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**BOSNA I HERCEGOVINA**

*Ministarstvo za ljudska prava i izbjeglice*

*Agencija za ravnopravnost spolova  
Bosne i Hercegovine*



**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA BIH**

*Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees*

*Gender Equality Agency of  
Bosnia and Herzegovina*

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## **Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013-2017**

**Published in: "Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina" no 98/13**

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## INTRODUCTION

**The report on the realization of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (GAP BiH) 2006-2011** was reviewed and adopted in the 5th session of the Council of Ministers of BiH held on 18 April 2012. Numerous activities of GAP BiH were implemented in accordance with the envisaged deadlines, thanks in large part to the establishment of a financial mechanism for the implementation of GAP BiH (FIGAP programme 2009-2014) supported by a group of international donors in BiH. The Council of Ministers adopted, along with the report, the structure proposal of GAP BiH 2013-2017 and entrusted the Gender Equality Agency of BiH of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees to co-ordinate its development.

BiH's obligation to periodically develop GAP derives from international and domestic documents such as:

**CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)** in Articles 2, 3 and 4 defines the obligation of States Parties with the aim to eliminate discrimination, and support the development and advancement of women, as well as to accelerate the achievement of equality between women and men. These obligations, *inter alia*, include the following:

- States Parties shall take in all fields, particularly in political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation to ensure the full development and advancement of women, in order to guarantee them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms based on equality with men.
- States Parties' adoption of the temporary special measures aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention; but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards. These measures shall be discontinued when their objectives of equal opportunity and equal treatment have been achieved.

After considering the initial, second and third report of BiH upon the CEDAW Convention in 2006, the Committee for the elimination of discrimination against women (UN CEDAW Committee) submitted concluding comments and recommendations **CEDAW/C/BiH/CO/3** for BiH.

**Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)** in chapter IV – “Strategic goals and actions” – proposes that “...in each critical area of concern, the problem is diagnosed and strategic objectives are proposed with concrete actions to be taken by various actors in order to improve the position of all women, and special attention is to be paid to the most disadvantaged groups”.

The Platform for Action recognizes that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, etc. Some face discrimination because they are indigenous. Many women encounter obstacles related specifically to their family status, particularly single parents; and to their socio-economic status, especially regarding living conditions in rural, isolated or impoverished areas. Additional barriers exist for refugee women; displaced women, including internally displaced women; immigrant women and migrant women, including women migrant workers. Many women are also particularly affected by environmental disasters, serious and infectious diseases and various forms of violence against women.

**Recommendation CM/Rec (2007)17 by the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe “Standards and mechanisms for gender equality”** emphasized that gender equality is a concern and responsibility of the entire society. In the chapter of this recommendation related to strategies, mechanisms and tools for realization of gender equality, the obligation of States Parties is, *inter alia*:

- *to adopt and implement the efficient periodic State action plan for gender equality as well as the indicators to measure results and progress achieved during implementation; to support systematic and regular reporting; and, if necessary, to conduct a revision of the action plan and strategy in order to reach goals optimally.*

***The Law on gender equality in BiH – consolidated text (Official Gazette of BiH, No.:32/10)***, in Article 26 item C, defines the obligations of the Gender Equality Agency of BiH, within its jurisdictions, “to initiate and co-ordinate the development of GAP BiH, *in co-operation with the Gender Centres of the Entities, which is adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH*”; and in item D – to co-ordinate and monitor activities with all relevant subjects during implementation of GAP BiH, as referred to in Article 24 Paragraph 2 of this Law.

## **Structure of GAP BiH 2013-2017**

GAP BiH 2013-2017 is a strategic document containing goals, programmes and measures for the realization of gender equality in all areas of social life and work, in the public and the private sphere. GAP BiH provides guidelines for the development of annual operational plans at the entity, cantonal and local level. GAP BiH follows priorities of all levels of government in BiH, relying on GAP BiH 2006-2011, State and Entity development strategy, European Union (EU) Strategy for equality of men and women and other relevant strategic documents of the Council of Europe (CoE), EU and United Nations (UN).

This strategic document still contains all areas of social life but prioritized and cross-cutting areas were defined, as well as areas related to strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments to achieve gender equality and strengthening co-operation and partnership. In this manner, the obligations of institutional gender equality mechanisms were clearly defined, as well as the obligations and responsibilities of competent ministries in each priority area. GAP BiH 2013-2017 contains three strategic goals defining priority areas of activities—namely, programmes and measures needed to realize each goal.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Development, implementation and monitoring of the programme of measures for advancement of gender equality in the governmental institutions, as per priority areas**

#### **Priority areas:**

- I.1. Preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence as well as trafficking in human beings
- I.2. Public life and decision making
- I.3. Work, employment and access to economic resources
- I.4. Education, science, culture and sport
- I.5. Health, prevention and protection
- I.6. Social protection

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Establishing and strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments to achieve gender equality**

#### **Priority areas:**

- II.1. Co-ordination of and supervision over implementation of GAP BiH
- II.2. Monitoring and improvement of application of international and domestic gender equality standards
- II.3. Strengthening and co-operation of institutional gender equality mechanisms
- II.4. Raising awareness on gender equality in all segments of life
- II.5. Support to programmes and projects of institutional and non-institutional partners
- II.6. Monitoring and assessment of progress in realizing gender equality

### **STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Establishing and strengthening co-operation and partnership**

#### **Priority areas:**

- III.1. Co-operation at the regional and international level
- III.2. Co-operation with civil society organizations, social partners and academic community

Each area in each strategic goal will contain:

- Short analysis of the situation including applicable domestic and international regulations and documents;
- Programme of measures in accordance with the Law on gender equality in BiH;
- Competent holders of responsibilities and deadlines. Primary holders of responsibilities in Strategic Goals 2 and 3 are institutional gender equality mechanisms and in Strategic Goal 1, the competent bodies of the State government in accordance with the scope of activities prescribed by law;
- Obligation to report.

In achieving the three strategic goals, **cross-cutting areas** maintain equal importance and represent an integral part of all aforementioned priority areas. A strategic, systemic and multi-sectorial approach will be used in the planning and implementation of activities and action measures.

**The cross-cutting areas are:**

- Media
- Advancement of the position of multiple marginalized groups of women and men
- Role of men
- Adjustment of private and professional life

## **STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES**

### **I. STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Development, implementation and monitoring of the programme of measures for advancement of gender equality in the governmental institutions, as per priority areas**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Law on gender equality in BiH defines the obligations of all governmental institutions to undertake appropriate and required measures to implement the provisions prescribed by this law and GAP BiH.

In order to implement measures, the governmental institutions must establish and implement active public policies and strategic measures to achieve gender equality. The integration of gender equality standards into all areas of social life (gender mainstreaming) is not only the obligation of gender equality institutions but of all competent institutions.

In Strategic Goal 1, the obligations of competent governmental institutions were defined in the priority areas of the Law on gender equality in BiH and international gender equality standards. These obligations delineate measures competent institutions must undertake during implementation of GAP BiH. Deadlines as well as holders of responsibilities will be confirmed by the annual operational plans, in accordance with the competencies of institutions, as established by the appropriate legal framework.

The Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH and Gender Centre of RS will continue to provide professional support in the implementation of activities by competent governmental institutions. The activities of the Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH and Gender Centre of RS will be further defined in the Strategic Goal 2.

#### **Strategic Goal 1 includes measures and activities in seven priority areas:**

1. Preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence as well as trafficking in human beings
2. Public life and decision making
3. Work, employment and access to economic resources
4. Education, science, culture and sport
5. Health
6. Social protection
7. Sustainable environment and information-communication technologies (ICTs)

#### **Measures in the mentioned areas are defined according to the following structure:**

- Introducing and applying international and domestic gender equality standards as obligations which directly or indirectly regulate gender equality issues
- Conducting analysis, from the gender equality aspect, (gender analysis) of laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts
- Maintaining statistical registry, analysis and regular announcement of data, disaggregated by gender
- Elaborating and implementing measures for the advancement of gender equality within institutions in accordance with the obligations from the Law on gender equality in BiH
- Conducting gender equality training
- Implementing promotional activities, information campaigns and campaigns for raising public awareness of gender equality
- Regularly monitoring and reporting on progress of institutions in the application of international and domestic gender equality standards

## Principles for defining measures and activities of institutions:

- **Principle of using international gender equality standards**  
During the creation and implementation of activities, the institutions use international gender equality standards and especially those deriving from the documents of the UN, CoE, and EU. The basic documents from which international standards derive were enumerated in each area of GAP BiH.
- **Principle of harmonization of regulations with Law on gender equality in BiH**  
In accordance with Article 24 (paragraph 3) of the Law on gender equality in BiH, all laws, by-laws, strategies and action plans must be harmonized with the provisions of this Law and with international standards in the area of equality. Adopted international documents require the introduction of provisions for achieving gender equality, as well as the prohibition of gender-based discrimination, into the entire legal system and not only into laws directly regulating gender equality and discrimination issues.
- **Principle of elimination of gender-based discrimination**  
The activities of institutions will be directed towards removing the roots of gender-based discrimination which stem not only from biological differences between men and women but also from sociologically and culturally conditioned differences.
- **Principle of gender equality**  
According to needs, GAP BiH activities should be targeted to achieving gender equality with the aim to ensure that men and women have equal status, equal opportunities for realization of all rights, equal benefit from achieved results and that they are equally represented in all areas of public and private life. GAP BiH activities will be aimed at strengthening women in areas in which women are an especially excluded group, through the introduction of special measures envisaged by the Law on gender equality.
- **Principle of co-operation with gender equality institutions**  
During the creation and implementation of GAP BiH activities, it would be necessary for institutions to achieve continued co-operation with the gender equality institutions (Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH Government and Gender Centre of RS Government) so that common capacities are used to achieve efficient, effective and sustainable results.
- **Principle of analysing the budget impact on different needs of men and women (gender-sensitive budgeting)**  
During the planning of activities and the analyses of situations in particular areas, it is necessary that each budget beneficiary makes an analysis in order to assess the impact of existing budget funds on meeting different needs of men and women. This analysis should serve as the basis for planning activities per area under GAP BiH.
- **Principle of co-operation with non-governmental organizations**  
When planning and conducting activities, competent institutions, when necessary, should co-operate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the areas in which NGOs have developed capacities to work on gender equality issues. NGOs working with final beneficiaries have information on their needs and may thus contribute to the efficient implementation of activities of GAP BiH.
- **Principle of improving the sustainability of activities**  
During the creation and implementation of activities of GAP BiH by institutions, all holders of responsibility are obliged to undertake appropriate measures defined by Article 24 of the Law on gender equality BiH. This includes:

- adoption of programme of measures in order to achieve gender equality in all areas at all levels of government;
- adoption of new laws, or amendments to existing laws and other regulations in order to harmonize the provisions of this Law with international gender equality standards;
- implementation of activities and measures of GAP BiH through regular programmes of work with assurance of budget funds;
- assurance of collecting, maintaining, analysing and presenting statistical data disaggregated by gender.

All holders of activities are obliged, when drafting the proposal of activities for the implementation of GAP BiH, to analyse the gender situation within certain areas and propose the measures to remove perceived gender inequalities in that area.

- ***Principle of the inclusion of cross-cutting issues***

When planning activities in institutions, it is necessary to include cross-cutting areas, respectively the areas pervading integral parts of each priority area.

