



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

Distr.: General
8 September 2008
English
Original: Spanish

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

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

Sixth periodic report of States parties

Argentina*

* The present report is being issued without formal editing.

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Introduction

The Government of Argentina regrets that it cannot report on application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in its entire national territory, which includes the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. As the United Nations recognizes, there is a sovereignty dispute over the "Question of the Malvinas" between Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The illegal occupation by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland led to the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49, 37/9, 38/12, 39/6, 40/21, 41/40, 42/19 and 43/25, urging the parties on repeated occasions to resume negotiations. Despite the standing readiness of the Argentine government, this has not happened. In a note of 3 April 1989, Argentina rejected the extension of the territory of application of the Convention to the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, as notified by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 7 April 1986. As well, by a note of 18 January 2005, it rejected the declaration of territorial application to those archipelagos, made by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 17 December 2004 upon its accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

A. Political, economic, social and cultural context

This sixth periodic report of Argentina covers the period from January 2004 until December 2007, during the presidency of Dr. Nestor Kirchner.

The government that took office on 25 May 2003 represented a new positioning for Argentina in political, economic, social and cultural affairs and in the matter of human rights.

This period began in a time of crisis, with high indices of poverty, affecting around 50% of the population, great social fragmentation, and the loss of values that were deeply rooted in the citizenry, as a result of the neoliberal policies pursued since the dictatorship introduced in 1976, and the undermining of institutions that guaranteed rights in the areas of labour and social security, education, health, employment, and women's political participation.

The issue of social inclusion is directly and closely related to economic growth, to social, territorial and gender equity, to the universality of social rights, and to the existence of legal mechanisms and policies for guaranteeing individuals the effective exercise of their rights.

The macroeconomic policies that have strengthened the international trade performance, together with the income policies pursued by the national government and provincial governments, have sparked a rapid recovery in social indicators, with a significant reduction in poverty and indigence, lower unemployment rates, an increase in the minimum wage, the restoration of collective wage bargaining, higher pensions, and a very significant broadening of their coverage. With implementation of the Social Security Inclusion Programme, some 2 million new retirees were brought into the system, 85% of them women.

Public social expenditure reflects the economic effort made by the State to improve people's living conditions and to promote the collective welfare. Over the last four years, consolidated public social spending has grown steadily, with a cumulative increase of 88% between the years 2003 and 2006, representing close to 20% of GDP. In the early years this spending was focused primarily on direct income transfers, in cash and in kind. Beginning in 2004, greater emphasis was placed on housing and urban development, drinking water and sewage, as well as education, culture, and science and technology. There has been a steady increase in the share of social promotion and assistance.¹

Between the year 2002, when poverty reached its peak, and 2007, poverty declined by nearly 30 percentage points, from a household incidence rate of 45.7% in 2002 to 16.3 in the first half of 2007.

Regional disparities remain significant, however: while the household poverty rate in Patagonia was 9.5% in the first half of 2007, it was as high as 30% in the Northeast.

Whereas 46.5% of women in all urban centres were classed as poor in the second half of 2003, this figure declined to 26.5% in the second half of 2006. Among poor women, the percentage who were indigent dropped from 19.9% in the second half of 2003 to 8.4% in the second half of 2006.²

Between 2004 and 2007 the unemployment rate declined steadily from 13.2% to 7.4%, and this decline was equally significant for men and women.

The *Salario Mínimo Vital y Móvil* ["Mobile Minimum Living Wage"] was raised from \$450 a month in September 2004 to \$980 on 1 December 2007. The minimum retirement allowance in 2007 stood at \$570, up by 307% from its starting level of \$140.

The Ministry of Social Development has implemented three national plans for the revival of human and social development: the Families Plan, the National Plan for Local Development and Social Economy "*Manos a la Obra*" ["Let's Get to Work!"], and the National Food Security Plan.

The adoption of a human rights policy as a central focus of the State necessarily implied an active policy to promote equality and equity between men and women, at the national and international levels. To begin with, our country withdrew the reservations it had entered in 1995 with respect to the Beijing Platform for Action, relating to the definitions of such concepts as sexual health, reproductive health and sex education, and is now playing an active role in international forums to promote the observance of women's rights, particularly with respect to health, education, decent work, a life free of violence, and reconciliation of working and family life.

In 2006 the National Congress approved the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, with no reservations or restrictions (Law 26,171). This marked a real milestone in the struggle initiated several decades ago in our country to win recognition of women's rights.

¹Country Report 2007, Millennium Development Goals, data supplied by the Public Expenditure and Social Programmes Analysis Division of the Ministry of Economy and Production.

²National Statistics and Sciences Institute (INDEC), Permanent Household Survey (BPH), all urban areas.

Our country has also ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

The National Antidiscrimination Plan has been adopted as State policy, with measures to do away with all kinds of discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, social status, religious or political convictions, etc.

There has been a significant increase in the number of women involved in politics, and in the elections held on 28 October 2007 Dr. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner was elected President of the Nation. In the last elections, female candidates for president secured a combined total of more than 78% of the votes cast. In the National Congress, 40% of the seats in its two houses, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, are held by women. At the provincial level, a female governor was elected for the first time, in the Province of Tierra del Fuego, and the number of female members of the provincial legislatures has grown.

Congress has passed laws and the national executive branch has issued decrees, resolutions and provisions that have a direct or indirect impact on the status of women in the country. These include the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Act, the Sexual Education Act, the Humanized Childbirth Act, the Technical and Vocational Education Act, and the National Education Act, as well as creation of the Gender Policies Council within the Ministry of Defence, measures concerning gender representation in the makeup of the Supreme Court of Justice (Decree 222 of 2003), the "Victims against Violence" Programme, and increased allowances for older mothers of seven children, etc.

As result of legislation, policies and massive public information campaigns, society is exhibiting changes that indicate major progress in recognizing women as social and political stakeholders:

- The Supreme Court has been transformed from one with an automatic majority to one that is pluralistic and independent; for the first time in our country's democratic history, two female justices have been appointed to the Supreme Court.
- Women have been appointed to head ministries such as Defence, Economy and Social Development, as well as the Banco de la Nación Argentina and the Integrated Social Services System for Retirees and Pensioners (PAMI, the "Comprehensive Medical Care Programme").
- The new approach to social policy is not focused exclusively on the welfare dimension but also includes the promotion of rights and seeks to ensure significantly greater equality and regional equity in the generation of cooperative projects and social undertakings, which are having a direct impact on people and will broaden participation for women.
- Law 25,673 creating the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme has been implemented nationwide, with appropriate funding and publicity.
- Some 1.5 million people who were formerly excluded because they were not contributors (housewives, informal workers, domestic workers, unregistered workers, etc.) have now been enrolled in the Social Security system, by means of Decree 1454 of December 2005, amending the rules

of the system governing independent workers. The final numbers of persons included in the system results from a budgetary allocation made by political decision of the President and the commitment of governors and *intendentes* (mayors), accompanied by campaigns on the part of the National Women's Council to publicize rights and to train community leaders.

- The National Antidiscrimination Plan is being implemented, accompanied by a mass publicity campaign.
- Encouragement is being given to plans and action programmes at the national level for giving effective enforcement to the Convention of Belém do Pará, so as to respond in an integral and coordinated manner to gender violence. This effort has involved the National Women's Council and other national, provincial and municipal agencies and civil society organizations: the CNM's National Action Plan on violence against women; training for the security forces; preparation of resource manuals and the establishment of guidance and referral services in the provincial women's offices, the "Victims against Violence" programme, the office for addressing workplace violence, and mass public campaigns.
- The Tripartite Commission for Equal Treatment and Opportunities between men and women in the workforce has been strengthened at the national level, and encouragement is being given for the creation of tripartite commissions at the provincial level.
- Equal opportunities are being encouraged by integrating women into the economy through technical and vocational training, technical assistance, access to credit, and the microcredit law, through such programmes as the CNM's Women, Equity and Work Programme and the establishment of cooperatives for building 240 Community Integration Centres, comprising women and men from the Heads of Household Programme.
- Female domestic workers are being encouraged to join the formal workforce. More than 214,000 female domestic workers are now registered as Social Security contributors, a fourfold increase in the registration of such workers.
- Women are participating in society and are exercising their civil rights more actively, and there is greater recognition of those rights by political parties and social organizations and movements, with the creation of gender units and training and technical assistance programmes.
- The "Juana Azurduy" Programme for Strengthening Women's Rights and Participation was created in 2006 within the Federal Ministry of Social Development. This programme gives Argentine women the tools, within a supportive State, to guarantee their rights and to make all sectors of society more aware of the potential for a culture of equity and inclusion in all areas.
- The education and technology budget has been increased, a National Literacy Plan has been implemented, and a new National Education Act has been approved, with a gender perspective.

- Women in the armed forces. New provisions allow the recruitment of cadets in situations of pregnancy or paternity, which previously constituted obstacles to recruitment and a permanent career. The National Women's Council has signed an agreement creating the Observatory on the Integration of Women into the Armed Forces, and a Gender Policies Council, involving academics, women's organizations, officers of the three armed forces, the Human Rights Office and the National Women's Council.
- A Committee for Gender Equity in Peace Missions has been instituted at the behest of the Argentine Foreign Office, with participation by the Armed Forces and the CNM.
- The CNM is a member of the Interministerial Committee created under the National Social Policies Coordination Council to monitor and prepare national reports on the Millennium Development Goals and to submit documents for inclusion of the gender perspective in indicators relating to all those goals. The CNM participated in drafting Goal 4, "Promoting Gender Equality and Equity", for Argentina's country report for 2005 and its 2006 update, and the 2007 National Report on the Millennium Development Goals. It also participates in preparing metadata: definition, calculation and analysis of indicators.
- The security forces in all provinces are being trained, and a protocol is being prepared for providing care to victims of violence in all the police stations of Argentina, in conjunction with the Internal Security Council (CSI) and the CNM. For the first time, all provincial security units are training their staff in the human rights perspective, including the prevention of violence against women and care for its victims. This task is related to the strengthening of the Provincial Women's Offices and the building of networks.
- The Observatory on Discrimination in Radio and Television is now operating, involving the Federal Broadcasting Committee and the National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism (INADI), as well as the CNM.
- PROFAM, the Programme for Strengthening the Family and Building Social Capital from a gender perspective is being pursued, as is the Federal Programme for Women (PFM), focused on reinforcing the provincial women's offices (*Areas Mujer*) and providing finance and technical assistance for 350 projects of local organizations, governmental and nongovernmental, for promoting rights in the areas of health, violence and support for production. A set of testimonial videos is being prepared for use in dissemination, outreach and training activities.
- The budget of the CNM has been increased, and funds have been budgeted for the ministries of Justice (Security, Human Rights and INADI), Health, Labour, Defence, Social Development, and the Communications Department, for the development of equity policies and programmes.

The recommendations made by the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) during its consideration of the follow-up report to the Fifth Periodic Report of Argentina in 2004 (CEDAW/C/SR.660) have been widely

disseminated and communicated by the National Women's Mechanism—National Women's Council (CNM)—among the national authorities and the various agencies and provincial governments. They have served as guidelines in the preparation of this report.

B. National Mechanism

The National Women's Council (CNM) has made it a priority objective during these years to institutionalize gender policies and to mainstream them into various areas of the national government, the provincial and local governments, and to instil in the community an understanding of women's rights and equity policies.

The agency incorporates the National Social Policies Coordination Council of the Office of the President, currently chaired by the Minister of Social Development, Dr. Alicia Kirchner. The function of this Coordinating Council is to articulate sectoral policies in accordance with the strategic guidelines of the National Executive Branch, and to coordinate them among the different ministries involved (Social Development; Health; Education; Labour, Employment and Social Security; Economy and Production; Justice, Security and Human Rights; the Ministry of Federal Planning and Public Investment and Services; and the Office for Children, Adolescents and the Family).

The Federal Women's Council and the Executive Board are component bodies of the CNM:

The Federal Women's Council comprises provincial representatives. It promotes capacity building for institutions dealing with women's issues in the provincial executive and legislative branches, and provides technical assistance to help them pursue programmes and projects for gender equality and equity.

The Executive Board has representatives of the ministries and departments of the national executive branch. Its main mission is to integrate gender perspective into public policies in the different sectors.

The CNM, as part of its effort to mainstream gender considerations in policies, has signed cooperation agreements with governmental and nongovernmental agencies dealing with joint activities for implementing the provisions of the CEDAW Convention.

As part of the institutional strengthening of the CNM, its annual budget has increased sharply since 2006:

Growth of the budget of the National Women's Council (figures in pesos)

<i>CNM</i>	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Central activity	1 450 000	1 574 000	1 850 000	2 732 139	5 067 000

At the same time, the staffing complement of the CNM has virtually doubled over those years.

Between 2004 and 2006, the Programme for Strengthening the Family and Building Social Capital (PROFAM) was implemented, with World Bank financing. In 2006, the Federal Plan for Women was revived, thanks to an extension granted by the IDB, and was wrapped up at the end of 2007.

The federal government has invested around 21 million pesos in these initiatives, most of which was spent over the last four years. Some 350 projects were financed. They have served to strengthen local government organizations and NGOs with a gender perspective, and to reinforce the provincial and municipal women's offices, as well as to provide training, technical assistance and equipment for provincial and local officials and civil society organizations.

The priority issues addressed have been women's rights, health, violence, and support for production. In addition to these issues, the training has helped to develop management tools: strategic planning, local development with a gender perspective, labour and social rights. We have produced video materials for training and for use in campaigns to make the public aware of government efforts and the results flowing from the promotion of social organization.

Mass outreach campaigns have been conducted dealing with various aspects of women's rights: topics have included women's right to integral health, women at work, family violence, sharing family responsibilities, and the results of time use surveys.

These campaigns have been conducted jointly with the Communications Department of the Ministry of Social Development, the Media Department of the Cabinet of Ministers, and business involvement. Each campaign was conducted nationwide, and included posters, brochures, banners, flags and advertisements in newspapers and general-interest magazines of national circulation.

The CNM has focused its activities on promoting and publicizing women's rights, monitoring compliance with international commitments, integral health for women, labour and employment, and prevention of gender violence. In this work it cooperates with other areas of the national government, with all the provinces, and with civil society organizations and social movements. Specific programmes mounted throughout the country include the following: "Women's Rights Are Human Rights," "Women, Equity and Work," "Don't Get Used to Violence" (*Que la Violencia no nos sea familiar*), "Integral Health for Women," "Gender and Disabilities," "Observatory on Discrimination," "Woman Means Work (*Decir Mujeres Decir Trabajo*): Time Use Surveys," and outreach campaigns on these topics, as indicated above.

Consistent with its missions and functions, the agency provides standing technical assistance to other government agencies at the national, provincial and local levels, to civil society organizations, and on request, in the area of women's rights and their effective exercise.

Signature and implementation in 2005 of a contract between the CNM and the Security Department of the Ministry of the Interior (now part of the Federal Ministry of Justice and Human Rights). Participation in the programme of the Executive Secretariat of the Security Council for Training and Professional Upgrading of the Police and Security Forces, through seminars and workshops on family violence and gender violence, conducted throughout the country with participation by 1,200 security officers. Preparation of a draft Police Action Protocol to optimize care, containment, information and referral to other services, while preserving local legislation and characteristics. During 2008, seminars were offered for police forces throughout the country in applying this protocol, and there are plans to provide training for instructors in police institutes and schools.

The 2005 cooperation and technical assistance agreement between the National Institute for Cooperatives (Asociativismo) and the Social Economy (INAES) supports joint work for mainstreaming the gender perspective in the cooperative movement and for promoting women in the leadership of these organizations. The cooperatives module was incorporated into the Women, Equity and Work Programme in response to demands and needs identified by both institutions. The CNM uses teaching materials and training equipment to contribute the gender vision not only for working with women in the cooperatives but also as a way of giving INAES a gender vision of cooperatives activity in general.

In this respect, work is under way with groups of women in rehabilitated textile enterprises and with women's cooperative movements of the *COOPERAR* Federation, which have succeeded in drawing attention to gender questions and creating gender committees within their institutions.

The CNM also includes the National Board for the Microcredit Promotion Act in Argentina, chaired by the Ministry of Social Development, together with the Ministries of Economy, Labour and Education, INAES, INAI, CONADIS, and provincial representatives, to promote women's access to microcredit and to involve the provincial women's offices in promoting local development through the use of microcredit.

The CNM took an active part in the campaign to include women in social security rights, through the Federal Women's Council, and more than 1,800 social leaders throughout the country were trained and enlisted in the cause.

Through its participation in the Interministerial Commission established within the National Social Policies Coordination Council, the CNM contributed to preparation of the national reports on the Millennium Development Goals with proposals and ideas for incorporating the gender perspective into all the target indicators. It was part of the committee that defined, calculated and analyzed the indicators (metadata) together with the agencies working on each of the targets and with the Statistics and Census Institute in the preparation of Goal 4, "Promoting gender equality and equity", for the 2005 and 2007 country reports. The latter report included a section on the general framework for recognizing and advancing women's rights, which includes the issues of gender violence, reproductive health and responsible procreation, labour and education. Together with the National Social Policies Coordination Council, the CNM also participated in work with the provinces to prepare their reports on the millennium goals, to ensure a comprehensive and integrated vision and the use of gender-disaggregated data.

An agreement has been signed with the Ministry of Defence to coordinate efforts to ensure respect for the human rights of Armed Forces personnel, and equality of opportunity in the professional military career, as well as for addressing complaints of sexual harassment and on-the-job violence. The CNM is a member of the Gender Policies Council created by the Ministry of Defence, together with other State agencies, civil society organizations, academics, and 12 members on active duty with the three armed forces. This is in fact an unprecedented initiative that gives military women the opportunity to debate the gender perspective and build it into policies regarding the Armed Forces.

An inventory has been compiled of national and provincial legislation relating to sexual harassment, feminine quotas, the registration of overdue alimony payments,

reproductive health and gender violence, and education, among other issues. The CNM monitored bills presented in Congress that had a direct or indirect impact on the status of women during the period 2004-2007.

A proposal was submitted to the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to incorporate a gender perspective into the draft National Education Act (2006), and this was done.

The CNM monitored compliance with the Electoral Quotas Act in the 2005 and 2007 elections: (a) it contacted electoral judges throughout the country, filed appeals before the federal elections court for the city of Buenos Aires, and provided technical assistance to the federal councillors responsible for monitoring application of the quotas in their respective jurisdictions; (b) information on national and provincial elections and the legislators elected was compiled and published at the information agency's website.

