



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Distr.: General
1 May 2013
English
Original: Russian

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States
parties under article 18 of the Convention**

Fourth periodic report of States parties due in 2012

Kyrgyzstan*

[18 January 2013]

* In accordance with the information transmitted to the States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document has not been edited.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction.....	1–10	3
II. Information relating to the articles of the Convention	11–222	4
Article 1	11–12	4
Article 2	13–28	4
Article 3	29–37	6
Article 4	38–49	8
Article 5	50–62	9
Article 6	63–73	11
Article 7	74–77	12
Article 8	78–79	13
Article 9	80–81	13
Article 10	82–110	13
Article 11	111–126	16
Article 12	127–158	19
Article 13	159–179	23
Article 14	180–205	26
Article 15	206–209	28
Article 16	210–222	29

I. Introduction

1. Kyrgyzstan acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in accordance with Decision No. 320-1, adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Zhogorku Kenesh (parliament) on 25 January 1996, and Decision No. 257-1, adopted by the House of Representatives on 6 March 1996.
2. In accordance with the provisions of article 18 of the Convention, Kyrgyzstan is submitting its fourth periodic report (CEDAW/C/KGZ/4) to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
3. General information on Kyrgyzstan, its population and political structure, the various human rights protection agencies and efforts to disseminate human rights information can be found in the core document, which was adopted under Government Decision No. 141 of 20 February 2012 on national reports relating to the implementation of international human rights treaties and forwarded to the Human Rights Committee in March 2012.
4. The present report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines for preparation of reports by States parties (CEDAW/C/7/Rev.3) and covers the period from 2008 to 2012.
5. The information contained in this report was obtained from ministries, government departments, and civil society organizations, and taking into account the Committee's concluding observations following consideration of the country's third periodic report in October 2008 (CEDAW/C/KGZ/CO/3).
6. The Government met to discuss those concluding observations and, in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 7 therein, adopted Decision No. 387 of 19 June 2009 on an action plan for their implementation.
7. In October 2011, the Committee was sent an intermediate report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 20 and 22 of the concluding observations.
8. In accordance with paragraph 27 of the concluding observations, a round-table discussion was held in preparation of the present periodic report, with the participation of representatives of State bodies, civil society and international organizations such as the Central Asia representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, UN-Women and the Soros Foundation – Kyrgyzstan. The Government appreciates their involvement and contributions to the report. Their recommendations and proposals were taken into account in the final draft.
9. The report contains specific information on the implementation of individual articles of the Convention, measures taken by the Government, progress made in the advancement of women, obstacles that remain and plans for the future.
10. The Government is aware that it needs a comprehensive approach if it is to bring about significant changes on the road to establishing gender equality and acknowledges that it will take time to achieve equal rights and opportunities for all members of society. It remains committed to further progress and, for the first time in the country's history, has adopted a long-term national strategy document on achieving gender parity by 2020 that was approved under Government Decree No. 443 of 27 June 2012.

II. Information relating to the articles of the Convention

Article 1

11. Under the Constitution, equality of civil and human rights and freedoms is guaranteed regardless of sex, race, language, ethnicity, religion, age, political or other beliefs, education, origin, wealth or other status, or other circumstances.

12. In recognition of the need to create conditions conducive to overcoming discrimination on the grounds of sex and to promoting equality of opportunity for women in all walks of life, domestic legal norms and standards, and departmental guidelines, regarding equality between men and women have been strengthened. It has moreover been established that special measures to ensure equal opportunities for different social groups do not amount to discrimination. Public declarations promoting the idea of gender superiority are prohibited. All citizens have equal rights and opportunities to enter the civil service at the State and municipal levels and to be promoted.

Article 2

13. The principle of equality between men and women is enshrined in the Constitution. Under article 16, paragraph 4, men and women in Kyrgyzstan enjoy equal rights and freedoms, and equal opportunity to enjoy them. The implementation of those constitutional guarantees is governed by the Act on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women (No. 184 of 4 August 2008), under which citizens may report specific violations of gender equality. Persons subjected to sex discrimination may file complaints simultaneously with the Ombudsman (Akyikatchy), the Office of the Procurator, the courts, other State bodies and local authorities.

14. With a view to combining the efforts of State bodies and human rights NGOs and to launching initiatives to ensure justice in the area of gender development, a public gender development council was established in the Ombudsman's Office under Order No. 186 of 30 December 2009. By way of example, the Office received 12 reports of gender discrimination in 2011 and 3 in the first quarter of 2012. No complaints regarding bride theft were received in 2011. Upon receipt of one such complaint in the first quarter of 2012, action was taken to restore the rights of the young woman concerned. The Ombudsman's Office established a monitoring and analysis centre in 2009 to counter domestic violence and gender discrimination.

15. As part of the implementation of National Action Plan No. 2 for the years 2007 to 2010, volunteer coordinating councils were set up in all regions. Under National Action Plan No. 3, working groups on the introduction and effective implementation of gender policy have been operating on a permanent basis in all government bodies since 2012.

16. Persons whose rights and freedoms have been infringed by sexual discrimination ensuing from the actions of government bodies, local authorities or their officials, or legal entities, may appeal to the courts to have their rights restored. According to the Judicial Division of the Supreme Court, 2,144 persons committed acts of domestic violence from 2008 to the end of the first quarter of 2012, with 2,238 victims over the same period. As a result, 242 sentences were handed down in criminal cases and 1,811 for administrative offences. A particularly high rate of domestic violence was recorded in 2010, with 62 per cent more victims than in 2011.

17. The ministries of Internal Affairs and Justice jointly drafted a bill, approved by Government Decision No. 571 of 17 August 2012, to amend the Criminal Code. The bill, which is currently before the Zhogorku Kenesh, provides for harsher penalties for sexual offences against minors and young children.

18. Act No. 136 of 25 July 2012 amending the Administrative Liability Code was aimed at increasing the effectiveness of measures to prevent domestic violence through the introduction of stiffer penalties, whereby such offences are punishable not only by fines, but by administrative detention of up to 5 days.

19. With regard to paragraphs 11 and 12 of the concluding observations, Government Decision No. 526 of 14 August 2009 stipulates that government bodies must conduct a specialized assessment of bills, including from a gender perspective. Those functions are invested in the Ministry of Justice in accordance with Government Decision No. 764 of 15 December 2009. Moreover, in 2008, standards for assessing the gender impact of bills before parliament were approved under Decision No. 75-IV of 18 January 2008, adopted by the Zhogorku Kenesh.

20. In the course of conducting such assessments, it became clear that specific guidelines were also needed for the case of by-laws. Thus, under Government Decision No. 319 of 8 December 2010, guidelines were approved on how to assess draft by-laws in the light of legal, human rights, gender, environmental and anti-corruption considerations.

21. In spite of these measures, the implementation of such gender-based assessments has been hampered by insufficient capacity in the relevant Government bodies, and the absence of regular reports and monitoring mechanisms.

22. Under National Action Plan No. 3, the Government is working to further refine the mechanisms for legal analysis from a gender perspective by making it an integral component of the work of government departments and incorporating it fully into the duties of the civil servants concerned.

23. The Office of the Procurator is responsible for monitoring implementation of the Act on State guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for men and women. According to data for 2011, the Office conducted 147 reviews, on the basis of which it took action in 409 cases, including 148 orders to rectify infringements of the law and 236 directives and cautions issued to 20 officers for such infringements. Administrative proceedings were launched in five cases. The Office brought disciplinary actions against 30 persons and administrative actions against 5.

24. Since 2012, the Office of the Procurator-General has included a section in government statistical reporting regarding the oversight of enforcement of the law in the area of gender policies. In the first half of 2012, it conducted 30 examinations and brought 39 actions, including 15 orders to desist from unlawful activity and 18 directives and cautions issued to 5 officers for infringements of the law. The Office brought five persons before disciplinary hearings.

25. These measures demonstrate that the Government is serious about improving the legal framework protecting women against discrimination. Nevertheless, it has to be admitted that their practical implementation poses problems.

26. The Office of the Procurator-General, reporting on the results of its work in the first half of 2011, pointed out that few of the crimes committed in June 2010 in the south of the country had been solved. Of 5,627 criminal cases launched by law enforcement agencies in Osh and Jalal-Abad provinces, only 6.2 per cent have been solved. Many have remained unsolved simply because their perpetrators could not be identified, given that the disturbances were caused by outsiders rather than local inhabitants and most of the suspects are outside the country.

27. The country's highest authorities, including the President, the Speaker of the Zhogorku Kenesh and the Prime Minister, have on more than one occasion clearly and unambiguously stated their commitment to a policy of inter-ethnic peace and harmony, and to the elimination of discrimination against people on ethnic, racial or other grounds. This has been borne out by reforms of law enforcement agencies, the security forces and the judiciary, and a decisive shift in the State bureaucracy towards democratic governance and the elimination of all forms of discrimination on ethnic, racial or other grounds at the central and local levels of public administration.

28. Additional information is contained in the combined fifth to seventh periodic reports on implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/KGZ/5-7) for the period from 2007 to 2011, which were approved by Government Decision No. 141 of 20 February 2012 and submitted to the relevant Committee.

