

Information of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the involvement and participation of persons with disabilities in the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- 1) *Please inform how persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are meaningfully consulted and their participation ensured during the follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda at the regional, national and subnational levels.*
 - a) *Is there a specific mechanism for follow-up and review of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the country? How are persons with disabilities included in this mechanism?*

- 2) *Please describe the participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in gathering data and producing Voluntary National Reports or Voluntary Local Reviews. Please share good practices in this regard.*
 - a) *What steps are being taken to facilitate their participation? Are there any awareness-raising campaigns implemented to inform persons with disabilities of these processes?*
 - b) *Are there any platforms in place for persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to contribute to the reporting process? How are they accessible? Is there a reasonable accommodation fund in place to secure the participation of persons with disabilities?*

In order to implement **target 10.3 (ensure equal opportunities and end discrimination)** and **target 16.b (promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies)** of SDG, the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" on May 31, 2018, which was prepared in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Law regulates the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the grounds of disability, the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, the full participation of persons with disabilities in the life of society and the creation of conditions for their social integration. It also defines the relations arising in the field of the full and equal exercise of the rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities.

Around 20 new legislative acts have been adopted in connection with the implementation of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These include the creation of an individual rehabilitation program, the reasonable adaptation of infrastructure facilities to make them accessible to persons with disabilities, the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, the establishment of a register of persons with disabilities and other similar provisions.

All offensive or negative notions considered offensive or carrying negative connotations towards persons with disabilities have been replaced by neutral words and expressions in national legislation.

In 2020, adoption restrictions related to disabilities were removed to eliminate discrimination. Currently, there are no restrictions on the adoption of persons with disabilities.

Additionally, an allowance of 600 manat has been established and assigned to adopters to encourage the adoption of children of this category.

The legislation was amended to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal conditions and opportunities to effectively use information technologies and the Internet. This decision guarantees accessibility of official Internet information resources of all state bodies for persons in this category based on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

A public council consisting of 9 civil society institutions was established under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population (MLSPP) to ensure the participation of civil society institutions in the organization of public control over the adoption of legal acts of the MLSPP. Moreover, all legislative acts drafted by MLSPP are posted on the official website of MLSPP for public hearings and feedback, comments and suggestions from civil society institutions, individual citizens, specialists and experts.

"Standards of workplaces of persons with disabilities" adopted in 2019 set the requirements for employers of all enterprises and organizations operating in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan in accordance with the characteristics (persons with physical, hearing, and visual impairment) of employed persons with disabilities. During the preparation of the draft standards, the proposals and suggestions of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were taken into consideration.

The Regulation on the "State monitoring in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities" was approved in 2019. The objective of the "State monitoring in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities" is to assess the current situation regarding the implementation of state policies in this field, identify the shortcomings and determine the directions of the state policies and identify the necessary measures. State monitoring in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities is mainly conducted in four directions: accessibility, inclusion, discrimination on the basis of disability, and reasonable accommodation. For this purpose, a special working group was established within the MLSPP, comprising representatives of NGOs, experts and persons with disabilities. The report with remarks, including the remarks of persons with disabilities and representatives of NGOs on the results of the monitoring, is prepared by a working group and submitted to the government.

To implement target 1.3 (implement social protection systems) of SDG, 4 social reform packages have been implemented over the last 5 years in order to strengthen the social protection of vulnerable groups of population. As a result, the minimum disability pension has increased by 2.5 times, the average monthly pension has increased by 2 times, and social benefits and pension payments have increased by 5 times. A total of 4 million people are covered by these reforms and 7 billion manat is allocated annually from the budget.

4) Please provide information on whether capacity-building programs are in place, including specific funding, to allow persons with disabilities to meaningfully engage and participate in the process of follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the regional, national and sub-national level.

"Individual Rehabilitation and Habilitation Program" was developed to facilitate greater participation of people with disabilities in public life. An individual rehabilitation and habilitation program is designed to determine the specific needs of people with disabilities through the implementation of a relevant program. The mobile service is organized by rehabilitation institutions of the State Medical-Social Expertise and Rehabilitation Agency (Agency) under MLSPP in order to enhance the accessibility of rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities who have difficulties in leaving their place of residence.

Among the services provided by rehabilitation institutions, the "Rehabus" and the mobile service play an important role in ensuring the comfort of people with disabilities. The objective of the "Rehabus" rehabilitation service is to enhance the accessibility of outpatient and community rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities residing in Baku and the surrounding areas. Moreover, the service aims to facilitate easy access to the relevant facility by the rehabilitation bus. In addition to inpatient and outpatient care, the provision of rehabilitation services in community, telerehabilitation and mobile forms in recent years has served to improve the social well-being of persons with disabilities.

People with disabilities are provided with means of rehabilitation entirely at the expense of the state. At the same time, the capabilities of persons with disabilities increase, it becomes easier for them to work in organizations and perform everyday life functions. The Prosthetic and Orthopedic Production and Rehabilitation Center (Center) under the Agency provides rehabilitation tools for people with disabilities. This Center provides outpatient, inpatient and mobile prosthetic and orthopedic care to persons with disabilities, medical and social rehabilitation of persons with disabilities through rehabilitation therapy, prosthetics and orthopedics. The Center's hospital provides rehabilitation and treatment activities for people with all types of amputated limbs and people with prosthetic disabilities and carries out training for people with prosthetics.