



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

AYNA INITIATIVE GROUP

29 AUGUST 2023

Recommendations from Previous Cycle

18 recommendations on gender-based violence and violence against women were made during the last cycle:

- 7 Recommendations to take measures to combat violence against women and promote gender equality (Moldova, Gabon, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, Togo, Rwanda, Italy)
- 5 Recommendations to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (Cote D'ivoire, Spain, Honduras, Cyprus, Estonia).
- 3 Recommendations on legal reforms and national action plan (Paraguay, Brazil, Belgium)
- 3 Recommendations on raising awareness and strengthening responses, including training of legal professionals on handling cases of violence against women (Canada, Montenegro, Nepal)

Achievements

- Adoption of National Action Plan to combat Domestic Violence for 2020-2023;
- Establishment of the new state-funded shelter in 2020
- Training sessions for several judges, lawyers and other legal professionals

Challenges

- Istanbul convention has not ratified yet
- Lack of support services for survivors gender-based violence (GBV)
- Cyber-attacks against feminist activists

Situation in Azerbaijan

Issue I: Lack of support services for GBV survivors

- **Lack of Places in Shelters:** Only a total of 175 survivors of domestic violence can be sheltered at one time. This is approximately ten times less than international standards. It is easy to grasp the significant discrepancy between the number of the domestic violence crimes, which is approximately 1300 per year and the number of survivors.

Source: State Statistical Committee, Women and Men in Azerbaijan, Statistical Yearbook (2017; 2018; 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022); Mukhtarova N. (2022), Shelters for victims of domestic violence in Azerbaijan. Agora, available at <https://tinyurl.com/9z77724e>, accessed 14 August 2023.

Shortfall in Shelter Capacity for Domestic Violence Survivors



Figure 1. Shortfall in Shelter Capacity for Domestic Violence Survivors

Situation in Azerbaijan

Issue I: Lack of support services for GBV survivors

- ***Inaccessible Shelter Locations:*** The shelters are located only in two big cities (Baku and Ganja), which means that sometimes the survivors have to travel approximately 300 km (or 180 miles) from some areas of the country to get to the shelter.