Article 3

29. In 2011, in the wake of structural changes in the Government, responsibility for gender policy was transferred to the Ministry of Youth, Labour and Employment, the central executive authority thereby entrusted with implementing a unified gender policy pursuant to Government Decision No. 122 of 20 February 2012. The Ministry has established a gender policy department, the primary tasks of which (see paragraphs 25 and 26 of the concluding observations) are to make proposals defining priorities and formulating national gender policy, to conduct analysis of gender issues and to monitor policy implementation.

30. Under Government Decision No. 268 of 2 May 2012, the National Council on Gender Development, reporting to the Government, was established to set basic guidelines and introduce special measures to implement gender policy, in accordance with the country's international commitments. The National Council is the coordinating, consultative and advisory body responsible for the design and implementation of public policy on gender development matters and the provision of expert analysis in the drawing-up of the corresponding decisions.

31. The adoption on 27 June 2012 of Government Decision No. 443 on the National Strategy for the Achievement of Gender Equality by 2020 and the National Action Plan for Gender Equality for 2012–2014 can be seen as a milestone in gender policy. It represents the first long-term legal act on gender equality ever adopted in the country. The strategy focuses on legal and institutional changes designed to eliminate gender discrimination and represents a logical progression in the public gender policy implemented in the 20 years since Kyrgyzstan became independent. It has been developed in consultation with representatives of civil society at the national and local levels. The first step in its implementation is the medium-term National Action Plan No. 3 for gender equality for 2012–2014. Key features of the Strategy and Plan include the development of monitoring indicators and the allocation of a dedicated budget line to carry out the planned measures. The budget for the action plan is currently being drawn up. The strategy rests on the following priority actions:

- Broadening economic opportunities for women;
- Creating a system of functional education;
- Eradicating gender-based discrimination and fostering access to justice for women;
- Promoting gender parity in decision-making and strengthening women's involvement in political life.

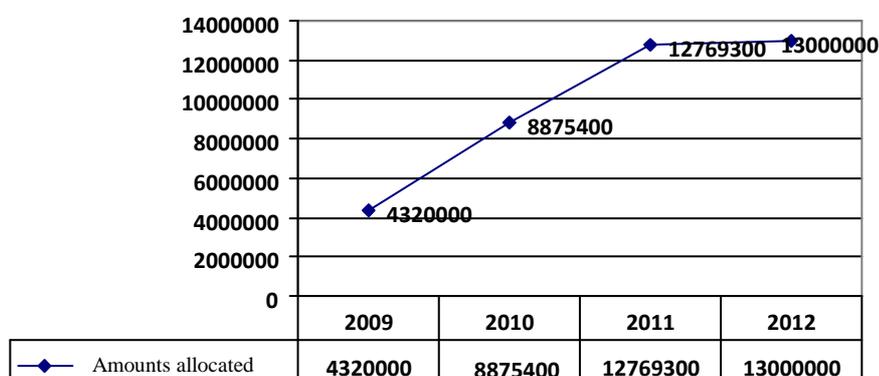
32. The development of gender policy at the institutional level has been accompanied by an improvement in the availability of statistical data on the situation of women. In 2011, for example, the National Statistics Committee's annual compilation entitled *Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic* included a significantly expanded chapter on crimes against women and children, and domestic violence. Twenty-three new indicators were included, reflecting the combined data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Judicial Division of the Supreme Court and the Association of Crisis Centres.

33. In a decision of the Defence and Security Committee of the Zhogorku Kenesh it was noted that the tragic events that took place in the south of the country, accompanied by widespread violence against civilians, especially women and other vulnerable groups, posed a challenge to political, government and public institutions, and to the secure development of the country. Equally, it had become apparent that the authorities and civil society, which lacked technology, skills and tools, were ill-equipped and ill-prepared to manage situations of inter-ethnic tension and to take the appropriate measures.

34. Bearing in mind the tragic events of June 2010, the Defence and Security Committee adopted a decision on 16 April 2012 to develop a plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on the role of women in promoting peace and security. Work thereon is currently under way.

35. With a view to tackling major social problems and establishing a market for the provision of social services, the Government Social-Sector Procurement Act (No. 162 of 21 July 2008) was passed. The Act lays down the general principles and legal and organizational framework for the shaping, placement and execution of State procurement orders designed to implement social programmes, and is aimed at making more efficient use of State funds earmarked for the resolution of social and economic problems and at improving the quality of public social services. During the period covered by the report, 39 million soms were allocated under the Act to the Ministry of Social Development to carry out State social-sector procurement.

Diagram 1



36. The Act can be seen as a positive step in view of the recommendations contained in paragraph 28 of the concluding observations regarding interaction with civil society in the provision of adequate support and funding for crisis centres for victims of violence, trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation. In 2012, for example, the Sezim crisis centre received a procurement order for the sum of 442,972 soms, under the category of rehabilitation and reintegration into society for groups at risk, to provide social services for women and family members who were victims of violence. The crisis centre works mainly to protect the rights of women and family members who have suffered from gender or

domestic violence. However, leveraging social-sector procurement has yet to become the norm around the country.

37. One example of institutional support for women's public initiatives is the establishment in 2010, with the backing of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, of the Association of Women Police Officers, which has branches around the country. The mission of the Association is to promote the interests of women, including former police staff.

Article 4

38. The Government continues to apply temporary special measures to hasten the advent of real equality between men and women. In order to implement recommendations 10, 31 and 34 of the concluding observations regarding support for the participation of women in political life, a quota system has been adopted at the local level.

39. Article 49, paragraph 7, of the Local Council Elections Act (No. 98 of 14 July 2011) stipulates that not more than 70 per cent of candidates nominated on the electoral lists of political parties and voters' groups for elections to district and municipal councils (kenesh) may be of the same sex, with no more than two positions between men and women on the lists.

40. Between 2007 and 2010, 23 (25.6 per cent) of the 90 members of the Zhogorku Kenesh were women. In the 2010 national elections, 28 (23.3 per cent) of 120 members elected to the fifth parliament were women.

41. As of the first quarter of 2012, 16 per cent of members (a total of 1,326) of district and municipal councils were women, as opposed to 6,753 men.

42. The proportion of women serving as judges in the Supreme Court has remained stable at an average of 46 per cent.

Table 1

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total	35	35	35	32	32
Women	17	19	17	16	16

43. Article 10 of the Act on state guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for men and women stipulates that persons of different sexes have equal rights, duties and responsibilities, and that they are equally entitled to enter the civil service at State and municipal levels and exercise professional activities in public bodies. The heads of government bodies and local authorities have an obligation to ensure equal access for men and women to civil service employment at those levels in accordance with their abilities and professional training. Civil service job vacancies at both levels are filled by competition, in which persons of different sexes may take part in equal measure and on equal terms. Job vacancies may not be advertised only for persons of one sex. Competitive selection of candidates for civil service positions at the State and municipal levels is conducted on the basis of approved, uniform tests.

44. The number of civil servants in State and municipal posts is as follows:

Table 2

	2008			2009			2010		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>%</i>
State civil servants	17 978	7 282	40.5	17 829	6 967	39.1	19 420	7 744	39.9
Employed in political and special posts	969	262	27	849	233	27.4	1 009	254	25.2
Employed in administrative posts	17 009	7 020	41.3	16 980	6 734	39.7	18 411	7 490	40.7
Municipal civil servants	8 579	2 947	34.4	8 531	2 913	34.1	9 172	3 102	33.8
Employed in political posts	517	20	3.9	505	20	4.0	510	25	4.9
Employed in administrative posts	8 062	2 927	36.3	8 026	2 893	36.0	8 662	3 077	35.5

45. Political posts continue to be filled mainly by men. As of 1 January 2011, 25 per cent of State civil servants in political posts and 5 per cent of municipal civil servants were women.

46. Despite the introduction of these special measures, the generally uneven representation of the sexes at the decision-making level has not changed. For example, of 459 heads of local authorities in elective posts, only 27 are women.

47. The gender imbalance at the decision-making level is conditioned by the persistence of traditional stereotypes concerning women's place in society. The current quota system applied in national and local elections does not guarantee that women will be re-elected, nor does it ensure that they will be retained in senior posts in the executive. For example, the proportion of women in decision-making posts fell from 25.6 per cent in 2010 to 19.8 per cent in 2012. Mechanisms for monitoring the legally established temporary special measures have proven weak.

48. In some cases, government departments apply their own internal quotas. From 2008 to 2012, the Ministry of Internal Affairs included in its annual order (most recently Order No. 391 of 14 May 2012) on approved rules for the selection and admission of students to State-funded full-time courses of study at the Major-General E.A. Aliyev police academy a 10 per cent quota for female students resident in Bishkek.

49. Information on special measures to protect motherhood can be found in the section of this report on article 11 of the Convention.

Article 5

50. The Constitution states that men and women have equal rights and that they are entitled to equal opportunities.

51. The Act on State guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for men and women prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of sex in any field, and the Family Code establishes that spouses have equal rights and duties, including for the upbringing of their children.