National reports have been prepared for submission to United Nations and OAS bodies on compliance with international conventions (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Inter-American Convention of Belém do Pará). Reports were also prepared for submission at international meetings (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC, and the Inter-American Commission of Women, CIM) and for the semi-annual meetings on "Women and Mercosur."

The CNM analyzed and offered suggestions on documents for approval at regional international conferences (9th and 10th ECLAC conferences).

The CNM participated in international meetings and conferences and in ad hoc working committees created by those conferences for drafting the final documents for approval.

The CNM participates in the workings of the Observatory on Discrimination in Radio and Television, together with the Federal Broadcasting Committee and the National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism. The Observatory monitors gender discrimination and the treatment of gender violence in the media. It has a webpage: www.observadiscriminacion.gov.ar. The Observatory has no sanctioning powers, but it can summon those responsible for the media product in question, advise them of its analysis, and urge them to make changes. All its activities are published on the web.

At the instigation of the CNM, a multidisciplinary interagency group has been established to conduct awareness and training activities to eradicate discrimination on grounds of gender and disabilities. The intent is to sensitize governmental and nongovernmental organizations, teachers, parents and coordinators of groups of disabled persons. First, a study of the issue and of international and national experience was conducted, and various actions were designed: workshops, participation in seminars and congresses, articles and notes in general-interest magazines, and publication of specific teaching materials.

Programme for Strengthening the Family and Building Social Capital (PROFAM). This joint CNM-World Bank programme is run by the CNM. It supports projects to assist poor families, to promote the development of each of their members from a cross-cutting gender focus that implies developing

cooperative activities with persons at all jurisdictional levels, in order to incorporate this perspective into the design and implementation of public policies.

Project selection and final programme evaluation were done by seven national universities: Universidad Nacional de la Plata, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras of the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, and Universidad Nacional de Misiones.

A total of 213 social projects with a gender perspective have been pursued in 13 provinces, at a cost of \$11,426,516: 81% of the projects involve NGOs, and the remaining ones local governments. These projects were designed to assist 140,000 families and 700,000 women living in situations of extreme vulnerability. They address the following issues: reproductive health; responsible maternity and paternity; domestic violence; civil rights and citizenship; daily care of children and support with their studies; environment; rural development; tourism; production support activities; and the establishment of cooperative networks.

Six regional training sessions were held, coordinated with the provincial women's offices. Some 4,300 promoters retrained, teaching and outreach materials were published, and nine videos were produced, carrying messages from the leaders of the participating organizations.

Federal Programme for Women. The National Women's Council, the executing agency for Federal Programme for Women, has championed the continuation of this programme as a strategic policy for achieving gender equity. The government decision to extend the programme recognizes its importance for pursuing all the commitments assumed with the provinces. The operating plan has been redesigned in a manner consistent with the basic objectives and components of the programme. That plan was submitted to the Federal Women's Council. Subsequently, an extension was requested and this was approved by the Inter-American Development Bank on 28 December 2005.

Its activities were focused on technical assistance, training, information and the establishment of networks to enhance organizational capacities and to exchange experience among the provinces with respect to the two components: institutional strengthening and support for local initiatives, which includes implementation of projects by governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

In 2006, more than 2,000 people attended six regional meetings dealing with gender equity policies and strategies in the context of local development. Those sessions covered the following modules: strategic planning, local development with a gender perspective, integral health, sexual and reproductive health, labour and social security with a gender perspective, sex education, provision of responsible procreation services, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, and violence and gender equity.

A virtual forum has been created at the CNM webpage to reinforce the organizational network. It constitutes a special site for maintaining communication with all those women who attended training and discussion sessions during 2006.

The programme involves two institutional projects:

1. A project for preventing family violence and attending to its victims from the gender perspective. It has prepared a national manual of resources and services for the care, guidance and referral of female victims of violence, and has organized

a national database managed by the provincial women's offices. It also provided training sessions on violence against women and ways to prevent it, in seven provincial capitals. Approximately 200 persons took part in them.

2. A project entitled "Women's Rights: Towards a Paradigm Shift", implemented with the Association of Female Judges of Argentina. It has conducted workshops for staff and members of various civil society organizations, involving more than 400 persons including federal councillors, CNM staff, grassroots organizations, the security forces, staff of the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces, government lawyers, officials of the Families Plan of the Ministry of Social Development, and professionals from organizations under contract for implementing the CNM's Unified Registry of Cases of Violence.

The CNM is continuing its training and outreach activities through the videoconferencing team that was set up within the CNM under the Federal Programme for Women, under an agreement with the Federal Investments Board (CFI) for use of its facilities in each province

Bibliography and publications

A sizable set of books (around a thousand volumes) has been shipped out to enhance the library collections of the provincial women's offices. Books were donated to the federal women's penitentiary to establish a library, under an agreement with the Federal Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Culture of the City of Buenos Aires.

Materials have been published for training about rights: the international Conventions (CEDAW and Belém do Pará), violence, health, sexual and reproductive health, manuals and workbooks, equity and work (including chapters on marketing, cooperatives and microcredit), welfare rights, strategic planning, local development, seniors, gender and disabilities.

Support for local initiatives

Funding has been provided for 130 projects sponsored by governmental and nongovernmental agencies, selected by competition in 14 provinces: La Pampa, La Rioja, Misiones, Neuquén, Salta, Catamarca, Chaco, Chubut, Río Negro, San Luis, Tierra del Fuego, Córdoba, Santa Cruz and Santa Fe.

More than 300 members of these organizations participated in two project meetings dealing with resource management and networking. They also attended regional training sessions and received technical assistance in project execution. The final evaluation of the Federal Programme for Women will serve as essential input for future efforts at institutional strengthening in the women's offices, and for improving policies with a gender perspective.

The CNM's activities with organizations continue to produce synergies and to enhance their capacity to promote women's rights. The CNM is building issue-oriented networks nationwide, involving all the organizations conducting projects under both programmes, and articulating them for joint work with the respective provincial and municipal women's offices.

The CNM's communications policy

The National Women's Council is concerned to cast its activities within a comprehensive concept of gender communication. Some of the fundamental aspects guiding its activities are: new information technologies, media and resource

management capacity, access for women to communications decisions, understanding the production and receipt of messages, and the relationships between men and women that are established in the communications process.

The CNM pursues a communications policy of national scope so as to place women's issues squarely on the public agenda and to promote and disseminate rights, plans and policies. It is designing strategies for mass communication and dissemination, directly and through the media. It prepares material and works with the provincial and municipal women's offices, and community organizations

The CNM has a freely accessible and interactive website, at www.cnm.gov.ar. It includes an online survey: "*Las Mujeres Cuentan. Contemos el TRABAJO de las MUJERES*" ["Women Count: Let's Tell about Women's Work"] to highlight the unpaid work that is done mainly by women and to win social recognition of family responsibilities. A fortnightly electronic newsletter is sent out to national and provincial government agencies.

The CNM Documentation Centre has 3,500 bibliographic records, classified according to the Spanish women's thesaurus. It includes magazines, publications, unpublished working papers and research reports that can be consulted at the CNM, with the assistance of trained personnel. It has an institutional brochure that is available upon request to the public—NGOs, institutions and interested individuals. The website contains a bibliographic catalogue that can be consulted electronically.

Dissemination and prevention campaigns include graphic and audiovisual products; regular publications in the printed media (a weekly column in *Diario Crónica*, 2006; a monthly column in the newsletter of the Hairdresser's Association, articles in the Internal Security Council's journal, etc.).

Observatory on Discrimination in Radio and Television: pursuant to Proposal 208 in the National Antidiscrimination Plan, the INADI and the Federal Broadcasting Committee (COMFER) established this Observatory in June 2006. In September of that year, the CNM joined the initiative to incorporate the discussion and consideration of gender issues.

Publications

2005

Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and the Eradication of Violence against Women, the Convention of Belém do Pará.

Brochures on humanized childbirth and violence-free family relations, 12,000 copies of each.

Brochure entitled "No to Violence", for use in the campaign at football fields.

Graphic materials to publicize and support the National Congress on "Women and Violence-Free Family Relations: toward a National Plan".

Institutional brochure describing the missions, functions and programmes of the National Women's Council (200,000 copies).

2006

Women and Health Campaign: "It's Our Right", posters and explanatory brochures on five themes: preventing breast cancer and cervical cancer, the right to a life free

of violence, HIV/AIDS prevention, the sharing of domestic tasks, and rights to sexual health, responsible procreation, and humanized childbirth: 60,000 copies.

Campaign: "Sharing Rights and Responsibilities", with placemats, pins, refrigerator magnets and banners (10,000 copies of each).

Book: "Woman Means Work. Methodologies for measuring time use from a gender perspective" (6,000 copies).

Explanatory brochure on pension rights: "Today we can retire", in support of the programme for the promotion of social security rights (200,000 copies).

Campaign: "Don't get used to violence", 500,000 flyers, 500,000 brochures, and 52 banners.

2007

Publication of education materials for the "Women, Equity and Work" programme (manual for facilitators and a workbook), with updated chapters on marketing, cooperatives and microcredit.

Preparation and publication of booklets on family violence ("Don't get used to violence"); "Healthy pregnancy: maternity and paternity with shared responsibilities"; "Contraception: women and men, the right to choose"; "Dealing with AIDS: Prevention"; "Female seniors: health, rights and quality of life"; "Gender and Disability" and "Progress in Argentina: the Beijing Platform for Action (2007)".

Publicity campaign launched on 8 March 2007, with the theme that women's rights should not just exist on paper: banners, teaching materials and a workbook (200,000 copies) and a brochure (100,000 copies) on the CEDAW Convention.

<i>Lines of Intervention</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Direct Participants</i>	<i>Indirect Participants</i>
WORK Women, Equity and Work	• Workshops for instructors who will provide direct training	• Training of facilitators in support of female entrepreneurs	• Governmental offices • Social movements	1 513	7 565
	• Training in social security rights	• Participatory workshops • Rights dissemination campaign	• Governmental offices • Social movements	1 803	23 000
	• Promotion of microcredit	• MOU and participatory workshops	• Provincial and municipal women's offices • Social movements	543	2 715

<i>Lines of Intervention</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Direct Participants</i>	<i>Indirect Participants</i>
VIOLENCE Awareness, technical assistance and training programme on violence against women	• Family violence	• Participatory workshops	• Governmental and nongovernmental organizations at the national, provincial and municipal levels	3 270	16 350
	• Seminar on family violence	• Participatory workshops	• Officers and staff of the security forces of all provinces	1 350	6 750
	• Unified Registry of family violence cases	• Participatory workshops	• Governmental and nongovernmental services for victims of family violence	60 services	
	• Network of the office for referral, guidance and monitoring of victims of violence	• Response by telephone or in person	• Spontaneous demand	1 750 consultations handled	
	• Guidance and referral of victims of family violence	• Technical assistance and participatory workshops	• Agents involved at all stages of caring for victims	560	2 800
PROFAM Programme for strengthening the family and building social capital	• Regional training sessions	• Participatory workshops and technical assistance	• Representatives of civil society organizations and government offices	648	
	• Project management	• Technical assistance in accounting and administration	• Project participants • Civil society and municipal organizations	220 projects	140 000 families
PFM Federal Programme for Women: institutional strengthening and support for local initiatives	• Regional training sessions	• Seminars and participatory workshops	• Federal Council of the CNM • Provincial and municipal offices	2 900	13 000

<i>Lines of Intervention</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Direct Participants</i>	<i>Indirect Participants</i>
	• Project management	• Technical assistance in accounting and administration	• Provincial and local government offices	145 organizations	

C. Provincial Mechanism

As of the end of 2007 there were provincial women's offices in 22 provinces and in the City of Buenos Aires, organized in various manners, as provincial councils, departments and divisions. There are also a large number of municipal women's offices.

One of the concerns of the CNM is the creation and strengthening of women's offices at the provincial and municipal level. In this respect, the Federal Women's Council, in which all the provinces participate, represents the commitment of provincial governments and makes it possible to develop programmes and projects with a gender perspective.

All CNM projects, whether funded domestically or with international resources, include institution building for women's offices throughout the country, and seek to create networks under the coordination of those offices.

These provincial mechanisms are an essential local counterpart for mainstreaming the gender perspective in policies on an equal footing throughout the country.

D. Social Policies and Women

Through the National Social Policies Coordination Council, the government is promoting comprehensive policies to restore work as the backbone of development with equity, based on high-quality universal education and access to health services for the entire population. In this effort, families are regarded as the primary units for solidarity and for transmitting culture and values. At the same time, the concept has been restored that the State must guarantee the full exercise of rights as an entitlement, thereby doing away with the notion that individuals are mere beneficiaries of programmes and plans, and breaking away from an asymmetrical relationship and promoting different forms of social organization..

We start from a new conception of social policy that goes beyond the welfare approach and seeks to enhance quality and territorial equity through cooperative projects and social undertakings that have a direct impact on people and that ensure broad participation by women.

The Federal Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with the provinces, has replaced 50 separate programmes by three essential lines of work.

National Families Plan for Social Inclusion. This plan promotes comprehensive health protection, education and capacity development. It pays an allowance to families who undertake to look after their children's health and education and supports adults seeking to complete their schooling or take occupational training. By the end of 2007, some 450,000 households were participating. There has also been an increase of more than 100% in non-contributory pensions paid to persons over 70

years of age, mothers with seven children or more, and persons with disabilities: there are currently 363,838 pensioners, 85% of whom are women. Believing it very important to work with the technical staff of the Families Programme, the CNM signed a cooperation and technical assistance agreement to provide joint training in the gender perspective for technical staff of the Ministry of Social Development who are directly involved with the programme beneficiaries and who are in a special position to encourage women to exercise their right to complete their studies or to take vocational training.

National Plan for Local Development and the Social Economy: *Manos a la Obra* ["Let's Get to Work!"]. This programme seeks to promote productive activities by financing and assisting local experiments, particularly under the Heads of Household Plan. Since the end of 2006 it has included the National Microcredit Programme (of which the CNM is a board member), which promotes the inclusion of women and trains instructors for the provincial women's offices and social organizations through the Women, Equity and Work Programme. The *Obras a la Mano* Plan has encouraged the creation of cooperatives. Women are heavily involved in all the projects.

As part of these policies, an effort was made to ensure that participants in the Heads of Household Plan could find opportunities for steady work and could join the employment insurance and training programme and the Families Programme. In 2003 there were some 2 million heads of household enrolled, while in 2007 the number was 890,000, with women accounting for 70% of the total.

Microcredit is a tool that involves more than just project financing: it seeks to promote the development of social capital and the insertion of those sectors that have been left behind by society. It helps female and male entrepreneurs, organizations and promoters to develop training activities, facilitate the settlement of neighbourhood problems, and serve as points of reference for various social needs. It restores a space where values, solidarity and commitment can flourish, as well as forming marketing networks.

To date, some 1,900 "credit promoters" have been trained, and 100 promoters are now passing on their experience. It is important to note that these are community promoters, and not simply microcredit agents: they receive a monthly stipend. There are currently 440 banks that are granting loans from \$500 to \$1500, with weekly payments.

18,000 loans have been made, 90% of them to women, in 17 provinces through 65 regional organizations. The recovery rate is 97%; 10% are in arrears and only 3% are considered unrecoverable.

A team consisting of 100 promoters, micro-entrepreneurs and regional organizations has systematically examined the experiment from the following viewpoints: policy; quality of life; local culture; the role of women.

National Food Security Plan, created by Law 25,724, is intended to protect health and to provide an adequate supply of quality food. It has recently reinforced its lines of work relating to the self-production of food, family, school and community gardens, and nutritional education. It is gradually replacing the community kitchens with systems of cards or tickets that allow families to purchase food products directly. In the community kitchens, social organizations providing food services are

being encouraged to upgrade security and hygiene conditions and to strive for sustainability.

Community Integration Centres (CIC) have been in place since 2006. They constitute a model for the integral management of social policies in the neediest communities. There are currently 236 CIC's operating throughout the country. In these centres, the CNM conducts awareness and training workshops for the promotion of women's rights (health, violence, work, disabilities, from a gender perspective).

Special Section: Application of the Convention

Articles 1, 2 and 3

The legal order in Argentina guarantees observance of the provisions of these articles. That legal order includes all the rights and guarantees of the national Constitution, the powers it grants to the National Congress to take positive action for equality of opportunities and treatment, and the possibility of filing appeals for *amparo* [constitutional protection] against any form of discrimination and to enforce collective rights in general, by the affected party, the ombudsman, and associations devoted to these purposes; the constitutional rank accorded to this Convention and the various international human rights treaties that Argentina has signed; the provisions of domestic legislation; the creation of specific agencies to coordinate and take action for its observance.

An active policy to promote equality and equity between men and women was a component of the human rights policy that the State has adopted as a central focus, and its results can be seen both nationally and internationally.

In the first place, our country withdrew the reservations it had entered in 1995 with respect to the Beijing Platform for Action, and is now playing an active role in international forums to promote the observance of women's rights, particularly with respect to health, education, decent work, a life free of violence, and reconciliation of working and family life.

In 2006 the National Congress approved the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, by means of Law 26,171.

In 2004, Argentina signed the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. This was approved by Law 26,202 of 2007, and ratified in February 2007.

National Law 25,673 creates the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme and the government's Regulatory Decree 1282/2003 represents progress in achieving respect for the human rights of individuals, promoting a reduction in maternal mortality, the number of abortion-related hospitalizations, and the teenage pregnancy rate.

In 2004, national Law 25,929 was approved, dealing with the rights of mothers, fathers and children during the birthing process known as "humanized birth".

In 2006, National Law 26,130 was approved, relating to ligation of the fallopian tubes for women and of the vas deferens or vasectomy for men. The provinces may regulate this right but may not restrict it.

By Resolution 232/2007, the Minister of Health added emergency hormonal contraception to the Compulsory Medical Programme as a contraceptive method.

National Law 26,058 on Technical and Vocational Education, of 2005, promotes this type of education throughout the country, and article 40 deals specifically with equal opportunities.

National Law 26,150 of 2006 creates the National Programme of Comprehensive Sex Education, which is mandatory throughout the country at all levels of schooling from five years of age

National Law 26,206, the Education Act of 2006, makes express reference to the gender perspective.

