



UNITED NATIONS  
TURKMENISTAN

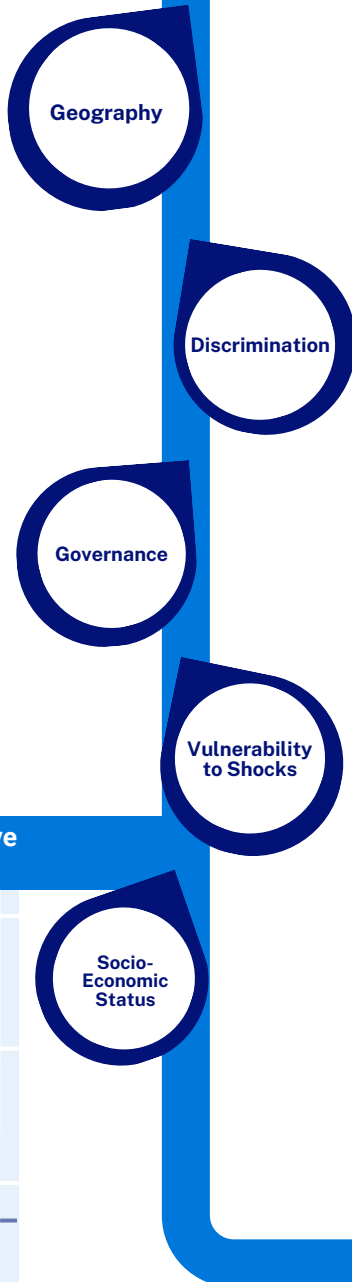


**Leave No One Behind**

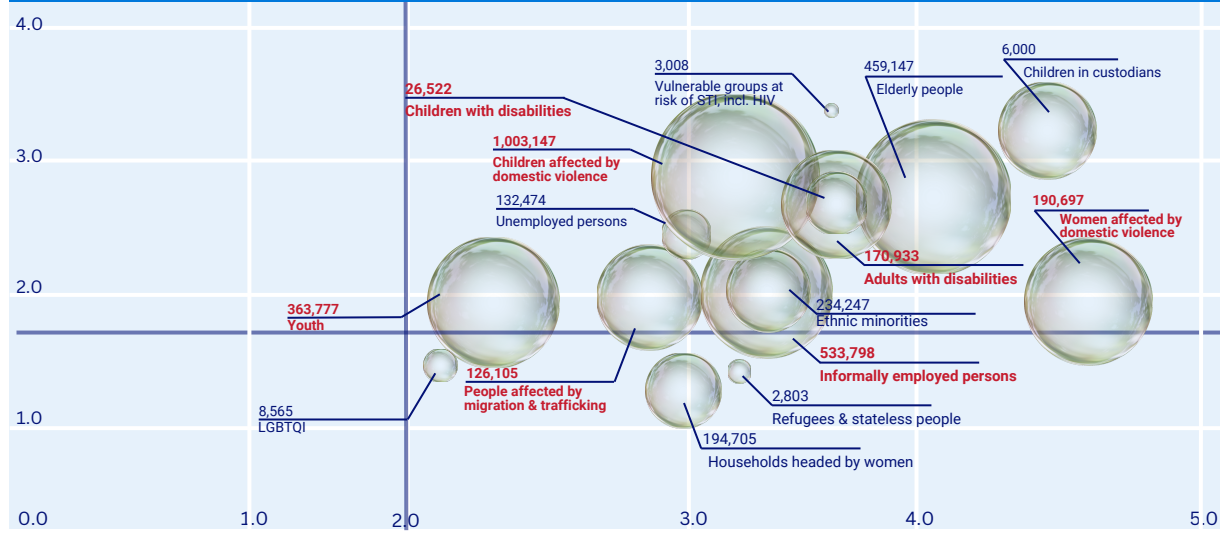


The UNSDG Operational Guidance on LNOB offers a framework capturing intersectionality of five impact factors (discrimination, geography, vulnerability to shocks, governance and socio-economic status) that can be simultaneously experienced by vulnerable groups reinforcing their exclusion.<sup>1</sup>