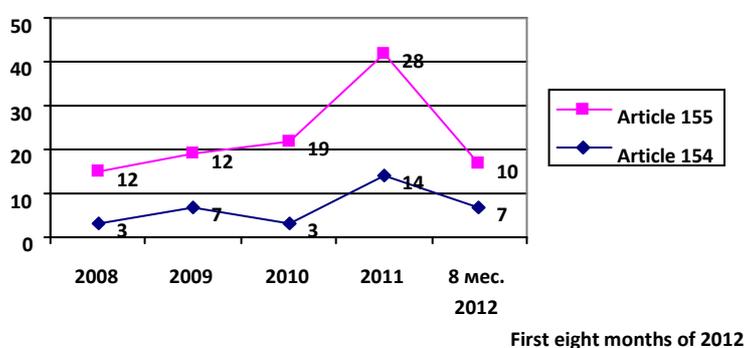
52. The Government launched a series of initiatives during the period under consideration with the intention of changing social and cultural stereotypes regarding men and women, eradicating prejudices and eliminating discriminatory practices. Thus, in the spirit of eliminating discrimination and reinforcing gender equality, the Labour Code

allows not only mothers, but also fathers, grandparents, other relatives and guardians to obtain leave in order to look after young children for whom they are responsible. The introduction of such regulations is having an effect on traditional cultural views of the role of men and women in the family.

53. After her visit in November 2009, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Rashida Manjoo, strongly recommended that the Government increase the criminal penalty for bride abduction and coercion into marriage, withdraw the possibility of imposing only a fine and provide stringent penalties for conspiracy and aiding and abetting in this crime.

54. Data provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs Information Analysis Centre regarding recorded offences under articles 154 (on the coercion of persons under the age of 16 into de facto marital relations) and 155 (on the forcing of women into marriage or the obstruction of marriage) of the Criminal Code are illustrated in diagram 2.

Diagram 2



55. Unfortunately, criminal cases do not generally go to trial. Only one conviction for bride abduction was handed down in the period under consideration (in September 2012). In what was a first for Kyrgyzstan, one man was sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment in a strict regime correctional colony. Further inquiries are being carried out with regard to his allies and accomplices. The sentence represents a breakthrough in efforts to combat the practice of bride abductions.

56. According to the central bureau of investigation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, three cases were brought against two persons for offences under article 153 of the Criminal Code, on bigamy and polygamy, between 2008 and the end of the first half of 2012. Two went to trial and the third was dropped.

57. A bill to amend articles 154 and 155 of the Criminal Code has been introduced by a member of the Zhogorku Kenesh, Ms. A. Altybaeva. The amendments would remove discriminatory provisions that affect article 123 on kidnapping, thereby bringing the Criminal Code into line with the Constitution, foster gender equality, and put the offence of abducting women for the purpose of coercing them into marriage on an equal footing with that of kidnapping. After a public debate, in which civil society groups involved in the promotion of gender equality through this bill actively participated, the bill passed its second reading in the Zhogorku Kenesh.

58. As part of the work to prevent bride abductions, the Ombudsman's Office proclaimed an anti-abduction month in 2012 under Order No. 01-1/129 of 9 November 2012. Evidence of discrimination against the young women abducted has led the

Ombudsman's Office to undertake new initiatives, including setting up a telephone helpline and declaring 2012 the year to combat the abduction of women for involuntary marriage and violence against women. A memorandum of cooperation on the initiative was signed by the Ombudsman's Office, the Ministry of Youth, Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health on 31 July 2012. Government bodies work together with local authorities and NGOs on public information campaigns to combat polygamy, bride theft and domestic violence.

59. The changes in the Government's approach to bride theft and moves to tackle the issue date to 2011. Since that year, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has held additional awareness sessions with parents and teachers in the context of measures to ensure law and order and security during graduation ceremonies for general and secondary school pupils.

60. With regard to recommendation 9 of the concluding observations, the first-ever parliamentary hearings on monitoring of the implementation of the Act on State guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for men and women and the Social and Legal Protection against Domestic Violence Act took place in autumn 2011. After the hearings of the Committee on Health, Social Policy, Labour and Migration, of the Zhogorku Kenesh it was recommended that the Office of the Procurator-General conduct monitoring to ensure that laws on equal rights and opportunities for men and women were properly and uniformly applied.

61. With a view to fully implementing the Civil Registration Act and the Health Act, as well as addressing citizens' complaints, applications and reports concerning gender identity, in October 2009, the Ministry of Health set up a working group comprising representatives of public institutions and civil society organizations to work on a draft Government Decision on Sex Changes for Persons with Gender Identity Disorder. The principle aim of the draft decision was to set parameters for medical and psychological tests to be administered to persons with gender identity disorder prior to them amending their passports. The draft was suspended in April 2012 because of the need to amend article 38 of the Health Act with regard to sex changes and correction procedures. Work in that regard is ongoing.

62. Additional information is contained in paragraphs 153–155 of the report to the Committee for Civil and Political Rights.

Article 6

63. The Constitution upholds human rights and freedoms as supreme values. The enslavement and sexual exploitation of persons and human trafficking are inadmissible.

64. The National Action Plan for 2008–2011 on combating human trafficking was approved under Government Decision No. 515 of 13 September 2008 and National Action Plan No. 2 for 2013–2016 is currently being coordinated by ministries and government departments.

65. Kyrgyzstan is a party to the anti-human trafficking cooperation programme of the Commonwealth of Independent States for the period 2011–2013.

66. Kyrgyzstan is a member of the United Nations Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking. The provisions of General Assembly resolution 64/293 of 30 July 2010 on a global plan to combat trafficking in persons will be included in the draft National Action Plan No. 2 for 2013–2016.

67. In order to bring national legislation into line with Kyrgyzstan's international obligations, and to toughen criminal liability for human trafficking, the minimum penalty

provided for in the Criminal Code for such offences was increased from 3 to 5 years' imprisonment (article 124 on human trafficking).

68. In order to combat violations of people's sexual integrity more effectively, penalties have been toughened not only for customers but also for workers in the sex industry, as set forth in amendments to articles 129 to 133 of the Criminal Code, which address such offences.

69. Ministry of Internal Affairs Information Analysis Centre data on human-trafficking offences under article 124 indicate that criminal proceedings were launched in 25 cases in 2008, 25 in 2009, 13 in 2010, 9 in 2011 and 2 in the first quarter of 2012. The figures are not disaggregated by sex and it is unclear how many of the persons concerned were female victims and how many were perpetrators of human trafficking. Between 2010 and 2011, the Kyrgyz authorities, working with NGOs and international organizations, were able to help 700 victims of human trafficking, 30 per cent of whom had been subjected to sexual exploitation, return to their countries of origin. Overall, 40 per cent of the victims of human trafficking are women.

70. The results of research¹ confirm the complexity of obtaining hard data on human trafficking. For that reason, law enforcement agencies set particular store by informing the public about the risks of trafficking and organizing major awareness-raising campaigns throughout the country. A nationwide free telephone helpline (189) for reporting cases of human trafficking has, with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), been in operation since 2008. It received 36,000 calls between 2009 and 2011 on issues including migration, smuggling and human trafficking.

71. Coordinated efforts by the authorities and IOM, under a memorandum of cooperation signed on 26 May 2006, to combat human trafficking have been especially fruitful. The ministries of Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs, the Bishkek Mayor's Office and other government departments and bodies, for example, are developing training and information materials, organize regular public awareness-raising activities on the risks of human trafficking and train law enforcement officers and court personnel to combat the practice.

72. Although action plans have been drawn up, measures to combat violence against women, human trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution have largely remained on paper because to date funding for them has not been forthcoming under the State budget.

73. Additional information is contained in paragraphs 391 to 393 of the report to the Committee for Civil and Political Rights.

Article 7

74. The constitutional and legislative guarantees safeguarding equality between men and women in the political and public life of the country have been reflected in previous periodic reports. No significant legislative changes, aside from the above-mentioned special measures taken to bolster the representation of women in elected bodies at the local level, have occurred during the period under consideration.

75. Article 52 of the Constitution states that all citizens are equally entitled to enter the civil service at the State and municipal levels and to be promoted to positions as provided for under the law.

¹ With the support of the International Organization for Migration, a sociological study on the scale of human trafficking in Central Asia was conducted in 2011 in Kyrgyzstan.

76. For the first time in Kyrgyzstan's history, a woman became the head of the Government in 2010. However, in the years since independence there have been only isolated cases of women being elected mayor or appointed to head regional or district administrative bodies. One of the main causes of poor representation of women in government posts is the absence of institutional encouragement to foster political leadership among women or support for women's NGOs.

77. It should be noted that women displayed considerable initiative during the tragic events of June 2010, both in official capacities and among the general public. During those events and in the post-conflict period, government bodies and women's NGOs showed that they could work together effectively to aid victims of the violence.

Article 8

78. Three of Kyrgyzstan's 28 foreign missions, 2 of them among the country's 3 permanent missions to international organizations (in Vienna and Geneva) are headed by women.

79. A total of 47 women are employed in the foreign missions. One reason for the persisting gender imbalance in this area lies in the employment difficulties that arise for their spouses when women move abroad to take up long-term postings.

