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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

*Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees*

*Gender Equality Agency of  
Bosnia and Herzegovina*

# **Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022**

October 2018

**GENDER ACTION PLAN OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA  
2018 - 2022**

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## FOREWORD

Incorporating principles of equality of women and men in all areas of social life, in the public and private spheres, represents fulfilment of one of the basic standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Integration of these principles into legal, institutional and political frameworks in Bosnia and Herzegovina is based on the obligations arising from international documents, membership in international alliances and bodies, as well as on the principles of the protection of fundamental human rights specified in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The third Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (GAP BiH) for the period 2018-2022 is a framework strategic document for inclusion of the principle of gender equality in all areas of social life and provides guidelines for development of operational plans of institutions at all levels of government in BiH.

GAP BiH (2018 - 2022) relies on the strategic goals, priorities and measures of GAP BiH (2013-2017) that are aligned with the commitments and recommendations from the relevant international and domestic documents in force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Director of the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH  
Samra Filipović Hadžiabdić



## ABBREVIATIONS

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| ARPMljPIBiH         | Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| AP UNSCR 1325 u BiH | Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| BiH                 | Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| BDBiH               | Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| BHAS                | Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| CIKBiH              | Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| CEDAW               | UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women   |
| DEIBiH              | Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| EK                  | European Commission   |
| EU                  | European Union  |
| FBiH                | Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| FIGAP               | The Financial Mechanism for the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan  |
| GCFBiH              | Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| GCRS                | Gender Centre of Republika Srpska   |
| GAPBiH              | Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| IOM                 | International Organization for Migration  |
| KO                  | Coordination Board  |
| KORS                | Commission for Gender Equality of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina      |
| MCPBiH              | Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| MFTBiH              | Ministry of Finance and Treasury of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| MICS                | Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey   |
| MBBiH               | Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| MVTEOBiH            | Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations  |
| MPBiH               | Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| MIPBiH              | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| MKTBiH              | Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| MLjPIBiH            | Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina   |
| NVO                 | Non-governmental organization   |
| OSBiH               | Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina  |
| OEBS                | Organization for European Security and Cooperation  |
| PSBiH               | Parliamentary Assembly of BiH   |
| PDPSBiH             | House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH   |
| RS                  | Republika Srpska  |
| SIPA                | State Investigation and Protection Agency   |
| SIDA                | Swedish Agency for International Development  |
| UN                  | United Nations  |
| UNDP                | United Nations Development Programme  |
| UNFPA               | United Nations Population Fund  |
| UNICEF              | United Nations Children's Fund  |
| UNSCR 1325          | UN Security Council Resolution "Women, Peace and Security"  |
| UN WOMEN            | United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women  |
| USAID               | U.S. Agency for International Development   |
| SE                  | Council of Europe   |

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| SMBiH   | Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina                    |
| VSTV    | High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| ZoRPBiH | Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina                  |



## INTRODUCTION

Gender Action Plan of BiH (GAPBiH) 2013 - 2017 was adopted in September 2013 (“Official Gazette of BiH”, number 98/13). The Council of Ministers of BiH (SMBiH) has tasked the BiH Gender Equality Agency of the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (ARPLjPIBiH) with coordinating its implementation and all relevant institutions with engaging actively in the implementation of planned activities.

At the proposal of MLjPIBiH, the SMBiH adopted two reports on the implementation of GAPBiH 2013-2017: Report on the Implementation of GAPBiH for 2014, at the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Council of Ministers of BiH, held on 28 January 2016, and the Report on the Implementation of GAPBiH for 2015 and 2016, at the 98<sup>th</sup> session of the Council of Ministers of BiH, held on 12 April 2017. The final report on the implementation of GAPBiH was produced in 2017.

After successful implementation of GAPBiH 2013-2017, the development of a new, third GAPBiH for the period 2018-2022, began as being a strategic document that includes goals, programmes and measures for achieving gender equality in all areas of social life and work in both public and private sphere.

