Women’s economic empowerment is increasingly considered to be a prerequisite for realizing gender equality, strengthening women’s agency and achieving sustainable development for all as agreed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with an aim to reduce inequalities and to “leave no one behind”.

The first main phase of the project “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus” (WEESC) was initiated in August 2018 and aims to ensure that women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are economically empowered and participate in relevant decision-making. The project is implemented by UN Women Georgia, in close partnership with UNDP (in Armenia and Azerbaijan), and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

**Situation**

There has been some progress in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in terms of reducing gender inequality in recent years. Yet, several international indices show that work remains to be done to remove gender-based discrimination and achieve the full and equal participation of women in society and in the economy.
Outcomes

Outcome 1: Women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, use skills, economic opportunities and relevant information to be self-employed and/or to join the formal labour sector in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (grass-roots level)

Outcome 2: Armenia and Georgia implement adequate legislative and policy frameworks to enable women’s economic empowerment (policy and legislation level)

Outcome 3: Government and public institutions develop and deliver gender-responsive programmes, public services, strategies and plans for women’s economic empowerment in Armenia and Georgia (institutional level)

Implementation Strategy

In line with the theory of change, the proposed project will bring about transformative change through a holistic approach, enabling linked interventions at three levels: grass-roots, policies and legislation, and institutions. This will be achieved through consistent dialogue and participation of women so that relevant institutions, policies, legislation and services respond to women’s needs and enable women with strengthened capacities to empower themselves economically. The project will also support capacity development to mainstream gender in the relevant laws and policies, programmes and services to make sustainable contributions to women’s economic empowerment.

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2 A score of 1 would mean absolute equality.
6 National Statistics Office of Georgia (2018), Women and Men in Georgia.