Table 3

Number of women working in foreign missions of Kyrgyzstan

	2008		2009		2010		2011	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Women</i>
In Ministry of Internal Affairs missions abroad	190	48	190	54	190	57	192	47

Article 9

80. Pursuant to article 14 of the Citizenship Act (No. 70 of 21 May 2007), ethnic Kyrgyz persons with foreign nationality or who are stateless, former Kyrgyz nationals returning to a permanent place of residence in Kyrgyzstan, as well as foreign nationals or stateless females who marry Kyrgyz nationals and move to a permanent place of residence in Kyrgyzstan, shall be granted Kyrgyz nationality on advantageous terms.

81. Where both or one of the parents of a child residing in Kyrgyzstan relinquish or lose their Kyrgyz nationality and do not participate in bringing up the child, whose guardianship or custody is entrusted to Kyrgyz citizens, the child retains his or her Kyrgyz nationality.

Article 10

82. Pursuant to article 45 of the Constitution and the Education Act, all citizens of Kyrgyzstan are equally entitled to free basic general and secondary education in State schools, and to receive secondary and higher vocational education.

83. According to figures from the Ministry of Education and Science, a total of 96,824 pupils, 48.9 per cent of whom were girls, were accepted in the first year of school in the 2008/09 academic year. In the 2010/11 academic year, the total was 102,144 pupils, 48.6 per cent of whom were girls.

84. The increase in the number of school-age children over that period led to a moderate expansion in the number of general education schools, which, according to figures from the National Statistics Committee, rose from 2,188 in 2008 to 2,197 in 2010 and 2,204 in 2011.

85. Figures regarding a drop in the number of girls who fail to complete their schooling are unavailable because no such statistics are kept.

86. Boys and girls go to school together, are taught the same curriculum and use the same textbooks. Over the past four years, 170 textbooks have been published, with a total print run of 6,512,000 copies. They were submitted for expert analysis, including from a gender perspective, in line with the regulations and practical guidelines for the evaluation of content and structure of new generation textbooks approved under Ministry of Education and Science Order No. 496/1 of 2 August 2006, and bearing in mind paragraphs 15 and 16 of the Committee's concluding observations.

87. For the most part, construction of new school buildings has had little impact on the number of places available in schools or contributed to improving teaching conditions. Classes in State schools continue to be held in several shifts. Schools operating on a two-shift basis are the norm.

88. According to the August enrolment register for the 2011/12 academic year, 2,177 school-age children — 827 girls and 1,350 boys — did not attend school.

89. The law stipulates that the same criteria shall apply to men and women in terms of job orientation, career choice and access to educational institutions in all categories.

90. The proportion of girls studying in secondary vocational schools has risen, along with the overall number of students in such schools. In the 2008/09 academic year, girls accounted for 59.4 per cent of the total number of students. In 2009/10, the figure was 57.6 per cent and in 2010/11, 58.2 per cent.

91. A significant gender gap can be observed in secondary vocational education: 83.1 per cent of students attending courses related to the power industry are male and 16.9 per cent female. Mechanical engineering and metalworking attract only males. Job orientation for students and young people reflects traditional gender roles.

92. At the beginning of the 2010/11 academic year, 54 per cent of students in higher education were women. The higher education system, like other areas and levels of vocational education, is characterized by a gender imbalance not only among teaching staff but also among students. Traditionally, the following areas attract a high percentage of female students: the humanities, where 61.7 per cent of students are women (against 38.3 per cent men); education, with women accounting for 84.4 per cent of students (15.6 per cent); and the social sciences, with 66.2 per cent women and 33.8 per cent men.

93. At the same time, male students dominate in terms of numbers in the exact sciences and strategic oriented professions. Thus, 68.8 per cent of engineering students are male (31.2 per cent women). In manufacturing, transport and architecture and construction the figures are, respectively: 70.7 per cent (29.3 per cent); 92.2 per cent (7.8 per cent); and 76.7 per cent (23.3 per cent).

94. The percentage of women enrolled in higher education in the period under consideration decreased slightly from 55.7 per cent in 2008/09 to 53.7 per cent in 2010/11.

95. More women than men are enrolled in continuing adult vocational education. Female postgraduate students outnumber their male counterparts by almost two to one (1,412 women and 887 men). However, more men than women enrol in technical studies, physics, mathematics, legal studies and medicine.

96. Women are represented to a greater degree in areas such as history, economics, literature and teaching. In these areas, more women than men go on to do higher postgraduate studies.

97. The 2009 census revealed that there was a significant difference between men and women in terms of education, with twice as many women illiterate as men.² At the same time, 17.2 per cent of women had completed or partially completed their higher education, as opposed to 14.7 per cent of men. Ninety per cent more women than men had completed secondary vocational education.

98. The census results showed that 99.2 per cent of the population aged 15 and over had attended school. The separate figures for women and men were 99 per cent and 99.5 per cent respectively.

99. The statistics showed that 99.8 per cent of women aged 15 to 24 had attended school.

100. The proportion of young people (aged 15 to 24) attending school had risen considerably since the previous census in 1999. The number of women completing or partially completing higher education was three times the previous figure (the number of men had increased by 170 per cent); the number of women with a primary general education had risen by 350 per cent (260 per cent for men).

101. General schools include courses on the fundamentals of health and safety for pupils in Years 1 to 5. Pupils in the higher years receive instruction on reproductive health and family planning, which is included in subjects like biology, anatomy, ethics and social studies. Gender-related issues are allotted teaching time in schools in the context of several subjects on the curriculum, including law, social studies, *adep sabagy* (moral education) and ethics.

102. By law, education is secular and independent of political and religious institutions. Boys and girls in State educational establishments are taught together regardless of age, follow a uniform curriculum and use the same textbooks, although there may be informal divisions based on stereotypical notions regarding occupations suitable for men or women.

103. More recently, however, there has been an increase in the number of private schools in which curricula are based on religious teachings.

104. The State education system is faced with a shortage of qualified staff, especially in general education schools in rural areas. In 2010, teachers' salaries were among the lowest in the public sector. As a consequence, teaching has become an overwhelmingly female profession, with women making up 82 per cent of teachers in 2008, 82.4 per cent in 2009 and 2010 and 82.7 per cent in 2011. There is a marked trend towards the employment of teachers of pre-retirement and retirement age.

105. Under Government Decision No. 18 of 19 January 2011 on the introduction of new salary scales for education employees, a new salary system based on hourly rates was introduced for teachers in general schools, preschools, boarding schools and preparatory vocational institutes.

106. As a result of the salary reform, a senior general schoolteacher is paid an average of 6,000–7,000 soms a month, including benefits. Less experienced teachers earn around 5,000 soms.

² Government Decision No. 141 of 20 February 2012 on national reports relating to the implementation of international human rights treaties.

107. In order to tackle the shortage of teaching staff, the Ministry of Education and Science ran a programme between 2004 and 2010 to attract young teachers, which included an incentive package of between 2,000 and 3,000 soms a month, in line with Government Decision No. 702 of 21 September 2004. Under the programme, each year the Ministry would send 500 young professionals to schools in remote mountain regions with State funding and 100 teachers as part of a rural education project run by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

108. In some regions, local authorities decided to provide young teachers with extra payments and benefits. Thus, young professionals assigned to work in rural schools would receive a one-off lump-sum payment of 10 times the base salary to cover their household needs.

109. In spite of the combined efforts of the Ministry and local authorities, the overall results of the programme to boost the number of young professionals working in rural schools failed to meet expectations. Some of the young teachers accepted under the programme resigned without completing their contracts.

110. The Government's strategy for boosting teacher numbers in rural schools had little impact because of the failure to provide young teachers with accommodation, the lack of prestige attached to the teaching profession and the dearth of social infrastructure in rural areas.

Article 11

111. The Ministry of Youth, Labour and Employment has drafted an employment generation policy for 2013–2020 with a view to making fuller and more rational use of the country's human and territorial resources and capacity for employment generation, while laying the foundations for the provision of decent work.

112. The Decent Work Country Programme for the Kyrgyz Republic 2012–2015 has been drafted by the Ministry in conjunction with the International Labour Organization. Its principal objective is to secure economic and social well-being for the people of Kyrgyzstan, with a particular focus on helping vulnerable population groups in terms of achieving gender equality and ensuring social peace and political stability in society.