**The obligation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to produce GAPBiH** follows from domestic documents as well as international obligations, which BiH assumed by ratifying the gender equality conventions, such as:

- ✿ **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** from 1979, wherein Articles 2, 3 and 4 define the obligations of the State Parties towards elimination of discrimination, development and progress of women and accelerated achievement of equality between women and men. These obligations, among other things, include the following:
  - State Parties should take all appropriate measures in all fields, particularly in political, social, economic and cultural ones, including legislative, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, guaranteeing them enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms based on equality with men.
  - With a view to speeding up the achievement of equality between women and men, the adoption of provisional measures by the State Parties aimed at accelerating de facto equality between women and men should not be considered as discrimination as defined in the present convention, however in no way whatsoever should it be required, as a consequence, to maintain unequal or separate standards; these measures should be abolished when the goals of equal opportunities and treatment are attained.
  
- ✿ **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** of 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 recognises that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of factors such as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, due to belonging to indigenous population or because of some other status. Many women encounter obstacles related specifically to their family status, particularly single parents; and in relation to their social and economic status, including their living conditions in rural, isolated or impoverished areas.
  - There are additional obstacles for women refugees, other displaced women, including internally displaced women immigrants or migrants, and even some women who migrate

for employment. Many women are also particularly vulnerable to ecological catastrophes, severe and contagious diseases and various forms of violence against women.

- ✿ **Recommendation CM/Rec (2007) 17** by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe “Standards and mechanisms for gender equality” emphasised 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 realisation 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 the 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.
  
- ✿ **Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina - consolidated version** (“Official Gazette of BiH”, No. 32/10), Article 26(c) and (d) defines the obligations of ARPMLjPIBiH to “initiate and coordinate the development of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in cooperation with Entity Gender Centres, which is to be adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina”, and d) “to monitor implementation and coordinate activities with all relevant entities in the process of realisation of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina as referred to in Article 24(2) of this Law;”.

### Structure of GAP BiH 2018-2022

GAP BiH 2018-2022 relies on strategic goals, priorities and measures of GAP BiH 2013-2017, State and Entity development strategy, European Union Strategy for equality of men and women and other relevant strategic documents of the Council of Europe, European Union and United Nations. This is a framework strategic document providing guidelines for the development of operational plans of institutions at all levels of organisation of the BiH authorities. This strategic document contains all areas of social life, however, prioritised and cross-cutting areas have been defined, as well as areas related to strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments to achieve gender equality as well as co-operation and partnership. In this manner, the obligations of institutional gender equality mechanisms and the obligations and responsibilities of competent ministries in each priority area have been clearly defined.

GAP BiH 2018-2022 contains three strategic goals defining priority areas of activities—namely, programmes and measures needed to achieve each goal.

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

##### **Priority areas:**

- I.1. Preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking in human beings
- I.2. Public life and decision making
- I.3. Labour, employment and access to economic resources
- I.4. Education, science, culture and sport
- I.5. Health, prevention and protection
- I.6. Social protection
- I.7. Gender and security

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

##### **Priority areas:**

- II.1. Coordination 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 cooperation of institutional gender equality mechanisms
- II.4. Raising awareness of gender equality in all segments of society
- II.5. Support to institutional and non-institutional partners in the process of inclusion of the gender equality principle
- II.6. Monitoring and assessment of progress in reaching gender equality

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

#### **Priority areas:**

- III.1. Cooperation at the regional and international level
- III.2. Cooperation with the 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;
- Programmes 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 administration in accordance with the scope of activities prescribed by law;
- Obligation to report.

In reaching the three strategic goals, **cross-cutting areas** are equally important and form an integral part of all aforementioned priority areas. However, strategic, systemic and multi-sectorial approach will also be applied to planning and implementation of activities and action measures.

#### **The cross-cutting areas are:**

- The media
- Advancement of the position of multiply marginalized groups of women and men
- Role of men
- Adjustment of private and professional life.

# STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

## 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

Article 24 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH (ZoRPBiH) defines the obligations of all governmental institutions to take the appropriate and required measures towards implementation of the provisions prescribed by this law and GAP BiH.

For the assumed obligations to be met, the governmental institutions must establish and implement active public policies and strategic measures so as to achieve gender equality. Introduction of gender equality standards to all areas of social life (gender mainstreaming) is not the obligation of gender equality institutions alone, instead, it is the obligation of all relevant institutions which are obliged to introduce and implement these standards in their scope of competence.