Cross-cutting areas are:

- *Media*  
Stereotypes and prejudices are the basic cause of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination; all activities should be aimed at changing the awareness of gender equality in the wider and professional public. Since media has a great influence on social change, the media's promotion of gender equality as a human rights principle may speed up the structural changes towards gender equality.
- *Advancement of the position of multiple marginalized groups of women and men*  
An aggravating consequence to the realization of rights is discrimination and exclusion on different bases such as: gender and age, gender and belonging to national minority, gender and property, gender and disability. During the planning of activities it is essential to pay special attention to the specific needs of multiple excluded groups, i.e. persons exposed to multiple forms of discrimination, including gender aspects and problems.
- *Role of men*  
Gender inequality and gender-based discrimination are the issues that influence the realization of the rights of women and men. To efficiently eliminate gender inequality and gender-based discrimination, it is necessary to encourage enhanced inclusion of men as natural partners. The inclusion of men and boys into each segment of gender equality leads to the reduction of violence in which perpetrators are men; brings about the improvement of partner and family relations; strengthens the initiatives of women's movement; influences the improvement of the health of women and men, boys and girls; and, leads to acceleration and efficiency of all other interventions in the gender equality area.
- *Harmonization of private and professional life*  
Gender stereotypes and division into gender roles influence social models which often hold a woman accountable for family and private life (for unpaid work), and a man for public and business life (for paid work). This results in an unequal division of domestic/family obligations—a main cause of discrimination against women in the labour market, which in turn limits their political and social participation. It is therefore required to induce harmonization measures for private and professional life, such as, et al, the business practices considerate of family life, equally accessible to women and men.



- Principle of co-ordination, co-operation and respect for division of competences established by the Constitution

The Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of RS and Gender Centre of FBiH will, in the process of elaboration and implementation of GAP BiH, adhere to the principle of co-ordination, co-operation and respect for the division of competences established by the Constitution. Thereby, the Gender Equality Agency of BiH co-ordinates the process of elaboration and implementation of this plan in such a manner that, in this process, it will realize close co-operation with the Gender Centre of RS and Gender Centre of FBiH; these two centres are to overtake co-ordination and co-operation with institutional and non-institutional partners at the entity and local level within their competencies. The applicable laws, policies, strategies and priorities of the entities are to be taken into account, as much in the planning of goals, measures and activities as in the reporting. The Gender Centre of RS and the Gender Centre of FBiH are obliged to respect the competences established at the BiH level. Plans and reports on the progress of GAP BiH will be submitted for adoption to the competent bodies of BiH, RS and FBiH. This principle implies: the obligation to exchange information; mutual reporting on progress and obstacles; and, joint and individual promotion and exchange of experiences and good practices in BiH, RS and FBiH, on a regional and international level.

## Priority areas within Strategic Goal 1:

### I.1. Preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence as well as trafficking in human beings

#### Introduction

BiH, with its aim of European integration, is tasked to harmonize its regulations with the European documents that regulate issues of violence and trafficking in human beings. There are many such documents but the most important are: **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women**; **Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women** (A/RES/48/104, 20 December 1993); **UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – “Women, peace and security”**; **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, adopted in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, **Convention of the CoE on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence** and **Recommendation of the CoE Rec (2002)5**. On 8 December 2008, the Council of the EU adopted the EU Guidelines on combating violence and all forms of discrimination against women and girls<sup>1</sup>.

The State of BiH, according to Article II of the Constitution, is obliged to ensure the highest level of internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Constitution of BiH provides protection from abuse, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment (paragraph 3 (b)); right to fair trial in civil and criminal procedures (paragraph 3 (e)); right to private and family life and housing (paragraph 3 (f)).

The Constitution of BiH guarantees the highest level of internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms by including the 15 most significant instruments for human rights protection into its constitutional system. The obligation of BiH to apply the highest internationally recognized human rights standards derives from the Dayton Peace Agreement. The BiH Constitution envisages that “the general principles of international law are integral part of the legal order of BiH and the Entities.”

Likewise, discrimination is prohibited; the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms envisaged by this document is guaranteed to all persons without any difference on any basis including gender.

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<sup>1</sup>En, EU Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them.

Therefore, in accordance with the BiH Constitution, the State must ensure these rights and freedoms. Violence against women, as an expression of power imbalance and gender inequality, has been present for centuries in all forms of historical development, in all societies regardless of political and economic system, wealth, race or culture. From birth to death, women have faced discrimination and violence by the state, community and family. At least one out of three women in the world will be the victim of violence during her lifetime.

According to the Law on gender equality in BiH, gender-based violence is **“each action which inflicts or may inflict any physical, psychological, sexual or economic damage or suffering as well as a threat by such action which inhibits a person or group of persons to enjoy human rights and freedoms in the public and private sphere of life”**. Since a major part of violence occurs in the family, it is important to emphasize that from this aspect domestic violence represents **“each form of control or domination which jeopardizes or violates physical or moral integrity of woman in family”**. (Lukić, 1997).

In BiH a major number of women face the issue of domestic violence. Our society has been developed on deep patriarchal grounds so that women victims of violence do not have the support of society; they face traditional prejudices and often continue living with an aggressive person, primarily because of economic dependence and fear for children.

Trafficking in human beings, especially trafficking in women for prostitution represents a problem which became particularly present in BiH in the last few years. Namely, opening state boundaries, transition to market economy, increase of unemployment and poverty, dissolution of the state and decreased movement control in some parts of Europe created convenient conditions for illegal trade, and especially trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation in the territory of our state.

## **Status assessment**

**Domestic violence**, one of the biggest challenges within BiH society, is a problem which has emerged from the private into the public sphere. To adequately address this problem, the entities adopted laws on protection from domestic violence, as well as strategies at the state and entity levels. The 2009-2011 State Strategy for prevention and combating against domestic violence in BiH encompassed activities realized at the state level, as well as the co-ordination of activities within entities' strategic and action plans, which have since been successfully implemented.

Victims of domestic violence in BiH came into the centre of attention and protection of society due to amending of the legal regulations, education, strengthening of capacity and improvement of the practice of institutions for more efficient application of laws as well as enhancement of co-operation among institutions and NGOs. Victims of domestic violence are increasingly encouraged to report violence to the competent institutions and bodies of protection, and for assistance to refer to NGOs dealing with domestic violence issues. In BiH 10 safe houses are active as well as two safe apartments and 2 SOS telephones (1265 FBiH and 1264 RS).

It is essential to provide further support to the implementation of laws, by-laws and strategic plans for prevention and protection from domestic violence and violence against women; to enable sustainable functioning of safe houses and other services providing assistance to victims of violence; to continue establishing referral mechanisms, conducting research and forming the unique statistical database on domestic violence cases. Likewise, it is needed to continue dealing with perpetrators of violence as well as to conduct information campaigns with concrete messages to boys and men about their responsibility regarding the prevention and elimination of violence against girls and women.

The basic catalysts behind manifestation of **trafficking in human beings in BiH** are: difficult economic situations; non-existence of employment opportunities; major number of displaced persons. Difficult economic circumstances in families often bring young women and girls into situations where, lured by fake announcements for employment, they become victims of trafficking in human beings and prostitution. The Council of Ministers of BiH in 2008 adopted the **Action plan for**

**prevention of trafficking in human beings in BiH for 2008-2012** which additionally elaborated the goals and measures for support, prevention and protection of the victims of trafficking; for the prosecution of perpetrators; and, international co-operation. Among co-operating, competent institutions and international organizations a range of activities have been conducted, aimed at raising public awareness of trafficking in human beings, especially vulnerable categories of the population –as well as the gender aspect of this issue, including work with girls and women belonging to vulnerable groups (Roma women, displaced persons, children without parents, children from poor families).

The continuation of activities aimed at combating trafficking in human beings and prevention and suppression of this phenomenon implies, among other things, further strengthening of co-ordination for improved assistance to victims and efficient prosecution of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings. Institutional gender equality mechanisms will continue conducting the activities on raising awareness of the issue of trafficking in human beings, especially women and girls for prostitution and sexual services, as well as preventive actions to eliminate roots of trafficking in human beings especially among vulnerable categories.

## **Measures**

The basic goal of the envisaged measures is **preventing and combating violence against women and men in the public and private sphere as well as all forms of trafficking in human beings, through the establishment of an efficient system of protection and prevention.**

- I.1.1. Introduction and application of international and domestic gender equality standards as obligations which directly or indirectly regulate preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking in human beings;
- I.1.2. Regular systemic collection, analysis and announcement of data and information on types and extent of gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking in human beings;
- I.1.3. Establishment of an efficient system of protection and prevention of gender-based violence as well as prevention and punishment of trafficking in human beings, especially women and children, including protection of potential and real victims, their rehabilitation and prosecution of perpetrators;
- I.1.4. Implementation of activities within the State and Entity strategies and action plans for preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence, as well as prevention and combating trafficking in human beings;
- I.1.5. Conduct or support to research on proportions and aspects of gender-based violence issues, including domestic violence, as well as trafficking in human beings;
- I.1.6. Implementation of educational programmes for professionals, service providers, including special training for preventing and combating gender-based violence and trafficking in human beings, including identification and assistance to victims as well as their human rights protection;
- I.1.7. Support to programmes of psychosocial treatment of perpetrators or those who resort to aggressive behaviour in family and other environments as well as programmes for the integration of victims of violence and trafficking in human beings into society, including integration into the education system and labour market;
- I.1.8. Implementation of promotional activities, information campaigns and campaigns for raising public awareness of violence against women as human rights violations, including

concrete messages referred to boys and men about their responsibility regarding prevention and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence;

I.1.9. Implementation of promotional activities, information campaigns and campaigns for raising public awareness of women and girls, as particularly vulnerable categories, on manifestations of trafficking in human beings;

I.1.10. Monitoring and reporting about manifestations of gender-based violence and trafficking in women and girls, as well as measures to combat these manifestations.

**Holders of responsibilities:** Governmental bodies at the state and entity level, cantonal bodies and bodies of local self-government, in accordance with departmental competences prescribed by the applicable legal regulations.

**Period of implementation:** 2013 - 2017

## I.2. Public life and decision making

### Introduction

**The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)** and the **European Parliament Resolution on participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution (2000/2025(INI))** give instructions and guidelines to the state and entity governments as well as other actors regarding the appropriate measures to improve the position of woman in society and prevent violent resolution of conflict.

The whole idea of parliamentary democratization rests on the representation of all its citizens. Society without the full participation of women and men in decision making is a nondemocratic society. **The UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted in 1979, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from 1995, and Recommendation Rec (2003) 3** of the Council of Ministers to States Parties on equal participation of women and men in political and public decision making (adopted on 12 March 2003), give the guidelines to States Parties for the inclusion of an equal number of women and men in decision making at all levels of government. Development of modern society depends, among other things, on women's working capabilities, their experiences and attitudes. The lack of balance between the social influence of women and men hinders many opportunities within BiH society. As mentioned in the World Bank's report from 1999, democracy and equal gender representation guarantees better economic development.

Therefore, we may say that the equal participation and division of responsibilities between women and men in public life and decision making *has* essential significance for the entire BiH society, as defined by **Article 20 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH**. The gender equality issue must become a part of each progressive policy, at all levels and all spheres.

For sooner achievement of equal gender representation in policies and decision making at all levels of government in BiH, during the revision of the Law on gender equality in BiH, Article 20 has been harmonized with the Recommendation Rec (2003) 3 of the Council of Ministers of the CoE, which prescribes that: "Equal gender representation exists in a case when one of the genders has been represented at least 40% in the State bodies at all levels of government and local self-government bodies, including legislative, executive and judicial powers, political parties..."

### Status assessment

There is a need for additional efforts in order to apply Article 20 of the Law on gender equality in practice. The Election Law of BiH is not completely harmonized with the Law on gender equality in BiH. However, special progress reflects the adopted amendments and supplements which have introduced affirmative measures during harmonization of the Law on financing political parties with the Law on gender equality in BiH.

The 2010 general elections saw the highest number of female candidates, as compared to the previous two electoral cycles 2002 and 2006, presented on the candidate lists of political parties. Accordingly, this influenced the realization of equal participation of women and men in political and public life. The opportunities of women's political participation and their political influence in the media and public sphere are still extremely limited.

A great obstacle to the equal representation of women in political life is insufficient support of political parties to women members in creating political programmes and political affirmation even though statutes of political parties do not contain a provision on prohibition of women's participation in the work of the party authorities. A certain smaller number of political parties defined in their acts the obligations with the aim of achieving gender equality in practice. However, there is still a traditional view of a woman's role, alongside socially established forms of behaviour and relationships that with insufficient legal regulation misrepresent and obstruct participation of women in public life and decision making bodies. It is necessary that all actors, including political parties and media take part in affirming women as equal carriers of political functions at all levels of authority in BiH.

