

# HEALTH AND STATUS OF A WOMAN IN THE FAMILY IN TURKMENISTAN



## Report on the results of the national sample survey

**V**iolence against women is a global problem that knows no cultural, geographic, religious, social and economic boundaries. Physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence against women is a widespread phenomenon. It is well known that violence against women in its many forms and manifestations is a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The sample survey "Health and Status of a Woman in the Family in Turkmenistan" was conducted in 2020 as part of the implementation of objectives of the first National Action Plan on Gender Equality in Turkmenistan for 2015-2020.

Collecting and analysing data on violence against women, as well as on women's and children's health is essential in order to facilitate the development and implementation of state policy, to stimulate in-depth scientific research and to raise public awareness on the issue. This analysis is also important for the fulfillment of Turkmenistan's international obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and monitoring the progress within the framework of the national agenda on achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

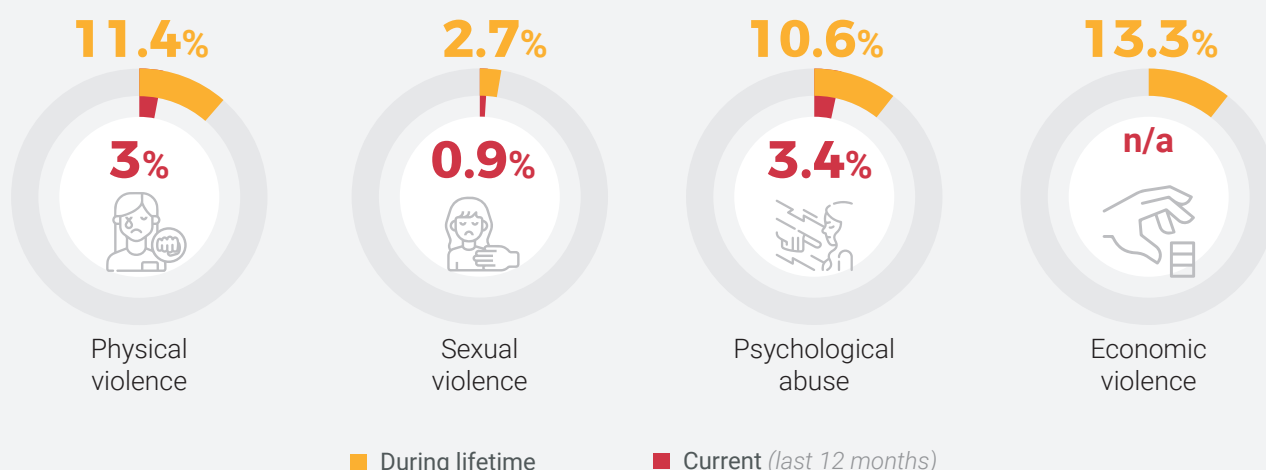


## PREVALENCE OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE



In Turkmenistan, **12% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse** by a husband/partner at least once in their lives.

Prevalence of various forms of husband/partner violence among women aged 18-59 who are or have been married or in a relationship, percent