Strategic Goal 1 defines the obligations of competent governmental institutions in the priority areas in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH and international gender equality documents. They contain measures the competent institutions must take during the implementation of GAP BiH. Deadlines and holders of responsibilities will be defined by the annual operational plans, in accordance with the competencies of institutions, as specified by the appropriate legal framework.

The Gender Equality Agency with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH (ARPMLJPIBiH), Gender Centre of FBiH (GCFBiH) and Gender Centre of RS (GCRS) will continue to provide professional support in the implementation of activities by the competent governmental institutions. The activities of the ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS 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. labour, employment and access to economic resources
4. education, science, culture and sport
5. health
6. social protection
7. Gender and security

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

- introduction and application of 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;
- maintenance of statistical records, analysis and regular publication of data, disaggregated by gender;
- development and implementation of measures for the promotion of gender equality in institutions in accordance with the obligations set forth in the Law on

- Gender Equality in BiH;
- conducting gender equality training;
- performing promotional activities, information campaigns and campaigns for raising public awareness of gender equality;
- regular 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, especially those deriving from the documents of the United Nations, Council of Europe and European Union. The basic documents from which international standards derive are listed in each area of GAP BiH.
- **Principle of harmonization of regulations with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH**  
In accordance with Article 24(3) of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, all laws, bylaws, 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 provisions to be introduced towards achieving gender equality and the prohibition of gender-based discrimination, into the 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 focused on elimination of the roots of gender-based discrimination arising not only from biological differences between men and women but also from sociologically and culturally conditioned differences between men and women.
- **Principle of gender equality**  
Depending on the needs, the GAP BiH activities should target the achievement of gender equality so as to ensure that men and women have equal status, equal opportunities for exercising all of their rights, equal benefit from the achieved results and that they are equally represented in all areas of public and private life. The GAP BiH activities will be aimed at strengthening women in the areas in which women form a particularly excluded group, through the introduction of special measures as stipulated in the Law on Gender Equality in BiH.
- **Principle of cooperation with gender equality institutions**  
During the creation and implementation of the GAP BiH activities, it would be necessary for the institutions to establish continued cooperation with the gender equality institutions (ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS) so that their common resources are used to achieve efficient, effective and sustainable results.
- **Principle of analysis of the budget impact on different needs of men and women (gender-sensitive budgeting)**  
During the planning of activities and the situational analyses of individual areas, it is necessary that each budget beneficiary makes an analysis to assess the impact of the existing budget funds on meeting different needs of men and women. This analysis should serve as the basis for planning activities by area under GAP BiH.
- **Principle of cooperation with non-governmental organizations**  
When planning and conducting activities, the competent institutions, if required, should cooperate with non-governmental organizations in the areas in which non-governmental

organizations have developed resources to work on gender equality issues. Non-governmental organizations working with final beneficiaries have information on these groups' needs and may contribute to the efficient implementation of the GAP BiH activities.

- **Principle of improving sustainability of activities**

During the creation and implementation of the GAP BiH activities by institutions, all holders of responsibility are obliged to take appropriate measures as defined by Article 24 of the Law on Gender Equality of BiH. This includes:

- o adoption of programme of measures in order to achieve gender equality in all areas at all levels of authority;
- o adoption of new laws, or amendments and supplements to the existing laws and other regulations in order to harmonise the provisions of this Law with international gender equality standards;
- o implementation of activities and measures of GAP BiH through regular programmes of work along with securing the budget funds;
- o securing collection, maintenance, analysis and presentation 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, that is, those which are permeated as integral parts of each priority area.

Cross-cutting areas are:

- o The media  
Stereotypes and prejudices are the basic cause of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination, therefore, all activities should be focused on changing the awareness of gender equality in the wider and professional public. Since the media has a great impact on social changes, the media promotion of gender equality as a human rights principle may speed up the structural changes towards gender equality.
- o Improvement of position of multiply marginalized groups of women and men  
An aggravating circumstance for exercising the rights is discrimination and exclusivity on several various grounds, such as sex and age, sex and belonging to an ethnic minority, sex and financial situation, sex and disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual characteristics. While planning the activities special attention should be paid to specific needs of multiply excluded groups, i.e. persons exposed to multiple forms of discrimination, including gender aspects and problems.
- o 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. 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.
- o 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 and family obligations, which is a main cause of discrimination against women in the labour market, thus limiting their political and social participation. It is therefore required to induce harmonization measures for private and professional life, such as, among other things, development of business practices considerate of family life and equally accessible to women and men.