## **Measures**

The primary goal of the provided measures is the **realization of equal gender representation in creating policies and decision making at all levels of organizing authorities in BiH.**

- I.2.1. Integrating international and national standards for gender equality, as well as obligations that directly or indirectly regulate equal participation in public life, including participation in legislative bodies, executive authorities, public administration, judiciary and diplomacy;
- I.2.2. Conducting gender analysis and research on the participation of women and men in public life and decision making, with regular maintenance and updates of statistical records sorted by gender regarding electoral candidates lists, elections results at all levels of authority, and representation of women and men in executive authorities, public administration, judiciary and diplomacy;
- I.2.3. Developing and implementing measures to equalize gender representation in public life and decision making bodies;
- I.2.4. Organizing trainings to help strengthen the capacities of political parties in order to increase the number of women in public life at all levels of decision making;
- I.2.5. Strengthening the role and accountability of media, implementing promotional activities, informative campaigns and campaign for raising awareness of the public on the importance of equal gender representation at all levels of political and public decision making; and,
- I.2.6. Regular monitoring and reporting on representation of women and men in the positions of decision making, electoral lists and other processes of the selection of candidates for the positions of managers in the bodies at all levels of organizing authorities, regional and international level.

**Duty bearers:** Executive and legislative authorities at state and entity level, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities regulated by relevant legislation, Central election commission.

**Deadline for Implementation:** 2013- 2017

### I.3. Work, employment and access to economic resources

#### Introduction

According to UN standards: **“Development means total development, including development in the political, economic, social, cultural and other dimensions of human life, as well as the development of the economic and other material resources and physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of human beings.”**

BiH, with its aim of European integration, is tasked to harmonize state and entity regulations with European documents that regulate areas of employment and labour market. Documents of special importance for this area are: **CoE Resolution (29 May 1990)** on the protection of dignity of women and men at work, **European Commission Recommendation (27 November 1991)** on the protection of dignity of women and men at work, including the code of practice to combat sexual harassment, **CoE Directive 86/378/EE3 (05 July 2006)** on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, **European Social Charter (revised) 2004**, **European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**, 12 July 2002, **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing on 1995, and **Recommendation of the CoE Parliamentary Assembly 1700(2005) Prevention of Discrimination against women in the workforce and the workplace (27 April 2005)**. BiH is a signatory of the 81 conventions of the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**; accordingly a great step forward has been made in relation to the harmonization of the laws from the area of labour with international legislative framework.

According to the existing laws on labour, every type of discrimination affecting the right to work and employment is prohibited in BiH. This is adopted in the Law on prohibition of discrimination in legal system of BiH.

Economic development is a multi-dimensional process, dependent greatly upon preservation of macroeconomic stability and economic openness in BiH. Economic growth and steady economic development enable greater employment and an effective system of social protection, which ultimately poverty. Countries preparing for accession to the EU will require economic reforms and a clear macroeconomic policy.

The Law on gender equality in BiH (Articles 12-16) regulates the issue of employment, work and access to all forms of resources. The Law prohibits discrimination based on gender in work and labour relations. It is prohibited by the Law: to deny equal salary for work of equal value for both sexes; prevention of advancement or professional development at work; exclusion from equal conditions for education; unequal suitability of work premises or auxiliary premises and equipment between employees of both genders; different treatments due to pregnancy, birth or use of maternity leave; any kind of unfavourable treatment of parents or tutors in harmonizing obligations from professional and private life; or, any other activity or act representing any certain form of: direct or indirect discrimination, defined by Article 4, point (1) and (2) of the consolidated text of the Law on Gender equality in BiH.

The area of work, employment and access to resources is extremely complex with regard to gender equality because it adheres to the market economy and economic concerns, formal and informal economic spheres, and multi-dimensional aspects of the access to different economic and social resources emerging from everyday social activity. Equal opportunities in the labour market and in economic life, economic independence and possibility of decision making inside economic structures is of vital importance for the realization of gender equality.

In BiH there is strong relation between the social role of a woman and her education, profession and status in the labour market. The question of equal opportunities to gain income and benefits, and to assess unpaid work must be considered under international standards, Law on gender equality in BiH, the state action plan, and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination

against Women (CEDAW). It is also important to note that until now, BiH had no published research regarding incomes and benefits from a gender perspective, and general knowledge and awareness on the impact of unpaid work on society, economy, development and reduction of poverty is extremely low.

## Status assessment

To eliminate gender-based discrimination in labour and employment, the Law on amendments and supplements to the Law on civil service in BiH and the entities' laws on labour are harmonized with the Law on gender equality in BiH. Employment strategies at the state and entity level are also harmonized with gender equality standards. However, representation of women in the labour market is not at the satisfactory level. Aside from the fact that women represent 51.7% of the overall assessed number of the work-capable population, only 35.6% of the employed are women. This is the lowest such percentage in South-East Europe. Employment structure is uniform for both sexes, but detailed review indicates that the percentage of younger women in the labour market is lower than that of their male colleagues. The most common reasons for are: resigning from a job due to child care; higher demand for younger workforce; lower retirement age for women, etc.

In BiH there are still stereotypes about occupations and professions suitable for women and men respectively. Possibilities for BiH women to answer the requests dictated by the labour market are limited. There are no specific professional trainings for women that are of great help for women, especially younger women still deciding on a type of education and profession. Adequate professional trainings would influence gender perception and stereotypes involved in decisions regarding career path, and later promotion. The country has yet to systematically solve the issue of adult education and pre-qualification, which appears necessary following the closure of an industrial company in BiH. Accordingly, there are no special programmes for employment, pre-qualification or rehabilitation of women with disabilities; neither is there relevant statistical data, nor special measures of employment protection for women with disabilities.

In this area, special attention should be given to the creation of future programmes of measures, that will ensure the implementation of national and international standards of equal treatment and equal opportunity for both sexes in employment, including proper work conditions, flexible working hours, the possibility of promotion in the career, protection of maternity and paternity, as well as equal rights to access and offers of goods and services.

## Measures

The primary aim of the anticipated measures is the **elimination of discrimination based on sex in work, employment and the labour market, as well as ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in accessing economic resources, including reducing poverty through new macroeconomic and development strategies.**

- I.3.1. Identifying the priority laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts in the area of work, employment and access to resources with the aim of introducing international and national standards of gender equality;
- I.3.2. Implementation of analysis of gender strategies, policies, programmes and projects within the labour market, employment, and access to economic resources, in order to identify disadvantages, advantages, real needs and opportunities relating to gender equality;
- I.3.3. Regularly collecting, analysing and publishing data classified by gender regarding participation of women and men in the labour market and economic life, including participation in decision making bodies, promotion in career, income, wage, work for indeterminate/fixed term, conditions of business contract, access to credit, etc;
- I.3.4. Drafting and implementing programmes of measures and activities to eliminate gender-based discrimination in work, employment, and access to economic resources, including

strengthening of institutional capacities to implement relevant national and international standards, introducing gender-responsible budgets, and establishing adequate institutional mechanisms for gender equality that will co-ordinate implementation of these measures;

- I.3.5. Providing support to research and programmes geared toward increased participation of women in the workforce; reduced unemployment; development of women entrepreneurs; representation in agricultural production and informal sector, and economic and social empowerment of women;
- I.3.6. Providing support to research and programmes to improve the status of women in the area of rural development, as well as to integrate gender issues into programmes for sustainable development and environmental protection;
- I.3.7. Organizing trainings for women on searching, choosing and obtaining adequate jobs, including pre-qualification, self-employment, and entrepreneurship;
- I.3.8. Improving measures to harmonize business and private life, including the protection of maternity and paternity rights, provisions for paid maternity/paternity leave, as well as special measures to help employees balance professional and familial obligations;
- I.3.9. Implementing promotional activities, information/awareness-raising campaigns on the right to equal access to employment, labour market and economic resources in the area of environmental protection and sustainable development; and,
- I.3.10. Monitoring progress and reporting on gender representation in careers, employment and access to economic resources, as well as in the area of women's entrepreneurship.

**Duty bearers:** Legislative and executive authorities at state and entity level, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by existing legislative provisions.

**Deadline for Implementation:** 2013 - 2017

#### **I.4. Education, science, culture and sport**

##### **Introduction**

Education represents one of the most important elements in achieving gender equality, especially as there is a present need for continued education and professional improvement regardless of age. Special attention should be devoted to the education of women, particularly in rurally-located and other vulnerable groups, in order to overcome divisions and traditional expectations based on gender, education, professions and positions in the labour market. This is of special importance in BiH's current period of transition.

According to legislative regulations for the education sector, gender-based discrimination does not exist in BiH. Of the numerous international and national documents, those of the special importance for this area are: **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted in 1979, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child from 20 November 1989, European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life from 1992, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from 1995.** Constitution of BiH part II.3 (L), and Constitutions of entities, Law on gender equality in BiH Article 10, and Laws from the area of education in BiH. These guarantee the right to education without discrimination on any grounds, including gender. Special attention should also be devoted to the **CoE Recommendation CM/Rec (2007) 13 on gender mainstreaming in education and Guidelines on elimination of**



## **discrimination against women and girls in sports given in the Recommendations of the CoE 1701(2005).**

The Framework Law on Elementary and Secondary Education in BiH and the Framework Law on Pre-school Upbringing and Education in BiH constitute a legal framework for education in BiH that is implemented at the state level. These Laws also commit the institutions and education authorities of the Federation of BiH (FBiH) (including cantons), Republika Srpska (RS) and Brcko District to implement and respect the principles and norms defined by these laws and to ensure education under equal conditions for all students, and to ensure equal opportunities of education and the possibility of choice at all levels of education, regardless of gender.

In practice there is a disproportionate gap in the percentage of educated women and men of the same age. Generally, a higher number of boys finish elementary and secondary education, while the number of women with university degrees is higher than the number of men. However, the number of men with master degrees and PhDs is higher than that of women. Also, there is an education gap between women in urban, suburban and rural areas. Gender segregation in education is present, wherein women are dominant in social and medical sciences, while men are dominant in technical sciences. In management positions within education, men are dominant. Roma, as national minority, are inadequately included in education process. Within this population, there is a high level of illiteracy and low level of persons with primary, secondary or higher education. Textbooks in BiH contain gender stereotypes about men, women and their social roles.

### **Status assessment**

Even though an equal number of boys and girls, women and men are included in the education process in BiH, the advancement opportunities for girls and women are limited, as is access to positions requiring high qualifications. This is primarily due to existing stereotypes of male/female professions, as well as issues of balancing professional and familial life. Special attention deserves to be given to the issue of education among members of vulnerable groups: members of national minorities, persons from rural areas, persons with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons; because of the numerous obstacles they face. The constituting element of the education system should be lifelong learning, open and accessible to everyone; this would contribute to socio-economic revitalization, greater employment opportunities, higher competition in the knowledge market, and increased mobility and professional flexibility of each individual

Analysis of the official statistical data concludes that differences in inclusion exist between female and male children at certain levels of education. On average, an equal number of girls/women and boys/men are included in elementary and secondary education. In higher education, the percentage of enrolled female students is on average higher (59%) in comparison to the number of male students, and accordingly the number of graduated female students is higher. The statistical data on the number of persons that obtain a Master's degree shows that from 2008 a higher number of women obtain this degree in comparison to men. Every year, there is a notable increase in the number of PhDs, and for women it is 35% out of the total number of PhDs. Analysis shows that during the course of higher education, there is a decreased number of women enrolled, and accordingly only one third of women hold a PhD degree.

A higher number of female teachers work in pre-school institutions (98%) and in elementary schools (69%), while the number of male lecturers increases in secondary schools (43%) and they are dominant in higher education (60%). Statistical data classified by gender of managerial staff at all levels of education are still not fully available. Statistical data classified by gender have to be expanded quantitatively and qualitatively, by introducing data monitoring on the level of literacy, by gender, assessing the overall number of children who applied for enrolment in elementary, secondary and higher education in comparison to the number of the children enrolled; scholarships; marginalized groups; level of schooling; reasons for leaving schooling; adult education and, support to scientific research and other data that can be identified as relevant in the process of education reform.

