



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! BE PROTECTED!

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN –
Easy-Read-version of selected articles

This version of the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** was developed jointly with positive champions*, women from Moldova survivors of violence, who help now other women overcome similar situations.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the positive champions **Maia Taran, Svetlana Verstiac, Alexandra Orlov, Natalia Palamari, Natalia Nalimova, Rodica Carpenco, Maria Scorodinschi, Svetlana Herta** and **Natalia Jenunchi** for advancing women's rights in Moldova and their essential contribution to the development of this publication.

In addition, we would like to thank our partners, Promo-LEX Association, namely: Dumitru Sliusarenco, Olga Manole, Tatiana Chebac, Lilia Poting, Alexandru Postica for facilitation of co-creation and editing of this publication.

This publication was developed as part of the Innovation Initiative led by UN Women Moldova Country Office using co-creation, positive deviance and employing other innovation tools and techniques. It contains only some CEDAW articles selected by the positive champions* and described from their point of view to help other women improve their knowledge and understand their rights.

This publication was developed with the support of the Swedish and Danish Governments.

Concept: Ulziisuren Jamsran

Coordinators: Ala Zolotariov, Olga Manole

Content Contribution: Dumitru Sliusarenco, Corneliu Eftodi, Marina Vataf

Computerized processing: Mihail Catan

Graphical Design: DoubleS Creative

Publisher: „Depol Promo” SRL

FREE COPY

* *Positive Champions is the term coined by survivors of various forms of violence who are regarded as the key experts. These are outstanding resource persons from among the survivors and other partners, who broke the norm and found ways to achieve greater results with the same resources, and are now helping other women in their communities.*

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! BE PROTECTED!

**CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL
FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN –
Easy-Read-version of selected articles**

Chisinau, 2017

GLOSSARY

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

SEX - all anatomic and physiological features that differentiate the human beings into women and men.

GENDER - all psychosocial and cultural features that differentiate men and women.

STEREOTYPE – misconceptions about certain categories of people, types of conduct or ways of thinking. Often these ideas are subjective and do not reflect the reality.

GENDER STEREOTYPES - set of social or cultural prescriptions of the gender roles. Gender stereotypes appear as a result of dominating concepts that exist in the society about different characteristics of women and men.

PREJUDICE/BIAS – unfair or irrational opinions or attitudes, formed without sufficient knowledge or logic rationale.

WHAT IS CEDAW?

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty that stipulates what the signatory states should do, including the Republic of Moldova, to ensure that women benefit of the same rights as men.

WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA OF THE CEDAW?

No woman should be underappreciated or treated unfairly because she is a woman.

The issues related to violation of women's rights shall be solved by the national authorities or can be raised with a special body, created for these purposes within the United Nations Organization - the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

HOW CAN I APPLY CEDAW TO DEFEND MY RIGHTS?

CEDAW contains a set of conditions and rules, which, when violated, entitles every woman to notify the Committee through a written complaint.

A complaint addressed to the Committee may be lodged by anyone who thinks a right guaranteed by the Convention was violated. The complaint may be lodged in person or with the assistance of specialized organizations.

DISCRIMINATION

Women and men are equal and have the same rights. The negative attitude towards women, their unfair treatment compared to men, and the impossibility of women to benefit of the same opportunities is considered violation of rights and gender discrimination.

EXAMPLE:

Elena is pregnant. Once her boss found out about her pregnancy, he forced her to quit her job in order not to pay her social benefits.

In this situation Elena's rights are violated by her employer.

EQUAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY AND FAMILY

Women and men have equal rights and obligations in the society and family. The prejudices towards women shall be eliminated.



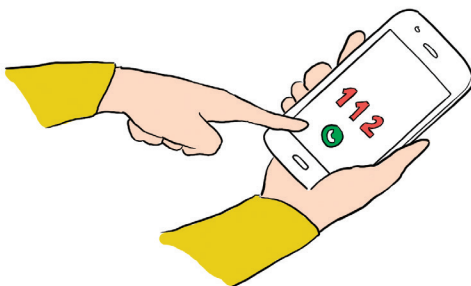
EXAMPLE:

Women should not be treated just as mothers and housewives who have the role to give birth to children and take care of the family. They should have the possibility to assert themselves equally in any field, and family obligations should be shared between partners.