- **Principle of coordination, cooperation and respect for division of competences established by the Constitution**

In the process of the development and implementation of GAP BiH, ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS i GCFBiH will adhere to the principle of coordination, cooperation and respect of the division of competences established by the Constitution. Thereby, the Gender Equality Agency of BiH (ARPMLJPIBiH) coordinates the process of the development and implementation of this plan in a manner that, in this process, it will establish close cooperation with the Gender Centre of RS and Gender Centre of FBiH which overtake coordination and cooperation with institutional and non-institutional partners at the entity and local community level within the respective competence of the entity and local self-governments. The applicable laws, policies, strategies and priorities of the entities are to be taken into account in this process, both in the planning of goals, measures and activities and in the reporting process. 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 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This principle also implies the obligation to exchange information, establish mutual reporting on progress and obstacles, and promote and exchange experiences and good practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina and at the regional and international level.

### Priority areas within Strategic Goal 1:

#### 1.1. Preventing and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking in human beings

##### Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina, striving towards European integration in the forthcoming period, is tasked with harmonizing its regulations with the international documents regulating the issues of violence and trafficking in human beings. These documents are numerous, but the most important are: **CEDAW, UN 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 European Union adopted the EU Guidelines on combating violence and all forms of discrimination against women and girls<sup>1</sup>.

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

Pursuant to Article II of the Constitution, the State of BiH is obliged to secure 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)); the right to fair trial in civil and criminal procedures (paragraph (e)); the 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 incorporating the 15 most significant instruments for the protection of human rights. The obligation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to apply the highest internationally recognized human rights standards derives from the Dayton Peace Agreement. The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina envisages that “the general principles of international law are integral part of the legal system of BiH and the Entities.”

Likewise, discrimination is prohibited and it guarantees the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms envisaged by this document to all persons without any difference on any basis, including gender. Therefore, in accordance with the BiH Constitution, the State must ensure these rights and freedoms. Violence against women, as manifestation 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**”. Definitions of domestic violence are provided in the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence of Republika Srpska and the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence in the Federation of BiH.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a large 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, face traditional prejudices and often continue living with an aggressive person, primarily because of economic dependence and out of fear for children.

Trafficking in human beings, especially trafficking in women for prostitution is a problem which has become particularly topical in BiH over the last few years. Namely, opening state borders, transition to market economy, increase in unemployment and poverty, dissolution of the state structure and decreased movement control in some parts of Europe created convenient conditions for illegal trade, and especially trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation on the territory of our country as well.

### **Situation assessment**

During the implementation of GAP BiH 2013-2017 progress was made in the area of establishment of the legislative, strategic and institutional-operational protection and prevention framework for the **prevention and combating gender-based violence, including domestic violence and trafficking in human beings**.



## Gender-based violence

On 7 November 2013, Bosnia and Herzegovina became the sixth member of the Council of Europe (SE) which ratified the **Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (the Istanbul Convention). In accordance with the obligations assumed by the ratification of the Convention, on 23 July 2015, SMBiH rendered a Decision on the adoption of the **Framework Strategy for the Implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2015 - 2018**<sup>2</sup>. In addition, RS and FBiH have adopted and implemented entity **strategies for the prevention and combating domestic violence**. The **RS Strategy for Combating Domestic Violence (2014-2019)** is being applied in RS and coordinated by the RS Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports. The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and the Strategy established the **Council for Combating Domestic Violence in RS**, as a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the RS Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and this Strategy. The Government of the Federation of BiH has adopted the **Strategy for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence (2013-2017)**<sup>3</sup>, within which the obligations Bosnia and Herzegovina assumed by ratifying the Istanbul Convention are being fulfilled. For the development and monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy, **the Government of FBiH has also formed an expert team** comprising representatives of all competent institutions and non-governmental organizations represented through the Safety Network and a number of experts. Apart from drafting the text of the Strategy, the team of experts prepares reports and annual action plans with activities that become an integral part of the work plans of the competent institutions.