There is positive progress in introducing standards of gender equality in the areas of culture and sport. A gender component is incorporated in the Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy on culture in BiH, within which the training on “Gender and Culture in BiH” was organized for the representatives of relevant ministries and other institutions from the area of culture in BiH that will organize further trainings at the local level. Also, there is to be proportional representation of both genders during the allocation of funds to cultural, artistic and sport associations, and in co-funding projects in the area of science.

Equal access and opportunities in the areas of education, culture and sports are important for better human and economic development, and they act as leading force of social change; it is therefore necessary to continue working on including principles of gender equality in legislative framework, policies and reform in these areas; to continue education of professional staff; conduct research on different aspects of gender equality in education, as well as in the areas of science, innovation, culture and sport.

## Measures

The primary aim of the anticipated measures is **creating equal opportunities and access to education for girls and boys, women and men in any age, including the members of vulnerable groups, in any area (rural/urban) and with the same prospective for future professional life.**

- I.4.1. Identifying priority laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts in the area of education, science, culture, and sport, with the aim of introducing and implementing international and national standards of gender equality in these areas;
- I.4.2. Implementing the analysis of the gender strategies, policies, programmes and projects in the area of education, science, culture and sport, with the aim of defining disadvantages, advantages, real needs and opportunities from the perspective of gender equality;
- I.4.3. Regularly collecting, analysing and publishing data classified by gender on the access and participation of women and men at all levels of education system, science, culture and sport;
- I.4.4. Regular monitoring and assessing the access of both sexes to graduate programmes and obtaining scientific degrees, as well as access to grants and scholarships under the same conditions, scientific-research programmes and projects, as well as the process of managing and co-ordination;
- I.4.5. Drafting and implementing programmes of measures and activities for achieving equal rights and equal access to education, science, culture, and sport, including strengthening professional capacities for implementation of national and international standards in mentioned areas, introducing gender responsible budgets, and establishing adequate institutional mechanisms for co-ordination of the implementation of these measures;
- I.4.6. Providing support to research on gender equality in the areas of education, science, culture, sport, as well as programmes focused on the elimination of discriminatory and stereotypical attitudes in educational, scientific, cultural and sport contents;
- I.4.7. Providing support to the programmes of lifetime education for priority target groups such as: adults without completed elementary or secondary school, adults with finished secondary schools that do not match the needs of labour market, persons with special needs, Roma, returnees, elderly persons, as well as persons desiring promotion in work and profession; as well as to improve entrepreneurial skills;

- I.4.8. Providing support to the programmes of equal opportunities for both genders for strengthening capacities, access and use of new information and communication technologies in government, public and private companies, media, as well as in the sector of education;
- I.4.9. Providing support to gender studies and research activities at universities and research centres;
- I.4.10. Implementing promotional activities, informative campaigns and awareness raising campaigns on gender equality as a principle of human rights, and with the aim of changing existing stereotypical attitudes and behaviour in relation to the role of women and men; and,
- I.4.11. Progress monitoring and reporting on representation and access of women and men in the areas of education, science, culture and sport.

**Duty bearers:** Legislative and executive authorities at the state and entity level, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by existing legislative provisions.

**Deadline for Implementation:** 2013- 2017

## I.5. Health, prevention and protection

### Introduction

Health is the key resource for quality life of every person. Investing in the health of citizens is one of the most important attempts in the process of strengthening social and economic stability of every country. Health includes physical, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual well-being and it is determined by biological factors, as well as the social, economic and political context in which women and men live. Health care is usually insufficient and conditioned by the economic situation, as well as by the fact that women and men are not usually informed enough on the opportunities and services at their disposal. Investing in the health of women and men, as well as in their awareness of health issues, means better quality of life for women and men, better quality of life for families, better quality of reproductive health and better practices of family planning.

Of the numerous international documents the most important are: **International contract on economic, social, and cultural rights from 1996, Convention on elimination of all form of discrimination against women from 1979, Convention on Rights of the Child from 1989, Recommendations of the World Health Organization on “ Health for All in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, Declaration on the promotion of patient’s rights in Europe from 1994** Constitution of BiH from 1995, Resolution on health policy for all citizens of BiH (Official Gazette of BiH, No.: 12/2002), Law on gender equality in BiH- consolidated text. These impose measures and offer guidelines for organizing a health system that will offer adequate help and protection to all citizens, with the aim of achieving healthier and better quality of life. Important for this is also the **Recommendation No. (2008)1 Committee of Ministers of the CoE** for member states on inclusion of gender differences in health policy (30 January 2008), as well as **The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**, in the part that refers to health care, adopted by UN General Assembly in 1993.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Council of Ministers BiH adopted The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities by the Decision of 30 September 2003

The Law on Gender Equality in BiH defines the right of everyone to social and health protection regardless of gender. By Law it is prohibited to discriminate in any form or on any basis in the enjoyment of all forms of rights defined by existing laws, and responsible authorities should secure laws and other acts and mechanisms that are in relation to the access and usage of social protection; and that responsible authorities should secure laws and other acts and mechanisms that are in relation to the access and use of social protection and that do not discriminate against a person based on gender, directly or indirectly.

## **Status assessment**

In BiH, significant efforts have been made in harmonizing laws, provisions and strategies that regulate the area of health and health care, with national and international standards for gender equality. Institutional mechanisms for gender equality actively participated in different projects that relate to specific health needs for women and men, protection of reproductive health of youth and protection of adolescents from sexually transmitted diseases, prevention and treatment of HIV, etc.

However, there are differences between defined rights on social protection and possibilities for their implementation in practice, and that specifically refers to women from rural areas and women members of vulnerable groups. There are a series of obstacles that disable the availability of health care for the residents of BiH, and some of them are: different levels of contribution for health insurance; unpaid contributions by employers; unresolved co-ordination issues between entities, cantons; etc.

It is necessary to continue with the efforts in implementing national and international standards to ensure equal rights for women and men to health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as support to the policies and strategies that solve specific needs of women and men. Also, there is a need to conduct statistical data and analysis on: representation of women in managerial functions and decision making bodies in the area of health, representation of women and men in branches of medicine, specializations and other types of improvement, insurance benefits in the categories of health insurance, enjoying rights defined by health insurance. It is important to continue promoting education and information on health and access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning and similar, through the education system, health institutions and media.

## **Measures**

The primary aim of the anticipated measures is **improving the health conditions of women and men through simple and effective access to information and health institutions.**

- I.5.1. Identifying priority laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts in the area of health care and prevention with the aim of introducing and implementing international and national standards of gender equality in these areas;
- I.5.2. Gender analysis of the strategies, policies, programmes and projects in the area of health care with the aim of identifying disadvantages, advantages, real needs and possibilities from the gender equality perspective;
- I.5.3. Regularly collecting, analysing and publishing data classified by gender on participation in, access to and usage of health services;
- I.5.4. Drafting and implementing programmes of measures and activities for achieving equal rights and equal access to health care, including strengthening professional capacities to implement national and international standards in mentioned areas, introducing gender

responsible budgets, and establishing adequate institutional mechanisms to co-ordinate implementation of these measures;

- I.5.5. Organizing trainings on gender equality for professional workers in the area of health in order to provide secure health services, taking into account the different needs and interests of women and men;
- I.5.6. Providing support to research on gender equality in the areas of health, as well as to the programmes focused on the improvement of health by prevention and protection, protection of mental health of men and women, protection of sexual and reproductive health with the special attention to vulnerable groups;
- I.5.7. Implementing promotional activities, information/awareness-raising campaigns on health, including sexual and reproductive health, and detailed information regarding options of family planning through media, health and education institutions; and,
- I.5.8. Progress monitoring and reporting on the representation and access of women and men in the area of health, access to and usage of health services, prevention and protection.

**Duty bearers:** Legislative and executive authorities at the state and entity level, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by existing legislative provisions.

**Deadline for Implementation:** 2013- 2017

## I.6. Social protection

### Introduction

BiH is on its path toward European integration, and is obliged and tasked to harmonize with international standards the laws relating to social and child care, as well as to undertake actions in order for these international documents and laws to be implemented, with the aim of fulfilling conditions for accession to EU.

The most important international documents from this area are: **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979, UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, UN Convention on Rights of the Child adopted on 20 November 1989, Convention of International Labour Organization, European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, European Social Charter (revised), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action dated 1995, Directive of the Commission of the CoE Directive 86/378/EEC dated 24 July 1986 on implementing principles of equal treatment for men and women in the schemes of social protection in employment, Directive 79/7/EEC dated 19 December 1978 on progressive implementation of the principles of equal treatment for women and men regarding social security, Constitution of BiH, Constitution of FBiH, Constitution of the RS, and Law on gender equality in BiH.**

Social protection can be observed as general life security from the perspective of gaining, using and protecting natural human rights and especially civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights, in harmonization with universal international documents. Social protection implies a system of

organized legal-economic, normative and institutional, social measures and activities in all the areas of establishing and implementing social needs of a person and his/her family.

## **Status assessment**

Laws on social protection in BiH regulate certain rights of persons affected by war events, elementary disasters, the general economic crisis, the psycho-physical condition of the individual and other issues that cannot be ameliorated without the help of another person. The users of social protection are also: children of special social needs; in general, persons with disabilities and persons with developmental disorders, not assured materially and unable to work; elderly persons without family care; persons with socially negative behaviour; persons and families in the conditions of social need that under certain circumstances require special forms of social protection. Women are usually represented as economically endangered persons.

It is possible to note the differences by gender in the usage of social services. Men are especially dominant when it comes to socially unacceptable behaviour, vagrancy, criminal acts, drug addiction and alcoholism; while women are dominant in prostitution, their number on whole is the lowest as compared to other groups. There is neither other available data nor relevant research that would document the level of knowledge regarding rights and procedures to achieve rights to social protection between men and women in BiH. Accordingly, there is a lower number of beneficiaries of the social protection services. There is no data on the number of persons that received information on the possibility of achieving rights to social protection.

Multiple marginalized groups of women and men are confronted with impossibility of employment and unfamiliarity with the rights from the area of social and health care. There is a need to continue working on the analysis of their status, mapping needs and supporting socially excluded groups and harmonizing and implementing laws, directives, strategies and action plans in relation to improvement of the status of the persons that can be treated as the socially excluded.

## **Measures**

The primary aim of the anticipated measures is **achieving social protection for all citizens through amendments and harmonization of legal regulations in the area of social inclusion, and through development and implementation of modern social policies and programmes of social protection.**

- 1.6.1. Identifying priority laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts in the area of social protection, with the aim of introducing and implementing international and national standards of gender equality in these areas;
- 1.6.2. Gender analysis of the strategies, policies, programmes and projects in the area of social protection with the aim of identifying disadvantages, advantages, real needs and possibilities from the gender equality perspective;
- 1.6.3. Regularly collecting, analysing and publishing data classified by gender on participation, access and usage of social protection;
- 1.6.4. Drafting and implementing programmes of measures and activities for achieving equal rights and equal access to social protection, including strengthening professional

capacities for implementation of national and international standards in mentioned areas, introducing gender responsible budgets, and establishing adequate institutional mechanisms for co-ordination of the implementation of these measures;

- I.6.5. Providing support to research in the areas of social protection, as well as to programmes focused on the improvement of social protection that address the specific status of women in the labour market and in social and economic life, for example: temporary jobs, disruptions in the career, lower average salary, etc;
- I.6.6. Providing support to the programmes of the pension system that treat specific aspects of job carrier and unequal distribution of duties between men and women (child care, care about the other members of the family and etc.) including, when it is needed, compensation measures in order to moderate negative consequences of the existing pension system for women;
- I.6.7. Providing support to the programmes designated for multiple marginalized groups that are exposed to the risk of poverty and isolation (these groups are usually women), in order to support their inclusion in labour market and achieving rights to social protection;
- I.6.8. Implementing promotional activities, information/awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of gender equality in the access and usage of social protection; and,
- I.6.9. Progress monitoring and reporting on the representation of women and men in the area of protection, access and usage of social services and social protection.

**Duty bearers:** Legislative and executive authorities at the state and entity level, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by existing legislative provisions.