Vulnerable Group <sup>1</sup>	Nº of vulnerability factors affecting people simultaneously	Relative intensity of vulnerability	Total group size, persons	Nº of the most vulnerable, persons
Youth (14-34)	3.2	2.0	2,421,799	363,777
Households headed by women	3.5	1.4	374,485	194,705
Adults with disabilities	4.2	2.6	170,933	170,933
Children with disabilities	4.2	2.6	26,522	26,522
People affected by migration & trafficking	3.5	1.8	322,005	126,105
Refugees & stateless people	3.7	1.9	1,965	1,965
Elderly people	4.2	2.4	573,934	459,147
Children in custodians	4.5	2.9	6,000	6,000
Unemployed persons	3.6	2.4	132,474	132,474
Informally employed persons	3.8	2.1	533,797	533,798
Women affected by domestic violence	4.7	2.2	190,697	190,697
Children exposed to violent methods of discipline (1-14 years old)	3.7	2.7	2,055,628	1,003,147
Ethnic minorities	3.8	2.0	936,987	234,247
Vulnerable groups at risk of STI, incl. HIV	4.1	3.2	3,008	3,008
LGBTQI	2.6	1.7	34,259	8,565



Graph: Number of vulnerability factors affecting LNOB groups simultaneously (horizontal) & relative intensity of vulnerabilities (vertical)<sup>1</sup>



Source: UNCT expert assessment based on 2022 Census data

**Growing intensity of influence**

- 1. Minimal intensity:** No noticeable effect; changes are insignificant. People face general human rights challenges
- 2. Minor intensity:** Slight effect; some changes in well-being and human rights are observed but largely negligible. People face specific human rights challenges
- 3. Moderate intensity:** Noticeable effect on well-being and human rights; can require adjustments but manageable. People are at risk of harm
- 4. Major intensity:** Significant effect; well-being and human rights hindered and may require substantial changes or efforts to manage. People are threatened
- 5. Severe intensity:** Critical effect; well-being and human rights are fundamentally compromised, requiring immediate and extensive policy response. People are harmed

[1] MICS 2019, Census 2022.

Women & Girls

Women and girls need better protection and advancement of their rights through devoted policy and legislation improvements, accessible health and scaled up social support services, addressing harmful social norms

Key indicators:

12% of women aged 18-59 have experienced physical and/or sexual assault by their current or ex-husband/partner at some point in their lives;

58% of women aged 15-49 believe that husband-inflicted physical violence can be justified in some situations;



Immediate Causes

- Unequal power & controlling behaviour
- Rising conservatism on gender roles
- Violent masculinities
- Community pressure
- Perpetrator impunity
- Absence of women-centered approach
- Limited support services to survivors of violence

Underlying Causes

- Limited capacity of services providers
- Justification of GBV
- Unreported and limited evidence on GBV
- Inadequate GBV services

Root Causes

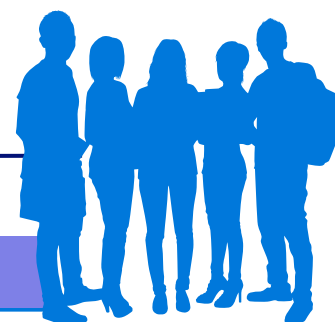
- Reluctance to recognise GBV as a problem
- Inadequate response mechanism for GBV
- Absence of institutions to train GBV service providers
- GBV is a norm in the society
- GBV is not criminalized
- Lack of link between existing capacity and needs
- Absence of gender budgeting
- Lack of national mechanism to promote women & girls rights

Youth

Increased vulnerabilities of youth that hinder the well-being, empowerment and participation in policy, social & economic development

Key indicators:

In 2023, 14.9% of youth (aged 15–29 years) were not in education, employment or training, amounting to 251,400 persons;