Report on Implementation of the Framework Strategy for 2015/2016 records progress in achieving the goals and measures. The challenge in the implementation of the Framework Strategy is the fact that the RS Government did not accept its implementation on the territory of this entity. For the same reasons, the planned Coordination Body for the Implementation of the Strategy has not been formed, therefore, this role has been assumed by ARPMLjPIBiH. The fact that the Framework Strategy has not been recognised by RS as a compulsory public policy hampers its consistent, efficient and coordinated implementation across the territory of BiH. Namely, the RS Government did not give its consent to the implementation of the Framework Strategy, arguing that, according to the constitutional division of competences in BiH, violence against women and domestic violence falls within the competence of the Entities, however, it takes all necessary measures to directly apply the Istanbul Convention in RS.

With a view to meeting the obligations under the Istanbul Convention, the RS Government has entrusted the GCRS with being the RS Coordination Body for the implementation, monitoring and reporting to the RS Government of programmes and measures under the Convention, including cooperation with the RS, BiH and Council of Europe bodies and organizations in relation to the Convention. At the same time, all ministries and republic bodies and organisations are tasked with cooperating with the GCRS in meeting the obligations under the Convention.

At the GCRS initiative, a new RS Criminal Code has been harmonised with the Istanbul Convention by introducing new criminal offences envisaged by this Convention. Also, a hate-based crime is defined, including sexual orientation as one of the basis thereof. The criminal offence of Violation of Equality of Citizens includes sexual orientation as a basis for differentiation. The criminal offence of public provocation and incitement to violence and hatred also involves sexual orientation as one of the grounds for criminal responsibility and sanction. The RS Criminal Code was adopted in line with the Recommendation CM/Rec 2010(5) of the

<sup>2</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 75/15

<sup>3</sup> Official Gazette of the Federation of BiH, No. 20/13

Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on measures to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, in a manner that the essential elements of the criminal offence committed out of hatred and a criminal offence of public provocation and incitement to violence include, inter alia, sexual orientation and gender identity.

In 2016, the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), which provides the definition of a hate crime, including those committed because of other person's gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity, is adopted, where such action shall be taken as an aggravating circumstance, unless the law does not explicitly impose a more severe punishment for a qualified form of hate crime. Appropriate prison sentences are prescribed for qualified forms of crimes of murder, severe bodily injury and rape, committed out of hatred, while for the qualified form of the offence of damaging someone else's object, a fine or imprisonment of up to one year is prescribed. These are positive steps in trying to recognise and sanction the criminal offences of hate crimes.

The new **Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of FBiH<sup>4</sup>** and the **Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of RS<sup>5</sup>** have been adopted. The protection of victims of domestic violence and the coordinated and efficient functioning of the protection entities has been further enhanced. These laws are considerably aligned with the Istanbul Convention. As part of the implementation of the Law in FBiH, the passing six rulebooks have been planned. Four rulebooks have been issued hitherto.

In order to secure a balanced access to legal aid, the Law on Providing Free Legal Aid in BiH<sup>6</sup> was adopted in 2016. This Law lays down the forms of free legal aid, the entities providing free legal aid and the free legal aid beneficiaries, the conditions for and the manner in which to reach its implementation, financing and control, as well as the supervision over the enforcement of this Law. At the Entity level, the Law on Free Legal Aid of RS<sup>7</sup> was adopted, while the legal framework in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of nine laws on providing free legal aid at cantonal level. This area has not yet been regulated only in the Central Bosnia Canton. Also, apart from the institutions, free legal aid is also provided by non-governmental organizations. The Appellate Court of BDBiH applies the Law on Legal Aid Office<sup>8</sup>.

By implementing the GAP BiH 2013-2017 and the Entity Strategies for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, the grounds for **sustainability of a multidisciplinary approach to the protection and prevention of gender-based violence** have been established. The Entity laws on protection from domestic violence have foreseen the obligation to form coordination bodies and multi-sectoral teams and to sign cooperation protocols at the level of municipalities, that is, cantons in FBiH. In RS, the General Protocol on Conduct in Cases of Domestic Violence has been in force since 2013. In FBiH, apart from the signed protocols and established coordination bodies, the cantonal programmes of measures have been adopted and continuous training of professionals in relevant areas, as well as civil servants in the competent institutions, has been organised. Work with perpetrators of violence has been intensified. Activities on the introduction of systematic data collection and electronic records have been launched.