National Law 25,674 governing the female quota in labour unions, and regulated by government decree 514/03, establishes a minimum floor for female membership and participation in union activities and in delegations for collective negotiations with employers.

National Law 26,117 creates the National Programme for the Promotion of Microcredit for Development of the Social Economy and Local Development, and is designed to promote and regulate microcredit as a further tool of the *Manos a la Obra* programme.

National Law 26,061 of 2005 on the Comprehensive Protection of the Rights of Juveniles recognizes children and adolescents as having rights, abolishes the doctrine of paternal authority, and moves towards a model of integrated protection enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Migrations Act was approved in 2004 (Law 25,871). Subsequently, the "National Programme for Migratory Document Normalization" was approved (by Decree 836 of 7/7/04) within the National Migrations Directorate (DNM) and as part of that programme, on 13 December 2005 the DNM adopted Provision 53253/2005, also referred to as "*Patria Grande*", and Provision 14949/2006 governing the migratory status of citizens of the member and associated states of Mercosur, i.e. Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. With that law, and in particular the DNM provisions, the government has instituted a new and open migrations policy according to which nationality is the criterion for regularization and residency. As of December 2007, approximately 400,000 applications have been approved, of which more than half involved female migrants.

Other Provisions and Measures

Decree 1086/2005 approved the document entitled "Towards an Antidiscrimination Plan: Discrimination in Argentina. Diagnosis and Proposals", and the National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism (INADI) was given the responsibility for implementing its proposals.

One line of action seeks to institute a culture that combats discrimination and promotes equal opportunities between women and men in Argentina, reflecting the current government's determination to overcome the scarcity and weakness of

comprehensive, consistent and high-impact policies in this area, in the majority of provinces and municipalities. It is being pursued through participatory debate by women themselves, in local, provincial and national assemblies.

Labour parity between women and men

With technical assistance from the ILO, a meeting was held in October 2007 with female representatives of labour organizations (CGT, CTA, UPCN) to draw up a code of good practices.

Joint work with the Tripartite Commission on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (CTIO) of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security to foster social dialogue as a tool for achieving effective equality of treatment and opportunities.

Parity between women and men in the business world

INADI holds meetings to debate strategies for achieving parity between women and men in the business world and in economic development. These meetings are attended by professional women, female entrepreneurs, business women, and representatives of the chambers, federations and colleges, and the CNM.

These meetings produced a consensus on the wording of a draft law to guarantee equality between women and men in business.

Federal Girls' and Boys' Forum, where children can debate their specific problems. It is planned to hold a Federal Forum for Girls, Boys and Adolescents, to give effect to this group's right of participation, to encourage them to take part in democratic processes and to generate opportunities for participation in effective fulfilment of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and Law 26,061, and their right not to face discrimination and their duty not to discriminate against others.

International event on the theme "Towards Full Citizenship in MERCOSUR", for a regional antidiscrimination policy (CEPI-INADI) November 2007.

Presentation of reports to international agencies, forums and conferences

Specialized agencies of the national government prepare the reports that Argentina submits to the various international agencies, in accordance with the established timetables, as well as those for various international conferences and forums. Information is requested for these purposes from all areas of the national government and from the provinces.

Reports presented by Argentina to the 9th and 10th Regional Conferences of Women of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Mexico City 2004 and Quito 2007.

Millennium development goals country report—Goal IV, "Gender equality and equity": 2005, update 2006. Incorporation of gender indicators (2005-2007).

Reports on the status of women in Argentina at meetings of MERCOSUR on the topic of women: total 10 reports (2004-2007).

National Report for the Beijing +10 Conference of the UN Economic and Social Committee for monitoring fulfilment of the Platform for Action (2005).

Response of Argentina to the questionnaire evaluating implementation of the provisions of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, the Convention of Belém do Pará, as

requested by the Committee of Experts on Violence, Monitoring Mechanism for the Convention of Belém do Pará (OAS 2006). Supplementary Information (2006 and 2007).

Argentina also plays an active role in international conferences and meetings hosted by ECLAC and by the OAS Inter-American Committee of Women (CIM), to which it sends representatives of the National Mechanism and of the provincial mechanisms, the Special International Representative for Women's Issues of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, and representatives of the legislative branch and civil society organizations. Official Argentine representatives have been members of the drafting committees for the documents approved in the plenary sessions, in particular those of the Ninth Regional Conference of Women of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) held in Mexico City 2004, and the 10th Regional Conference of Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Quito, Ecuador (2007).

The National Women's Council and the Women's Representation Office in the Foreign Ministry have undertaken to disseminate the international documents signed, at the governmental and nongovernmental levels, and to prepare proposals for amending Argentina's public policies to include the agreements reached in the "Mexico Consensus" (Ninth Regional Conference of Women of ECLAC) and the "Quito Consensus" (10th Regional Conference of Women of ECLAC).

Participation in the First Ibero-American Conference on "Gender and Social Cohesion, Santiago, Chile (2007).

Argentina participates in the Specialized Meeting of Women of MERCOSUR. These meetings are held twice a year, chaired by rotation among participating countries. Regional work plans are established, based on the international commitments assumed by the country.

Ad Hoc Commission for Follow-Up to the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference of Women (Beijing, China), coordinated by the Special International Representative for Women's Issues of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, as a supplementary mechanism of national scope for monitoring fulfilment of the commitments assumed by our country in all regional and international forums on women's issues.

Appointment of five female legislators to the recently created MERCOSUR Parliament.

The National Women's Council, as part of its gender mainstreaming work, has signed framework agreements with the various line ministries, dealing with interagency cooperation for implementing the CEDAW Convention and the Convention of Belém do Pará. Recent years have seen progress in areas with which there was traditionally little or no interaction, and framework agreements have been signed with the Ministry of National Defence, the Superintendency of Health Services, the Internal Security Council of the Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Broadcasting Committee (COMFER), the National Institute against Discrimination (INADI), the National Commission for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities (CONADIS), the National Institute of Cooperatives and the Social Economy (INAES), the Teodoro Alvarez General Hospital, and with civil society organizations such as the Association of Female Judges, the Argentine Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health, the "Women in Action" Association, the

National Universities, and the General Confederation of Barbers and Hairdressers of Argentina

Creation of the Observatory on Discrimination in Radio and Television sponsored by the Federal Broadcasting Committee, in which INADI and the CNM participate.

The Judiciary

The Federal Supreme Court, by means of Order (*Acordada*) 39/6, approved the creation of an office to deal with cases of domestic violence. Order 40/6 approved the regulations for its operations.

The Supreme Court thereby gave notice that access is impeded for a certain group of persons who find themselves in circumstances of special vulnerability because they are affected by domestic violence. It also pointed to the growing number of such disputes submitted for decision by judges, who are expressing their concern to find urgent remedies for addressing such situations.

This ruling is based on the generic constitutional mandate to "uphold justice", or the specific one "to legislate and promote positive measures guaranteeing true equal opportunities and treatment, the full benefit and exercise of the rights recognized by this Constitution" (Article 75 (23)), as well as the many international standards that oblige the State to guarantee effective access to justice under conditions of real equality, and in certain cases to take immediate protective measures to prevent abuse of persons who are at a disadvantage. The Court also found that the most important demand of the family magistrates is to overcome delays on the part of the interdisciplinary team of the Ministry of Justice and professionals of the Forensic Medical Corps in submitting the preliminary diagnosis when there is a situation of risk. Moreover, free legal representation must be guaranteed.

Jurisprudence

In labour matters

The Third Chamber of the National Labour Tribunal has held that when it is demonstrated that the plaintiff was the victim of harassment, there must be reparations for the mental injury caused, and the senior officers of the firm must be held jointly liable for permitting such an unlawful situation (*Veira Mónica v. Editorial Perfil S.A.* 12-7-2007)

The Seventh Chamber of the National Labour Tribunal ruled that in cases of mobbing, mental or sexual harassment, discrimination, job downgrading or any other type of labour violation, the court must take account of indications pointing to the facts to be demonstrated, and once the victim's allegations are proven, the employer has the burden of proving that it acted on other grounds (*Rybar Héctor H v. Banco de la Nación Argentina*, 8-6-2007).

The First Chamber of the National Labour Tribunal held that "even if the time between dismissal and childbirth exceeds the 7 1/2 months established in article 178 of the LCT (Law on Labour Contracts), what is important in these situations is the protection the law seeks to establish for the pregnant woman and for maternity, which must prevail regardless of the period of time within which the events occurred" (*Coronel Marisa v. Cosméticos Natura S.A.* 21-7-2006).

The Fifth Chamber of the National Labour Tribunal ruled that unjustified or arbitrary dismissal is an unlawful act that violates the constitutional rights banning

arbitrary dismissal and protecting employment stability, and that the right not to suffer arbitrary discrimination is a peremptory norm (*jus cogens*): consequently its violation entitles the worker to demand nullification of the act of dismissal and reinstatement in the position, pursuant to Law 23,592, particularly if it is demonstrated that the employee had been the subject of discrimination (case *P.V:M v. S:T: S:A* 14-6- 2006).

The Ninth Chamber of the National Labour Tribunal applied Law 23,592 to quash an act (*Greppi Laura Karina c Telefónica de Argentina S.A.* on dismissal, 2005).

Application of article 86.2 of the Criminal Code

Abortion performed by a licensed physician with the consent of the pregnant woman is not punishable:

Article 86.2 provides that if the pregnancy results from rape or indecent assault of a mentally handicapped woman, the consent of her legal representative must be obtained for the abortion.

With respect to the enforcement of article 86.2 of the Criminal Code referring to non-punishable cases of abortion, and in response to appeals for non-applicability, the Court of Justice of the Province of Buenos Aires ruled, in case 98,830 "RLM unnamed person to be born in 2006", that judicial authorization is not required for application of article 86.2, and that consequently no prohibition can be issued against the practice of interrupting pregnancy as long as the decision has been taken by medical professionals in accordance with the rules of the healing arts b) to report the situation to the provincial government, and urge it to provide the assistance and health measures necessary to ensure her health, treatment, and the satisfaction of her basic social needs.

The Supreme Court of Justice of the Province of Mendoza issued a similar ruling in 2006 in case 87, 985, "Gazzoli Ana Rosa *s/ per saltum*".

Article 5

There is legislation dealing with family violence at the national level and in all of the provinces (23). All these laws establish civil jurisdiction, and contain rules for deciding when this route is to be preferred, without prejudice to the intervention of criminal jurisdiction in appropriate cases. It is the severity of the damage suffered that will be the definitive parameter in deciding which jurisdiction to invoke.

The Convention of Belém do Pará is applicable throughout the national territory because, under our legislation, international conventions take precedence over domestic law. Bills have been presented in the National Congress to grant express recognition to the Convention of Belém do Pará as a human rights treaty, which would give it constitutional rank.

The Chamber of Deputies has a Committee on Family, Women, Children and Adolescents, which must consider any matter or bill relating to the organization, development, and consolidation of the family within the community; the protection and guidance of children and adolescents; and the status, condition and integration of women into society as a whole. The Committee also monitors compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Most of the provincial legislatures also have committees on family, women and children.

The Comprehensive Assistance Unit for Victims of Crime of the Office of the Prosecutor General has been operating since 1998, providing legal, psychological and social assistance. Subsequently, a special unit was established within the Attorney General's office to receive complaints and investigate crimes against sexual integrity, trafficking in persons, and sexual exploitation of children. It is the focal point with respect to human trafficking and it compiles and centralizes information for identifying and assisting victims and prosecuting those responsible and, if necessary, designing new investigation strategies. It also works to make institutions aware of the problem and to train public officials.

Some provinces have approved other regulations and administrative provisions relating to gender violence, as described below:

The Department of Health of the City of Buenos Aires approved a protocol of action for rape victims, in December 2003, requiring that they be provided with emergency contraceptive medication as well as drugs to prevent the contracting of HIV/AIDS, and it establishes time limits within which treatment must begin. That protocol is being applied in several hospitals: Hospital General de Agudos Dr. Teodoro Álvarez, Hospital de Infecciosos Dr. Francisco J. Muñiz and Hospital Pirovano. Resolution 140/04 requires all police stations and offices of the city that receive complaints of crimes against sexual integrity to inform the victims of the possibility of receiving immediate medical assistance at those hospitals.

The General Directorate of Women of the City of Buenos Aires runs the programme of care for victims of sexual crimes.

The Province of Misiones approved Law 4013 on "Protection and Care for Victims of Crimes against Sexual Integrity" in 2003, and the provincial Ministry of Health is responsible for its application. The provincial Attorney General's office provides free legal advice, coaching and support for filing complaints if the victim so decides. The Ministry of Government is responsible for making the necessary arrangements at police stations for receiving complaints or statements.

By means of Law 7222 of 2004, the Province of Mendoza created the Registry of Offences against Sexual Integrity, within the provincial justice system, reporting to the Supreme Court of the Province. That registry contains personal and physical data, date of conviction, penalty received and other background legal information relating to persons convicted of sexual crimes. The information is supplemented with photographs and DNA records.

The Province of Corrientes adopted Law 5665 in 2005, which calls for establishing a protocol of joint actions by the Ministry of Health, the Department of Human Development and the security agencies, for the prevention, treatment and care of victims of sexual violence.

The Ministry of Health of the Province of Buenos Aires, via Resolution 304/07, approved a provincial health programme for the prevention of family and sexual violence and assistance to victims, together with protocols governing detection and assistance for female victims of abuse, non-criminal abortion, and treatment for victims of rape. Application of these protocols in the provincial health system is mandatory.

The Province of Tucumán has a Coordinating Committee for Public Actions On Behalf Of Women, which has created a "women's observatory" that produces

information on the status of women, with a special focus on violence and health issues.

Telephone hotlines

Among the various provincial programmes of care for victims of family violence and of sexual abuse against women, children and adolescents, free telephone hotlines have been established in a number of jurisdictions:

The City of Buenos Aires has a 24-hour direct line for reporting violence against women, as well as the *Contame* ["Tell Me"] line for reporting violence against juveniles, which is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and is of national scope.

The Province of Buenos Aires has the "*Cuida Niños*" ["Kids' Help"] line and a family violence response service that operates Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Both services are free. There is also a provincial emergency telephone service (911) and the programme for female victims of violence refers calls from the service to a specific centre for "first level response and care for female victims of violence", staffed by professional operators trained in dealing with gender violence and equipped to respond immediately with suitable technical resources. It operates 24 hours a day, coordinating resources of the provincial government, the municipality and social organizations to provide guidance and assistance to female victims of violence, under specific agreements for the referral, treatment and subsequent follow-up of cases through the Provincial Prevention and Care Network. That network comprises the provincial agencies responsible for applying Law 12,569 on family violence: Provincial Women's Council, Ministry of Human Development and the Family, Ministry of Security, and Ministry of Health. There is a provincial interagency task force now working to create a comprehensive system for prevention and treatment of family violence.

Some municipalities in the Province of Buenos Aires also have their own free hotlines: for example, the municipality of Malvinas Argentinas has a 24-hour hotline established as part of its programme to prevent child abuse and mistreatment; there is the service of the Family Strengthening Union of the municipality of Almirante Brown; and the Community Prevention Centre of the municipality of Hurlingham.

The provinces of Chaco, Formosa, Misiones, San Juan, Santa Fe and Córdoba have free, province-wide hotlines for reporting cases of family violence.

Shelters

There is growing demand throughout the country to create and implement women's shelters. The CNM has conducted a nationwide inventory of public and private facilities, shelters and other means of protecting female victims of violence. There is a proposal to standardize shelter services. There are 12 government shelters at the provincial level (including the City of Buenos Aires) and 12 municipal ones to meet specific needs in each jurisdiction:

The City of Buenos Aires has three shelters. One provides attention to battered women over 21 years of age who are at high physical, mental and social risk because of family violence, together with their children (boys under 13 years and girls under 15 years). It provides accommodation and psychological, medical, social and legal assistance, and has the capacity to handle up to 25 women. A second shelter takes in young women and adolescents, while the third is a short-term shelter.

The Province of Buenos Aires has two shelters for victims of violence, run by the Provincial Council for the Family and Human Development.

In San Juan, there is a shelter run by the Programme to Prevent Violence against Women, under the Women's Promotion and Development Department (Ministry of Human Development).

In Misiones, there is a shelter run by the family violence department of the Office of Women in the Family of the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Entre Rios has a shelter in the city of Paraná, run by the Provincial Children's Council.

The Province of Formosa has a shelter run by the social affairs department.

The Province of Santa Fe has a shelter in the city of Rosario, run by the Provincial Secretariat for Children and the Family.

Neuquen has a shelter run by the Ministry of Social Action.

In Salta, the provincial Family Violence Programme runs a shelter.

The municipal shelters mentioned are located in municipal jurisdictions of various provinces: Province of Buenos Aires: in the municipalities of Bahía Blanca, Esteban Echeverría, Mar del Plata, Moreno, Pinamar, Saladillo, San Martín, and 25 de Mayo. Province of Chubut: in the municipalities of Comodoro Rivadavia and Esquel. Province of Santa Fe: Rosario has two shelters

There are 31 shelters throughout the country sponsored by civil society organizations.

In many municipalities there are alternative forms of shelter, such as hospitals, hotels, or family homes (operating formally or informally).

The Provincial Women's Council of Córdoba has a programme to help victims of family violence, and a shelter for women and children who have been victims of sexual assault.

The Province of Entre Rios recently approved a law to create temporary shelters for victims of family violence and sexual assault.

Self-help groups

The offices dealing with domestic violence against women at the provincial level generally have groups that promote self-help or mutual assistance. They take various forms, depending on their theoretical conception and the available resources. In most of these services, the care teams include professional psychologists, who conduct interviews and provide individualized treatment, and who may also coordinate self-help groups and bring in social workers, as well as lawyers and, to a lesser extent, medical professionals and other specialties.

There has been steady progress in creating groups to treat violent men. Mutual help groups for violent men have been established officially within the Women's Office of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, the Gender Violence Response Service of the Community Integration Department of the Province of Entre Rios, and the Families Department of the Province of Neuquen.

In the City of Buenos Aires and in the Province of Mendoza, there are programmes underway to address the problem of violence between unmarried partners.