**Deadline for Implementation:** 2013- 2017

## **II. STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Establishing and strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments for the realization of gender equality**

### **Introduction**

The equal right of men and women to enjoy universal human rights is a fundamental principle of the main international instruments for the protection of human rights and is generally accepted in international law. Gender equality is a fundamental human right, included in many legal instruments, declarations, as in many national constitutions, as is the case with the Constitution of BiH.

General prohibition of discrimination on a number of grounds, including gender, was the first step in that process, and therefore, in 1945 that approach was included in the Charter of the UN and in 1948 in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as in the two agreements adopted in 1966, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Such attitudes were further elaborated by the CoE through the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950), Declaration on equality of women and men of the CoE (1988), Declaration on equality between women and men as a fundamental criteria of democracy, adopted at the Fourth European Ministerial conference on equality between women and men (Istanbul, 1997) and the Recommendation of the CoE in the field of equality between women and men.

For the state to fulfil its obligation to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender, and achieve gender equality, further establishing or strengthening of systems, mechanisms and instruments for gender equality is needed. To achieve this objective it is necessary that institutional mechanisms at all levels of the legislative and executive branches of government have the necessary authority, visibility, political recognition, the necessary funding and human resources, and that their action is fully supported by the political authorities at all levels.

Gender Equality Agency of BiH in co-operation with Entity Gender Centres has established a Financial mechanism for the implementation of GAP BiH (FIGAP programme 2009-2014), which secured substantial funding for the implementation of GAP for a period of 5 years. The development objective of FIGAP programme is to contribute to an increased level of gender equality in BiH society. This implies that the concept of Gender Equality is accepted as an approach in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in all sectors of society and at all levels of government. FIGAP programme is an important tool for achieving gender equality in BiH. It is already recognized as a new financial mechanism in the region and represents an example of good practice that goes beyond individual programmes, projects and initiatives.

Implementation of the activities of the Strategic Plan II is primarily the responsibility of the Gender Equality Agency of BiH, the Gender Centre of the FBiH and the Gender Centre of the RS. In accordance with the Articles 26 and 27 of the Law on Gender Equality these three institutions have the following authorities:

## **Priority areas within Strategic Goal 2:**

### II.1. Co-ordination and supervision of implementation of GAP BiH

#### **Introduction**

Strengthening of capacities and co-ordination of institutional mechanisms for gender equality is one of the important prerequisites for the efficient implementation of GAP BiH at all levels of government.

#### **Status assessment:**

The Law on Gender Equality in BiH has entrusted monitoring over the implementation of this Law to the BiH Gender Equality Agency which conducts the monitoring in co-operation with the Gender Centres. In addition, the Agency and the Gender Centres are the key institutional mechanisms for gender equality within the Council of Ministers, the BiH Federal Government and the RS government and they are responsible for directing the efforts in fighting discrimination and achieving gender equality in BiH through the development of strategic documents and action plans.

In BiH there are already a number of established institutional mechanisms for gender equality in relevant governmental institutions but also on local level (municipalities and cities in BiH and cantons in FBiH). Although a balanced approach to the establishment of these mechanisms as well as their responsibilities in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH has not been achieved, these mechanisms would have to be authorized for:

- Implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH at the level of government at which it was established;
- Co-ordination of the implementation of the programmatic objectives of GAP BiH; and,
- Ensuring the implementation of international standards in the field of gender equality.

In other words, to support competent authorities of the executive and legislative branches to meet the obligations under the Law relating to:



- a) the adoption of a programme of measures to achieve gender equality in all areas and at all levels of government;
- b) adoption of new, or changing and amending of existing laws and other regulations to comply with the provisions of this law and international standards for gender equality;
- c) the implementation of activities and measures of GAP BiH through regular programmes of work, along with ensuring the budget funds;
- d) ensuring the collection, management, analysis and presentation of statistical data disaggregated by sex.

In order to ensure the implementation of the obligations from the Law, all levels of government should adopt programmes of measures to achieve gender equality in all spheres of public and private life.

In order to achieve gender equality in all spheres, an integral part of the programme of measures includes but is not limited to:

- a) analysis of the state of gender equality in a particular area;
- b) implementation of adopted state policies through action plans for gender equality; and,
- c) measures to remedy the identified gender inequalities in a particular area.

Strengthening and co-ordination of institutional mechanisms for gender equality is an important prerequisite for effective implementation of GAP BiH at all levels of government. Given that the BiH Gender Equality Agency, the Gender Centre of the FBiH and the Gender Centre of RS, since the enactment of the Law, work to provide expert support to other institutions in applying gender equality principles, this chapter (as does chapter II.2) foresees that the Agency and Gender Centres should continue with establishment and technical support provisions in the work of institutional mechanisms at all levels of government. Professional support relates to: the definition of criteria for the work of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels of government; the initiative for the establishment of new institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels of government; and, support to the introduction of standards for gender equality (publication and distribution of educational and expert materials for improvement of knowledge in the field of gender equality, improvement resources - educational and documentation centres).

Levels of government that are establishing institutional mechanisms are obliged to ensure means of organizational and professional strengthening and implementation of programmes, projects and activities, participation in conferences, round tables, public hearings, educational and promotional events.

In order to co-ordinate the implementation and monitoring over the implementation of GAP BiH, a Steering Board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP BiH will be established, and will consist of directors of the Gender Equality Agency and Gender Centres of RS and FBiH. The Steering Board will be responsible for the adoption of guidelines for the preparation of annual operational plans, approval of the annual operational plans as well as for reporting to the Council of Ministers and the BiH Parliamentary Assembly.

Co-ordination boards will be established by the Council of Ministers of BiH, the Government of FBiH and the RS Government and will be responsible for the development and adoption of the annual operational plans as well as for reporting to the Co-ordinating Committee of GAP BiH. By the end of October of each year of GAP BiH implementation, the co-ordination boards will be, in accordance with the adopted guidelines, developing propositions of annual operational plans that in terms of a unified approach in the implementation of activities, submitted to the Steering Board for review.

## **Measures**

The objectives of the envisaged measures are:

- Co-ordinated implementation of GAP BiH in accordance with the jurisdiction of individual levels of authority; and,

- Establishing of sustainable mechanisms for the implementation of GAP BiH at the local level of government in BiH.
  - II.1.1. Establishment of the Steering Board for the co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP BiH (comprised of the Director of the Gender Equality Agency, RS Gender Centre and FBiH Gender Centre)  
Responsibility: The BiH Council of Ministers on the proposal of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees  
Deadline: within three months from the adoption of GAP BiH
  - II.1.2. Establishment of the Co-ordination Board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP BiH by the BiH institutions (comprised of the Agency for Gender Equality and institutions of BiH whose composition proposes the Steering board)  
Responsibility: BiH Council of Ministers on the proposal of the BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees  
Deadline: within three months from the adoption of GAP BiH
  - II.1.3. Establishment of the Co-ordination Board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP by the RS institutions (comprised of the Gender Centre of the RS Government and an RS institution whose composition is proposed by the Steering Board).  
Responsibility: RS Government on the proposal of the RS Gender Centre  
Deadline: within three months from the adoption of GAP BiH
  - II.1.4. Establishment of the Co-ordination Board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP by the institutions of FBiH (comprised of FBiH Gender Centre and institutions of the FBiH whose composition is suggested by the Steering Board)  
Responsibility: FBiH Government on the proposal of FBiH Gender Centre  
Deadline: within three months from the adoption of GAP BiH
  - II.1.5. Adoption of guidelines for development of annual operational plans, prepared by the Co-ordination Boards as well as development of priorities for each year of the implementation of GAP BiH  
Responsibility: Steering Board  
Deadline: September 2013
  - II.1.6. Development of suggestions of annual operational plans for each year of GAP BiH implementation  
Responsibility: Co-ordination Boards  
Deadlines: by mid-September for each year of GAP BiH implementation
  - II.1.7. Submission of opinions on draft annual operational plans, prepared by Co-ordination Committees  
Responsibility: Steering Board  
Deadlines: by the end of November of each year of GAP BiH
  - II.1.8. Adoption of annual operational plans for each year of GAP BiH  
Responsibility: Co-ordinating Boards  
Deadlines: by the end of December
  - II.1.9. Adoption of annual reports and submission of reports to the Council of Ministers for consideration  
Responsibility: Co-ordination Board  
Deadlines: by June of each year of GAP BiH implementation for previous year

- II.1.10. Establishment of institutional mechanisms for gender equality on the local level (in towns and municipalities in BiH, and FBiH cantons in which they have not been established yet)  
Responsibility: Local levels of authority (towns and municipalities in BiH and Cantons in FBiH)  
Deadlines: by the end of 2017
- II.1.11. Establishment of co-operation between institutional mechanisms for gender equality on the local level of government and civil society organizations dealing with the promotion and protection of human rights and gender equality  
Responsibility: Local levels of authority (town and municipalities in BiH and Cantons in FBiH)  
Deadlines: 2013 – 2017
- II.1.12. Organization of the two years co-ordination meeting of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels of government  
Implementers: Steering board  
Deadlines: 2013, 2015, and 2017

## **II.2. Monitoring and improvement of application of international and domestic standards for gender equality**

### **Introduction**

A priority obligation arising from the mandates of institutional mechanisms for gender equality, as well as legal responsibilities, is monitoring and improvement of the implementation of international and national standards for Gender Equality in BiH.

Reports regarding the implementation of international documents (i.e. the UN and the CoE documents relating to gender equality and empowerment of women) are regularly prepared and submitted to the competent institutions, according to which BiH is obliged to report. (UN CEDAW Convention; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; UN Resolution 1325; the Recommendations of the CoE and European directives). In compliance with the obligation to report on the implementation of CEDAW, the fourth and the fifth periodic UN CEDAW report of BiH has been developed. Following the adoption by the Council of Ministers and House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, the report was submitted to the UN CEDAW Committee for consideration.

In order to improve the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security", an action plan has been developed for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" in BiH for 2010 - 2013, and was adopted by the Council of Ministers. In such a way, BiH has become the first country in Eastern Europe to adopt an action plan for the implementation of the mentioned resolution.

In accordance with the Articles 26 and 27 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, the Gender Equality Agency and the entity Gender Centres are obliged to follow, participate in the preparation of, commence initiatives and provide opinions on the harmonization of laws and other legal acts, policies, strategies, plans and programmes, that pass at the level of the county and entities, with the provisions of this Law and other national and international standards for gender equality.

### **Status assessment**

Practices and results of BiH in the implementation of international and national standards for gender equality are promoted and recognized internationally as evidenced by the fact that representatives of gender mechanism were invited to meetings and summits at the highest leadership level, across

Europe and the world. This includes regular participation in the work of the UN and the CoE, and regular reporting on the implementation of international documents of the UN and the CoE relating to various issues of gender equality.

Standards for gender equality are applied in the processes of integration of BiH into the EU. However, it is necessary to improve co-operation with the Directorate for European Integration of BiH and the European Commission Delegation to BiH to implement standards and mechanisms for gender equality in all aspects of the process of European integration, including the IPA programme and other programmes of EU assistance, especially in reporting on the progress of BiH.

In recent years, special attention has been paid to harmonization of draft and proposed laws, by-laws and other normative acts, strategies, plans and programmes with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH. This is a continuous process that needs to be further improved.

## **Measures and activities**

The main objective of the foreseen measures is efficient monitoring and improvement of the implementation of international and national standards for gender equality in BiH, in order to establish measures to achieve gender equality in all spheres of social life.

- II.2.1. Monitoring and improvement of applying international standards for gender equality;
- II.2.1.1. Implementation, co-ordination and monitoring of BiH's obligations towards the UN and the CoE documents (the Beijing Declaration, CEDAW and Recommendations, UN Resolution 1325 and the Action Plan for BiH, CAHVIO convention and implementation of CAHVIO Strategy for BiH...);
- II.2.1.2. Presentation at the international level and participation in activities of bodies for gender equality and women's human rights, working groups and mechanisms of the UN and the CoE;
- II.2.1.3. Development of regular reports to UN and CoE, as well as reporting per other international documents on fulfilling of obligations of BiH in the field of gender equality;
- II.2.1.4. Commencement of initiative for holding negotiations, making conclusions and ratification of international standards for gender equality; and,
- II.2.1.5. Co-operation with international organizations in implementation of obligations in accordance to international standards in the field of gender equality and women's human rights.  
  
