to raising awareness among local communities.

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