Specialized police services for women

The Gender Secretariat of the Ministry of Security of the Province of Buenos Aires has established 25 "women's police units" that work with interdisciplinary groups and apply a specific care protocol for cases of family violence. The Province of Salta has also prepared an action protocol. Specialized facilities of this kind are available as well in the provinces of Misiones (2), Chubut (2), La Rioja (2), Corrientes (2), Jujuy (1), Catamarca (1) and Salta (7).

The gender policies coordination office of the Buenos Aires provincial security ministry, which is responsible for the province's 25 "women's police units," reports that in 2006 there were 22,236 complaints received from women, while in 2007 there were 33,180 such complaints. Regulatory Decree 2875/05 referring to the Family Violence Law 12,569 of the Province of Buenos Aires requires these specialized police units to handle complaints of family violence, whether or not they involve a criminal offence, and to pass them on immediately to the competent jurisdictional authority.

National Women's Council

The National Women's Council (CNM) is the body responsible for monitoring application of the CEDAW Convention and the Convention of Belém do Pará.

Because Argentina is a federal country, it is very important for the CNM to have a specific body, the Federal Women's Council, with representation from all provinces, in order to coordinate and implement policies directed at women throughout the country. In 2006 a working committee was created, coordinated by the CNM and composed of federal council members from various provinces, for the purpose of: (a) discussing the contents of a National Action Plan; and (b) compiling the principal demands and innovative experiments and developments in each province.

The Council is working on preparation of a National Action Plan to eradicate violence against women in the family. To this end, the National Social Policies Coordination Council (CNCPS) has constituted an interagency committee with representatives of the ministries of justice, the interior, health, education, social development etc., coordinated by the CNM.

As part of its effort to achieve consensus on that plan, a National Congress was held in November 2004 on "Women and violence-free family ties. Towards a national plan to eradicate violence against women". The purpose was to lay the groundwork, build consensus, and pool efforts to construct and implement a national plan. The session was attended by legislators and foreign specialists, government agencies and civil society organizations at the national and provincial levels. Total attendance exceeded 1,300 individuals. Presentations were given by representatives of the national ministries of education, health, social development, the security forces and the judiciary, academics and researchers, and representatives of civil society organizations and social movements.

As a result of that Congress, a framework agreement on interagency cooperation was signed in 2005 between the Security Branch of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the CNM for the pursuit of joint projects in training, research, promotion, dissemination and development dealing with problems of common

interest, in order to promote and give effect to the commitments assumed by Argentina upon approving the CEDAW Convention and the Convention of Belém do Pará.

The CNM participated in the programme of the Executive Secretariat of the Internal Security Council for training and professional upgrading of the police and security forces, through seminars and workshops on family violence and gender violence, which were held throughout the country. During 2005 and 2006, 7 regional meetings were held with representatives of all the provinces, and training was provided for some 1,200 officers and staff of the security forces. In these specialized national and provincial seminars, presentations were given on various aspects of family violence and gender violence, and workshops were held where participants familiarized themselves with provincial legislation and the Convention of Belém do Pará and came up with working and methodological proposals tailored to each province in order to give violence victims the appropriate care to avoid secondary victimization.

Another result of the framework agreement and the regional seminars was the establishment of a working committee comprising representatives of the CNM, the Security Department and other security forces, which has prepared a proposed police action protocol for use throughout the country in order to optimize care, containment, information and referral to other services, while respecting local legislation and characteristics. This draft protocol has been submitted to the corresponding authorities. There are plans to continue with the training seminars and technical assistance in 2008 for implementing the Action Protocol throughout the country.

The CNM has a specialized technical team responsible for training and technical assistance, which it provides through the "National Programme for training, technical assistance and awareness about violence against women". That team maintains standing contact with other bodies of the national government, with the provinces, and with civil society organizations. It also provides care information and referrals in response to individual queries.

Activities of recent years have included training seminars for instructors in governmental and nongovernmental organizations at the national, provincial and municipal levels, and providing them with materials they can use for passing on their knowledge at the local level. These seminars are organized through the provincial or municipal women's offices, and are attended by health, education and justice personnel, the security forces and civil society organizations in each jurisdiction.

Other training activities have been provided for officers and employees of programmes and regional offices of the Ministry of Social Development; participants and beneficiaries of projects financed by the Programme for Strengthening the Family and Building Social Capital and the Federal Programme for Women; nongovernmental organizations such as labour unions and social, neighbourhood and community associations. A total of 3,270 instructors have been trained directly, and 16,350 persons indirectly (2004-2007).

The CNM has signed a framework agreement with the Argentine Union of Rural Workers and Stevedores (UATRE). Under this agreement, several seminars were held in 2007 to provide training in gender violence issues for staff of the women's unit of the Union as well as its social workers and literacy instructors. There is also

a commitment to provide ongoing technical assistance and materials to reproduce the training through the National Women's Network of UATRE and its Rural Literacy Programme, in order to reach rural women throughout the country.

The CNM has provided technical assistance for formulating, implementing and conducting final evaluations of projects on family violence and violence against women, financed by the agency with international support: 56 projects of PROFAM and 28 projects of the Federal Plan for Women.

The CNM is developing an Information and Monitoring System on Domestic Violence against Women, for which it has designed an instrument for recording cases and a computerized programme for entering and analyzing information. This tool is used to estimate the prevalence and incidence of institutional demand, i.e. cases handled by the specialized services, as well as the sociodemographic profile of persons assisted (family background, reasons for consultation, marital status, history of mistreatment, length of exposure to violence, etc.). Training and technical assistance are provided on a permanent basis, and records are kept up to date. The Unified Registry of Cases currently contains data from 50 care centres for victims of family violence, with the addition of 10 new services since 2007.

Together with the Human Rights Office and the Ministry of Security of the Province of Buenos Aires, training is being provided to 1,500 cadets at the Vucetich y Rosendo Marías School.

The CNM is working with the Federal Human Rights Department, the Equal Opportunities Office of the Province of Buenos Aires, and the Social Development Office of the Municipality of La Matanza, as well as social organizations and movements, to lay the foundations for a programme on violence against women, for implementation in that municipality. The following activities have been conducted:

Training for 530 social workers (governmental and nongovernmental).

Implementation of a research project: "Basis for developing a methodology to evaluate resources for addressing violence against women, through participatory community diagnoses", in coordination with the Department of Science and Technology

Agreement with the Superintendency of Health Services for training social workers in the prevention of family violence and treatment of its victims.

Joint activities with the Federal Ministry of Health for training in sexual health and responsible procreation, and dissemination of Law 25,929 on "humanized childbirth", with the Hospital General de Agudos Teodoro Álvarez (city of Buenos Aires), agreement for the use and application of the Single Registry of Cases of Domestic Violence against Women, and for strengthening the care services for victims of sexual violence.

Participation in the *No a la Trata* ["No to Trafficking"] Network, together with other government organizations (Council on Juvenile Rights, Women's Office of the City of Buenos Aires, journalists, deputies and NGOs). The network seeks to draw public attention to the issue of human trafficking, the victims of which are subjected to many forms of exploitation. It also participates in activities of the Project for Institutional Strengthening in the Struggle against Human Trafficking in Argentina (COINTRA), sponsored by the International Organization for Migrations (IOM), and in meetings hosted by the National Council on Children, Adolescents and the

Family dealing with trafficking in juveniles for purposes of sexual exploitation, child pornography via Internet, and regulatory frameworks.

The CNM is a member of the Interagency Network for Addressing Violence (RIAVI) and is involved in organizing its six annual meetings, held in Buenos Aires.

During 2006 and 2007, under its Federal Programme for Women, the CNM proceeded with the project for "Prevention and treatment of family violence from the gender perspective in Argentina," intended to produce and systematize information on resources and services for dealing with violence against women, the creation of provincial guidance and advisory offices, and the establishment of institutional and social networks.

In response to the need for updated information covering the entire country, the CNM has compiled the National Resource Guide and created a centralized national database. The information is included at a webpage reserved exclusively to the provincial women's offices.

To help with the creation of a network of guidance and advisory offices on family violence, the CNM is providing technical assistance through seminars on guidance and training for assisting female victims of domestic violence, targeted at the staff of those offices, referral institutions and government and nongovernmental organizations involved in the issue, and dealing with ways of providing care, advice, coaching, referral and monitoring of cases of female victims of domestic violence. The objective is to have specialized personnel and adequate facilities available for providing care, and prompt and coordinated referral mechanisms.

In support of these objectives, and with a view to providing technical assistance and funding to the provinces for the pursuit of these activities, the CNM has signed cooperation agreements with eight provinces (Buenos Aires, Catamarca, Corrientes, Formosa, La Pampa, Mendoza, San Juan and Tucumán) for the creation of referral, guidance and monitoring offices for victims of violence, training for their staff, the production of statistics and the development of interagency networks at the local and provincial levels, in an effort to address this problem comprehensively.

A total of 560 agents have been trained in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Catamarca, Corrientes, Formosa, La Pampa, Mendoza, San Juan and Tucumán.

In support of these efforts, cooperation agreements have been signed with the National Universities of La Matanza and Lanús for joint training and technical assistance activities (2007).

An operating module entitled "Modalities for Addressing Violence against Women" has been prepared and published for use as training material. This is supplemented by the training manuals published by the CNM and a Resources and Services Guide for inclusion at a webpage for use by the provincial women's offices, together with instructions for providing information and referrals by telephone.

The CNM provides guidance and referral services on demand for female victims of violence, either by telephone or in person. Some 1,750 consultations are handled every year.

During 2006, the CNM launched two national campaigns on the prevention of violence against women. The first took place on 8 March, using a communications strategy coordinated with the provincial women's offices, the Communications

Media Unit of the Office of the President, the Social Predication Department of the Ministry of Social Development, and eight civil society organizations and social movements. It involved publication of graphic products on "the right to live a life free of violence" in national newspapers, cultural and general-interest magazines, street posters, banners, and information brochures (1,500,000 copies). The second was launched on 25 November 2006 as a nationwide campaign on the theme "Don't get used to violence", which included the erection of gigantic photographs on bridges and public buildings in Buenos Aires, street posters at suburban train stations, and banners in provincial plazas. In all these places, CNM staff and the provincial offices ran information booths on the topic and distributed a survey to gauge public awareness of the scourge of gender violence. Some 2.5 million brochures were distributed.

From 15 to 30 November 2006 a national campaign was conducted for the elimination of violence against women, joined by 8,400 women around the country, who produced murals, theatre skits and puppet shows, screened films, held public workshops and made open radio broadcasts. A short film on the right to live free of violence was shown in all cinemas of the National Institute of Cinematic and Audiovisual Arts (INCAA). A survey on violence against women and another one on sexual health and responsible procreation were also designed, and to date 8,753 responses have been processed.

The CNM also had a slot during the whole of 2006 on *Esa Bendita Costilla* [a reference to "Adam's rib"], a TV programme carried on Channel 7, in which experts addressed the issue and publicized data on governmental agencies and civil society organizations working to prevent violence against women and provide assistance to its victims.

Finally, the CNM signed an agreement with the Federal Broadcasting Committee (COMFER) and the National Institute against Discrimination (INADI), to set up and operate the Observatory on Discrimination which watches for discrimination and gender violence in radio and TV broadcasting. These national agencies are in this way cooperating in evaluating the contents of programming in order to detect cases and decide appropriate penalties.

Among the programmes for which international financing has been secured, the CNM has produced videos with testimony from female victims of violence involved in various projects. These materials are distributed to the provincial and municipal women's offices throughout the country.

The CNM has included the following lines of action in its proposed National Action Plan to eradicate domestic violence against women:

- Developing proposals for training legal professionals, judges and justice workers to incorporate the gender dimension in addressing the problem of violence against women.
- Promoting greater coordination among the police and justice services for the examination and enforcement of judicial decisions.
- Preparing a protocol for dealing with complaints of domestic violence against women, in order to identify promptly those cases that should go to court, and those situations of risk that should be handled in other ways.

- Coordinating with social worker teams to establish unified criteria for evaluating the severity and the risk involved in situations of violence.
- Enhancing the efficiency of judicial measures through follow-up and coordination with other areas involved.
- Coordinating activities with governmental and nongovernmental victim assistance and security services with respect to referral, consultation and monitoring of cases.
- Promoting forums for analyzing and discussing protection laws in order to overcome procedural obstacles to their enforcement.
- Developing and applying agreements to improve specialized legal assistance in cases of family violence, between the professional colleges and other resources.
- Incorporating the issue at the university level by including compulsory materials in the curricula for law, medicine, nursing, obstetrics, psychology, child psychology, and social work.
- Using workshops, meetings, and outreach campaigns with the provincial women's offices, women's organizations, and other grassroots organizations to strengthen their understanding of the existing legal framework for the full and effective exercise of civil rights.

Other Programmes at the National Level

A number of programmes are being pursued through other areas of the national government. In 2006 the “*Juana Azurduy*” programme was created for strengthening women's rights and participation. This programme gives Argentine women the tools, within a supportive State, to guarantee their rights and to make all sectors of society and government more aware of the potential for a culture of equity and inclusion in all areas. It addresses women's rights in the context of human rights. From this approach, domestic violence against women is one of the key areas of work.

Through the *Manos a la Obra* programme, the Ministry of Social Development is helping women to reinforce their independence with resources to support themselves. Through the Families Plan, it is providing assistance to mothers and their children in situations of violence. It is supporting social organizations active in prevention, assistance and training, with three lines of action (improving infrastructure, providing equipment, and prevention activities).

The Federal Ministry of the Interior issued Resolution 314 of 13 March 2006 creating the programme for “Victims against Violence”, covering various Federal Police Districts in the City of Buenos Aires:

- The Victim Guidance Centre Division, created in 1991, provides guidance to all persons who consider themselves victims of violence, and offers psychological, social and legal advice to the general public. It is currently part of the programme of reference, supported by the Mobile Brigades, which are part of an effort to bring the Federal police closer to the community, comprising an interdisciplinary team of police officers and a group of 70 professionals, social workers and psychologists who respond to calls to a dedicated hotline (dial 137) or through deployment of the Police Radio Command Division and/or at the request of the local police

chief. Its purpose is to provide care to victims of domestic violence in an emergency situation at home or in the street, within the city of Buenos Aires. These brigades operate from two strategically located points: the North Central Zone and the South Central Zone (the latter recently inaugurated) which allows them to reach the scene of events more quickly. These two centres operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- The Care Centre for Victims of Sexual Violence was created in 1995 to respond through the Mobile Brigades, teams of psychologists and social workers with special training in emergency care for all victims of crimes against sexual integrity, offering them first aid, support and coaching in the various procedural measures, both at the time they file a complaint at a police station and in subsequent intervention and monitoring. The centre also performs the following activities, through its interdisciplinary group of professionals:
 - Advising victims of crimes against sexual integrity.
 - Care, guidance and psychological treatment.
 - Assistance with specific problems.
 - Legal and medical guidance.

This work team is intended not only to deal with emergencies but to consider each individual case and respond to queries, working with the social, physical, psychological and family situation of each patient as it relates to sexual abuse or assault, for victims of all ages and either sex, and respecting their decision as to the legal route they wish to follow. This specialized attention is provided through an interdisciplinary team, consisting of female officers and staff, gynaecologists, psychologists, child psychologists, lawyers and social workers.

Creation of the Office for Cases of Domestic Violence of the Federal Supreme Court of Justice

This Office was created by Order 39/6 and is regulated by Order 40/6. It is located in a building next to the Palace of Justice and has its own operating budget. It operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year, offering victims the chance to request judicial intervention at any time, without the limitations imposed by the working hours of the various offices of the judiciary.

One objective of the Office is to mitigate the problem facing vulnerable sectors of society and to facilitate access to justice. Cases are handled by an interdisciplinary team. The Office is expected to have medical, psychological and social services, as well as employees with legal training. All personnel receive prior training in light of their functions. Persons coming to the Office give a verbal account and prepare the necessary reports, and are then referred appropriately. It must be recognized that while this Office is part of the judicial branch, it is not strictly speaking a judicial office, as referrals will not always be to a civil or criminal court.

Efforts are being made, to the extent possible, to establish networks so that referrals of this kind will cause the least possible inconvenience for the person affected. It must be noted that it is not a function of the judiciary to provide social assistance, but the Court cannot overlook the current shortage of resources in this area, and the

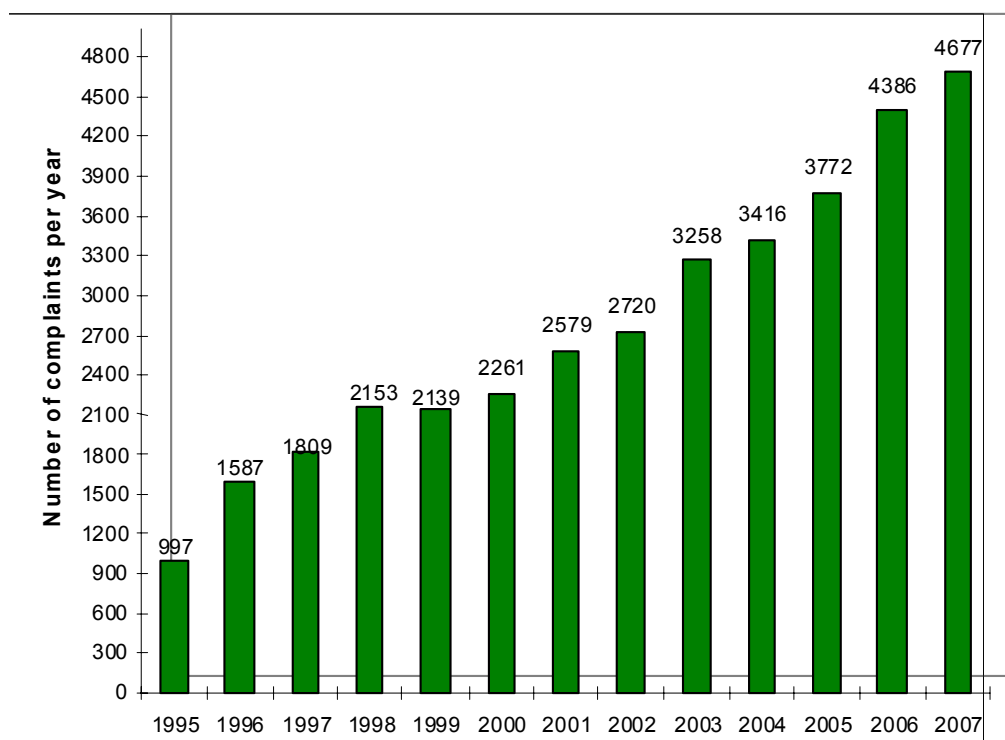
interest in establishing networks of this kind. Negotiations are now under way to formalize agreements to this end with the municipal authorities of Buenos Aires.