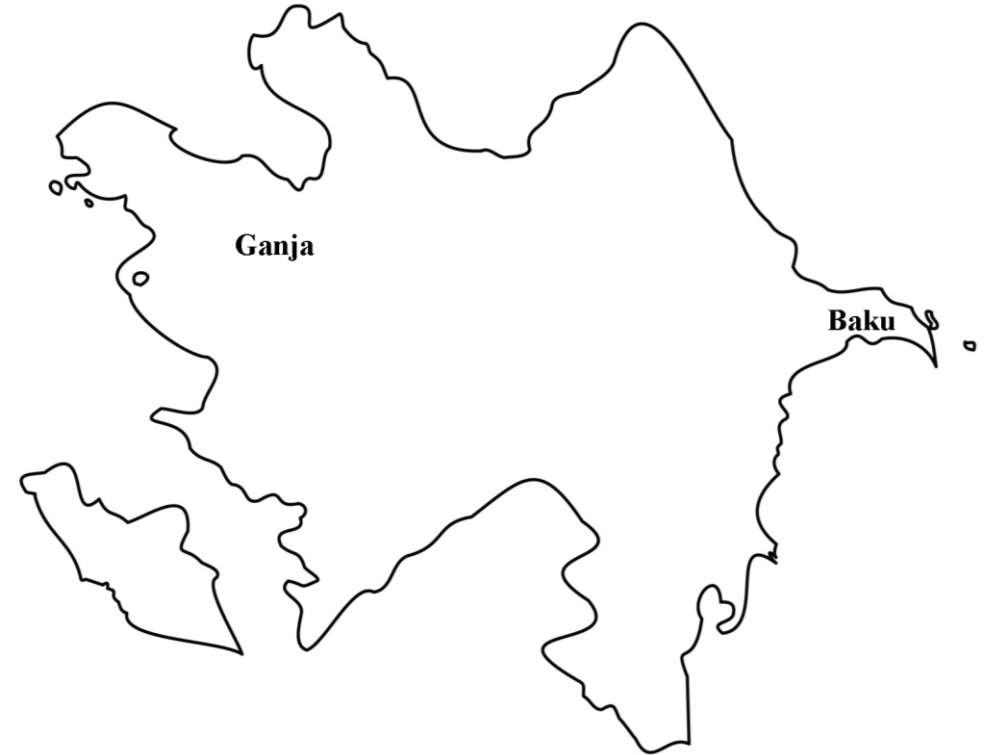


Figure 2. Map of Azerbaijan

Source for map: www.vecteezy.com

Situation in Azerbaijan

Issue I: Lack of support services for GBV survivors

- ***Gender segregation in shelters:*** The shelters in Azerbaijan are gender-segregated, designed to provide services mainly to women and children. This arrangement poses difficulties for individuals in the LBT+ community who do not identify as female or do not feel comfortable in gender-segregated spaces, as they may face challenges in accessing shelter services. In many cases, these shelters refuse to accept them. Even when they are accepted, they often cannot stay there due to discrimination, which forces them to leave.

Situation in Azerbaijan

Issue I: Lack of support services for GBV survivors

- ***Non-availability of specialised rape crisis centres:*** survivors of rape and sexual assault require specialised support and care, access to healthcare for physical exams, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, and access to emergency contraception; access to counselling and mental health support to address trauma and emotional distress; access to legal support etc. Such centres are unavailable in Azerbaijan.
- ***Delays in testing evidence:*** Forensic testing centres are not available on 7/24, which makes it difficult or sometimes impossible to collect evidence to identify and prosecute perpetrators of sexual violence.

Recommendation Issue I

- to increase countrywide the number of shelters for gender-based violence survivors to meet international standards and to ensure them to be inclusive for a vulnerable population, especially LGBTQ+;
- to ensure the availability of specialised rape crisis centres, 7/24 forensic testing for victims of sexual assault and rape.

Situation in Azerbaijan

Issue II: Cyber attacks against feminist activists

- Feminist and gender activists have faced cyber attacks since the beginning of the Feminist Movement in Azerbaijan in 2019. Instagram and Facebook pages that promote feminism and LGBTQ+ activism have been hacked and deleted.
- Personal correspondences, intimate photos, and audio recordings, alleged to belong to feminist activists, were disseminated through Facebook pages and Telegram channels, subjecting these activists to slut-shaming and online harassment.
- Official information from Gmail indicates that these cyber attacks were carried out by the government.

Cyber attacks in 2020-2022

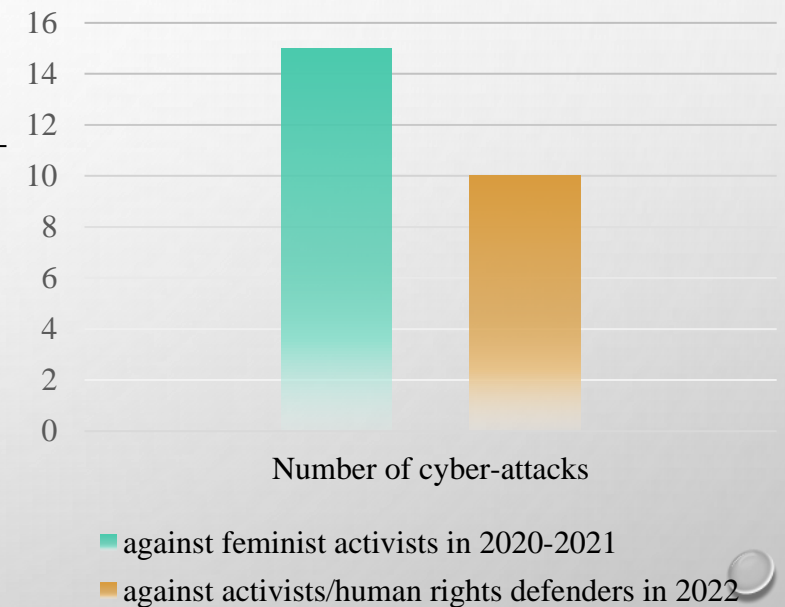


Figure 3. Cyber attacks against activists in 2020-2022
Source: www.amnesty.org and www.az-netwatch.org

Recommendation Issue II

- to investigate and hold accountable those responsible for cyber-attacks and online harassment against feminist activists.

Fem-utopia

Qadın
Qətləri

AONA

For
woman

NƏFƏS
LGBTI
AZƏRBAYCAN ALYANSI

Gender Resource Center

THANK YOU!