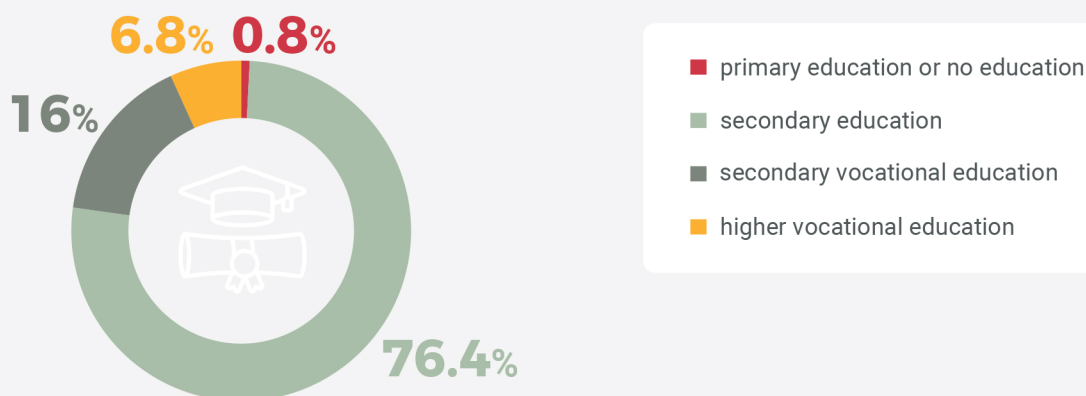




## DEFINITIONS

<b>Violence against women</b>	is “ <b>any act of gender-based violence that causes</b> or is likely to cause physical, sexual or psychological <b>harm or suffering</b> to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether in public or in personal life”.
<b>Domestic violence</b>	<b>is any act by a family member</b> (most often an intimate partner), regardless of where it occurs, that has a negative impact on a woman's well-being, physical or psychological health, freedom or right to the full development of a woman.
<b>Intimate partner</b>	<i>(identical to husband/partner in this sample survey)</i> is a partner in current and past relationships, both in registered marital relationships (in the civil registry offices) and in unregistered relationships.
<b>Physical violence by an intimate partner</b>	is the <b>intentional use</b> of physical force with the intent (or potential) to injure, harm or take life.
<b>Sexual abuse (act of sexual abuse)</b>	by an intimate partner is any act in which a person uses force, coercion or psychological pressure <b>to force another to participate in a sexual relationship</b> . It can occur in a variety of situations, including marital relationships, dates, contacts at school or work, and in the family. The definition does not include sexual harassment.
<b>Psychological abuse on the part of an intimate partner</b>	is <b>any act that is detrimental to a woman's self-esteem</b> , identity, or development of a woman's personality. Examples of such actions are humiliation, insults, threats.
<b>Economic violence</b>	is the <b>intentional deprivation</b> by one family member of another family member of housing, food, clothing and other property or means. It also includes control over access to health services and employment.

### Level of education of women aged 18-59 who took part in the survey



5.2.1



**Sustainable Development Goals Indicator 5.2.1.: Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 18-59 who were subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by their husband or partner in the previous 12 months was 5.4%.**

At the same time, the prevalence of physical violence was 3%, sexual violence - 0.9%, psychological violence - 3.4%.

One in six women (16.1%) experienced some form of physical, sexual or psychological abuse, 2% of women

experienced all three forms of violence by a husband/partner during lifetime.

Respondents who **first got married or got in a relationship before the age of 18** were more likely

**(24.7%) to report physical violence from their husbands** than women who entered their first marriage/relationship after the age of 18 (10.1%).

In general, acts of physical and sexual violence by the husband/partner are recurring, not a one-time incident. Only 24% of women who experienced physical violence and 21% of women who experienced sexual violence reported that it happened once.

The majority of women (64%) who experienced physical abuse by their husband/partner reported severe forms of physical abuse.

Among women who experienced husband/partner violence, one in five (21.6%) experienced violence during pregnancy.

At the same time, almost every tenth woman (9.6%) reported that her husband/partner kicked or hit her in the abdomen.

Psychological abuse is most often manifested through actions such as "intimidation" (7.7%) and "insults" (7.1%).

2.4% of women experienced physical violence by any person (except husband/partner) during their lifetime (after the age of 15). At the same time, the proportion of women subjected to physical violence by family members (except for the husband/partner) was 1.9%, and by non-family members - 0.5%.

According to the results of anonymous forms filled in by the respondents, 1.6% of women experienced sexual abuse in childhood (up to 15 years of age).

## IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

The survey found that the experience of violence in a woman's life is correlated with an increased prevalence of specific health problems and negative reproductive health outcomes. Among women who experienced physical and/or sexual abuse by their husband/partner, 33.5% resorted to abortion, 26% had a miscarriage, and 6.3% gave birth to stillborn children.

In families where a woman has been physically and/or sexually abused by her husband/partner, her children are more likely to suffer from behavioral problems such as nightmares, bedwetting at night, withdrawal/shyness, aggressiveness.

## COPING STRATEGIES FOR HUSBAND/PARTNER VIOLENCE

Most women who have experienced domestic violence do not tell anyone about it. Only 36.8% of women said they had told someone about their experience. Most often, the respondents reported violence from their husband/partner to their parents (23.8%), less often - to the husband's family (13.1%), other members of their family (11.1%).