Immediate Causes

- Depleted labor & education opportunities
- Inadequate/unavailable youth-oriented health & social protection services
- Gender based violence & discrimination
- Youth voices not fully considered/recognized in decision-making
- Lack of awareness of Youth of their rights
- Early marriages, unintended pregnancies

Underlying Causes

- Lack of protection of outgoing labor migration, and reintegration challenges for returning migrants
- Youth viewed as beneficiaries rather than active agents of change
- Traditional gender roles limit opportunities for girls & women
- National action plans lack focus on early marriage and teenage pregnancy
- Restrictions on internet freedom and access to information, and insufficient data on youth needs
- Insufficient legal frameworks for youth participation, and lack of youth-led organizations
- Unequal access to vocational and non-formal education
- Disbalance between education and labor market demands. Growth of informal employment
- Lack of inclusive environments

Root Causes

- Economic instability, unequal resource distribution, limited political freedoms, & lack of transparency for youth opportunities and participation
- Social Norms and Cultural Barriers
- Top-down governance, limited resources, and lack of coordination for effective youth policies & programs

Informally Employed

Persistently High Informal Employment in Turkmenistan



Key indicators:

In 2023, 29.6% of females and 18% of males were engaged in informal employment, totalling 533,797 persons (including 292,248 females and 241,549 males);

Immediate Causes

- Lack of formal job opportunities
- Regulation challenges & suppressed private sector
- Low wages in formal sector

Underlying Causes

- Managers of state-owned enterprises have limited authority over profits & decisions related to investments, modernization, repairs & wages
- Limited access to credits for private sector development
- Weak social security & labor Inspection Systems
- Insufficient skill development

Root Causes

- Centralized decision-making structure at state-owned enterprises
- Unconsolidated state budget leads to underinvesting in human capital
- Excessive regulatory landscape & controls
- Weak governance & high corruption
- Cultural acceptance of informal work for women & marginalized groups

Returning migrants

Returning migrants and their families cannot reach levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability and psychosocial well-being to cope with (re)migration drivers



Key indicators:

According to the MICS, 2019, 3.6% of children have at least one parent living abroad (88,716 (Census, 2022));

Estimated number of returning migrants is 37,390 per year;

Immediate Causes

- Insufficient national reintegration programs for returning migrants and their families, lacking a gender and age-sensitive approach to address their economic, social, and psychosocial needs
- Underappreciation of returning migrants' skills & networks
- Limited capacity of returning migrants & their communities for effective reintegration

Underlying Causes

- Shortage of qualified social workers to assess returning migrants' needs and develop reintegration plans
- Insufficient psychosocial support for returning migrants, particularly women, including counseling and community networks
- Limited access to housing, education, legal, social, health, and other services for social reintegration
- Insufficient economic reintegration support through skills training, job placement, small business assistance, access to banking, microloans, financial counseling, and community projects for income generation

Root Causes

- Limited state support for return and reintegration in the development agenda
- Lack of return-friendly policies for reintegration in local and national development strategies
- The lack of recognition of migrants' foreign skills and qualifications limits their reintegration into the formal economy, leading to remigration
- Non-recognition of migrants' foreign skills hinders their reintegration and leads to remigration
- Lack of essential services at the local level and national referral mechanism to facilitate the returning migrants' reintegration
- Lack of cross-sectoral coordination and capacity of relevant government institutions

Persons with Disabilities are deprived of their rights to social inclusion



## Key indicators:

As of 2024, there are 26,522 children with disabilities & 170,933 are adults with disabilities;

It less than 1% of all children & 3% of all adults in the country & is far below the global average estimate at 16%;

### Immediate Causes

- Lack of awareness of pwd of their rights
- Lack of ability of caregivers/parents to provide appropriate care for pwd
- Lack of assistive devices for persons with disabilities to participate in mainstream activities.
- Widespread perception among duty bearers & general public of persons with disabilities as those who need to be fixed or helped with a charity
- Low understanding of caregivers/parents on developmental delays in early years
- Lack of public awareness about challenges of persons with disabilities
- Lack of access to mainstream services