Responsibility: Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH and Gender Centre of RS  
Deadline: 2013 - 2017
- II.2.2. Monitoring and improvement of application of national standards for gender equality;
- II.2.2.1. Provision of opinion on the compatibility of draft laws and proposals, by-laws and other normative acts, strategies, plans and programmes with the Law on Gender Equality of BiH;
- II.2.2.2. Direction of initiatives, opinions and recommendations for changes and amendments of regulations in case of non-harmonization with the provisions of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH;

- II.2.2.3. Participation in the preparation of laws, by-laws and other acts, strategies, policies and programmes in order to identify measures for achieving gender equality in all spheres of social life; and,
- II.2.2.4. Reception and processing of requests, complaints and petitions of persons and groups of individuals that indicate the violation of a right under the Law on Gender Equality in BiH.

Responsibility: Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH and Gender Centre of RS  
Deadline: 2013 - 2017

### **II.3. Strengthening and co-operation of institutional mechanisms for gender equality**

#### **Introduction**

Instructions, responsibilities, objectives and guidelines for strengthening and sustainability of national mechanisms, their co-operation and capacity building, are contained in Chapter 37 of the Memorandum 21 "National mechanisms and international co-operation for capacity building of developing countries" of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, the Study on the effective functioning of national mechanisms for gender integration in the CoE member states (2004), state mechanisms: action plans and the integration of gender in the CoE member states from the 4th World Conference of Women in Beijing in 1995 (2004); the Handbook of the CoE on national mechanisms for promotion of gender equality and action plans - guidelines for establishment and implementation of national mechanisms for promotion of equality, with examples of good practice, 2001; the Constitution of BiH (1995); the Law on the Administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of BiH, No.: 32/ 02); and, the Millennium Development Goals. BiH has established institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the legislative and executive branches of the state, entity, cantonal and municipal levels, thereby creating basic conditions for the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH.

All institutional mechanisms have a precisely defined mandate, which indicates the government's commitment to achieving gender equality and the inclusion of gender issues in all aspects of social life. However, the real driver of the initiative, proposed activity measures, and key subjects in this process are the Gender Equality Agency, the Gender Centre of the FBiH and the Gender Centre of the RS. These three institutional mechanisms for gender equality are a crucial leverage in initiating and implementing activities, projects and programmes in the field of gender equality, as well as in initiating the establishment of such mechanisms on the local level.

In order to better implement the Law, and sustainability of these mechanisms, further strengthening of their capacities as well as mutual co-operation and co-ordination is necessary. The co-operation and technical support to other institutions in the application of principles of gender equality is of essential importance, too.

#### **Status assessment**

The Gender Equality Agency of BiH, the Gender Centre of the FBiH and the Gender Centre of the RS have a very successful mutual co-operation. Their work is co-ordinated through activities and regular meetings of the co-ordination board of institutional mechanisms for gender equality and the Steering Board, established to monitor the implementation of the FIGAP programme; it is comprised of the directors of the Entity Gender Centres. Strengthening of co-operation and capacities is a continuous process that includes improvement of expertise in gender equality institutions, as well as other institutions at all levels of government, with the goal of further development and application of systems, mechanisms and instruments for gender analysis, assessment of the impact from the aspect of gender equality and gender-responsive budgeting.

A number of trainings of civil servants, judges and prosecutors have been conducted in order to apply standards of gender equality. The majority of ministries are aware of their obligations and are interested in the inclusion of gender equality principles in the plans and programmes of work and budgets. However, in practice the opinion is often present that the creation of conditions (normative and others) for achieving gender equality *de facto* is solely the responsibility of gender institutional mechanisms, primarily the BiH Gender Equality Agency, the Gender Centre of the FBiH and the Gender Centre of the RS. However, the integration of gender equality standards in all government policies, strategies and programmes of work and budgets can only be achieved in close co-operation with institutional mechanisms for gender equality and state institutions responsible for the implementation of these standards and monitoring of the state of affairs in certain areas of social life and work. Continuous co-operation, training and technical support are necessary for all actors involved in policy-making processes, in order to identify problems and develop policies that take into account gender issues.

Necessary means in this process is gender-responsive budgeting, which includes respect of principles of gender equality in the preparation of budgets, and the allocation and assignment of financial resources. Progress has been made in the instructions for the development of framework budget documents (DOB-a) for budget users at the state and entity levels, which require elaboration on the impact of policies, strategies and priority programmes on the promotion of gender equality. This practice should continue and accelerate gender responsive budgeting in institutions at all levels of authority, which will further promote that all policies, strategies, programmes, laws and regulations have incorporated a gender aspect at the level of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results.

### **Measures and activities**

The main objective of the envisaged measures is strengthening the capacities, operationalization and sustainability of institutional mechanisms for gender equality, as well as other institutions in the process of inclusion of gender equality at all levels.

- II.3.1.1. Defining criteria for the work of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels of government;
- II.3.1.2. The initiative for the establishment of new institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels of government;
- II.3.1.3. Strengthening capacities, co-operation and co-ordination of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all levels of government;
- II.3.1.4. Continuous co-ordination between the Gender Equality Agency, Gender Centre of the FBiH and the Gender Centre of the RS Government (through the work of the Steering Board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP BiH);
- II.3.1.5. Continuous co-ordination between the BiH Gender Equality Agency and the institutions of BiH (through work of the co-ordination board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP by the institutions of BiH);
- II.3.1.6. Continuous co-ordination between the RS Government Gender Centre and RS institutions (through the work of the Co-ordination Board for co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of GAP by the RS institutions);
- II.3.1.7. Continuous co-ordination between the FBiH Gender Centre, and the FBiH institutions (through the work of the Co-ordination Committee for co-ordination and monitoring of implementation of GAP by the institutions of the FBiH);

- II.3.1.8. Support to Commission for implementation of Gender Equality of the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly;
- II.3.1.9. Support of Commissions for Gender Equality of the FBiH and the Equal Opportunities Committee of the National Assembly of the RS;
- II.3.1.10. Support to mechanisms for gender equality on the local level;
- II.3.1.11. Organizational and professional strengthening of institutional mechanisms for gender equality (professional trainings, publication and distribution of educational and professional materials for improvement of knowledge in the field of gender equality, improvement of resource-educational and documentation centre);
- II.3.1.12. Implementation of joint programmes, projects and activities, participation in conferences, round tables, public hearings, educational and promotional events; and,
- II.3.1.13. Development of mechanisms for reporting and exchange of information of all IGMM.

**Responsibility:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH, Gender Centre of RS

**Deadline:** 2013 - 2017

- II.3.2. Co-operation and support to institutions in the process of inclusion of principles of gender equality;
- II.3.2.1. Basic and advanced trainings of government officials on the concept of gender equality and obligations under domestic and international normative and legal standards for gender equality, and other trainings on the application of these standards to the needs of the target groups;
- II.3.2.2. Training for the harmonization of standards for gender equality, including gender analysis of legislation;
- II.3.2.3. Co-ordination and support to institutions in introducing gender-responsive budgeting, including trainings, support in development of budget analysis to determine the differences in impact on men and women, and gender budget analysis in the planning and assessment of revenues and expenditures;
- II.3.2.4. Support on the introduction of specific policies and actions in areas critical for the advancement of the position of women and for gender equality;
- II.3.2.5. Co-ordination, management and administration of work of the co-ordination body for the implementation of the Action Plan of UNSCR 1325 in BiH; and,
- II.3.2.6. Establishment of other forms of formal and informal co-operation with institutions of authorities in all sectors and at all levels in order to share information, planning and implementation of joint programmes and activities, participation (upon invitation) at conferences, round tables, public hearings, educational and promotional events.

**Responsibility:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH, Gender Centre of RS, Civil service agencies

**Deadline:** 2013 - 2017

## II.4. Raising awareness on gender equality in all segments of society

### Introduction

In modern society, the media, besides family and educational institutions, is the most important source of information. The development of technology in recent decades has facilitated the development of communication networks with great influence on the formation of personal and public views on specific events and activities in the community.

Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Declaration on Equality between Women and Men of the CoE, Annex 1 of the DPA, EU Gender Roadmap and GAP BiH, in its essentials require representation of women and men on an equal and non-stereotyped manner, with full respect for their human dignity. In accordance with international and domestic legal standards, print and electronic media in BiH, through editorial policy should ensure respect of equality based on gender, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation through:

- Showing positive examples of non-discrimination and respect for human rights on the above grounds, in public and private life;
- Displaying all persons, regardless of their gender, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, in an equal and non-stereotyped manner, with full respect for their human dignity and personality;
- Raising awareness of the need for their equal participation in economic and social development;
- Elimination of sexism, gender-phobia, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia in media language;
- Raising public awareness on the presence of different forms of violence based on gender, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation and the devastating impact of violence on victims and society as a whole;
- Raising public awareness of the problem of sexual violence, incest, domestic violence, economic violence, trafficking in human beings and effects on victims and society as a whole;
- Elimination of stereotypes and prejudices based on gender, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orienteering directed to persons who hold public functions and/or are in political life in BiH;
- Media promotion and equal visibility of political candidates regardless of their gender, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation;
- Educating journalists on equality based on gender, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation and the use of gender-sensitive language; and,
- Promotion of equal participation and representation of people of different sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation in decision-making positions in the media, especially in managerial, programmatic and regulatory bodies.

It is evident that our society is dominated by traditional stereotypes in the way of representation of women and men in the media, as evidenced through many studies of media content, including "BiH Gender Media Watch 2002" and "Projecting gender in the BiH Media" by the Gender Equality Agency of BiH and the Gender Centres of RS and FBiH. This research has shown that women are less present in the media than men. The media's images of women and men, which create public opinion, are mainly different. With respect to leadership positions and expertise, the media often focuses on men - which is partly a reflection of "social reality" and partly a "clearly sexist approach and particularly the result of lack of planning policies for unequal opportunities in public media". On the other hand, women who were given less space in socially significant issues, dominate in



portrayals of the private sphere. There they appear in the role of mothers, housewives, consumers, passive companions of their husbands, and so on.

The Beijing Platform for Action states the area of "Women and Media" as one of twelve areas where it is necessary to ensure adequate representation of women. This document defines the steps that are aimed at achieving equal gender representation in the media. Research and results available (Media Watch 2002) confirm that BiH as a whole is a community in which the under-representation of women in political, economic and other spheres of public life, reflects in the insufficient representation in the media and through the media too.

## **Status assessment**

Since the media plays an important role in creating social awareness, it can slow down or accelerate structural changes towards gender equality. To eliminate the causes of entrenched discrimination against women and to change of public awareness on gender roles requires intensive activities at all levels of government in BiH.

Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Equality conducted a series of measures in order to have gender equality respected in all aspects of media performance. The Law on Broadcasting Service, the Law on Public Broadcasting System and the Law on Communications of BiH are harmonized with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH. Standards of gender equality are embedded in The Press Code and Code on Broadcasting of Radio and Television Programmes in BiH. Numerous media campaigns, round tables, as well as trainings were conducted to educate the media regarding the principles of gender equality, gender stereotypes, gender sensitive reporting and implementation of gender-sensitive language.

Positive developments in respect to standards of gender equality in the media, the use of gender-sensitive language and giving importance to issues related to gender issues has been noted. Agency and Gender Centres regularly promote their activities through the media, promotional videos were broadcast in order to prevent and combat domestic violence, promote women to decision-making positions and others. It is necessary to continue the co-operation with the media and encourage media programmes that promote gender equality in all spheres of social activity, use of non-sexist language and presentation-stereotypical images, and exclude the use of any material that is degrading based on gender.

