

DUAL VULNERABILITY AND SECURITY: A CASE STUDY OF AZERBAIJANI AND ARMENIAN ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN IN GEORGIA

STUDY PROBLEM

There are significant gaps in empirical and academic studies regarding the problematisation of the dual vulnerability of ethnic minority women in Georgia.

STUDY AIM

The research aimed to study the security threats of ethnic minority women from the gender perspective and to underline the importance of female voice and agency in developing inclusive security agenda.

METHODOLOGY

WHAT?

6 focus groups with **48 women** of **Azerbaijani and Armenian** ethnic backgrounds and **8 face-to-face interviews** with key informants

WHO?

Experts, non-governmental organization (NGO), the Public Defender's Office, representatives from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Defence

WHERE?

Tbilisi, Marneuli, Akhalkalaki

WHEN?

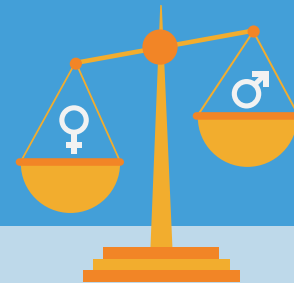
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ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Human security is a people-based approach that puts the individual at the centre of inquiry. It helps address security threats outside the military realm, focuses on a multi-sectoral understanding of security problems, including personal, economic, food, health, and political insecurities.

KEY FINDINGS:



1. DUAL VULNERABILITY

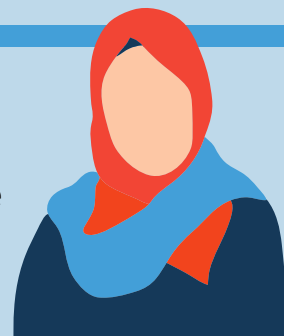
Patriarchal structures affect women from all ethnic backgrounds, albeit in different ways. Many ethnic minority women in Georgia are more disadvantaged and marginalized in power hierarchies due to their gender and belonging to a non-mainstream ethnic group that result in their dual vulnerability, to repression, ill-treatment and discrimination.

2. SECURITY, BORDERS, AND TERRITORIAL CONFLICTS

Territorial disputes impact security of ethnic minority women in multiple ways. While not necessarily directly affected by the conflicts in the region, women experience increased bullying, tensions, and deep emotional distress.

3. SECURITY SECTOR

Although the language of official documents has positively changed in recent years, ethnic minorities are still institutionally seen as security threats by the state apparatus. Direct discrimination is felt at times more from society than from the state and has moved from 'open' to more covert methods.



4. SECURITY DILEMMA

EMW face the silent security dilemma: their conditional security often depends on silence as a survival strategy and speaking up can even aggravate the threats that they face.

Society believes that women should keep silent, and if she is beaten, then that's what she deserves. Ethnic Azeri or ethnic Armenian women in our region rarely go to the police because when she leaves, she has nowhere to go. I also thought what is next, after the police? I had such cases [of domestic violence] in my family, and I did not contact the police; I did not want to return to my parents' house with my children, and I had nowhere to go on my own. I did not see any support from the state.' (Marneuli Focus Group, female, age group 29+)

5. VOICE AND FEMALE AGENCY

Despite the dual vulnerability of ethnic minority women the study found that ethnic minority women in Georgia are becoming increasingly active. Instead of depicting them only as vulnerable subjects with no agency, all efforts should be made not only to acknowledge their (in)security but also to empower their voices.