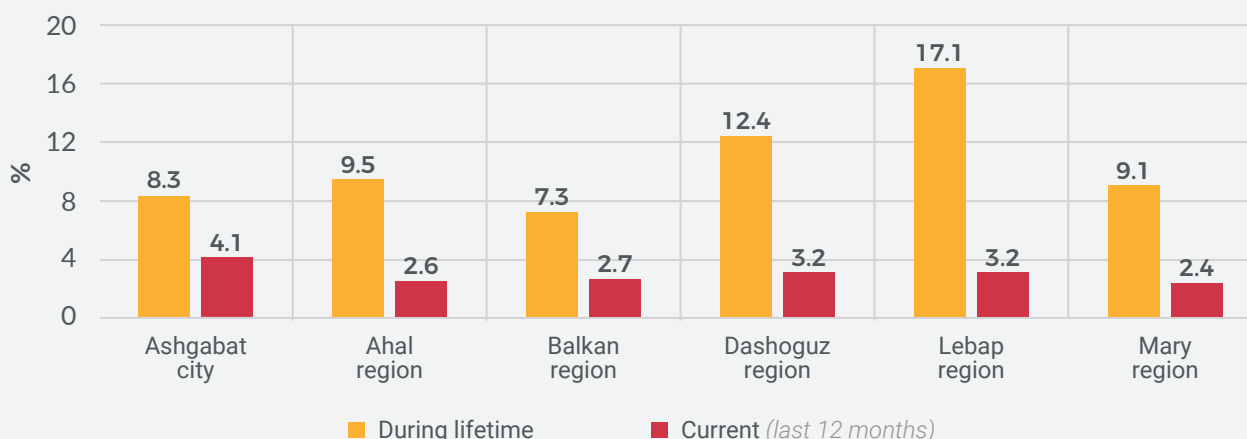
Among women aged 18-59 who were ever married/relationships and experienced intimate partner violence (IPV), only 11.9% chose to seek help from

relevant organizations and institutions. They mainly turned to the police (9.8%), less often to the courts (5.9%), medical institutions (3.8%), and local elders (3.2%).

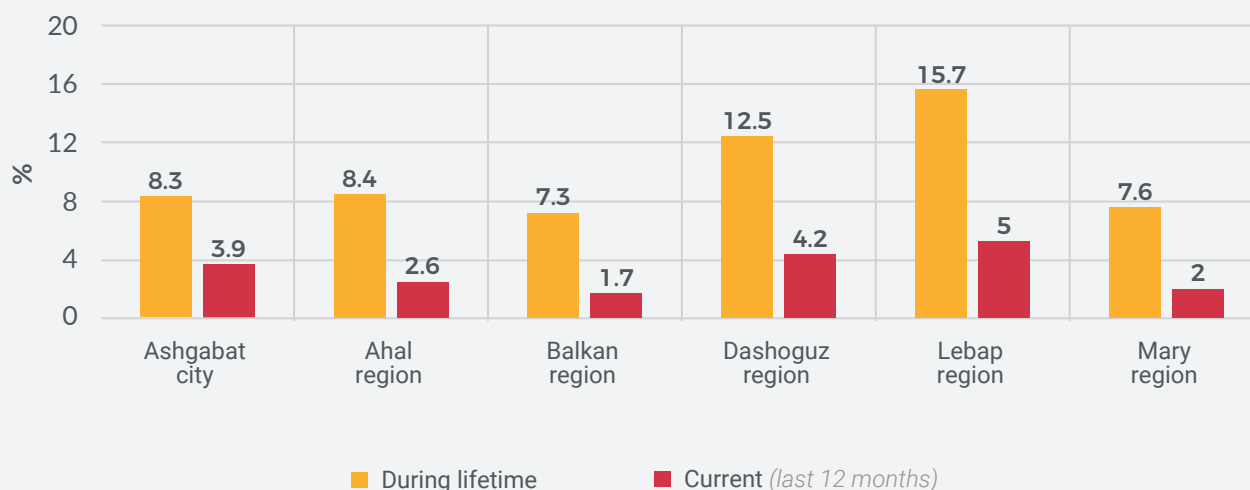
The survey showed that women turn to the relevant organizations and institutions for help when the situation reaches the limit: the majority (80.1%) of the respondents made this decision because they "couldn't endure it anymore".

## REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

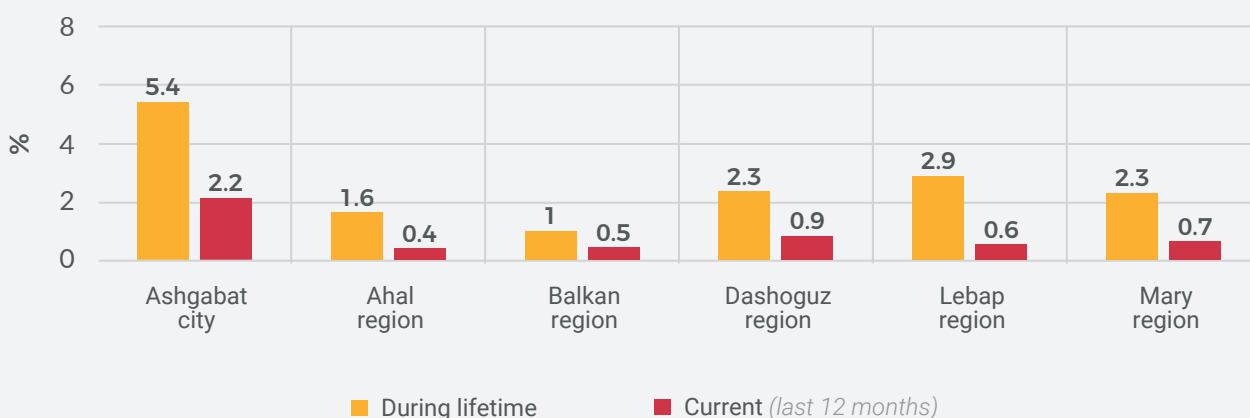
Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have experienced **physical violence** by current or former husband/partner, by region



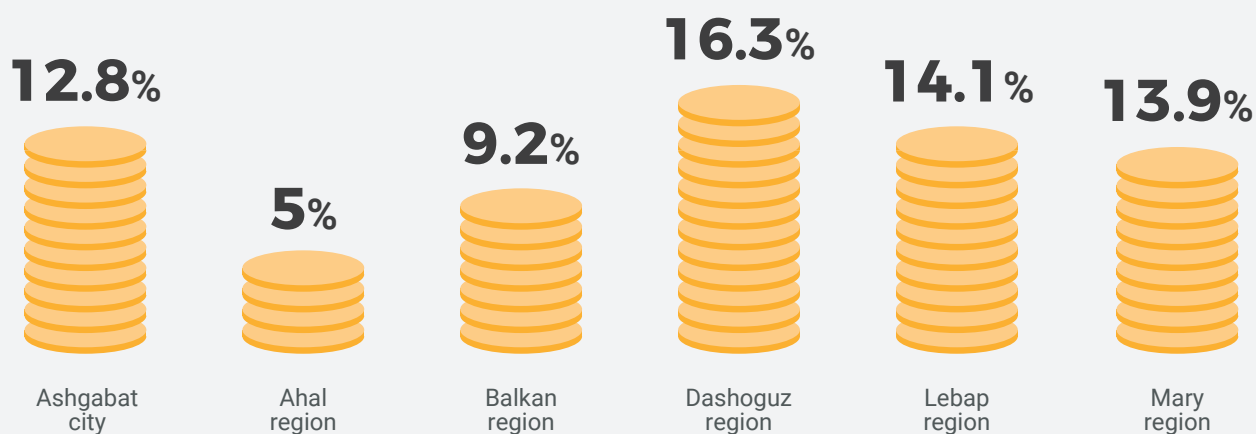
Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have experienced **psychological abuse** by their current or ex-husband/partner, by region