Another function of the Office is to monitor the cases filed with it, and to track the judicial process in each case referred to the courts.

It is hoped that the work of this Office, and in particular the preparation of statistics and reports on the true magnitude of the domestic violence problem, will be useful for the subsequent preparation of prevention programmes.

Trends in the reporting of family violence

Number of complaints filed annually before the federal judiciary, 1995-2007, city of Buenos Aires



Source: Federal Judiciary

In the total number of complaints filed during these years, some 80% of victims are women. For the years 2006 and 2007, there has been a sharp increase in juvenile victims, but in most cases they are cited jointly with female relatives.

It must be borne in mind that this information relates to only one district in the country.

Violence in the workplace

Violence against women has also been addressed from the employment perspective. In this respect, several draft laws have been presented dealing with violence in the workplace, in 21 provincial legislatures and in the National Congress.

There are currently five provincial laws in force on this issue, relating to personnel of the public administration (City of Buenos Aires, provinces of Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Misiones and Tucumán), and collective labour agreements have been approved. There are also special measures of affirmative action dealing with "nondiscrimination", the promotion of female workers, access to training and special leave for child care, among other provisions.

Violence in the workplace is one of the key themes in the federal government's approach to combating violence against women. An advisory office on workplace violence has been established under the Tripartite Commission for Equality of Treatment and Opportunities between Women and Men in the Workplace, established by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security. In addition, the Commission on Equality of Opportunities in the Public Service was recently created, reporting to the Head of the Federal Cabinet of Ministers. Similarly, there is an office for receiving complaints of workplace violence in the National Administrative Investigations Office, which is part of the judicial branch.

Article 6

In November 2006, by means of Law 25,632, Argentina ratified the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the two supplementary protocols approved in Palermo two years earlier: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

According to the first of these two supplementary protocols, trafficking in persons means "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."

The Special International Representative for Women's Issues of the Argentine Foreign Ministry considers the trafficking of persons to be a priority problem, as reflected in creation of the Antitrafficking Council, the establishment of a National Focal Point for Comprehensive Assistance to Victims of Crime (OFAVI) and the International Focal Point, in the form of the Special International Representative for Women's Issues.

The MERCOSUR Specialized Meeting on Women (REM) has adopted this issue as a focus for work at the MERCOSUR level and in its member countries.

Within the Foreign Ministry's Advisory Committee of Civil Society there is a Gender Equity Committee, and it is addressing this issue as one of its priorities.

Several bills have been presented in the National Congress to address the question. One of these has secured initial approval from the Senate.

Human trafficking and sexual exploitation deserve special consideration in the objectives of the National Women's Council (CNM), because they can be combated seriously only by building a different model of relationships between men and women. Gender equity policies are the best instrument, over the medium and long term, for curbing the violence that women and girls, in particular, suffer. These policies are all the more important to the extent that the practices involved in trafficking have come to be seen as natural, or as somehow justified, ignoring the

fact that trafficking is consistent with the characteristics of a patriarchal culture. This is because human trafficking flourishes in societies where there is fundamental inequality and inequity between the sexes.

The CNM is involved in all activities for combating human trafficking. It has supported the "No to Trafficking" Network since its founding in 2003. It is a member of that network, together with other governmental organizations (such as the General Directorate for Women of the City of Buenos Aires and the National Council on Children, Adolescents and the Family) and NGOs (such as CEDEM, *Mujeres en igualdad*, etc).

In 2007, the CNM began a process of internal training about human trafficking, and this will now continue, in a second stage, with activities in the offices and institutions working on women's issues in the interior of the country.

INADI supports training activities throughout the country, using and distributing materials produced jointly with the IOM (posters, videos, radio and TV spots). Training sessions are being held with the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Justice, with the National Office for Children, Adolescents and the Family, and with the Municipality of Comodoro Rivadavia, among others. The INADI hotline, 0800, is being publicized as a means for reporting incidents of trafficking.

INADI also attended the meetings of the Senior Human Rights Authorities of MERCOSUR. The working group expressly includes the issue of "trafficking in persons". The MERCOSUR agenda recognizes the importance of a regional approach to human trafficking, and to this end it was agreed to hold a regional seminar in Buenos Aires, in conjunction with the Federal Human Rights Office, with the following themes: a comparison of legislation in each country; care for victims; progress and obstacles; and prevention campaigns and programmes that can be conducted jointly.

INADI also works with civil society organizations involved with the "No to Trafficking" Network, with weekly coordination meetings, the distribution of written information, and publicity for the network's activities. As well, since March 2007 it has been joining the marches that are held on three days of each month in the Plaza Congreso [the square in front of the Congress building] under the slogan "*Ni una mujer más víctima de las redes de tratantes. Aparición con vida de las mujeres desaparecidas*" ["Not one more woman victim of trafficking rings. Produce the missing women alive!"].

As noted under Article 5, the Prosecutor General's Office has a unit for comprehensive assistance to victims of crime. Within the Attorney General's office, there is now a specialized unit for investigating sexual crimes, human trafficking, and child prostitution. The Federal Prosecutor General has submitted a draft law on the victims of sexual crimes and another on suppressing human trafficking and providing assistance to its victims, which is now under consideration by Congress. It serves as the focal point on trafficking and is compiling information for identifying and assisting victims and prosecuting those responsible and, as necessary, designing new investigation strategies, sensitizing institutions to the problem, and training public officials.

Article 7**Political Participation**

In October 2007, general elections were held throughout the country for the national, provincial and local governments, the National Congress, and the provincial and local legislatures.

For the first time, a woman, Dr. Cristina Fernández, was elected as President of the Nation, by direct vote of all inhabitants of the country. The runner-up was also a woman. In fact, taken as a whole, female candidates for president garnered around 72% of all votes.

In the previous government (2003-2007), there were three female ministers (Social Security, Defence and Economy); there were seven women with the rank of Secretary of State, and 16 Undersecretaries.

In her cabinet, President Fernández has appointed women to head three ministries (Social Development, Defence and Health), representing a quarter of all ministries. To date, 22% of persons appointed as Secretaries of State are women, as are 23% of the Undersecretaries.

Other senior positions held by women include the Presidency of the Banco de la Nación and the Banco Hipotecario S.A., the Environment Department, the National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism, the National Agency for Investment Development, the National Atomic Energy Commission, the National Social Pensions Commission, the National Office for Children, Adolescents and the Family, and the National Women's Council.

In terms of executive positions within the national government, an inventory of such positions at all levels in December 2007 showed that 38.5% were held by women.

At the provincial government level, a woman was elected for the first time as Governor of the Province of Tierra del Fuego, and six women were elected as vice governors, for the provinces of Catamarca, La Rioja, Misiones, Neuquén, Santa Fe and Santiago del Estero; the newly elected deputy mayor of Buenos Aires is also a woman. At the local government level, of the 2,172 municipalities in 23 provinces, 8.6% are headed by a woman, elected directly.

National Legislative Branch

The proportion of female legislators at the national level has risen significantly as a result of the Quotas Act of 1991 and its regulatory decrees 379/93 and 146/2000. There are now adequate tools in place for monitoring compliance with the law: as the annexed table shows, they call specifically for placing women on the electoral lists in positions where they have prospects of winning, and this is particularly the case for the replacement of legislators, as provided expressly in the 2000 decree. Thanks to regulation and monitoring of the election process, as well as the filing of appeals for *amparo* and recognition of the CNM as having "active legitimacy" to submit such appeals, the proportion of women elected in 2004 and in subsequent years has exceeded the 30% floor: following the 2004 elections, women held 35% of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 42% in the Senate, and with the October 2007 elections they now hold 40% in the Chamber of Deputies and 39% in the Senate.

The representation of women in the legislative branch has shown not only a systematic and steady quantitative increase but also a qualitative improvement. The

women now sitting in Congress are heading their lists and leading their party blocs, and they owe their position more to their professional track record than to personal or family ties.

Provincial Legislatures

In the provincial legislatures, 27.24% of the total of 1,171 seats (deputies and senators) are held by women, although there are marked differences between the provinces.

In 11 provinces, this figure exceeds 30%: Santiago del Estero (48%), Río Negro (39.50%), Chaco (37.50%), Corrientes (36%), Formosa (37 %), City of Buenos Aires (35 %), Misiones and San Luis (32%), and Chubut, La Pampa and Neuquén (31%).

On the other hand, women are still underrepresented in some provincial legislatures, such as those of La Rioja (4%), Jujuy (12.50%), Entre Ríos (17 %) and San Juan (12%).

At the local government level, 163 of the 2,172 municipios, or 8.61%, are headed by women.

The Judiciary

For the first time in its history, the Federal Supreme Court has had two female justices since 2004: Dr. Elena Highton de Nolasco and Dr. Carmen María Argibay.

Women have also been appointed as Federal Prosecutor General and as Federal Ombudsman.

In the provincial judiciaries, 15 jurisdictions have women sitting as members of the Superior Courts of Justice, distributed as follows: Santa Cruz 50% (2 of 4); Córdoba 50% (3 of 6); City of Buenos Aires 40% (2 of 5); Tierra del Fuego 33.3 (1 of 3), Catamarca 33.3 % (2 of 6) and Misiones with 22.2% (2 of 9). In the provinces of Buenos Aires, Chaco, Entre Ríos, Formosa, La Pampa, Salta, San Luis, Santa Fe and Tucumán there is one woman on the Superior Court.

When it comes to the provincial judicial systems, approximately 25% of the 966 members of the courts of first instance and the appeals courts are women. Their share is significantly higher in the courts of first instance, where they hold 41% of positions (1,839 members).³ Because members of the judiciary enjoy tenure, these figures remain steady with a few variations.

Representation in the Private Sector

There has been progress in establishing quotas to facilitate women's access to management positions in the private sector. A start has been made at implementing the Union Quotas Act, with uneven results: the quota compliance rate in professional and union statutes has been 72%.

Women hold only 21.76% of positions in labour unions, federations and confederations. The proportion of management positions in these organizations held by women increases with descending hierarchy. At the level of union general secretary, 9.44% of positions are held by women, while at the level of secretary,

³ Data prepared by CNM for the beginning of 2004. These figures generally remain steady, because members of the judiciary enjoy tenure.

undersecretary and board member their share is 24.56%, according to data for July 2006 from the Union Affairs Branch of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security.

Within the General Confederation of Labour (CGT), four of the 22 secretaries are women (responsible for Equality of Opportunities and Gender, Administrative Statistics, Personnel Training, and Consumer Protection). One of the five members of the audit committee is a woman.

Within the Argentine Workers' Union (*Central de Trabajadores Argentinos*, CTA), six of the 19 secretaries are women (Training, Social Assistance, Equality of Gender and Opportunities, Minutes and Acts, Youth, and Social Welfare).

When it comes to professional colleges and associations, the Public College of Lawyers of the City of Buenos Aires has been a pioneer in boosting women's participation. Women are currently members of the following bodies: the Executive Council (first and second vice president and pro-secretary), Assembly of Delegates (first vice president and recording secretary), and Disciplinary Tribunal (president, first and second vice president).

Mention should also be made of the Professional Council of Economic Sciences of the City of Buenos Aires, which has increased the proportion of women in its governing bodies: three of the seven Board members are women, and they hold positions of first and second vice president and treasurer. The Governing Council (*Consejo Titular*) has 20 members, of whom eight are women.

Women are still little represented in business organizations. The Industrial Union of Argentina (UIA), the Argentine Bankers' Association (ABA), the Argentine Chamber of Commerce (CAC), and the Argentine Confederation of Medium-Sized Businesses (CAME) have no women on their management committees. As notable exceptions, the CAME has a woman as regional vice president and two women on its ethics board, the CAC has two female board members, the *Confederación General Económica* business federation (CGT) has a woman as treasurer on its provisional board, and the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Production of Argentina (CACIPRA) has a woman as honorary president.

National universities

Women represent an increasing share of the student body and the teaching staff in higher education, but there is no correlation to institutional management.

In 2005, according to data from the Ministry of Education, there were six female rectors in a total of 38 national universities. That number remains the same for 2007 (national universities of Cuyo; Salta; Comahue; Lanús, Patagonia Austral; and Córdoba). In the private universities there is a similar lack of balance between men and women at the highest management levels. For 2007, there were only three female rectors in a total of 45 establishments (Universidad Católica de Cuyo, Universidad John F. Kennedy, and Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales).

Article 10

Legislation

Laws 25,273 and 25,808 were issued in 2003, dealing with compulsory school attendance and banning punishment for non-attendance by students who are pregnant or have children.

National Law 26,058 on Technical and Vocational Education, of 2005, redesigned technical education throughout the country. In article 40, on "equality of opportunities", it provides that specific steps must be taken to ensure that young people in a position of social risk or with learning problems can enrol in technical and vocational education courses and see them through to completion, through the provision of materials, scholarships, and extra tutorial services. It also promotes measures to bring women into technical and vocational education in its various modalities.

National Law 26,150 of 2006 creates the National Programme for Comprehensive Sex Education, which is mandatory throughout the country at all levels of education from age 5. This law, which will impact the process of acquiring and transforming knowledge, attitudes and values with respect to sexual and reproductive rights, is designed to generate greater equity in the social relations between men and women.

These changes are to be achieved through the transmission of reliable and full information on safe sexual behaviour, so as to promote:

- the adoption of responsible decisions and behaviour relating to reproduction, maternity, paternity, the prevention of teenage pregnancies, maternal morbidity and mortality, abortion, and the transmission of HIV and STD;
- the prevention of mistreatment, sexual abuse and crimes against sexual integrity;
- individual, family and social responsibility in the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights, mutual respect between men and women, and a change of attitudes.

A working commission has been set up to prepare a proposal for enforcing this legislation throughout the country.

In the Province of Buenos Aires, the school authorities incorporated sex education into the curriculum in 2005. In 2007, some 800,000 students received sex education in the public and private schools, covering the entire intermediate education system.

In October 6, the City of Buenos Aires approved Law 2110 on Comprehensive Sex Education.

The Province of Chaco, by means of Provincial Law 5011 of November 2006, provides for comprehensive sex education in public and private education establishments.

National Education Law 26,206 of 2006 makes explicit provision for incorporating the gender perspective:

"The principles, rights and guarantees enshrined in the national Constitution and in the incorporated international treaties form its legal framework and include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women."

Article 11 on the goals and objectives of national education policy refers (item f) to "ensuring conditions of equality, respecting differences between individuals, and admitting of no discrimination by gender or any other type."

With respect to the quality of education, article 84 provides that "the State must guarantee the material and cultural conditions whereby all students may achieve

common learning of high quality, regardless of their social origin, geographic location, gender or cultural identity", and article 92 provides that the curriculum in all jurisdictions must have "contents and approaches that will contribute to generating relations based on equality, solidarity, and respect between the sexes, in accordance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, with constitutional rank, and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Law 24,632) and the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW (Law 26,171)."

The law calls for the use of non-sexist language in all fields of application, and makes express reference to gender equality in each of its provisions.

The objectives of initial education include encouraging children from 45 days to 5 years of age inclusive to learn, as "persons with rights and active participants in a comprehensive process of education, and as members of a family and of a community", and promoting "solidarity and respect for themselves and for others". The law provides for the creation of nursery schools (45 days to 2 years) and kindergartens (from age 3 to 5 years).

Primary and secondary education is to stress the principles of solidarity, respect for human rights, and the rejection of all kinds of discrimination.

When it comes to continuing education for young people and adults, the educational programmes and activities of the Ministry and the various jurisdictions are to be coordinated with the activities of other ministries, such as Labour, Employment and Social Security, Social Development, Justice and Human Rights, Health, etc., and "gender equity and cultural diversity" are to be mainstreamed as basic approaches and contents in their curriculum and institutional structures (article 48 (d)).

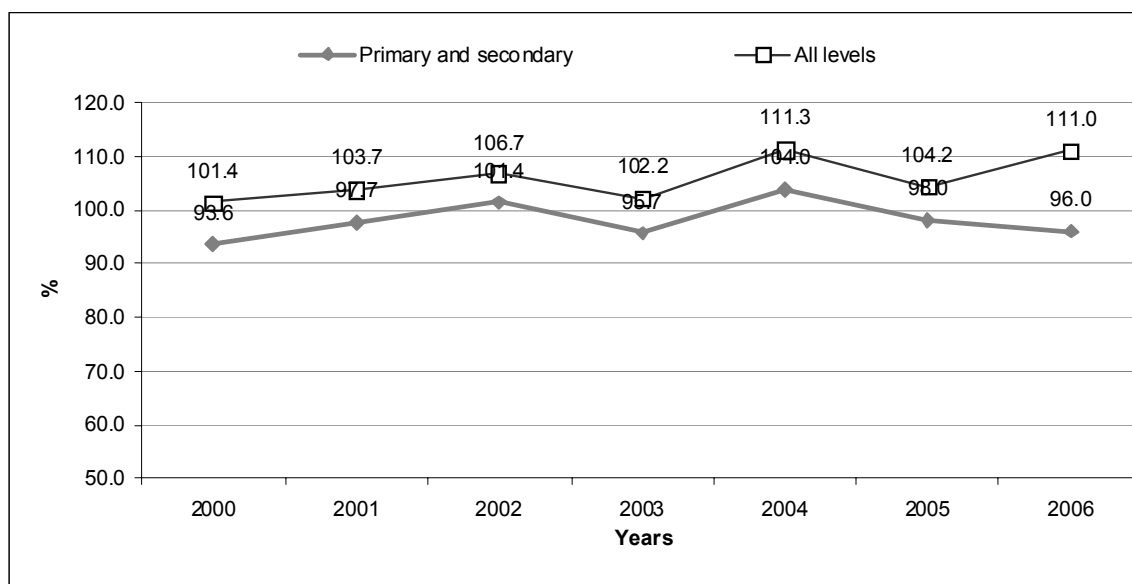
In rural education, particular importance is devoted to gender equity. Article 50 (d) calls for "promoting equality of opportunities and possibilities, by ensuring gender equity", and article 51 (d), dealing with the general criteria for achieving quality levels equivalent to those of the cities, speaks of "organizing informal education services that will contribute to vocational training and cultural advancement for rural people, with particular attention to the condition of women".