These are social models of conduct based on gender prejudices.

WOMEN TRAFFICKING

The authorities have to protect women from trafficking and sexual exploitation. Women should not be afraid to report any attempt of trafficking or sexual exploitation.



** **112** is the single emergency call number which is active non-stop and can be dialed free-of-charge from landline and cell phone*

EXAMPLE:

Cristina was forced to provide sexual services against her will. This is a violation of Cristina's rights. The police, prosecutor's office, and the court must investigate the case, and bring the culprits to justice, and ensure Cristina's immediate protection.

The authorities are obliged to compensate the damage brought to Cristina and act immediately.

POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE

Women have to benefit from the possibility to vote in any type of elections and be elected for management positions, in municipalities, rayon councils, Parliament, Government, public organizations, and any other institutions, without any obstacle.



EXAMPLE:

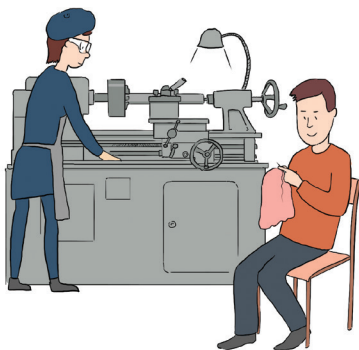
Lucia wants to candidate for the councillor position in local elections. Although Lucia has lived in the village her entire life and knows its specific and problems, she cannot get the support of any political party because she took care of her household and family her entire life and does not have the necessary experience.

*This is a violation of women's rights.
Political parties are obliged to promote women
on electoral lists.*

EDUCATION

Women and girls have the right to education under the same conditions as men and boys. Women and girls have the right, in particular to:

- ♦ be enrolled in any school or university and benefit of adequate conditions to study;



- ♦ study the same programs as men, be trained by equally qualified teachers and take the same tests and exams as men;
- ♦ obtain a study diploma, certificate or license;
- ♦ enjoy mixed education, not divided by gender;
- ♦ benefit of education programs and curricula, which exclude any prejudices, especially related to the model [traditional] roles of women in society and family;
- ♦ have equal access to scholarships and other support;
- ♦ participate in family planning trainings.

EXAMPLE:

Irina studies at a military institution. Frequently, the trainers and professors make jokes about Irina, insinuating that women's place is not in the military. The colleagues harass her and advise her to choose a profession suitable to a woman.

Discrimination and harassment of women in the educational process affect the quality of studies and fortify the prejudices towards them.

WORK

Women have the right to work, in equal conditions as men.
The State has to guarantee this right, especially:



- ♦ to make sure the employment process is not affected by prejudices that the woman is weaker, less capable, cannot make important decisions or is less efficient due to pregnancy or children;
- ♦ to guarantee to the women the right to choose their own work place and occupation;
- ♦ to guarantee that women receive equal pay for equal work as men, as well as other benefits such as bonuses, promotions, etc.;
- ♦ to provide women with pensions and social aid, including medical or disability support;
- ♦ to ensure that women are not fired or sanctioned for giving birth or going on maternity leave;

- ♦ to pay maternity leave, and to keep the job;
- ♦ to encourage men to involve more actively in raising children, including by providing paid paternal leave;
- ♦ to create sufficient places in crèches and kindergartens, so women can continue to work and participate actively in different public activities.