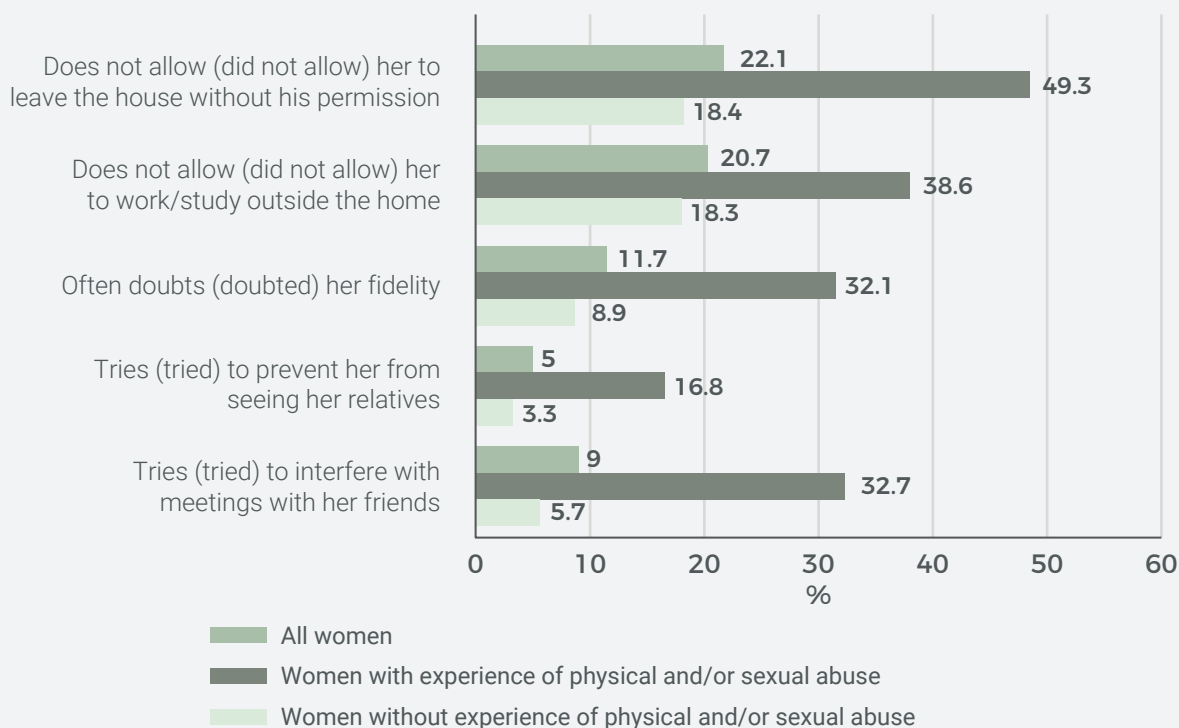
Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have experienced **sexual violence** by current or ex-husband/partner, by region



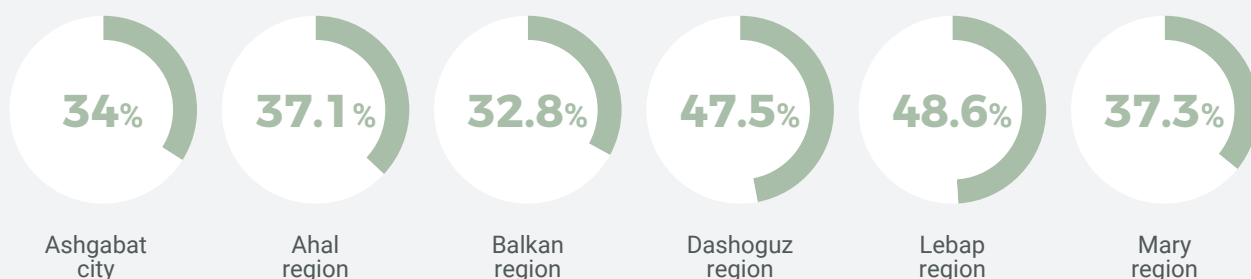
Percentage of women aged 18-59 who experienced **economic violence** by their current husband/partner during their lifetime, by region