In Argentina, access to education has always been regarded as a condition for promoting the well-being and the full social integration of women.

Female coverage of formal education in our country is broad, and has remained so in recent years. Yet female enrolment in formal education establishments at the combined General Basic and Multi-Track Education levels does not show the same pattern in all regions of the country, and the overall presence of women was lower between 2004 and 2006. This situation is being reversed in some cities, where parity is now being achieved (especially in the Central Region).

Nevertheless, when all levels including the highest ones (tertiary and university) are considered, the female participation rate is clearly higher than that for males in all the years of reference. In 2006, the ratio of female to male enrolment in higher education was nearly 124%, and it was 110% across all levels together.

Female/male ratio of enrolment at different levels of formal education. Total urban areas, 2000-2006

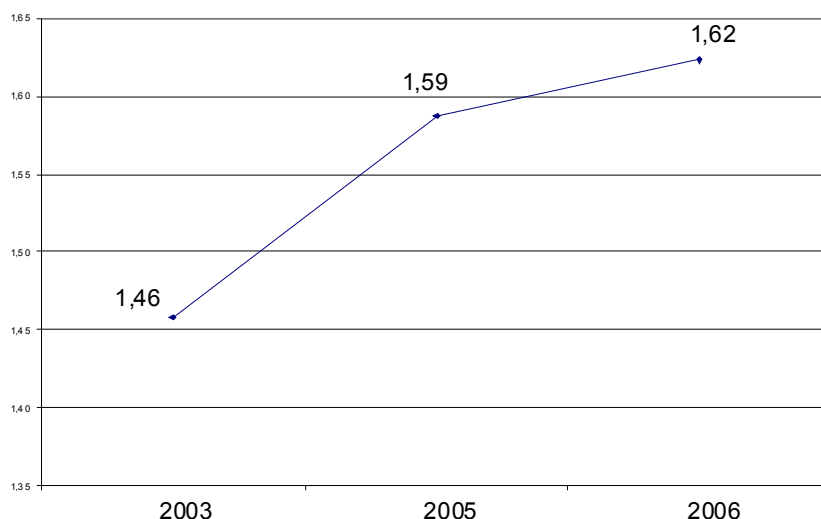


Source: CNM calculations, using SIEMPRO information based on EPH-INDEC data.

It is important to note that, while women outnumber men at the tertiary and particularly at the university levels of education, they continue to select careers in social studies, teaching and social work, a decision that has repercussions on their future incomes.

Similarly, women are more likely to be underemployed in comparison to their qualifications: in the second half of 2006, the percentage of women who were underemployed (defined as women with a secondary education or better who are engaged in unskilled occupations) was 17.1%, while among employed men the figure was 10.5%.

The gender gap in underemployment. Total urban areas, 2003, 2005 and 2006



Source: CNM calculations, using SIEMPRO information based on EPH-INDEC data.

Technical and vocational education declined sharply in Argentina during the 1990s. With approval of the new Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) Act, establishing a Technical Education Fund which stood at 15 million pesos in 2005 and at 260 million pesos in 2006 and 2007, there has been a concomitant increase in education units and in the number of students. This has given a boost to technical schools at the intermediate and non-university higher education levels, and to vocational training centres.

Throughout the country, enrolment in secondary TVE courses is high: for the year 2006, there were 306,589 students registered (public and private education combined), of whom 35% were women.

In historical terms, it will be recalled that female enrolment in this type of education was very low for decades. Also significant is the fact that the provinces with the highest proportion of women registered in these intermediate technical schools are generally those regarded as the poorest ones, such as La Rioja (53.6), Santiago del Estero (47.7), Catamarca (47.9), Misiones (47.6), Formosa (46.5) and Tierra del Fuego (47.8).

The Federal Ministry of Education sponsors the National Student Scholarships Plan, targeted at students between 13 and 19 years of age who come from extremely poor families, who attend public schools, and who are at risk of dropping out. It offers them incentives to stay in school, to advance, and to complete their compulsory education. Every year, 500,000 scholarships are awarded throughout the country.

On this total, 58% went to women in the first round, and 59% in the second round (2007). A breakdown of distribution by provinces shows fairly similar percentages.

Article 11

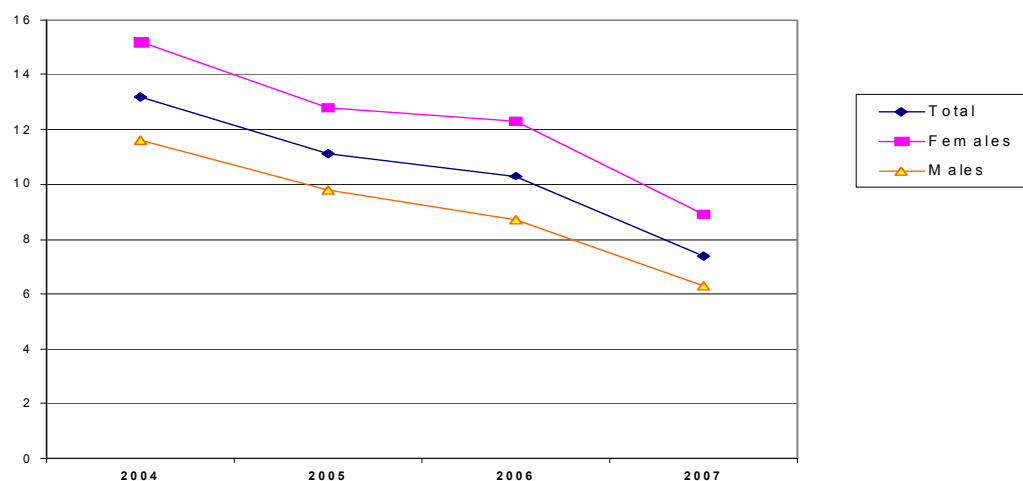
Unemployment Trends

Argentina is currently undergoing a real economic recovery, as reflected not only in the macroeconomic indicators but also in labour market and poverty variables.

Between 2004 and 2007, the number of unemployed men and women dropped steadily, and the unemployment rate declined over that time from 13.2% to 7.4%.

A comparison between men and women shows that the decline was equally significant for both groups, although women were more affected by unemployment in all the years of reference, according to the INDEC Permanent Household Survey (EPH).

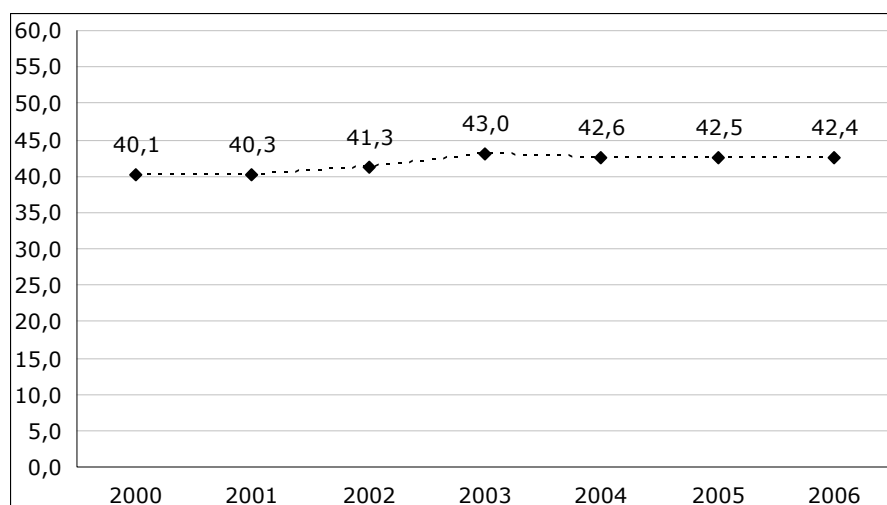
Unemployment Trend: Total, Male and Female



Source: authors' preparation based on INDEC, EPH, total urban areas, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007.

An analysis of women in the labour market shows a slight upward trend for the female participation rate in all paid nonfarm occupations: the high point since 2000 was reached in 2003 (43%), and it has remained near that level since then. This upward trend may be associated with the recovery of demand for labour in Argentina during this time.

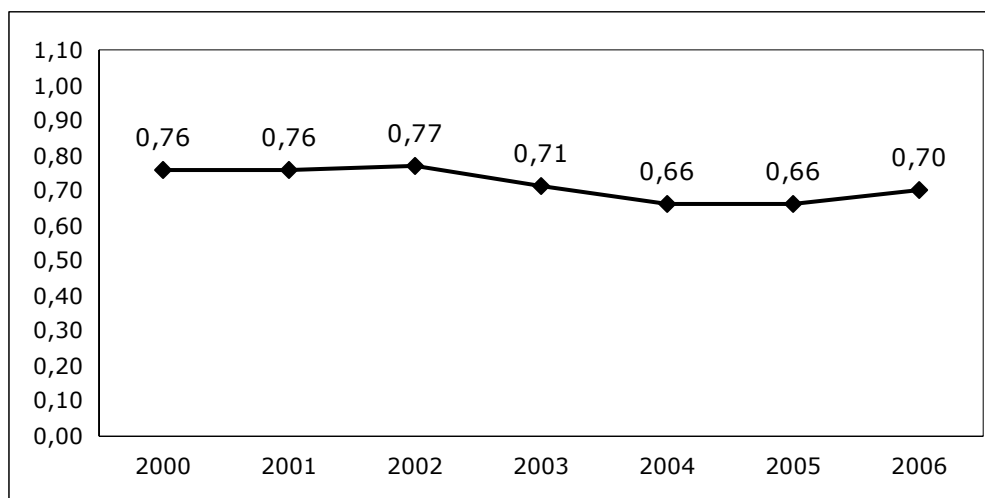
Percentage of women in paid nonfarm employment. Total urban areas, 2000-2006



Source: CNM calculations, using SIEMPRO information based on EPH-INDEC data.

Women remain at an income disadvantage. While the gap has been closing over the last decade, in the second half of 2006 it still stood at nearly 0.70 in all urban areas combined. Moreover, the male-female gap was narrowest in the period of the 2001-2002 economic crisis, suggesting that differences are smaller when male incomes are falling.

Gender gap in employment income. All urban areas, 2000-2006



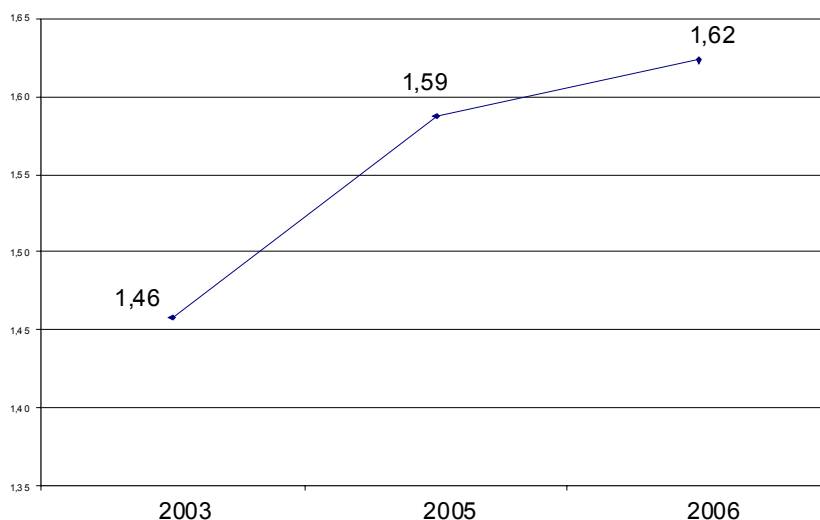
Source: CNM calculations, using SIEMPRO information based on EPH-INDEC data.

These income differentials reveal a different pattern when examined by occupational classification. In skilled and professional occupational areas, the gaps were historically higher than those in semi- and unskilled work.

It must be recognized that, while women outnumber men in tertiary and above all in university education, they continue to pursue careers regarded as "feminine", where incomes have traditionally been lower.

Similarly, women are more likely to be underemployed in comparison to their qualifications: in the second half of 2006, the percentage of women who were underemployed (defined as women with a secondary education or better who are engaged in unskilled occupations) was 17.1%, while among employed men the figure was 10.5% (cf. Figure 4.2).

The gender gap in underemployment. Total urban areas, 2003, 2005 and 2006

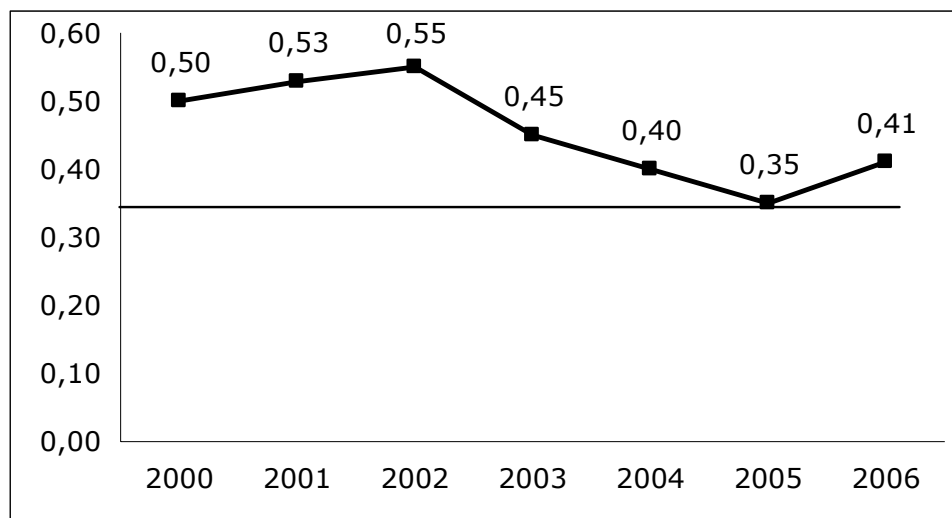


Source: CNM calculations, using SIEMPRO information based on EPH-INDEC data.

Women in senior positions, public and private

Management occupations are those concerned with the overall leadership of organizations, institutions and public, private or mixed enterprises, and they involve setting objectives and goals and taking political, social, economic and production decisions. The definition is broad enough to include occupational categories at different levels, including school principals, bank managers, merchants, etc. Although it is a rather vague indicator, constructed on the basis of data from the Permanent Household Survey, it will be seen that women's share of senior positions showed a steady decline from 2002 to 2005 (from 55% to 35%), before rising slightly in 2006 (41%). Recognizing that equity would imply equal shares—a ratio of 1 or 100%—and the variety of situations covered by this indicator, one can appreciate the distance that separates men and women at the senior level in the productive structure.

Ratio of women to men in senior positions, public and private



Source: CNM calculations, using SIEMPRO information based on EPH-INDEC data.

Social Security

National legislation and programmes

Since late 2004 a number of laws, decrees and resolutions have been issued, making pensions available to vast sectors of the population that were previously excluded from the system. They have had a special impact on women, who constitute 75% of persons who, upon reaching legal retirement age, had no pension benefits.

As a first step, the Early Retirement Allowance was created, for persons who, although not of the required age (55 years for women and 60 years for men), could claim 30 years of service with contributions to one or more mutual regimes and who were unemployed on 30 November 2004. This was an exceptional benefit, designed to last for two years from the time the law came into effect (since extended to January 2007).

Decree 1454/2005 of December 2005 made changes to the Independent Worker's Regime by amending Law 24,476 making permanent the moratorium under that regime, and targeted at persons of retirement age who do not have the number of years of contributions required by law. These people (independent workers as well as *monotributistas* [taxpayers under the simplified tax regime]) will be able to retire immediately, using the moratorium to make up for the missing years if they predate 1993. The spouses of deceased members who did not complete 30 years of contributions will also be able to access this pension as a survivor's benefit. These provisions are permanent in nature.

An example of the extraordinary impact on the discrimination that women face is the fact that this Decree also allows persons who have never been contributors to place in moratorium all the years of contributions required by the system, but they must first register as independent workers, and then apply for the Payment Facilities Plan and for the benefit. This decree is popularly known as the "housewives' retirement" provision, because of the size of the beneficiary population they

represent, and because the impact that domestic work has on women is one of the main causes of inequity in the social insurance system. This measure has come to be seen as a response to very justified demands.

In all cases, whether in applying for the retirement benefit or for a pension, the applicant must first request a tax coding from AFIP [“Federal Administration of Public Revenues”], and the Payment Facilities Plan for the amount owing. Next, the applicant requests the social benefit from ANSES [“National Social Security Administration”] and begins to pay the moratorium. Upon retirement, that quota starts to be just deducted monthly from the retirement allowance (maximum 60 instalments).

Non-contributory pensions have increased greatly in recent years, and by the end of 2007 they covered 363,838 individuals (disabled persons, seniors, mothers with more than seven children, and other special provisions), of which 85% of beneficiaries were women.

Other legislation and programmes

National Law 25,674 on the female quota in unions (regulated by Decree 514/03), sets a floor for women's participation in union activity and in the delegations that conduct collective bargaining with management. Currently, 72% of Professional and Union Statutes have been adapted to conform to the female quota law (source, Ministry of Labour and Social Security).

National Law 26,063 was issued in 2005, adding a major incentive for declaring domestic servants under employment legislation. Domestic service is in fact an important source of employment for women, representing 17.2% of all employed women and 22.7% of female wage earners in the country. This occupation is characterized by employment instability. The new legislation allows the employer to claim an income tax deduction for amounts paid to domestic workers as remuneration for services, as well as the employer's contributions to the Special Social Security Regime for Domestic Servants. The purpose is to provide medical and pension coverage for domestics who work at least six hours a week. For an additional payment, the family group can be covered. Some 240,000 persons have registered in the system.

The Ministry of Labour has created a training and employment insurance programme for domestic workers, to help such workers enhance their employability through specialization and skills upgrading.

This training and employment insurance is of benefit primarily to women, who generally lack opportunities for vocational training that will raise their status or improve their working conditions. It is also targeted at beneficiaries of the Heads of Household Programme who work in domestic service.

This initiative is also helping to counter the high degree of informality in domestic employment, by requiring that such employees be registered (through the AFIP *Trabajo en Blanco* campaign for regularizing employment status).

The programme offers training in the following areas: general domestic service, personal care and service, comprehensive hospitality service (for restaurants and events), information and reception in tourism establishments, bakery and confectionery services.