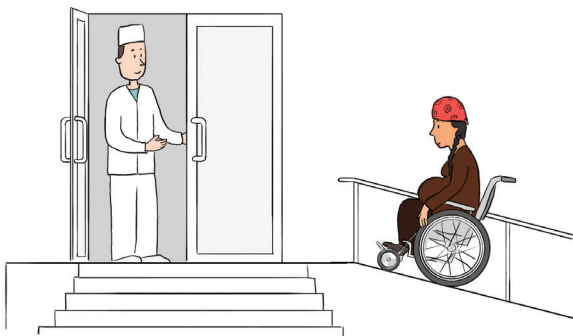
EXAMPLE:

Maria has applied for the position of Head Engineer at a textile company. Although she passed all the tests and has the necessary experience, she was not hired, and the company extended the selection period. The representatives of the company explained to Maria that she was not selected because the position requires overtime hours, sometimes during the night, and the office is located in an industrial area, outside the city. This is why the employer believes that Maria, being a mother and a wife, would not be able to adjust to the working conditions.

Performing different tasks should not be associated with social roles of the woman, and respectively, with the gender prejudices.

HEALTH

Women have the right to quality medical services, including in child and pregnancy planning. Women should receive free services before and during the pregnancy and after the delivery, especially medical tests and check-ups, medicines and healthy diet.



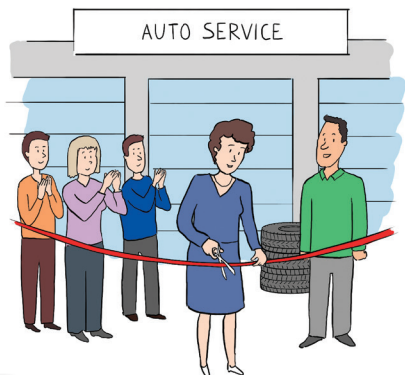
EXAMPLE:

Olga is pregnant. She went to a family doctor for medical assistance during pregnancy. The doctor refused to provide assistance because Olga is a housewife and does not have mandatory health insurance.

The State has to guarantee quality medical services for women. Pregnant women have the right to free medical services.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

Women should have the possibility to apply for credits and other types of loans under equal conditions as men. Cultural and sports activities should be equally accessible to men and women.



EXAMPLE:

Alina has divorced recently. Before the divorce, she took care of the household, and her husband was the breadwinner. She tries to start her own business, but cannot get a credit or loan. All financing institutions refuse to give her a loan because she has no permanent income, job or other assets.

This is a discrimination against woman based on roles distribution in the family. This situation has led to limited access of woman to financial resources.

WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS

Women in rural areas have a special role in the family life and its livelihood. Women have the right to participate actively in the development of their native village, its management and organization.

The women in rural areas should have equal living conditions as women in urban areas, especially such as access to water, sewage, electricity, transportation, and housing.



EXAMPLE:

Victoria lives in her native village. Once she found out that she was pregnant, she went to the local medical center to receive health services, but the doctor explained her that he cannot provide her with all necessary services and Victoria has to go to the city, which is 70 kms away.

The State has to ensure quality health services in rural areas.

EQUALITY BEFORE LAW

Women and men are equal before the law. Women can decide by themselves on how to use their own money and assets, and they can sign any documents. The laws or other acts that limit women before law are considered null and void.

EXAMPLE:

Doina is married to a foreign citizen. Doina wants for her child to become a citizen of the Republic of Moldova, while her husband obliges her to accept for the child the citizenship of his state. He explains to her that in his state women cannot decide on the citizenship of the child, because this is the right of the man.

*Women and men have equal rights,
irrespective of the country they reside in,
and any limitation of their rights
is in contradiction with CEDAW provisions.*

MARRIAGE

Women are equal to men in family relations and marriage, and are free to decide on their own, if they want to marry, who to marry and what name to have.



In the family, men and women have the same obligations, including with regard to bringing up and educating children.

Women have the right to decide freely when and how many children to have.

All assets, including money earned during the marriage belong equally to both spouses.

Women have equal rights and can use freely the house, car, and other joint property. Women have the right to manage freely the money and to inherit property.

No woman can be obliged to marry or choose a certain life partner. Currently, in Moldova, in accordance with the existing laws, measures are taken to avoid marriage between children, and the minimal age for getting married is 18 years old.