## **Measures and activities**

The main objective to be achieved by the envisaged measures is gender sensitive electronic and print media throughout the territory of BiH

- II.4.1. Promotional activities and awareness raising;
  - II.4.1.1. Raising awareness by marking important dates from the field of gender equality (gender equality weeks "Gender Week", international campaigns "16 days of activism against gender based violence", and other important dates from the field of gender equality);
  - II.4.1.2. Media promotion of activities carried out in the process of inclusion of the principles of gender equality;
  - II.4.1.3. Organization of promotional events, campaigns, conferences, workshops, round tables, thematic sessions etc, in various areas of social life;
  - II.4.1.4. Improvement and regular update of the web page content of the Gender Equality Agency, Gender Centre of the FBiH, the RS Gender Centre and the web page of FIGAP programme and Action Plan for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325; and,

- II.4.1.5. Development, printing and distribution of promotional materials and publications.

**Responsibility:** Gender Equality Agency, Gender Centre of FBiH, Gender Centre of RS

**Deadline:** 2013 - 2017

- II.4.2. Strengthening relations with media;
  - II.4.2.1. Encourage the adoption and implementation of measures, guidelines, codes of conduct or other provisions in the electronic and print media, including the elimination of discrimination based on gender and harmful gender stereotypes in media programmes. Promotion of gender equality as a key segment of human rights, introduction of gender sensitive language;
  - II.4.2.2. Encourage media content that portrays women and men in an equal and non-stereotyped way, promoting their equal status and roles in private and public spheres, with full respect for their human dignity.
  - II.4.2.3. Regular assessment of the representation of women in managerial and steering levels and in technical services of electronic and print media, public and private, as well as advisory, regulatory and supervisory bodies within the media sector;
  - II.4.2.4. Support to projects in researching media content on women's representation in education, science, culture, politics, economy and social life, as well as the influence of media in shaping values, views and behaviour, needs and interests of women and men in all stages of life; and,
  - II.4.2.5. Training on gender equality for media professionals.

**Responsibility:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of FBiH, Gender Centre of RS, professional associations of journalists, media regulatory body, media.

**Deadline:** 2013 – 2017

## **II.5 Support to programmes and projects of institutional and non-institutional partners**

### **Introduction**

Gender equality institutional mechanisms provide regular experts' assistance to the processes of preparing, implementing and monitoring of programmes and projects carried out by the institutions and civil society organizations which are financed from donations. These projects and programmes are adjusted to the needs and priorities of the institutionalized gender equality mechanisms.

However, in recent years, the greatest contribution to the process of systemic implementation of gender equality in the priority areas of the society was achieved through the implementation of FIGAP programme. **FIGAP programme, the Financial Mechanism for Implementation of GAP BiH** was established with the signing of the Agreement on joint funding between the Council of Ministers and a group of donors at the end of 2009. The programme provided significant funding for implementation of GAP until 2015. FIGAP is directly implemented by the Agency and entity Gender Centres through allocation of a significant portion of funds to the programmes and projects of the institutions and civil society organizations. For that reason, thoughtful planning and implementation is important not only for the gender equality institutional mechanisms but also for their institutional and non-institutional partners and donors. The aim of FIGAP is to see gender mainstreaming activities incorporated into the regular programmes and budgets of institutions.

## **Status assessment**

Over the previous period, numerous projects were implemented with institutional and non-institutional partners in the following areas: prevention of domestic violence, implementation of the UN Resolution 1325, political participation of women, gender-responsive budgeting, and support to local authorities in introducing gender equality standards and other specific topics. Besides the programmes/projects envisaged by FIGAP, it is also important to mention the joint project of the gender equality institutional mechanisms and the UNDP/UNFPA "Prevention and combating sexual and gender based violence in BiH" UN Women (before UNIFEM) has continued providing support to the projects for implementation of gender-responsive budgeting and implementation of the UN SCR 1325 in BiH.

In order to achieve long term sustainability, it is still necessary to permanently monitor and control the processes and to guide institutions and NGOs through the joint needs mapping and planning, and to provide professional assistance in implementation of all activities.

## **Measures**

The main aim of the envisaged measures is that the application of gender equality standards becomes an integrated part of regular programmes and budgets of the institutions as well as the establishment of real partnership between institutions and NGOs.

- I.6.10. Provision of professional support in preparation and implementation of programmes and projects of institutional partners at all organizational authority levels, which are financed from the funds of FIGAP and other donations.
- I.6.11. Allocation of FIGAP funds to the institutions responsible to implement the programmes and measures for improvement of gender equality, including monitoring and assessment of programmes.
- I.6.12. Provision of professional assistance in preparation and implementation of NGOs' projects, funded from the funds of the FIGAP and other donations.
- I.6.13. Allocation of grants from FIGAP funds to non-governmental and other organizations of civil society for projects of gender equality advancement, including monitoring and assessment of project implementation.

**Duty bearers:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of the FBiH, Gender Centre of the RS.

**Implementation deadline:** 2013-2017

## **II.6 Monitoring and assessment of progress in realization of gender equality**

### **Introduction**

Gender-disaggregated statistics, analyses and research are among the most important instruments for efficient planning, implementation and assessment of the effects of measures for advancement of gender equality. Bearing in mind this aim and in accordance with Article 22 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, it is necessary to encourage further improvements in collecting data disaggregated according to gender, and to carry out analyses and research in all areas of society. Quantitative and qualitative analyses and research represent bases for periodical evaluation and assessment of situations from the aspect of women and men, and in relation to efficient planning and defining of policies based on real needs. According to the Law, the Agency and Gender Centres are obliged to analyse and monitor the application of the Law on Gender Equality and to follow implementation of GAP BiH and overall situation related to gender equality in BiH.

Based on the collected data and conducted analyses, reports, opinions, suggestions and recommendations are being regularly drafted and forwarded to the competent bodies.

## **Situation Assessment**

For the sake of regular reporting on the situation regarding gender equality and on the application of ratified strategies and adopted plans, the BiH Gender Equality Agency and Gender Centres regularly collect and analyse data submitted by institutions, non-governmental and international organizations. These reports are sent for consideration and adoption to the Council of Ministers and entity governments (reports on the situation regarding gender in BiH, reports on application of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, reports on application of the state and entity strategy for prevention and combating domestic violence, reports on implementation of the Action Plan for implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 for BiH). Besides these reports, special analyses and reports are being drafted and submitted to competent organizations with regards to application of actual strategies of different sectors and action plans. The mentioned action plans are, for example: Action Plan for advancement of the position of women in villages in the RS; Action Plan for implementation of gender-responsive budget in FBiH, Strategic Plan for prevention of domestic violence in the FBiH for 2009-2010; and, other random analyses and reports submitted upon requests of competent authorities in BiH.

## **Measures**

- I.6.14. Drafting quantitative and qualitative analyses on the status of genders in BiH as a basis for efficient planning based on real needs and performing the assessment of introducing gender equality standards into laws, strategies, policies and programmes;
- I.6.15. Implementing and providing support to research in the area of gender equality;
- I.6.16. Regular reporting about the state of gender equality in BiH based on reports of competent institutions; and,
- I.6.17. Regular reporting on realization of sector strategies and action plans (AP for implementation of UNSCR 1325, strategy for fights against and prevention of domestic violence, AP GPB, AP for advancement of women in villages etc.).

**Duty bearers:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of the FBiH, Gender Centre of the RS.

**Implementation deadline:** 2013-2017

## **III. STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Establishment and strengthening of co-operation and partnership**

### **Introduction**

Bearing in mind that realization of gender equality is a common aim relevant to the entire society, the establishment and development of co-operation is a key strategy for efficient promotion and achievement of the results set in the field of gender equality. Gender equality institutional mechanisms are continuously working on establishing and strengthening formal and informal types of co-operation with other institutions at all authority levels, with non-governmental and other organizations of civil society, academic and research communities, social partners and other relevant state actors, including also the extended co-operation at regional and international level.

Co-operation with partners is carried out through a multi-sectorial approach, depending on the competence and established priorities, sometimes based on the initiative of the Gender Equality Agency of BiH, sometimes as a joint activity and sometimes on the initiative of institutional and non-institutional partners and international organizations. This provides for the participation of all, exchange of information and good practices and adds quality to the work on implementation of policies and strategies directed towards advancement of gender equality.

## **Priority areas within Strategic Goal 3:**

### **III.1. Co-operation at regional and international level**

#### **Introduction**

BiH has initiated regional co-operation in the area of gender equality by signing the Regional Declaration on co-operation of gender mechanisms in Western Balkans in 2005. Since signing the Declaration, the regional co-operation has been integrated into regular work plans and programmes of BiH Gender Equality Agency. Thus, BiH has gained its leading position in the region with regards to regional co-operation. Due to the lack of funds, regional meetings are organized most often during regional conferences and seminars. Through their programmes and budgets, other countries of the region are increasingly paying attention to this type of co-operation. In that manner, regular meetings are being held continuously and information exchange is taking place at regional conferences, seminars, forums contributing to significant improvement of regional co-operation.

Co-operation with international organizations (Swiss Agency for International Development Co-operation -SIDA, Austrian Development Agency, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation -SDC, UN Women in BiH, UNDP in BiH, UNFPA in BiH, EUPM, NATO, OSCE and others), joint programmes and activities are adjusted to the needs and priorities of the institutional mechanisms for gender equality and they represent direct support to the implementation of GAP BiH, sectorial strategies and action plans.

#### **Status assessment**

Former regional meetings, joint projects, activities and initiatives have proved to be very useful, by contributing to common interest, for countries in the region. However, *ad hoc* co-operation is not sufficient to achieve the desired effect of the gender equality processes in the region nor can it establish a long-lasting and sustainable system of exchange of knowledge and practices of integrating gender issues, which is particularly important in the processes of European integration underway in countries in the region.

It is necessary to establish a continued flow of information, exchange of experiences and good practices as well as availing of gender and human rights experts' knowledge. It is also necessary to initiate bilateral and multilateral agreements and projects related to gender equality, especially in the context of development of joint projects in cross-border co-operation which is financed by the EU. However, there is also a need for formal establishment of the regional co-ordination body in charge of planning, implementing, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of all joint regional projects and activities.

In the previous period, a series of joint initiatives, projects and activities were realized with international organizations. It is important to emphasize the importance of the attempts of the Agency and Gender Centre entities to establish a co-ordinated approach to those activities, both by donors and implementing partners. The aim is to implement all activities in co-operation, through a well-timed exchange of information, and a combination of professional and financial resources in order to prevent overlaps within different programmes and funds. This would also enable efficient utilization of available resources, including FIGAP funds. This manner of work contributes not only

towards financial efficiency but also to better substantive realization of the planned objectives and priorities.

## Measures

The goal of the envisaged measures is further advancement of regional and international co-operation and co-ordination in implementation of programmes, projects and activities in the process of advancement of gender equality.

- III.1.1. Strengthening co-operation between the regional gender equality institutional mechanisms, including development of regional policies and programmes for improvement of gender equality as well as for exchange of experiences and best practices through organization of regional meetings, conferences and study visits; and,
- III.1.2. Co-operation with international organizations through exchange of information and co-ordination of donor's assistance, planning and implementing joint programmes, educational and promotional events.

**Duty bearers:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of the FBiH, Gender Centre of the RS

**Implementation deadline:** 2013-2017

## III.2. Co-operation with civil society organizations, social partners and academic community

### Introduction

Co-operation with non-governmental and other civil society organizations has improved during implementation of activities related to: domestic violence, health, prevention and protection, education, security, gender-responsive budgeting in accordance with GAP priorities and the sectorial strategies and action plans. This helps increase strategic orientation of projects and activities of NGOs. It also ensures that projects and activities of NGOs are more strategically oriented to support target groups identified in public policy institutions at all levels, and to monitor the goals and priorities of gender equality institutions. The number of projects explicitly motivated by donors' objectives has decreased, while there has been an increase in strategic and professional involvement of NGOs as equal partners in the public sector.

### Status assessment

The attempts to improve co-operation and the exchange of information amongst NGOs and gender equality institutional mechanisms have resulted in a decreased number of *ad hoc* projects and an increased involvement of NGOs as equal partners to the public sector. This was in part achieved through the realization of projects supported by FIGAP programmes. Municipalities with active women's NGOs that have co-operated with local authorities experienced qualitative progress in the implementation of gender equality standards in local government. It is necessary to further establish and strengthen formal and informal co-operation as well as implementation of joint projects and activities with non-governmental and other organizations of civil society, media, academic and research communities, social partners and other relevant actors.