Table 4

The number of unemployed persons benefiting from labour market measures

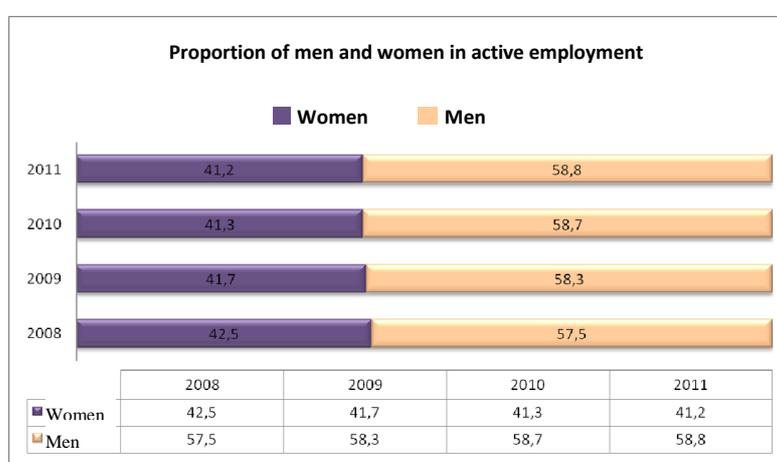
No.	Year	Number of persons benefiting from measures	Paid public employment	Vocational training	Recipients of microloans
1	2008	Total	20 953	6 238	1 895
		Women	7 800	3 112	920
2	2009	Total	23 374	8 382	2 120
		Women	8 069	4 683	1 159
3	2010	Total	26 096	8 604	2 034
		Women	8 974	4 751	1 044
4	2011	Total	25 801	8 594	1 977
		Women	9 258	4 640	1 000

No.	Year	Number of persons benefiting from measures	Paid public employment	Vocational training	Recipients of microloans
5	2012 (first half)	Total	13 686	5 308	1 315
		Women	4 898	2 956	592

113. The data indicate that more than half of the total number of people benefiting from labour market measures are women. In the main, they are engaged in landscape improvement and other lighter work and account for around 30 per cent of the total number of persons engaged in such work.

114. Employment figures between 2008 and 2011 were quite healthy, standing at between 59.3 per cent and 60 per cent. However, the number of women in employment in the same period fell from 49.7 per cent to 48.4 per cent.

Diagram 3



115. The distribution of occupations in which women and men are employed shows up considerable differences. The services sector has the highest proportion of women, particularly in health care and social services (83.3 per cent), education (76.8 per cent), hospitality (63.9 per cent), and the provision of municipal, social and personal services (56 per cent), as well as in manufacturing (47.5 per cent).

116. The majority of jobs in the textile industry are done by women, who make up 89 per cent of employees. Men are mainly employed in production, construction, the power industry, transport and communications, the mining industry, and by law enforcement agencies.

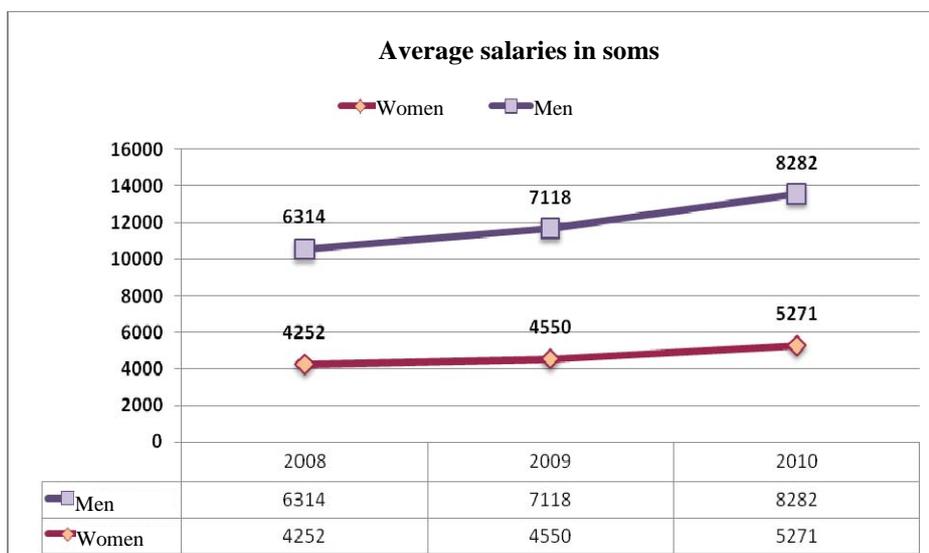
117. No employment analysis or forecasting has been conducted that would make it possible to determine the demand for women in the labour market. With a view to conducting such research, a methodology for forecasting workforce requirements was approved under Government Decision No. 203 of 26 March 2012. Its principle aim is the establishment of a comprehensive forecasting mechanism to track labour market needs and thereby allow for the training of appropriately qualified staff.

118. Government Decision No. 240 of 12 April 2012 was adopted with a view to creating new jobs, boosting employment and reducing poverty. The Ala Too Finance microcredit agency, under the Ministry of Youth, Labour and Employment, had a credit portfolio of 1 billion soms in 2012. Its principle function is to complement measures aimed at reducing

poverty, boosting employment, and improving the material, social and economic conditions in which low-income people live by providing access to microloans at low interest rates (7 per cent per annum at the most). The agency operates virtually throughout the country. As of 1 September 2012, 10,614 people, 3,657 (35 per cent) of them women, had been granted microloans.

119. The difference between men's and women's salaries remains marked. In 2008, women were paid on average 67.3 per cent of men's wages. By 2011, they were earning more than three-quarters of men's pay (78.4 per cent). This is due to the structural breakdown of employment in terms of gender, since the bulk of managerial positions, which are well paid, are occupied by men, while women are the majority among lower-paid junior staff.

Diagram 4



120. Unofficial figures indicate that 1.6 million people in Kyrgyzstan work in the informal economy. Of them, 0.6 million are women, most of whom work in the area of trade and services.

121. The failure to count household work carried out by women, including when they are pregnant or caring for their children, remains a major problem. In Kyrgyzstan, household duties are in the main left to women, who spend an average of 4.2 hours per day, or 17.4 per cent of their time, on them. Men do not spend more than 5.7 per cent of their time on such duties. In all, women spend three times more time than men on household duties and twice as much on child-rearing. Men devote almost a quarter of the day to leisure, 20 per cent more than women.

122. Article 9 of the Labour Code prohibits discrimination in employment, including on the grounds of gender. Chapter 24 of the Code also contains details of regulations governing the employment of women and other persons with family responsibilities, setting out a series of safeguards and rights for working women, including additional safeguards governing the employment of pregnant women and women with young children, the termination of work contracts, work-related travel, overtime, night and weekend work and work on holidays.

123. In addition, there are problems of non-compliance with labour regulations in the case of female civil servants employed by the State and at the municipal level. Women

continue to work outside regular working hours and on holidays without receiving the benefits and incentives to which they are legally entitled. Some pregnant women and nursing mothers fail to avail themselves of their legal entitlement to take time off work for fear of provoking the ire of their employers.

124. The Government, out of particular concern for their health, has prohibited the employment of women in heavy work, hazardous and/or dangerous conditions, or underground work, with the exception of non-physical work and cleaning and domestic services, or in work involving the manual lifting or moving of loads that exceed limits set for women under article 303 of the Labour Code.

125. The Government's State Inspectorate for Environmental and Technical Safety constantly monitors activities for signs of workplace discrimination against women. No such cases were reported in the period from 2008 to 2012.

126. From 2008 to 2012, a total of 516 persons, including 15 women, suffered from workplace accidents that left them incapacitated for one or more days. There were 155 victims of fatal accidents, of whom 4 were women.

Article 12

127. The Health Act, the Reproductive Rights Act, the National Reproductive Health Strategy to 2015 (Government Decree No. 185 of 24 April 2008) and the Den Sooluk health-care reform programme for 2012–2016 (Government Decree No. 309 of 24 May 2012) guarantee equal access to health-care services for all citizens, both men and women.

128. The National Reproductive Health Strategy 2006–2015 is particularly important among the different sectoral policies. The measures taken under the Strategy have helped to achieve figures of more than 98 per cent of pregnant women registered for medical care at an early stage of their pregnancy and 62.5 per cent of maternity homes providing effective perinatal care in line with the WHO integrated safe motherhood and effective perinatal care programme.

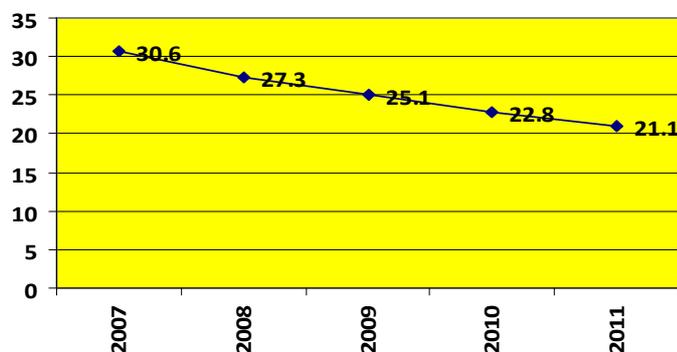
129. The implementation of the Manas Taalimi national health-care reform programme 2006–2010 and the new Den Sooluk health-care reform programme 2012–2016, based on a broad sectoral approach, makes it possible to carry out targeted activities towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and improving the health status of the population, for instance, by setting priority on maternal and child health, ensuring access to health-care services and reducing the financial burden on the most vulnerable population groups.

130. The key challenge in reducing maternal and infant mortality is expanding effective perinatal care. The Government approved the improved perinatal care programme 2008–2017 in 2008, but no funding has been allocated specifically to it.

131. The Ministry of Health is leading activities to reduce anaemia among women and children, with the purchase of vitamin A for mothers and children under the age of 5, as well as salt iodization tests and premix for flour fortification.

132. The Ministry of Health has observed a decline in infant mortality, from 30.6 per cent in 2007 to 27.3 per cent in 2008, 25.1 per cent in 2009, 22.8 per cent in 2010, and 21.1 per cent in 2011.