### Underlying Causes

- The shortage of qualified professionals, including social workers, physical therapists, & psychologists
- The disability assessment process often leads to segregation, institutionalization, and exclusion based on medical definitions
- Limited access to affordable inclusive social support and employment services
- Lack of inclusive education opportunities, special education system
- Limited reproductive health rights services for vulnerable women & young pwd
- Ineffective assistive devices lacking integration with support services for pwd
- Negative attitudes towards pwd among service providers
- Gender-based violence against individuals with disabilities, especially girls and women
- Insufficient social security for individuals with disabilities and their families
- Weak capacity of OPDs and CSOs to advocate for & support pwd

### Root Causes

- Social stigma against pwd causes discrimination & exclusion
- A medical model data system for disabilities only records those with a diagnosis, resulting in underreporting and lack of visibility and disaggregation
- Insufficient resource allocation for pwd leads to multidimensional poverty & exclusion
- The laws are based on a medical definition of disability, promoting a medicalized approach that results in segregation and institutionalization
- Lack of inclusive education & deinstitutionalization leads to segregation & exclusion of pwd
- Inaccessible infrastructure leads to exclusion

## Notes on LNOB populations estimates

- Based on 2022 census data in Turkmenistan there were 7,057,841 people (3,526,421 men, 3,531,420 women), of them 6,968,739 resided in 1,420,838 households (average size 4.9 persons), among them in 976,598 households with children and 374,485 households headed by women.
- 194,705 households were headed by women elder than 50 years (48499 of 50-54 years, 47109 of 55-59 y.o., 50026 of 60-64 y.o., 41133 of 65-69 y.o., 56437 of 70 y+).
- According to 2022 National Sample Survey, 5.4% of women aged 18-59 experienced violence, which translates to 105,095 women.
- Among 2,055,628 children 1-14 y.o. (553355 1-4 years old, 811407 5-9 y.o. and 690866 10-14 y.o.) at least 1,003,147 are considered as affected by domestic violence. According to MICS 2019, 68.6% of children aged 1-14 years experienced any violent discipline, 48.8% experienced physical punishment (1,003,147 in terms of 2022).
- Youth aged 15-29 y.o. amounted to 2,441,454, of them 14.9% or estimated 363,777 persons were not in education, employment or training (NEETs rate, SDG indicator 8.6.1).
- According to MICS 2019, 3.6% of children lived with at least one parent living abroad 2.8% of children were with one parent living abroad, another 0.8% of children were with two parents living abroad. If we translate this to conditions of 2022 Census this corresponds to 88716 children from 30592 households. As in 22% of households (0.8%/3.6%) two parents were abroad from those households an estimated number of returning migrants is 37,390 per year. Thus, in total it gives 126,106 people affected by migration.
- As of July 2024, Turkmenistan hosts 13 refugees recognised by UNHCR under its global mandate, and 2,790 known stateless people (<https://www.unhcr.org/centralasia/en/turkmenistan>)
- According to the latest WHO data published in 2020, HIV/AIDS deaths in Turkmenistan reached 3,008 (<https://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/turkmenistan-hiv-aids>)
- According to 2022 Census Turkmens made 86.72% (6120854), the remaining 13.28% (936,987 people) were of other ethnicities.
- An estimate based on A.Kensley formula suggests a conservative number of 5000 gays in Ashgabat, that corresponds to 34,259 persons from LGBTQI community (0.5% of total population, while the estimate is 4% for South Korea and 8% for Türkiye (<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/lgbtq-population-by-country>))
- Population of working age was 4,020,649 persons, of them 2,311,192 persons were employed and 132,474 unemployed (unemployment rate 5.4%). Labor force participation rate was at 60.8%. 533,797 persons (241549 men or 18.2% in 2022, 292248 women or 29.8% in 2022) were informally employed.