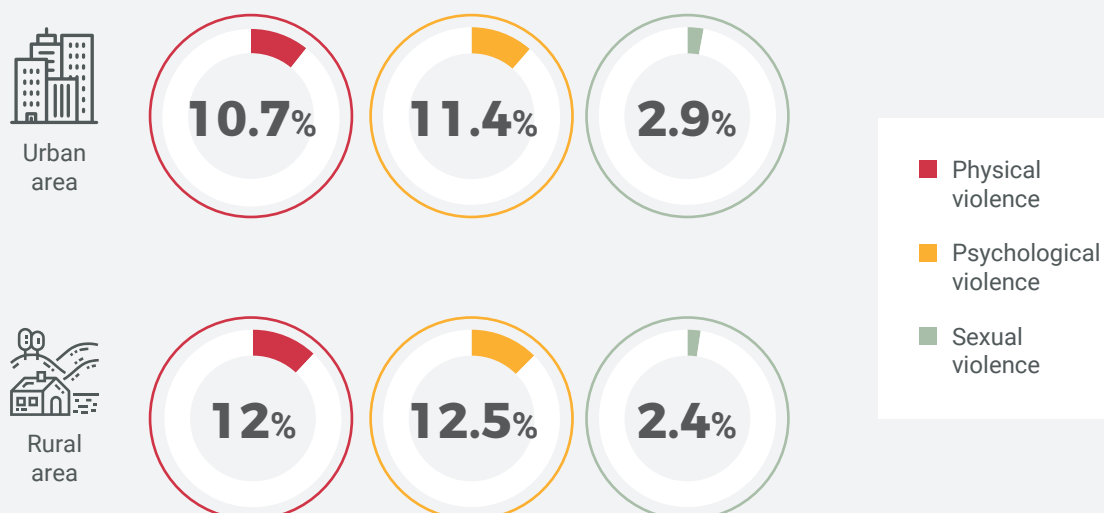
Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have experienced various **controlling actions** from their current (last) husband/partner



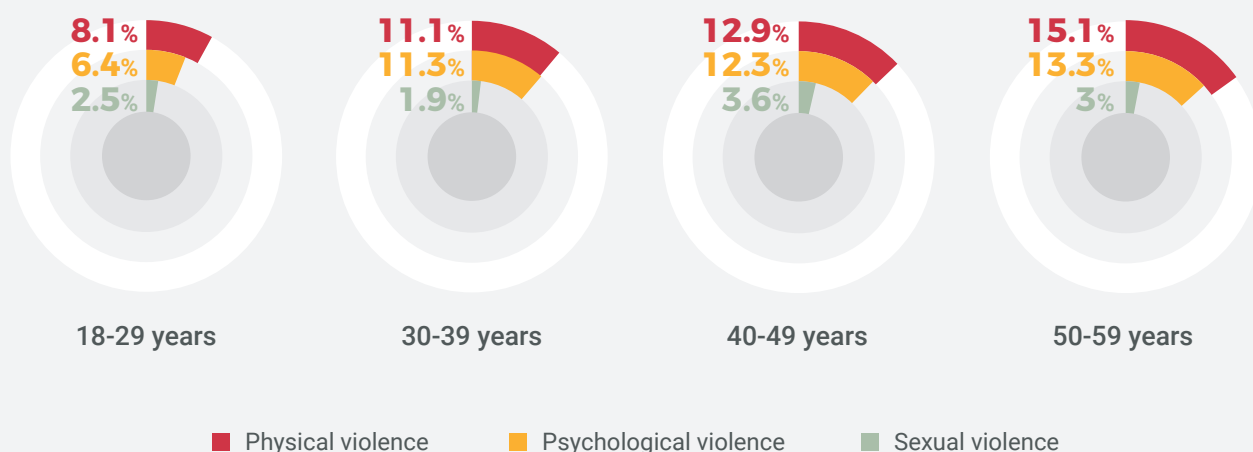
Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have experienced various **controlling actions** from the current or most recent husband/partner, by region



Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have experienced violence by their current or former husband/partner during their lifetime, by location



Percentage of women aged 18-59 who have been subjected to lifetime violence by their current or former husband/partner, by age groups



## RECOMMENDATIONS

**T**he results of the survey demonstrate **the need to develop a roadmap for the prevention of domestic violence and other types of violence against women.** Taking into account the

complex nature of the problem, it is necessary that the actions include measures on four main components:

- 1 improving legislation
- 2 building a coordinated system of services to support and protect survivors of violence
- 3 measures to prevent violence against women and all forms of gender discrimination
- 4 collection and analysis of data on the frequency, prevalence and characteristics of gender-based violence in and outside the family.

» Institute of State, Law and Democracy of Turkmenistan, State Statistics Committee of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan, and UNFPA, 2021. Health and Status of a Woman in the Family in Turkmenistan. Report on the results of the national sample survey. Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

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