Diagram 5
Infant mortality rate



133. The child mortality rate (1–4-year age group) has also fallen over the last five years. The causes of child mortality vary by age group. For example, figures from the Ministry show the main causes of infant mortality (up to the age of 1 year) in 2011 were conditions originating in the perinatal period (65 per cent), diseases of the respiratory system (14.3 per cent) and congenital anomalies (10.3 per cent). Between the ages of 1 and 4 years, the main causes were diseases of the respiratory system (30.1 per cent), injuries and poisoning (29.5 per cent) and infectious and parasitic diseases (11.7 per cent).

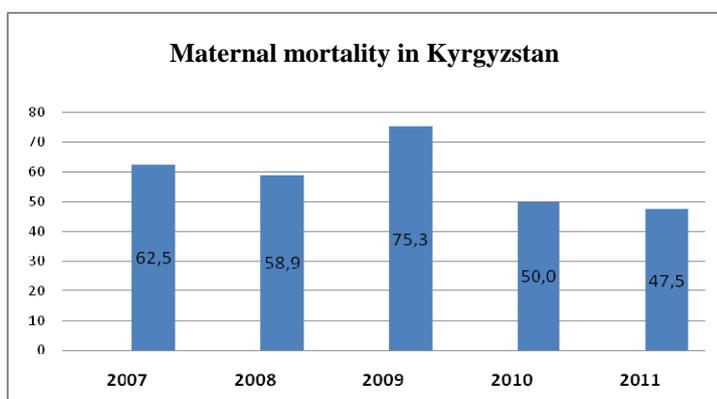
134. With funding from donor organizations (under SWAP), work is being carried out in the framework of the Manas Taalimi national health-care reform programme to improve the equipment available in provincial maternity clinics.

135. The Gulazyk flour fortification programme was introduced in June 2009 to prevent micronutrient deficiency in children under the age of 2 and pregnant women.

136. Ministry of Health data show that maternal mortality is still at a worryingly high level, although it is declining. The rate rose to 61.0 per 100,000 live births in 2005, and then fell to 58.9 in 2008; in 2011 there was a fall of 6.3 per cent to 47.5 per 100,000 live births, or 71 cases (compared to 50.6 and 74 cases respectively in 2010).

137. The causes of maternal mortality are diverse, go beyond the health sector and are conditioned by many economic, social and cultural factors, the demographic structure, accepted behaviours, health literacy and others.

Diagram 6



138. The structure of causes of maternal mortality has completely changed. Ten years ago, the main causes were high blood pressure and septic complications; by 2005, they had changed to haemorrhage (50 per cent) and non-pregnancy-related diseases during pregnancy (23.9 per cent).

139. With the help of parallel funding, the Ministry of Health's effective perinatal care programme today reaches 62 per cent of the target group.

140. Determined to improve the delivery of quality antenatal care, the Ministry has also approved 18 clinical protocols on antenatal care and delivery, and these have been introduced into health service staff training. The lack of neonatologists and anaesthetists (at the regional and district levels) is particularly worrying.

141. Although the State Guarantees Programme and the Supplementary Compulsory Medical Insurance Programme include free hospitalization and treatment for pregnant women and children under the age of 5, many other effective interventions (such as vitamin A and K supplements, contraceptives and albendazole) remain inaccessible to women and children.

142. The data on the proportion of pregnant women affected by anaemia are as follows: 52.9 per cent in 2008; 54.4 per cent in 2009; 53.5 per cent in 2010; and 64.0 per cent in 2011.

143. The rate of abortions (spontaneous and medical) in 2011 was 10.3 per 1,000 women of reproductive age. Not all abortions carried out in health-care facilities are recorded in medical accounting and reporting documentation. There were 1,205 spontaneous and medical abortions in adolescents in the 12–19 age group in 2008, compared to 1,468 in 2009, 1,425 in 2010, and 1,445 in 2011. The major cause of abortions is spontaneous miscarriage, accounting for 69.2 per cent in 2010 and 65.1 per cent in 2011.

144. Contraceptive coverage in the country is 30.1 per cent; there is no system for their delivery and limited resources make procurement impossible, meaning that the country is dependent on donor supplies (the United Nations Population Fund and the United States Agency for International Development). The prevalence of contraceptive use among women of reproductive age (15–49 years) was: 33.1 per cent in 2008; 31.2 per cent in 2009; and 30.3 per cent in 2010. The main method of contraception is the intrauterine device. The decline in the use of contraceptives is affected not least by the growing influence of religion in the population.

145. The 30-per-cent rise in mortality rates from cervical and breast cancer in recent years is associated with a decline in preventive screening for pretumorous and tumorous conditions. Currently only 12 per cent of cancer patients are identified through preventive screening.

146. Breast cancer is the first cause of morbidity and mortality from malignant neoplasms among female cancer patients in Kyrgyzstan. The figures have been rising over the past 10 years. Up to 500 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed each year. Annual mortality due to breast cancer was 21.5 per cent in 2010 and 37.1 per cent in 2011. The highest incidence is in the most socially active age groups, of 40–49 years and 50–59 years.

147. In view of the high levels of morbidity, advanced symptoms and mortality from breast cancer, the lack of wide-scale prevention and diagnosis, the low level of awareness among the population and the lack of cancer awareness among doctors at all levels, a breast centre was set up within the National Oncology Centre. Since the beginning of the year, the Ministry of Health, together with NGOs and international organizations, has organized mobile teams of medical specialists, including mammologists, who have carried out ultrasound screening for breast cancer in women living in the regions.

148. The lack of equipment in treatment facilities and the problems they have with hot and cold water, electricity, heating and the sewage system have an impact on the quality of service provided and the prevention of hospital-acquired infections. Of the 147 hospitals in the country, 112 use buildings designed for the purpose.

149. There is still alcohol dependence among women, with a morbidity rate of 13.3 cases per 100,000 population in 2008, 12.9 in 2009, 13.1 in 2010 and 12.6 in 2011.

150. The incidence of drug dependence among women was, per 100,000 population: 2.6 in 2008; 2.3 in 2009; 1.7 in 2010; and 2.0 in 2011.

151. The continuing rise in figures for sexually transmitted infections among the population, including among adolescents, and adolescent pregnancy, the absence of any decline in the abortion rate and other problems show that public awareness of and access to contraception is limited.

152. Sexually transmitted diseases among women:

- The incidence of syphilis (cases per 100,000 population) was 21.1 in 2008; 19.1 in 2009; 14.4 in 2010; and 14.9 in 2011;
- The incidence of gonorrhoea (cases per 100,000 population) was 14.7 in 2008; 12.0 in 2009; 13.1 in 2010; and 9.4 in 2011.

153. The new national tuberculosis programme, Tuberculosis-IV, and the National HIV/AIDS Programme 2012–2016 are currently under development.

154. The figures for tuberculosis among women were: 2,278 new cases in 2008; 2,329 in 2009; 2,341 in 2010; 2,274 in 2011. The State is taking comprehensive measures not only to improve health care, but also to provide social protection for tuberculosis patients. Under the Protection against Tuberculosis Act, the local authorities may fund the cost of travel to and from the place of treatment. Since the second quarter of 2011, a grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has been used in all the regions to provide social support for patients with multi-drug resistant tuberculosis in all phases of treatment, providing them with food and hygiene kits, and using food packages as incentives for patients with drug-susceptible tuberculosis receiving outpatient treatment.

155. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Kyrgyzstan is in the concentrated phase, where HIV prevalence rates are higher than 5 per cent in one or several population groups (such as injecting drug users), but less than 1 per cent among pregnant women in urban and rural areas. HIV prevention and control is guided by the HIV/AIDS Act No. 149 of 13 August 2005. The Act is modelled as closely as possible on international standards to guarantee protection from stigma and discrimination to persons living with HIV/AIDS, as well as vulnerable population groups.

156. The Country Multisectoral Coordination Committee to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria organizes the planning, coordination and monitoring of the relevant activities in the country. In 2007, Government Decree No. 372 of 24 August 2007 set up the Committee, which reports to the Government, to address socially significant and particularly dangerous infectious diseases.

157. All AIDS patients who are currently receiving antiretroviral therapy are given their medication in a timely manner, records are kept of antiretrovirals drugs received and issued, and drugs are issued during the course of treatment in line with the clinical protocols approved by the Ministry of Health.

158. However, the official figures do not reflect the full picture. There are currently between 11,000 and 12,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in the country. The path of HIV

infection and AIDS is gender-specific: most men are infected by parental transmission, while the main path of infection in women is sexual.

Article 13

159. The Constitution of Kyrgyzstan declares that the country is a social state.

160. New mechanisms have been introduced to promote gender-oriented social policies to achieve equal rights and opportunities for men and women: the rights to receive State benefits, bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit.

161. There have been some changes to the main types of social support for socially vulnerable categories of citizens. Pensions have been increased, bringing them for the first time close to the minimum subsistence level, and the number of pensioners who receive more than the minimum subsistence level has increased fivefold. Since 1 October 2011, the average pension has been 3,796 som, an increase of 996 som compared to 2010.