## Measures

The goal of the envisaged measures is to advance of co-operation and establish real partnership with non-governmental and other organizations of civil society.

- III.2.1. Strengthening co-operation with NGOs, planning and implementing joint projects and activities, participation in conferences, round tables, public hearings, educational and promotional events; and,
- III.2.2. Strengthening regular formal and informal co-operation with other organizations of civil society, including media, social partners, research and academic institutions, professional organizations and specific target groups to raise awareness of gender equality;

**Duty bearers:** Gender Equality Agency of BiH, Gender Centre of the FBiH, Gender Centre of the RS, civil society organizations, social partners and academic community.

**Implementation deadline:** 2013-2017

## EXPLANATION

### I. Constitutional and legal bases for implementation of regulations

The Constitution of BiH, Article 4 (a) envisages that the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH shall adopt legislation aimed at fulfilling the obligations of BiH.

GAP BiH is adopted with the aim of fulfilling the obligations established within the framework of Article II 1. Human Rights and fundamental freedoms which prescribes that: "BiH and both entities will ensure the highest level of internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms..." and the same Article 2. International standards also establishes: "Rights and freedoms as envisaged by the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its protocols are directly applied in BiH. These acts shall have priority over all other laws." Protocol 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms which was signed and ratified by BiH prohibits discrimination in access to all rights guaranteed by legislation.

The main provision of the Constitution of BiH, which was used as basis for preparing the GAP text, is contained in the Article II (4). Non-discrimination is an essential base for adoption of GAP BiH which prescribes the following: "The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms provided for in this Article or in the international agreements listed in Annex I to this Constitution shall be secured to all persons in BiH without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status".

The basis for the adoption of GAP BiH is also contained in the General Framework Agreement for Peace in BiH-Agreement on Human Rights-Annex 6. This Annex lists 16 international instruments on human rights that are obligatory for BiH. These changes and amendments represent the fulfilment of obligations that originate from CEDAW 1979 and the corresponding recommendations to BiH by CEDAW.

The obligations of BiH to draft a periodical GAP originates from national and international documents such as:

**CEDAW – UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (1979) in articles 2, 3 and 4** established obligations of States Parties aimed at eliminating discrimination, developing and advancing women, accelerating progress in realizing equality between women and men. Amongst other, these obligations include the following:

- States Parties shall undertake in all areas, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on the basis of their equality with men.
- States Parties' adoption of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

After considering the initial, second and third report of BiH under the CEDAW Convention, 2006, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW Committee) has submitted the Concluding Comments and Recommendations CEDAW/C/BIH/CO/3 for BiH.

**Beijing Declaration and Plan for Action (1995) in Chapter IV – "Strategic objectives and actions"** propose that... *In each critical area of concern, the problem is diagnosed and strategic objectives*



*are proposed with concrete actions to be taken by various actors in order to improve the situation of all women, while special attention should be given to groups that are the most disadvantaged.*

The Platform for Action recognizes that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of factors such as race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, because they are indigenous women or because of other status. Many women encounter specific obstacles related to their family status, particularly as single parents; and to their socio-economic status, including their living conditions in rural, isolated or impoverished areas. Additional barriers also exist for refugee women, other displaced women, including internally displaced women as well as for immigrant women and migrant women, including women migrant workers. Many women are also particularly affected by environmental disasters, serious and infectious diseases and various forms of violence against women.

**Recommendation CM/Rec (2007)17 of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE „Standard mechanisms for gender equality”** emphasizes that gender equality is the concern and responsibility of the society as a whole. This recommendation, in the chapter related to strategies, mechanisms and assets for realization of gender equality, amongst others, prescribes the obligation of a State Party of:

- *Adoption and implementation of the efficient periodical national action plans for gender equality and indicators which would be used to measure results and progress achieved during the mentioned implementation process, to provide support to systematic and regular reporting and, if necessary, for revision of actions and strategies in order to achieve the objectives of mentioned action plans in the best possible manner.*

**The Law on Gender Equality in BiH – revised text (Official Gazette BiH, No.: 32/10)**, Article 26 (c) defines obligations of the BiH Gender Equality Agency to “...initiate and co-ordinate development of GAP BiH, in co-operation with entities’ Gender Centres, which is adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH” and in point (d) to “monitor application and co-ordinate activities with all relevant subjects in the GAP BiH implementation process from Article 24, paragraph 2 of this Law.”

## **II REASONS FOR INTRODUCING REGULATIONS AND EXPLANATION OF THE SELECTED POLICIES**

At the fifth session of the Council of Ministers of BiH, held on 18 April 2012, a report was considered and adopted regarding realization of GAP BiH 2006-2011. Numerous activities of the BiH GAP were implemented within the set deadlines. To a certain extent, it was achieved due to the establishment of FIGAP 2009-2014, which is supported by a group of international donors in BiH. With the report, BiH Council of Ministers adopted also the Proposed Structure of GAP BiH 2013-2017 and tasked the BiH Gender Equality Agency, Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees BiH to co-ordinate its drafting.

### **Structure of the BiH GAP 2013-2017**

GAP BiH 2013-2017 is a strategic document containing strategic objectives, programmes and measures for the realization of programmes aimed at gender equality in all areas of social life and work, in both the public and private sphere. BiH Gender Equality Plan follows priorities of all organizational levels of authority, based on GAP 2006-2011, state and entity development strategies, EU Strategy for the equality of men and women and other relevant strategic documents of the CoE, EU and UN.

This strategic document reflects all areas of social life. However, priority and cross-cutting areas have been identified as well as areas related to the strengthening of the system, mechanisms and instruments for achieving gender equality, and strengthening co-operation and partnership. In this

manner, responsibilities were more clearly defined concerning institutional mechanisms for gender equality, and the duties and responsibilities of relevant ministries in each priority area. GAP BiH 2013-2017 contains three strategic objectives of defining and prioritizing necessary activities, programmes and measures.

**STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Development, implementation and monitoring of the programme of measures for improvement of gender equality within governmental institutions, as per priority areas:**

- I.1. Preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence as well as trafficking in human beings
- I.2. Public life and decision making
- I.3. Work, employment and access to economic resources
- I.4. Education, science, culture and sport
- I.5. Health, prevention and protection
- I.6. Social protection

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Establishing and strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments for realization of gender equality per priority areas:**

- II.1. Co-ordination of implementation and supervision over implementation of GAP BiH
- II.2. Monitoring and improvement of applying international and domestic standards for gender equality
- II.3. Strengthening and co-operation of institutional mechanisms for gender equality
- II.4. Raising awareness of gender equality in all segments of society
- II.5. Support to programmes and projects of institutional and extra-institutional partners
- II.6. Monitoring and assessment of progress in the realization of gender equality

**STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Establishing and strengthening co-operation and partnership per priority areas:**

- III.1. Co-operation at regional and international levels
- III.2. Co-operation with civil society organizations, social partners, academic community

Each field in each strategic goal contains:

- Short analyses of the situation, including effective national and international regulations and documents.
- Programmes of measures in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH.
- Competent duty bearers and deadlines. Primary duty bearers in the Strategic Goals 2 and 3 are gender equality institutional mechanisms. In Strategic Goal 1 primary duty bearers are competent administrative organs according to the statutory scope of work.
- Reporting obligation.

Cross-cutting areas are of equal importance for achieving all the three goals, as they represent an integral part of all mentioned priority areas. Planning and implementation of the activities and measures shall be approached in a strategic, systemic and multi-sectorial manner.

**Cross-cutting issues:**

- Media
- Advancement of marginalized groups of women and men
- Role of men
- Harmonization of private and professional life

### **III HARMONIZATION OF REGULATIONS WITH EUROPEAN LEGISLATION**

General prohibition of discrimination on a number of grounds, including gender, was the first step in a larger process. Prohibition was included in the UN Charter from 1945 and in General Declaration on Human Rights from 1948 as well as in two agreements from 1966, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights.

The topic was further explored at the CoE level through the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950); its Declaration on equality between women and men serves as a touchstone of democracy, and was adopted at the Fourth European Ministerial Conference on Equality Between Women and Men (Istanbul, 1997) and included in CoE recommendations.

GAP BiH is being harmonized with directives and documents of the EU in the field of gender equality, specifically with the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Men and Women 2010-2015.

GAP BiH includes, as an integral part, the strategic goals and activities of the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Men and Women 2010-2015, as well as strategic goals from other documents of the UN and CoE.

### **IV IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS AND SECURING COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS**

2. The BiH Law on Gender Equality entrusts monitoring and implementation of GAP to the Gender Equality Agency of BiH, which performs this duty in co-operation with local Gender Centres. In addition, the Agency and Gender Centres are the key institutional mechanisms for gender equality within the Council of Ministers, Government of FBiH and the RS Government responsible to co-ordinate efforts to combat discrimination and achieve gender equality in BiH, by drafting strategic documents and action plans.

3. Numerous institutional mechanisms for gender equality have already been established in BiH within the competent institutions and at the local level (municipalities and cities in BiH and cantons in the FBiH). An equalized approach has not yet been taken in establishing these mechanisms and defining competencies in accordance with the Gender Equality Law in BiH. To ensure implementation of obligations prescribed by the Law and GAP BiH, all authority levels should adopt programmes with measures to achieve gender equality in all areas of public and private life. The integral part of the programme of measures aimed realizing gender equality in all areas includes but is not limited to:

- a) Analyses of gender situations in certain areas;
- b) Implementation of adopted state policies through gender equality action plans; and,
- c) Measures to remove gender inequality in areas where found.

Strengthening and co-ordination of gender equality institutional mechanisms is one of the most important prerequisites to efficiently apply GAP BiH at all levels of authority. As of the adoption of the Law, the Gender Equality Agency BiH, Gender Centre of the FBiH and Gender Centre of the RS have been providing professional assistance to other institutions in the process of introducing gender equality principles. GAP envisages that the Agency and Gender Centres should continue providing professional assistance to the institutional mechanisms at all authority levels. Professional assistance relates to the definition of work criteria of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at all organizational levels of authority. It includes initiatives to establish new gender equality institutional mechanisms at all organizational levels and to support the introduction of standards for gender equality (publication and distribution of educational and professional and educational materials, improvement of resource-based education and documentation centre).

The levels of authority establishing institutional mechanisms are obliged to ensure funds for organizational and professional development of those mechanisms, implementation of programmes, projects and activities, participation at conferences, round tables, public, educational and promotional events.

To co-ordinate and monitor implementation of GAP BiH, a Steering Board shall be established composed of directors of the BiH Gender Equality Agency, RS Gender Centre and F BiH Gender Centre. The Steering Board will be in charge of adopting the guidelines for annual operational plans, approving annual operational plans and reporting to the BiH Council of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH.

Co-ordination boards shall be established by the Council of Ministers BiH, Government of the F BiH and Government of the RS and shall be in charge of drafting and adopting annual operational plans for as well as reporting on the Co-ordination Board of GAP BiH. In accordance with the adopted guidelines, the Co-ordination Board of GAP BiH will annually draft proposals of annual operational plans, for submission to and approval by the Steering Board.

## **V EXPLANATION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS NEEDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

There is no need to ensure additional financial assets for implementation of Strategic Goals 2 and 3 of GAP BiH; funds have already been planned for in the budget of existing gender equality institutional mechanisms.

Funds needed for implementation of Strategic Goal 1 will be envisaged through operational plans which will be adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers and entity governments. The competent institutions will participate in preparation of operational plans and the funds needed for implementation of envisaged plans will be provided as integral part of those plans.

The BiH Gender Equality Agency in co-operation with entity Gender Centres established FIGAP programme 2009-2014 ensuring significant funds for implementation of GAP for the period of five years and for implementation of GAP BiH in the next two years (2013 and 2014).

## **VI DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT DURING THE PROCESS OF DRAFTING REGULATIONS**

The Gender Equality Agency of BiH and the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH in co-operation with Gender Centre of the F BiH and Gender Centre of the RS drafted GAP BiH 2013-2017.

In its 103<sup>rd</sup> session, the Government of the RS voted in favour of the draft GAP BiH, while the opinion of the F BiH Government has not yet been attained as it has so far not reached the Government's Agenda.