**Information submitted by the Government of Azerbaijan**

I 2. Resolution#213 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated June 23rd, 2020, approved the Rules for raising awareness among young people about the importance of family and marriage, the negative consequences of early marriage and consanguineous marriage in order to protect and strengthen it. The legislation raises the minimum age of marriage for girls from 17 to 18, and in accordance with Article 10 of the Family Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the age of marriage in the Republic of Azerbaijan is set at 18 years. At the same time, on November 15, 2011, Article 176.1 was added to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan on “Forcing a woman to marry”. According to this article, forcing a woman to marry is punishable by a fine of 2,000 to 3,000 manat or imprisonment for up to two years, the same acts committed against a minor considers a fine of 3,000 to 4,000 manat or imprisonment for up to four years.

The “Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for Children for 2020-2025” was approved by the Presidential Order of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated November 27, 2020. The Action Plan envisages measures to “strengthen the social protection of children in difficult living conditions and create equal opportunities for them”, “Strengthening measures and organization of awareness-raising activities in the field of prevention of early marriages and marriages between relatives".

3.c “Self-presentation skills”, “Development of leadership skills”, “Gender equality and human rights”, “Early marriage and domestic violence”, “Financial literacy”, “Family budget management”, “Business organization and management trainings” were held in Azerbaijan’s Tovuz region and "Early Marriage" trainings were held in Azerbaijan’s Goychay region through Women Resource Centers in 2021.

d. From June 7th to October 20th, 2021, medical services in the field of obstetrics and gynecology were provided to 909 women living in border villages as part of a project on the provision of mobile services on sexual and reproductive health (CRS) with the support of the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), Compulsory Medical Insurance and TABIB. During the examinations, the women were informed about the use of modern contraceptives.

In 2019-2021, half-day seminars on reproductive health, early marriage, children's rights and human trafficking were organized in more than 800 schools for 10-11thgrade students in six districts of the country and several districts of capital city Baku. Awareness-raising and incentive banners No to Early Marriage!, Reproductive Health, Safe Abortion, etc. were developed and distributed to the general public and health workers.

During full-time education in 2019 and 2021 half-day seminars on reproductive health and family planning covering more than 30,000 children from over 1,500 secondary and boarding schools of the country and more than 5,000 parents were held in cooperation with the Ministry of Health , Ministry of Education , UNFPA, UNICEF and Hopeful Future Social Initiatives PU, and awareness-raising booklets distributed.

4. In 2019-2021, more than 700 secondary school teachers, police officers, social workers, school psychologists and employees of NGOs working in the regions underwent 2-day live and virtual training courses on the prevention of violence against children, and early marriage. An e-course was developed and posted on <http://www.ecourses.az> platform.

An educational project "Let's say no to early marriage!" based on the topic was implemented by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (SCFWCA) in order to prevent negative situations such as girls' dropout of education and unhealthy psychological situation in the family in 2021.

In 2019, 367 early marriages were registered, while in 2020, this figure declined significantly to 165 registered cases. In order to prevent such violations, monitoring is carried out in secondary schools and awareness-raising campaigns such as We say no to violence!, Able to defend yourself, We must know our rights, Early marriages lead nowhere, Early marriages and negative consequencesof incest. In order to inform the population, electronic posters such as Marriage under 18 is a marriage of children! are put up in Baku Underground stations.

7. A study entitled "Current Family Relations in Azerbaijan: Socio-Psychological Analysis" has been prepared in 2021. During the analysis, respondents were asked questions about marriage - attitude to the age of marriage, the most suitable age for marriage, whether there are any cases of marriage of girls under 18 in their area and relatives, the frequency of marriages. In order to study the attitude to early marriages, respondents were asked questions about "Marriage of girls under 18" and "Marriage of boys under 18".

10. Within the framework of the campaign against coronavirus (COVID-19), the SCFWCA and its 11 Child and Family Support Centres have strengthened their activities in accordance with the instructions of the operational headquarters of the Cabinet of Ministers. In order to support citizens, psychologists from the Child and Family Support Centers provided psychological assistance. The special project **“**Online psychological assistance**”** has been launched since April 2020.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the SCFWCA, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) launched a new project “Stand Up for Women and Girls” to help tackle violence against women. The project further boosts the capacity of the Women Resource Centers to advance women’s economic empowerment by providing training and business advisory services for women entrepreneurs and by working with the private sector to create more opportunities for vocational training and internships for women.