162. At the end of 2010, 560,000 persons were registered with the Social Fund pension agencies as receiving pensions, an increase of 7 per cent in five years. The number of old-age pensioners increased in 2008 because of the reduction in the retirement age for men to 60 (after 25 years of contributions) and for women to 55 years (after 20 years of contributions). The trend is linked to the large number of people born in the 1950s, when the birth rate rose after the war, who are now of retirement age.

163. For the past five years, pensioners have represented about 10 per cent of the country's population. More than 65 per cent of pensioners are women, and only 35 per cent are men, as women have a higher average life expectancy and their retirement age is five years earlier than that of men.

164. Under the State Pension Social Insurance Act, women who have given birth to five or more children and have cared for them up to the age of 8 are entitled to an old-age pension at the age of 53 after 15 years of contributions, that is, five years earlier than the standard pensionable age for women, which is 58.

165. Amendments were introduced to the Act in November 2011 to supplement the pensions of heroine mothers by 1,000 som. If they do not have the right to pension benefits at the specified age, heroine mothers are entitled to a monthly social allowance, which currently stands at 1,000 som.

166. Recognizing the tradition of respect for mothers and the importance of their role in strengthening the family and contributing to the development of society, and in the context of 2012 as the Year of the Family, Peace, Harmony and Mutual Forgiveness, Presidential Decree No. 93 of 23 April 2012 instituted Mother's Day in Kyrgyzstan, to be celebrated annually on the third Sunday in May.

167. Government Decree No. 727 of 11 November 2011 approved regulations for the allocation, payment and amount of benefits payable in the case of temporary disability, pregnancy and maternity, and of funeral benefits.

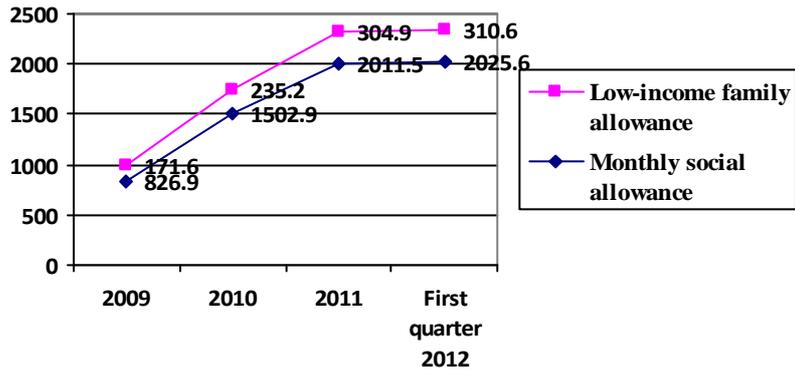
168. The State Benefits Act governs the allocation and payment of two main types of State benefits – a monthly allowance for low-income families with children and a monthly social allowance. The allowance for low-income families is focused on children, the aim being to raise the income of the poorest families with children up to the level of the guaranteed minimum income.

169. The monthly social allowance is allocated on the basis of category, regardless of the family's total average per capita income; it is given to those unable to work who do not

have the right to pension benefits. Since 2010 it has not been linked to the guaranteed minimum income.

170. Data from the Ministry of Social Development show that, on 1 January 2012, the average low-income family allowance was 304.9 soms and the average monthly social allowance was 2,112.8 soms.

Diagram 7
Average State benefits 2008 to 1 September 2012



171. The monthly social allowance was 1,306 soms higher in 2012 than in 2008; the low-income family allowance rose by 175.2 soms over that period.

172. Gender-disaggregated information on recipients of the two allowances during the period 2008 to 2012 is given below:

Diagram 8
Total number of recipients of low-income family allowance 2008 to 2011
(1,000s)

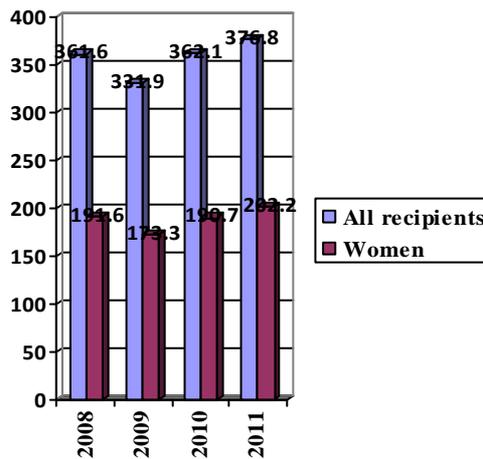
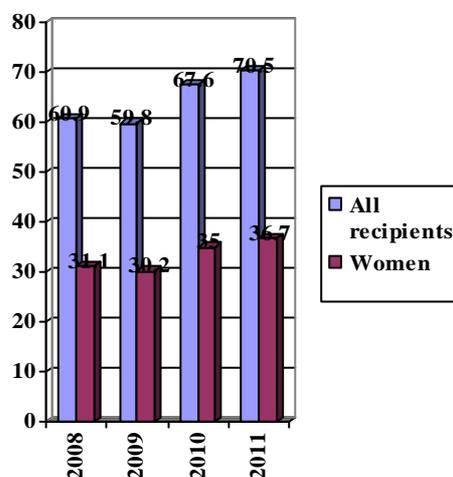


Diagram 9

Total number of recipients of monthly social allowance 2008 to 2011

(1,000s)



173. The guaranteed minimum income was increased on 1 July 2011 from 310 to 370 soms (an increase of 19.4 per cent) and the monthly social allowances for all children with disabilities rose to 3,000 soms.

174. In 2009, the benefits system was reformed to improve the targeted provision of services and optimize cash allowances. Under Presidential Decree No. 511 of 13 November 2009, as of 1 January 2010, monthly cash allowances are paid in lieu of benefits. They are granted, regardless of need, to 25 categories of the population, and range between 1,000 and 7,000 soms a month.

175. The Government's major strategy documents highlight microfinance as a means of improving access to finance for a large part of the population, as well as an instrument for poverty reduction. Improving access to financial services is a key factor in ensuring continued economic growth.

176. At the end of 2010, microcredit was available to an average of 7.1 per cent of the population, with a total of 391,400,000 borrowers. The microfinance sector had provided loans to a total of 11.1 billion soms. Figures from the National Statistics Committee show that women are the main recipients of microcredit (73.4 per cent of all those given loans in 2010), and that the number of women who receive loans has grown each year, standing 55.12 per cent higher in 2010 than in 2008.

177. There are no restrictions in Kyrgyzstan on women's access to leisure, sports or any other areas of cultural life. However, the State has paid more attention to the development of traditionally male sports, such as the national sports of *kok-boru*, *ordo*, *torguz korgool* and *arkan tartysh*, as well as strength sports and the martial arts. The average annual budget for the development of national sports is currently around 5 million soms.

178. The sports infrastructure is poor, resulting in only 6 to 7 per cent of the population participating in physical culture and sport. A total of 48.3 per cent of general schools have sports halls, while 91.3 per cent have stadiums and simple facilities; 37 per cent of sports facilities are in an unsatisfactory condition; in 70 per cent of schools, the equipment has not been replaced for 15 to 20 years; the availability of public sports facilities ranges from 16 to 1 per cent (the latter figure is for swimming pools).

179. No disaggregated figures are available for access of women and men to other cultural activities (to concert halls and theatres, clubs, libraries and museums).

Article 14

180. Kyrgyzstan attaches particular importance to the implementation of paragraphs 33, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42 of the Committee's concluding observations in respect of the situation of rural women.

181. The State recognizes that rural women constitute a sociodemographic group in society, have specific sociopsychological characteristics, different roles and a specific social status. Data given by the National Statistics Committee in the annual publication entitled *Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic* show that 65 per cent of women live in rural areas. Most of them are aged between 15 and 49, i.e., are women of reproductive age, the second largest group of rural women consisting of girls of 0 to 14 years.

182. Rural women in Kyrgyzstan have a difficult life with many complex contradictions. Many of these are a result of the serious socioeconomic problems in rural areas, including the low standard of living, social vulnerability, unemployment, limited opportunities for income generation, or to acquire legal knowledge and skills, reduced health indicators and inadequate representation at the level of decision-making.

183. Having a permanent income-generating activity is a primary condition for rural women's material and social well-being, and this is where they are least protected. Rural women represented 40 per cent of the workforce in 2009 and 39.5 per cent in 2011.

184. The types of employment available to rural women tend to be in low-wage areas, particularly the service sector, education and health care. Most frequently, they work in trade, services or as employees in municipal institutions or local authorities. Wages from the main place of work and social benefits are the only regular sources of income for the vast majority of the rural women.

185. One of the basic sources of income for rural women is the production and sale of farm produce or small-scale sewing or traditional arts and crafts.

186. A total of 30.1 per cent of working women are employed in the agricultural sector. Of those, 39 per cent are workers, 22.2 per cent are employees and 40.3 per cent are self-employed.

187. Women who work at home produce vegetables, fruit and berries, and tend livestock for meat, milk and egg production. In general, all the produce is sold at low prices. This restricts food consumption by the family and does not provide an adequate income.

188. Many of the women are employed in the fields, using mainly manual techniques (for tilling, weeding, harvesting, etc.). They are also fully dependent on their employers, who do not give them contracts.