EXAMPLE:

Stela is in the 8th grade and is of Roma origin. She is passionate about boxing and dreams of becoming world champion. According to Roma traditions, her sisters married very young, abandoned school and sports. Stela respects traditions, but is strongly against school abandonment and early marriage.

***Women have the right to decide if,
when and who to marry.***

CEDAW IN BRIEF*

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW, is an international legal instrument that requires countries to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas and promotes women's equal rights. **CEDAW is often described as the international bill of rights for women.** The United Nations adopted CEDAW on 18 December 1979. As of 2016, **189 countries have ratified CEDAW.**

Article 1. Definition of Discrimination against Women and Girls: Discrimination against women and girls means different treatment from men and boys that prevents them from enjoying their human rights. It includes both direct and indirect discrimination.

Article 2. Obligations to Eliminate Discrimination: Countries are obligated to take action to end discrimination against women and girls in all its forms, by establishing laws and policies to protect women and girls from discrimination and including the principle of equality in constitutions and other national laws.

* Based on the CEDAW version for young people, developed by the UN Women's Headquarters in New York.

Article 3. Appropriate Measures: Countries must take all appropriate measures to guarantee that women and girls can enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of society.

Article 4. Temporary Special Measures: Countries should adopt temporary special measures to accelerate progress towards gender equality and end discrimination and women and girls.

Article 5. Gender Stereotypes: Countries must work to change harmful gender stereotypes about women and girls and men and boys that perpetuate discrimination and limit opportunities for women and girls to achieve their full potential.

Article 6. Trafficking and Exploitation of Prostitution: Countries must end the exploitation of prostitution and trafficking in women and girls.

Article 7. Political and Public Life: Countries must eliminate discrimination against women and girls in political and public life.

Article 8. Participation at International Level: Countries must ensure that women and girls have equal rights to represent their country at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

Article 9. Nationality: Countries must guarantee that women have equal rights with men to acquire, retain or change their nationality, and the nationality of their children. Countries must allow women to pass their nationality to their foreign spouses on an equal basis with men.

Article 10. Education: Countries must end discrimination against women and girls and ensure equal rights in education.

Article 11. Employment: Countries must eliminate discrimination against women in employment, including ensuring equal opportunities to choose one's profession and receive equal pay for work of equal value.

Article 12. Health Care and Family Planning: Countries must guarantee equal access to health care and ensure women and girls are not discriminated against in health care and have access to services for family planning and reproductive health.

Article 13. Economic and Social Life: Countries must eliminate discrimination against women and girls in economic and social life.

Article 14. Rural Women and Girls: Countries must take account of the specific problems and important role that rural women and girls play in the survival of their families.

Article 15. Equality before the Law: Countries must guarantee women and girls equality with men and boys before the law, including equal access to legal counsel, services, and resources.

Article 16. Marriage and Family Life: Countries must eliminate discrimination against women in marriage and family relations. Countries must ensure that women have equal rights as men in their choice of whom to marry and whether to marry, and any matters relating to the birth, adoption, and raising of children. The marriage of a child has no legal effect and countries should take steps to set a minimum age for marriage.

Articles 17 to 22. These articles detail how the CEDAW Committee works, including its role in monitoring the implementation of CEDAW in countries that have ratified CEDAW.

Articles 23 to 30. These articles deal with the administration of CEDAW.

Optional Protocol. The Optional Protocol introduces additional mechanisms for the implementation of CEDAW, including an inquiry procedure for the CEDAW Committee to address systematic violations and a way for women and girls to submit complaints directly to the CEDAW Committee if they consider their human rights protected by CEDAW are violated.

There are several organizations in Moldova that provide support in cases of gender-based violence and discrimination. For more details, please contact:

Promo-LEX Association

127, Stefan cel Mare blvd.

Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Tel.: + 373 22 450024

**The United Nations Entity
for Gender Equality and the
Empowerment of Women (UN Women)**
Str. 31 August 1989, No. 131, MD-2012
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