Participation in the Training and Employment Insurance Programme is compatible with registration of contributions for domestic employment for up to 12 months, continuous or discontinuous, within a maximum period of two years. The municipalities are also to identify potential institutions with experience in this kind of training, and institutional agreements will be signed with them.

At the beginning of this campaign (the AFIP "Social Inclusion Plan" designed to regularize domestic work), in January 2005, there were only 58,000 women employed in this category. By July 2007, a total of 214,000 women had already registered, and they are now enjoying Social Security benefits.

National Law 26,117 created the National Microcredit Programme for promoting the social economy and local development. The objective is to encourage and regulate microcredit as one more tool of the *Manos a la Obra* programme, which provides support and subsidies to disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors of society. It creates the National Programme Coordination Commission, as the body responsible for administering the programme, meeting its objectives, and monitoring it, as well as the design of financing, technical assistance and training programmes. The CNM is a member of this commission, where it contributes the gender perspective, bringing with it organizations that are working for equity and equality of opportunity between men and women, as well as the provincial and municipal women's offices.

Tripartite Commission on Equal Treatment and Opportunity in the Workplace (CTIO) of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Security

Coordination among the three component sectors has been strengthened in recent years, at both the national level and in the provinces (with the CTIOs established) in order to ensure effective compliance with the rules that guarantee equality of treatment and opportunities at work, to promote policies for achieving this equality, and to eradicate gender discrimination in the labour market.

One of the objectives is to monitor compliance with the Union Quota Law and to hold meetings and disseminate materials to female workers.

Another concern relates to people disadvantaged because of their status as migrants or because they are exposed to situations of vulnerability. In this respect, a seminar on "Decent Work, Legal Employment" was held in 2006, jointly with the International Organization for Migrations (IOM), sponsored by the ILO, UNIFEM and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

In October 2006 the IOM gave a presentation to the Tripartite Commission on the training programme for public officials and organizations engaged in this issue. Currently in implementation.

Activities of the CTIO under the Plan of Action 2006-2007 for "Inclusion in the World of Work".

Participation in the Social and Gender Dialogue Programme—ILO.

At federal initiative, the provinces are being encouraged to establish provincial CTIOs that will replicate federal equality policies at the local level. Such commissions have already been established in the provinces of Jujuy, Corrientes, Santa Fe, Santiago del Estero and La Rioja. A federal coordinating body for the CTIO is now being organized to track government policies relating to equity and equality of opportunity.

Following are the principal activities underway for providing care to women and men who are victims of workplace violence:

Signature of an agreement between the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security (MTSySS) and the National Administrative Investigations Office—Resolution N: 51/06.

Legislative follow-up to the drafts presented on this topic.

Participation as the public consultations body for the Draft Law on Workplace Violence prepared by the Committees on Labour and Social Security, Rights and Guarantees, General Legislation, and Population and Human Development. Support and recommendations relating to the initiative.

Signature of MTSySS Resolution 51/06, establishing the Advisory Office on Workplace Violence (OAVL) and an advisory body consisting of specialists in the field. One objective is to have members of the Tripartite Commission work with civil society to prepare policy proposals for prevention, assistance, and eradication of workplace violence.

Preparation of a CD for publicizing basic concepts, legislation, court rulings and statistics on violence in the workplace.

Preparation and distribution of workbooks showing how women face different labour market conditions than men, and addressing such topics as: women and work, general characteristics, the male-female salary gap, workplace violence, and enforcement of the Union Quota Law.

National Women's Council

National training programme for facilitators, "Women, Equity and Work", to help women integrate themselves into the economy by developing the capacities and attitudes that will enhance their position in the workforce. Training workshops and delivery of materials for reproducing them throughout the country. Preparation and publication of specific training materials on "The Status and Position of Women", "Women's Rights Are Human Rights", "Women and the Workplace", and "Women and Productive Activities" (Business Plan).

In 2006 the programme was expanded to cover the following issues: marketing, forms of cooperatives, labour and pension rights, valuing unpaid work, and microcredit. Republication of training materials (2007). Training and technical assistance provided to:

Civil society organizations: Argentine Union of Rural Workers and Stevedores (UATRE) and its National Women's Network, Social and Political Institute for Women (ISPM), Dr. Elvira Rawson Centre for Women's Studies and Research, *Fundación Propuesta*, Union of Housewives of Argentina ((SACRA), women's solidarity networks throughout the country, Land and Housing Federation: 450 direct beneficiaries, 2,250 indirect beneficiaries.

Regional and provincial training sessions for instructors from the Provincial and Municipal Women's Offices and other governmental agencies throughout the country (Chubut, Entre Ríos, Córdoba, Santa Cruz and Catamarca): 1,063 direct beneficiaries, 5,350 indirect beneficiaries.

Regional meetings with PROFAM organizations and participating projects: 420 direct beneficiaries, 2,100 indirect beneficiaries.

Regional meetings on the Federal Plan with participation by provincial and municipal women's offices and officials from participating provinces: 200 direct beneficiaries, 1,000 indirect beneficiaries.

The CNM has joined the Board of the National Microcredit Promotion Commission to bring a gender perspective to the social economy and projects developed by this promotion fund for the Social Economy and Microcredit (Law 26,117) (2006).

Promotion and training activities relating to the Microcredit Promotion and Project Management Law, aimed at provincial and municipal women's offices, civil society organizations, and social movements in the provinces of Tierra del Fuego, Jujuy, Mendoza, Formosa, Corrientes, La Pampa and Catamarca. Total: 543 participants (2006-2007).

Another important issue that the CNM is addressing has to do with the lack of visibility and the social undervaluation of the domestic work or unpaid work that keeps daily life going. This topic needs to be addressed through initiatives and policies for achieving gender equity, recognizing that most of this work is performed by women, who face discrimination and have no chance of enjoying conditions of equality in either the public or the private spheres. The CNM has been conducting research, it has participated in international meetings, and it has published materials on time use measurement. The main activities have included:

Training seminar for representatives of women's offices around the country and personnel of related provincial and national offices, relating to the study, "Methodologies for measuring time use from a gender perspective" (2005), produced with technical assistance from the Spanish Cooperation Agency-Embassy of Spain. Training with the CNM, Río Gallegos, Santa Cruz- Buenos Aires (2005).

Joint publication by the Spanish International Cooperation Agency, the Embassy of Spain and the CNM of a book: *Decir Mujer es decir trabajo* ("Woman Means Work")—Methodologies for measuring time use from a gender perspective—City of Buenos Aires, March 2006. Distribution to national, provincial and local government agencies and specialized civil society organizations: universities, labour unions, study centres.

Report on "The Economics of Care in Argentina" with a quantification of women's contributions through domestic work, for presentation at the 10th Regional Conference on Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, Quito, Ecuador (2007).

Participation in international activities on this topic: Seventh Meeting on Gender Indicators, November 2005, in Mexico, and Technical Meeting on "Time Use and Non-Remunerated Work Surveys", conducted on 27 and 28 November 2006, organized by the United Nations Women's Development Fund (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Montevideo, Uruguay, the main objective of which was to share data gathering and processing skills so as to be able to meet the needs for basic information for the development of women's policies.

Online survey on time use, "*Las mujeres cuentan. Contemos el trabajo de las mujeres*" at www.cnm.gov.ar (2006-2007), and processing of information. This survey provided valuable data on how people distribute their time, broken down by

several variables: age, socioeconomic level, type of home, size of family, etc. Information from a survey conducted in the city of Buenos Aires between November and December 1998 was also updated and published in *Decir Mujer es decir trabajo*.

Videoconference on time use, with experts from Spain, ECLAC and Argentina (2007).

Recognizing the prospects that the new retirement provisions were opening for women, the CNM created a programme for "Awareness, Training and Dissemination of Pension Rights", conducted in coordination with ANSES and SACRA, for training government advisers at the national, provincial and municipal levels (personnel of the women's offices and social development offices, in particular the Integrated Community Centres (CIC), reference centres, the National Directorate for Critical Assistance and the Seniors Directorate of the Ministry of Social Development, social workers, PAMI) as well as for nongovernmental personnel (social advisers, NGOs concerned with women's issues, retiree centres and seniors' organizations and networks, etc.), providing advice on how to obtain pension allowances under the early retirement law and the decrees and resolutions on the moratorium for independent workers and taxpayers under the simplified tax system. Workshops, seminars, preparation and publication of graphic and audiovisual teaching materials for mass distribution. Total: 49 workshops, 1,803 direct beneficiaries trained (pension promoters), 23,000 indirect beneficiaries trained.

Under the agreement signed with National Institute for Cooperatives and the Social Economy (INAES), advice was provided to women in a rehabilitated textile firm on how to set up a cooperative. The CNM and INAES provided training in cooperatives and marketing from a gender perspective (2007). Total: 60 participants.

Finally, with INAES assistance, several meetings were organized at the CNM with women from rehabilitated textile firms, under the Women, Equity and Work programme (May and September 2007). At those meetings, the CNM provided advice on how to set up cooperatives, and undertook to provide training to the women, once they had established a cooperative, in matters relating to preparing a business plan, marketing, and gender barriers.

CNM participation in the Tripartite Commission on Equal Treatment and Opportunities between Men and Women in the Workplace: the CNM reviewed and made further contributions to training materials for unionized women, dealing with application of the quotas law (2004-2005). Participation in the Legislation Commission for discussion of the Law on Violence in the Workplace. Seminars on workplace violence, decent work, and equity in the workplace. Parity in firms (participation in the discussion together with INADI, 2004-2007).

Article 12

By means of Regulatory Decree 1282/2003, the government implemented National Law 25,673 creating the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme. This represents a step forward in achieving respect for individuals' human rights, reducing maternal mortality, the number of hospitalizations for abortion and the teenage pregnancy rate. Its importance lies in the emphasis it places on protecting health through prevention, the free and universal availability of contraceptive methods, access to information and advice at the national and provincial levels,

early detection of cervical and breast cancer, female participation in decisions concerning their health, and the quality and coverage of care.

The national programme supports the strengthening of provincial programmes through technical assistance, training and the financing of provincial advisers to reinforce the existing teams.

Contraceptive methods are procured centrally and distributed to public health facilities in the country's 24 jurisdictions for free delivery to the public. The health teams are being trained in matters relating to integral health for women, counselling, comprehensive care of adolescents, and contraception technology.

Together with other agencies, it participates in activities and workshops on health targeted at adolescents. It is contributing to the preparation, distribution and dissemination of training and social communication materials targeted at the community. It is supporting local campaigns via radio, television and other media.

It monitors and evaluates activities and outcomes for this programme, and tracks its coverage in all jurisdictions.

In 2004, National Law 25,929 on "humanized childbirth" was approved, dealing with the rights of parents and children during the birth process. It gives women the right to be accompanied by their partner or a person of their choice during labour and delivery. It provides for the training of professionals and the adaptation of physical facilities in the national health system. The purpose is to ensure a healthy pregnancy and assisted childbirth.

In 2006, Law 26,150, the Comprehensive Sex Education Act, was approved, creating the National Programme of Comprehensive Sex Education, which is of mandatory application throughout the country at all levels of education from age 5. This law, which will impact the process of acquiring and transforming knowledge, attitudes and values with respect to sexual and reproductive rights, is designed to generate greater equity in the social relations between men and women. One of its objectives is to comply with the specific provisions of Law 25,673 creating the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme.

The Provinces of Buenos Aires and Chaco and the City of Buenos Aires have issued laws incorporating comprehensive sex education into the public and private curriculum.

In 2006, National Law 26,130 was approved, relating to ligation of the fallopian tubes for women and of the vas deferens or vasectomy for men. The provinces may regulate this right but may not restrict it.

By Resolution 232/2007, the Minister of Health added emergency hormonal contraception to the Compulsory Medical Programme as a contraceptive method.

Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme

Created by National Law 25,673, this programme recognizes that the right to health embraces sexual health, and that this includes the possibility of leading a gratifying sexual life free of coercion, as well as preventing unwanted pregnancies. The fundamental principle is that all persons should have the individual freedom to elect a contraception method in accordance with their convictions, on the basis of sound information and advice.

The programme therefore aims to provide free, high-quality counselling in sexual and reproductive health at public health services throughout the country.

At the same time, it encourages the timely detection of genital and mammary diseases, thereby contributing to prevention and early detection of infections and HIV/AIDS.

It provides technical assistance and support to the provincial authorities for the implementation of local programmes in all provinces, and training for health teams in conjunction with the Community Physicians Programme.

Evaluation of the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme

According to a 2007 report from the Ministry of Health, the programme is now operating in more than 6,100 health centres and hospitals throughout the country, serving around 1.9 million users.

Implementation of the programme includes:

Delivery of products to the provinces for free distribution upon request at primary health centres and public hospitals, with advice or specialized counselling.

The sexual and reproductive health products now distributed by the programme include condoms, injectable hormonal contraceptives, hormonal for lactating women, combined hormonal, and emergency hormonal contraceptives, IUDs and insertion kits.

Production and free distribution of educational materials, and social communication activities and campaigns on the topic.

Coordination of activities with units and programmes of the Health Programmes Department (National AIDS and STD Programme, the *Plan Nacer* ["Birthing Plan"], the Maternity and Infancy Directorate, the Community Physicians Programme, the Health Programmes Directorate) and the National Youth Directorate and the Families Programme of the Ministry of Social Development, as well as NGOs, scientific, academic and community development organizations.

By law, social programmes and prepaid health enterprises must offer contraceptive methods free of charge throughout the country. Beneficiaries are not supposed to pay anything, if the medical prescription is for a generic contraceptive specifying its pharmaceutical form (pill or injection). Coverage also includes intrauterine devices (Resolution 310/04): "Intrauterine contraceptives, copper IUDs." Insurance agents pay 100% of the cost, including both the cost of the IUD and its placement, and the legislation makes no provision for coinsurance or any form of cost sharing.

Moreover, the system offers a network of registered service providers. It covers 100% of the cost of condoms, diaphragms and spermicides. The physician is required to prescribe generic products at all times. As of December 2006, free coverage includes surgical contraception (tubal ligation and vasectomy) and Emergency Hormonal Contraception was added to the Compulsory Medical Programme (PMO) in 2007.

Progress with the Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme (PSSYPR)

The programme set 10 goals for its first three years of operation. Provincial programme data show progress against the proposed indicators as follows:

Goal 1. Implement the programme in all jurisdictions of the country for 2005: 100% achieved

Goal 2. A programme monitoring and evaluation system operational in all provincial jurisdictions: 100% achieved.

Goal 3. Include at least 50% of health units in the province: goal achieved, 63% of health units are included in the programme.

Goal 4. At least 80% of health units under the programme have regular supplies of products for 2005: 100% achieved.

Goal 5. All provincial jurisdictions are conducting information activities for 2005: achieved, 91.7% of health units have information activities.

Goal 6. All provincial programmes include counselling activities for 2005: achieved, 74.8% of units have counselling activities.

Goal 7. Reduce the maternal mortality rate in all jurisdictions by at least 15% for 2005: information on achievement not yet available. (Source: Vital Statistics).

Goal 8. Reduce the number of abortion-related hospitalizations by at least 20% below the 2000-2001 level within five years after programme start-up. Achievement to be evaluated in 2008 (source: health centre records).

Goal 9. Reduce the teenage pregnancy rate by at least 10% within five years after programme start-up: information on achievement not yet available.

Goal 10. All women under the provincial programmes have had a Pap test in the last three years. information on achievement not yet available. (Source: Vital Statistics).

Goals 1 to 6 are process indicators and are evaluated quarterly. Goals 7 to 10 are impact indicators and they will be evaluated once statistical data for 2005 are consolidated.

The following table shows the goals with their respective indicator, sources, and trend of the main variables, consolidated quarterly from the first quarter of 2003 through the second quarter of 2005:

Principal variables	Q3 2003	Q3 2004	Q2 2005
Health units covered by the programme	2 878	5 076	5 791
Population covered by the programme	628 309	1 550 266	1 970 594

The proportionate use of different contraceptive methods is shown below:

Contraceptive method	Q3 2003	Q3 2004	Q2 2005
Persons receiving IUDs	12%	11%	8%
Persons receiving oral contraceptives	78%	74%	79%
Persons receiving injectable contraceptives	11%	15%	13%

Contraceptive methods by age and sex of user:

Trend by sex and age	Q3 2003	Q3 2004	Q2 2005
All females	97%	92%	95%
Women up to 19 years	21%	24%	24%
Women 20 years and older	79%	76%	76%
All males	3%	8%	5%
Males under 20 years	50%	45%	34%
Males 20 years and older	50%	55%	66%
	100%	100%	100%

Contraceptive use: the programme has distributed 18 million condoms to date. The figures show that 24% of all women using contraceptives are under the age of 20. In the case of males, where the consultation rate is much lower in all ages (5%), 34% of users are under 20 years of age.

In December 2007, a technical guide for the care of non-criminal abortions was approved under the programme, indicating clinical and surgical procedures recommended by the WHO for the interruption of pregnancy, including drug-induced abortion.

This document seeks to clarify application of the law (article 86 §§1 and 2 of the Criminal Code), which makes court authorization unnecessary in cases where women request an abortion in the terms permitted by the law.

The new law creating the National Programme of Comprehensive Sex Education is a useful tool for preventing teenage pregnancy and morbidity from sexually transmitted diseases as well as promoting equality of treatment and opportunity between men and women. This law is consistent with other provisions of the programme under evaluation.

The Province of Buenos Aires has approved a provincial health programme for the prevention of family and sexual violence and care for victims, together with protocols of detection, assistance for female victims of abuse, non-criminal abortion, and dealing with victims of rape (Resolution 304/07).

Maternal Mortality

According to the Vital Statistics published by the Ministry of Health, the maternal mortality rate has shown a clear declining trend since the early 1980s: from 7.0 for every 10,000 live births in 1980 to 3.9 in 2005. The 2001/2002 crisis affected this indicator slightly, as the values rose to 4.6 and 4.4 respectively (Figure 1).