189. Government programmes to support farmers in the period 2009–2011 included preferential access to fuel and lubricants. Concessional loans at an interest rate of 7 per cent were also available to farmers in 2011–2012.

190. The Government is taking measures to support other forms of private enterprise, such as the development of business start-up centres and traditional crafts, as well as annual exhibitions of agricultural and manufactured goods and local products.

191. The income of women in the agricultural sector is very unstable, with self-employment being one of the major income-earning strategies. However, this means that women have to reconcile their commercial activities with unpaid work in the home.

192. According to *Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic*, rural poverty levels rose by 2.4 per cent between 2008 and 2010. In addition to the above-mentioned factors of vulnerability among women, there is also the unavailability of medical services, and cuts in other social services, including kindergartens, against the background of a significant reduction in the number of preschool institutions in villages.

193. Coverage of preschool facilities is as follows:

Table 5

	2008		2009		2010	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
In rural areas	4.3	5.1	5.5	5.2	6.5	6.1
In urban areas	25.0	25.1	27.6	27.7	27.9	28.1

194. In 2010, 27.4 per cent of households headed by men and 20.7 per cent of households headed by women were categorized as poor. Furthermore, where the head of the household is a woman, the level of overall poverty is worse than that in households headed by men.

195. Analysis shows that, in rural areas, women spend much more time on housework than men, and this significantly reduces their free time. Thus, while rural women spend 91.6 per cent of their time on work related to the home, men devote 75.8 per cent of their time to it.

196. The proportion of the population with access to clean drinking water has been stable since 2008, at 91.5 per cent.

197. The State keeps records of low-income families, by means of social passports for the provision of targeted assistance. Once the social passports are filled in, the local authorities recommend active and passive support measures, such as the allocation of State allowances, social grants, cash payments and material and humanitarian assistance. They also help provide training and retraining for members of low-income families, set up mutual support groups and communities, and offer paid employment in community service, other employment and microcredit for small businesses.

198. Over the past two years, the quality of all levels of education in villages, and especially the primary and secondary levels, has deteriorated. Some of the reasons are that the schools do not have enough specialized subject teachers, training materials or supplies. Of particular concern is the fall in school attendance and the dropout rate of girls because of their families' socioeconomic situation as well as the higher value set on female labour in the traditional areas of agriculture. The Ministry of Education and Science monitors school attendance to identify such children and bring them back to school.

199. Under the State Guarantees Programme, in a drive to improve women's health, they have since 2006 been exempt from co-payments during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period for eight weeks, as have children under the age of 5 years. Emergency medical assistance is provided on a cost-free basis.

200. In 2011, to improve health care for the whole population, including women in rural areas, there were health programmes covering 1,400 villages with a population of more than 2.7 million people, representing 80 per cent of the rural population. The National Hospital Mobile Medical Centre went out to the regions, where 17 teams of medical specialists treated 28,720 people. They took with them a total of 496,545 soms-worth of medicines and medical products to provide humanitarian assistance to the population. The

teams included midwives, gynaecologists and oncologists-mammologists to provide timely diagnosis of any pathology of women's reproductive systems.

201. The health promotion services are working actively in the rural regions. In 2009, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Science jointly approved guidelines entitled *The Path to Safety in Kyrgyzstan*, under which students in 626 schools receive training on HIV and drug abuse prevention each year. Over 10,000 pupils in the senior classes have been trained using the peer-to-peer method. A version of the programme was developed in 2011 for adults and teachers working with parents.

202. The State has taken the first steps to introduce monitoring of the provision of medical services, including for women living in rural areas, by setting up an internal control unit in each hospital (Ministry of Health Order of September 2012).

203. There are a number of outstanding problems in ensuring access to health-care services for women living in rural areas. Medical services are provided through rural health centres, which are usually staffed by paramedics and nurses, the size of the staff depending on the size of the local population. They do not have enough medicines, and so women have to buy most medicines in commercial pharmacies, mainly in the district centres. Women also have to travel to the district centres for appointments with medical specialists. Emergency medical assistance is difficult to access because of poor roads and the high cost of fuel.

204. The problems of rural women in general were made a priority in the National Gender Development Strategy to 2020, approved by Government Decree No. 443 of 27 June 2012, which promotes access to non-formal education through improved technical infrastructure (the development of Internet access throughout the country) and by expanding the functions of existing institutions (schools, rural health centres and family health centres). Institutional and procedural changes will be translated by the technical infrastructure and promote various forms of functional education among rural women.

205. These changes will include opportunities for rural women to learn new professions and the development of entrepreneurship, as well as more possibilities for combining family and work responsibilities through new types of work at home using modern information and communication technologies. In the final analysis, the measures will help to change the traditional view of professional and career opportunities available to rural women, the structure of employment and the quality of life of rural women.

Article 15

206. Under the Constitution, all citizens in Kyrgyzstan are equal before the law and the courts. Civil legal capacity commences for a citizen at birth and ceases upon death. Women enjoy all civil rights and duties on an equal basis with men. The Constitution and legislation governing the judicial system state that there is a single judicial system, which functions to protect the rights of all citizens, both women and men. Additional information may be found in paragraphs 220, 271–275, and 290–292 of the combined second, third and fourth periodic reports on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Government Decision No. 141 on the national reports of Kyrgyzstan on the implementation of human rights international treaties, 20 February 2012).

207. In respect of paragraph 13 of the Committee's concluding observations, the Constitution states that the norms of the international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, are directly applicable. Thus, the courts are entitled to apply the norms of international treaties in their decision-making on a case. In practice though, there have not been any cases in which the

courts have done this. However, the Supreme Court is currently working to introduce the practice of judicial decisions based on international treaties.

208. Legislation provides that citizens, both women and men, have the right to own, inherit and bequeath property. Women are entitled to set up legal entities on their own or together with other citizens and legal persons, to engage in any transaction that is not contrary to the law and to assume obligations.

209. In accordance with the Constitution, national legislation and international human rights instruments, all citizens, both women and men, have the rights of freedom of movement, to choose their place of residence and domicile in Kyrgyzstan, and to leave the country freely. Restrictions may be placed on the rights of citizens to freedom of movement and choice of place of residence and domicile within the borders of Kyrgyzstan only where justified by law. However, to guarantee the conditions in which citizens may realize their rights and fulfil their responsibilities in respect of other citizens, a record is kept of their place of residence in the country.

Article 16

210. New legislation on gender equality in family relations was introduced during the reporting period.

211. For the first time, the 2010 Constitution laid down the conditions in which marriages may be entered into and registered. A person who has reached the age of marriage has the right to marry and establish a family. No marriage shall be entered into without the free and mutual consent of the intending spouses. Marriage is registered by the State.

212. To reduce the vulnerability of women in unregistered marriages (consecrated only by religious practice), a parliamentary deputy has initiated a bill to give mullahs the right to conduct a wedding ceremony on presentation of a marriage certificate issued by the register office. The initiative generated great public interest but was not supported by Parliament.

213. Under the Family Code, men and women have equal material and personal non-material rights and responsibilities in family relations.

214. In respect of paragraph 17 of the Committee's concluding observations, the minimum age of marriage remains unchanged at 18. Article 14 of the Family Code states that, where there are valid reasons, the local authorities in the place of residence of individuals wishing to marry may lower the age of marriage by no more than one year for both men and women on the basis of a decision by the local office of the Government Children's Ombudsman.

215. Act No. 147 was adopted on 26 July 2011 to amend articles 1 and 14 of the Family Code, establishing the legal status of marriages officially registered by the registry office and local authorities, and streamlining procedures for registering marriages involving a reduction in the age of marriage.

216. Under these amendments, religious ceremonies do not confer legal validity. Only those marriages registered by the registry office and local authorities officially empowered to register acts of civil status are recognized.

217. Registry offices in Kyrgyzstan register 50,000 marriages annually, and the figure has been increasing each year. A total of 50,491 marriages were registered in 2010, followed by a rise of 3.4 per cent in 2011 to 52,144. Data on cases in which the age of marriage has been lowered are given in table 6.

Table 6
Data on the State registration of marriage
 (From the Registry Office)

	<i>All marriages</i>	<i>Cases in which the marriage age has been lowered</i>	<i>Proportion (%)</i>
2010	50 491	89	0.17
2011	52 144	85	0.16

218. In general, State-registered marriages recorded by the registry office concern individuals of marriageable age. Only 0.16 per cent of marriages registered in the country involve a reduction in the age of marriage.

Table 7
Average age of marriage (years)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
2008	24.1	27.8
2009	24.0	27.9
2010	24.1	27.9
2011	24.0	27.8

219. There may be no gender discrimination in family relations (Family Code). Further information may be found in paragraphs 527–536 of the report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

220. Additional information on marriages and divorces in the country may be found in paragraphs 157–162 of the combined second, third and fourth periodic reports of Kyrgyzstan on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Government Decision No. 141 on the national reports of Kyrgyzstan on the implementation of human rights international treaties, 20 February 2012).

221. The possession, use and disposal of the common property of spouses is effected by mutual agreement of the spouses (Family Code).

222. A transaction involving the disposal of common property by one spouse may be nullified by a court on the grounds of lack of consent by the other spouse only on his or her request (Family Code).