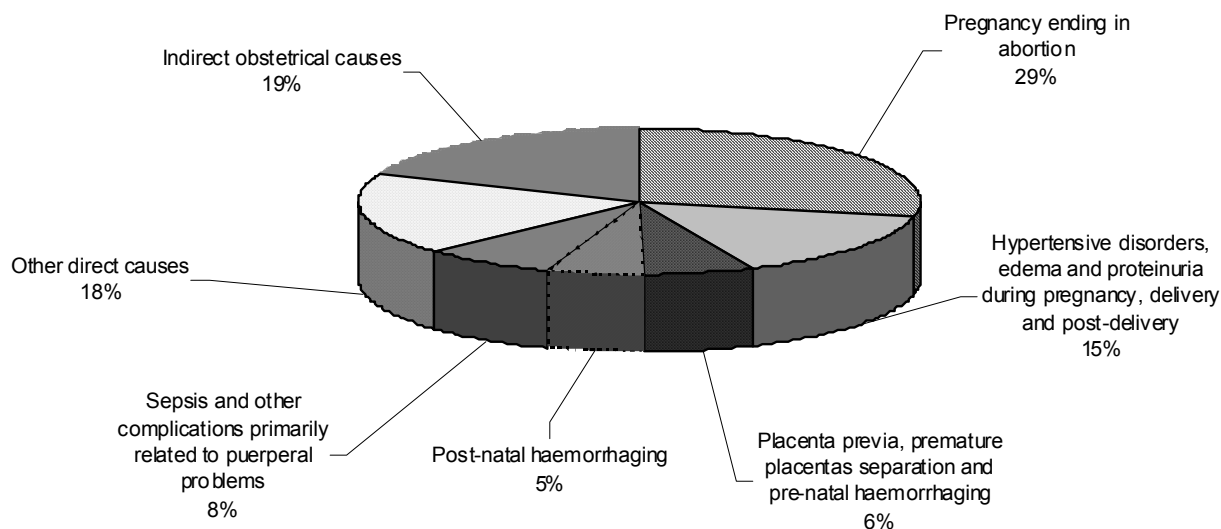
These overall figures conceal some significant differences between jurisdictions. While at the national level the maternal mortality rate for 2005 stood at 3.9 per 10,000 live births, in the provinces of Formosa and La Rioja it was 16.4 and 15.0

respectively. At the other extreme, in the city of Buenos Aires it was only 0.7 in that same year. Interprovincial disparities have persisted over the years, with fluctuations that in general have not altered the provincial rankings (Figure 2).

Direct obstetrical causes account for 52% of maternal deaths (these include hypertensive disorders, edema and proteinuria during pregnancy, delivery and post-delivery, placenta previa, premature placentas separation and pre-natal haemorrhaging, post-natal haemorrhaging, sepsis and other complications related primarily to puerperal problems and other direct causes). Almost a third (29%) are caused by abortion. Indirect causes account for 19% of cases (Figure 3).

Direct obstetrical causes are closely linked to pregnancy and childbirth, and reflect problems with the coverage of medical care and the quality of health services: family planning, prenatal care and the capacity of health units to deal with haemorrhaging, sepsis and complications arising from abortions.

Distribution of maternal mortality by causes: Argentina, 2005

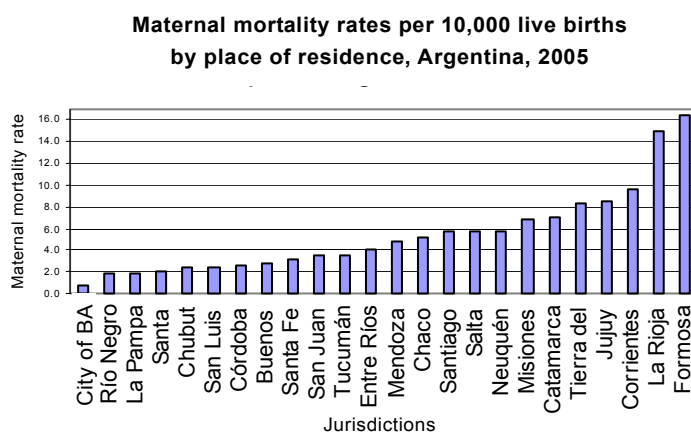


Adolescent fertility and maternity

The adolescent fertility rate has been declining since 1980, although more slowly than for other age groups. Adolescent fertility is relatively high in comparison to the general fertility level.

Adolescents (under 20 years of age) account for about 15% of births: of the 712,220 births in 2005, the mothers in 107,109 cases were under 20 years of age (and 2,699 were younger than 15 years). Adolescent fertility varies among jurisdictions: in the City of Buenos Aires it accounted for 6.7% of births in 2001, while Chaco has the highest rate, at 24.5% (Figure 4). Over the last 15 years, the percentage of women

bearing children before 20 years of age rose from 14.9% in 1991 to 16.2% in 1998, and then declined to 14.8% in 2002, and remained at that level in 2005.



The HIV/AIDS epidemiological situation

The Federal Health Ministry's National Programme to Combat Human Retroviruses, AIDS and HIV reports that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has evolved dissimilarly since the first case was recorded in 1982: as of 31 August 2007, a total of 64,000 HIV cases had been diagnosed, and around 35,600 of these had developed into AIDS.

Until highly effective antiretroviral treatments appeared, AIDS was a very lethal disease, with a post-diagnosis survival prospects of about two years.

In 2005, the HIV/AIDS mortality rate dropped by five percentage points from 2004, representing a decline of 14%, thanks to the universal accessibility of antiretroviral combination therapy, early diagnosis of HIV, greater availability of ARVs, better adherence to treatment, and the appearance of new drugs.

In 2006, based on cases notified by sex, the male-female ratio was 2.5/1, and this ratio had been stable for the last five years. This means that, of the cumulative total of AIDS cases, women represent 24.8% and men 74.9% (the remaining 0.5% represents cases where sex was not determined).

It is the economically active age group that is primarily affected by this disease, with the highest occurrences for both sexes between the ages of 25 and 39 years. Among the female population, the disease reaches its peak in the 25-29 years age group.

The distribution of AIDS cases by age offers significant evidence that adolescents constitute a highly vulnerable group. The fact that the age range in which the disease develops includes the young adult population means that many of them must have contracted the infection during adolescence. Moreover, while 24% of all cases are females, the proportion is higher in this group (29%). Age at infection among females is lower than among males.

Since the early 1990s, the most common manner of transmission has been through unprotected sexual relations. Among persons who developed AIDS in 2004, the distribution was as follows: heterosexual relations (50.7%), followed by sexual relations between men (18%), and intravenous drug users (16.8%).

Other programmes of the Federal Health Ministry

I. Maternal-Child Programme: Comprehensive Health for Women, Children and Adolescents

Area: reproductive health, maternal and perinatal health.

Its objectives include:

- Promoting policies in favour of women's rights and gender equity.
- Promoting women's capacity for self-help and mutual help throughout their childbearing years, including during pregnancy, delivery and post-delivery.
- Empowering women to take informed decisions relating to their sexual and reproductive health.
- Providing access to comprehensive preventive health services.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and habits.
- Promoting breast-feeding.
- Reducing the risks associated with the most frequent causes of female morbidity.
- Promoting the preparation and distribution of manuals for health teams relating to perinatal and reproductive issues.
- Providing technical assistance in all programme aspects, and training for health teams.
- Promoting research in support of decision-making, and the development of instruments for evaluating the quality of perinatal care.

This programme is universal and available in every province through the health centres, where it serves pregnant women, adolescents and children. It is financed by the federal government and provides inputs, equipment and infrastructure, training, and dissemination materials.

II. Adolescent Health Programme

Its objectives include:

- Promoting healthful locales for adolescents.
- Encouraging the development of life skills and self-help and mutual help.
- Promoting psychosocial growth and development.
- Providing places where young people can participate in formulating proposals for integral development.
- Reducing exposure to behavioural risk factors associated with adolescent lifestyles, such as smoking and other addictions, violence, and sexual activity.
- Developing standards and other aspects of care for adolescents.
- Sponsoring preventive measures to promote and protect health.
- Promoting research in support of decision-making and the preparation of instruments for evaluating the quality of care under the Medical Care Quality Programme, on the basis of national standards adapted to each jurisdiction.

III. *Plan Nacer* ["Birthing Plan"]

Beneficiaries: pregnant women and new mothers, and children

As of April 2007, this plan covered 40,181 pregnant women and new mothers, and 405,517 children, in the Northeast and Northwest of the country (provinces of Catamarca, Corrientes, Jujuy, Salta Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Chaco, Formosa and Misiones).

In total, more than a million instances of service have been provided as of 2007: 45,000 childbirths covered, 430,000 beneficiaries registered. The benefits, which are provided free to pregnant women who have no social coverage, include the following:

Pregnancy test (blood and urine analysis), vaccinations, five checkups, two ultrasound scans; childbirth attended by specialists in a public hospital; counselling services in contraceptive methods; dental examination; education and information on care after birth and for the newborn, maternal breast-feeding, and activities to reduce smoking..

National Women's Council

The CNM conducts a wide range of activities to promote and publicize the rights of women, through publications, graphic and audiovisual materials, and mass campaigns with governmental and nongovernmental agencies throughout the country. Among the principal activities are the following:

Women and Health Campaign. “*Tenemos derecho*” [“It's our right”], distributed through the provincial women's offices, in all health units, and by NGOs. Includes posters and explanatory brochures on five topics: prevention of cervical and breast cancer, the right to a life free of violence, HIV/AIDS prevention, the sharing of domestic chores, and sexual health, responsible procreation and humanized childbirth: 60,000 copies of the poster and 100,000 brochures (2005-2006).

Dissemination of Law 25,929 on Humanized Childbirth. Explanatory brochures (2004). Publicity campaign on World Respected Childbirth Week, under the slogan “*Facilitemos un ambiente amoroso*” [“Let's make for a loving environment!”], instituted in May 2007 together with the Federal Ministries of Health and Social Development and the NGO “*Dando a Luz*”.

Interdisciplinary training for health professionals in the provinces of Corrientes, Santa Cruz and Tucumán, in the treatment of victims of sexual crimes, jointly with AASER [Argentine Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health] and the Ministry of Health and Social Action. Joint Analysis of Application of the Protocol of Care for Sexual Crime Victims (2006).

Technical assistance was provided for the PROFAM programme's financing of projects on health and sexual education. As well, during 2006 there were six regional meetings on capacity building and training, coordinated by the programme teams with the provincial women's offices, the CNM National Directorate of Technical Assistance, and the Health Ministry's Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Programme, dealing with comprehensive health for women, sexual health and reproductive rights. Delivery of dissemination materials. Civil society organizations and the target population of the projects participated.

Under the Federal Plan for Women, the CNM sponsored seven regional meetings in 2006 and 2007 on “gender equity policies and strategies in the context of local development”, for representatives of the provincial and municipal women's offices, health and education officials, and civil society organizations.

Those sessions were devoted to developing skills and tools for the design, formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and for promoting effective coordination with other governmental agencies and the society organizations. Together with specialists from the Argentine Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health and the CNM, the training included the following modules relating to health:

Human rights, gender equity, quality of service, gender violence, sex education and responsible procreation, HIV/AIDS and STDs, barriers limiting access to responsible procreation.

To convey and disseminate the message, training materials were prepared and published, designed to develop the capacity for management with gender equity. Those materials have been made available to provincial and municipal governments, provincial and local women's offices, technical teams and permanent staff at the different levels of administration, NGOs and all those involved in institutionalizing the gender perspective in public policies.

Workbooks were updated and reissued on various topics, including domestic violence, healthy pregnancy, shared maternal and paternal responsibilities, contraception for men and women, AIDS prevention, and older women (2007).

Preparation and publication of workbooks on "Older women: health, rights and quality of life" and "Gender and disability" (2007).

Article 13

Women in Argentina are entitled to direct or indirect family allowances.

As well, there is no impediment to taking out loans, mortgages and other forms of financing, although in practice there are some constraints on access to credit, in particular the necessary guarantees or endorsements.

Within the Sports Department of the Office of the President, a women's unit has been created to highlight the importance of female representation in this field, and to encourage the design of policies that will eliminate inequalities in various sports. A representative of the Sports Department has now joined the National Women's Council.

This move has encouraged:

- Greater democracy in sporting organizations and their policies, by including in their management and programme planning a sector historically excluded for cultural reasons: women.
- Inclusion of a gender perspective in areas of decision and participation in all sporting and recreational organizations and activities.
- Equal participation in physical activities in terms of gender, social sector and age, in search of equity and a better quality of life for people.
- Promotion of "social sport" as a cultural good and a public entitlement.

Participation by the Women's Unit of the Sports Department in the 2006 Olympic Games in Japan [sic] was an occasion for the Women's Unit and the CNM to prepare joint dissemination materials: posters and brochures promoting women's full participation in all levels of sporting activities.

The Department of Culture has developed a programme to disseminate and promote women's rights in public libraries and community centres around the country. The programme includes building a library with titles addressing women's issues, and holding workshops on women's rights. During 2006 and the first half of 2007, 240 such workshops were held.

The Department of Culture, by agreement with the Ministry of Planning, is conducting the "Books and Houses" Programme that provides families moving into public housing developments (1,800 throughout the country) with a bookcase containing books of various types, including the Women's Manual, a compilation of CNM materials on women's rights. That manual was revised and updated by CNM technical staff.

Article 14

The new National Education Act (Law 26,206) approved in late 2006, pays special attention to rural education and gender equity: article 50 (d) speaks expressly of "promoting equality of opportunities and possibilities, assuring gender equity", and article 51 (d) mentions, among general criteria for achieving quality levels equal to those in the cities, "organizing informal education services that will contribute to the

vocational training and cultural advancement of rural people, with special attention to the status of women."

Law 25, 431, passed by the National Congress in 2001, institutes commemoration of Rural Women's Day on 15 October each year, giving it official recognition. Argentina thereby joined other countries around the world that have launched identical initiatives.

The Agricultural Development Directorate of SAGPYA (Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food) and the Agricultural Social Programme have been working systematically with rural and aboriginal women for the last 18 years through the Rural Women's Project (*Proyecto Mujer Rural (campesinas y aborígenes)*).

Activities began with a group of women from the Small Farmers' Association of Cachi, Salta, and were extended with the project for rural women in the Northwest, both funded by UNIFEM.

Subsequently, work on rural women's issues expanded to other regions, with funding from SAGPYA, PROINDER (the Small Farmer Development Project), the Rural Promotion Centre (CEPRU) and other governmental institutions and NGOs.

It targets poor rural women who are engaged primarily in different farming activities under conditions of scarce natural and material resources, and who have launched cooperative endeavours. Its objectives are:

- to enhance rural women's participation in organizational and social activities, and to win recognition for them as producers;
- to ensure that the gender perspective is incorporated into all rural development programmes, and that women reap equal benefit from them.

The following activities were found effective as a strategy for implementing the gender focus: awareness raising (for officials and technical staff), training (for women, technical staff and officials), and encouragement for organization, diagnosis, fieldwork, and participation by women.

1. Specific programme activities to promote active participation by rural women. Specific training in gender issues and productive development, through regional, local, provincial and national meetings of rural women. Organization of women's groups to formulate and implement productive projects and to monitor projects designed by rural women

Support for the work of technical staff in various programmes operating in the field with rural women (training, meetings, bibliography and support materials, discussion of working methodologies, etc.), sponsored by the Network of Technicians and Institutions Working with Rural and Aboriginal Women (TRAMA).

Participation in designing specific activities with rural women as part of the Small Farmer Development Project (PROINDER).

Putting together an organization of Rural and Aboriginal Women of Argentina (MUCAAR) with delegates from all regions of the country.

Strengthening the Network of Technicians and Institutions Working with Rural and Aboriginal Women (TRAMA).

2. Achievements and outcomes of work with rural and aboriginal women. These include:

Sustainability over time (18 years) for the rural women's groups that have been established, which currently number some 400; around 10,000 rural and aboriginal women trained (numbers fluctuate because of rural exodus), with the following results:

Women have enhanced their self-esteem at work and within the family, and there have been improvements in diets and in self-sufficiency. Greater participation by women in local life (schools, communities, churches, other organizations).

Women have the capacity for management and leadership in their communities, and they are trained in the production of new products, and have achieved greater recognition of their resourcefulness and the incomes they generate.

Multiplier effects include: greater participation by women at regional and provincial product fairs; female correspondents for the bimonthly magazine *Campesina*, of national circulation, published by the Rural Promotion Centre (CEPRU), which reaches 800 women [sic]; a rural woman and a female technician are involved in the Coordination Office of the Latin American Network of Rural Women.

Eighteen rural and aboriginal women participated with technicians of the PSA in the Second Latin American and Caribbean Gathering of Rural Working Women, in Mexico, in September 2005.

Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life, awarded by the Women's World Summit Foundation to a farm woman in the Puna area of Jujuy.

Establishment of undertakings headed by women to produce agricultural goods and handicrafts for market (foods, textiles, clothing etc.).

Establishment of the Provisional Coordination Team of MUCAAR.

Coordination of the National Network of Technicians and Institutions Working with Rural Women (TRAMA), an interdisciplinary team of 60 female technicians belonging to 27 governmental and nongovernmental institutions working with rural and aboriginal women.

Rural and aboriginal women are members of the Latin American Network of Rural Working Women (ENLAC), headquartered in Fortaleza, Brazil.

3. Main problems

Improving incomes from productive projects so that they will generate sufficient resources for subsistence. Some projects tend to increase the work burden on rural women. Problems associated with marketing products produced by rural women. Lack of ability to ensure quality, quantity and continuity, or lack of transportation facilities for taking products to market.

Increased participation by women sometimes sparks conflicts within organizations. Rural women still face problems (machismo, violence, health and education) that cannot be solved through productive initiatives alone, and there is a lack of coordination among institutions working on these problems.

4. Publications:

Participatory diagnoses with rural women: small farmers, rural wage-earning women, poor rural women, aboriginal women.

Proceedings of Local, Provincial, Regional and National Meetings of Rural and Aboriginal Women, from 1990 to the present.

Methodology for Holding Participatory Diagnostic Workshops with Participation by Poor Rural Women.

Rural Development with a Gender Focus. The Experience of the *Mujer Campesina* Project in Northwest Argentina.

Rural Women and the Gender Perspective

Criteria for Evaluating Projects with a Gender Focus.

Working with Rural Women in Northwestern Argentina. Contributions to the Gender Focus and Rural Development.

Women Working the Land. A Study of the Situation of Rural Women in Argentina

The National Women's Council signed several agreements with the Argentine Union of Rural Workers and Stevedores (UATRE) in 2002, and these were expanded in 2005. They have resulted in training workshops for instructors on gender violence, the Women, Equity and Work Programme for integrating women into the productive economy, including modules on gender, rights and business plans, and delivery of materials for repeating such workshops throughout the country.