GCFBiH has established an **electronic database on reporting cases of domestic violence** in the police, monitoring of protective measures taken by centres for social work, accommodation in safe houses, performed by non-governmental organizations with this type of accommodation

<sup>4</sup> Official Gazette of the Federation of BiH, No. 20/13

<sup>5</sup> Official Gazette of Republika Srpska, No. 102/12 and 108/13

<sup>6</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 83/16

<sup>7</sup> The Law on Free Legal Aid of RS (Official Gazette of RS, Nos.20/08, 89/13 and 63/14)

<sup>8</sup> Official Gazette of BDBiH, No. 19/07

and reporting to SOS 1265 telephone line. Training has been conducted and databases are used. The GCFBiH regularly collects statistical data of the FBiH judicial authorities on criminal offences with elements of gender-based violence. In RS there is also an initiative to establish an electronic database, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to BiH. The activity is planned for 2018, and the RS Ministry of the Interior (MUPRS) expressed its interest in and willingness to enter this process. In RS, the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports of the RS has the jurisdiction to monitor the implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, to which the protection entities submit all data and reports on cases of domestic violence, in accordance with the Rulebook on the Content of Records and Reports on Domestic Violence. The GCRS collects statistical data within its competence and regularly monitors and analyses the situation concerning the gender-based violence in RS.

The available statistical data and differently regulated methods of collecting them at the entity level confirm the fact that BiH does **not yet have a single methodology for gathering data on gender-based violence** so that data at the BiH level can be presented, especially for the reporting purposes towards meeting the international obligations regulating this field.

In the reporting period, the **Survey on Prevalence and Characteristics of Violence Against Women in BiH** was published in 2013, being the first survey conducted on a representative sample in BiH. Implementation of the **Women's Well-being and Safety Survey in OSCE Member States, including BiH, with an emphasis on gender-based violence**, is ongoing during 2017 and 2018. Comparing the data and findings of these two surveys should enable the assessment of the situation, i.e. to show whether there was any change during the period 2013-2017. Furthermore, the survey will provide evidence and information that will help the government's representatives to improve their work policies and help services, and to increase the safety of women in BiH.

MLJPIBiH and USAID signed a \$ 1.75 Million **Grant Agreement** in September 2015, within which \$ 750,000 is foreseen **to address the gender-based violence issues**. In order to promptly implement the grant, immediately after its signing, ARPMLJPIBiH made analysis and assessed the needs in this sector and conducted extensive and continuous consultations with relevant stakeholders, and the gender mechanisms related to the identification of priorities and implementation modalities in particular. The goal of the project the implementation of which began in 2017 is **to increase the quality of services and to provide all victims with equal access to prevention and protection from gender-based violence in BiH**. The project implementation started on 1 June 2017 and completion of the project is planned for the end of 2019.

In the meantime, the GCRS informed ARPMLJPIBiH that the aforementioned grant will not be implemented on the RS territory, in accordance with the decisions of the Government and the RS National Assembly, which does not accept the implementation of the Framework Strategy for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in RS, and that the RS Government is continuously supporting the work and strengthening the capacity of the GCRS, in line with the commitment of the RS Government to fully respect international conventions, declarations and standards in the field of gender equality.

Efforts to harmonise laws, by-laws, public policies and practices in exercising the right to protection and availability of assistance and support to victims of gender-based violence in BiH, should continue.

## Trafficking in human beings

**In the field of human trafficking, the legislative and strategic framework has been improved. Amendments and supplements to the Criminal Code of BiH<sup>9</sup> of 2015 have revised and made the criminal framework more stringent** for certain forms of the criminal offence of international trafficking in human beings and incitement to prostitution. By the amendments to the Criminal Codes of BiH, FBiH<sup>10</sup>, RS<sup>11</sup> and BDBiH<sup>12</sup>, the provisions related to prosecution of trafficking in human beings have become harmonised with the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code of BiH and international standards for incrimination of human trafficking.

In December 2015, SMBiH adopted the **Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2016 - 2019**. The **Action Plan** is strategically focused on improving the support system for the fight against trafficking in human beings in BiH, the effective prosecution of trafficking in human beings and related crimes, the prevention of trafficking in persons by reducing risks and providing effective protection and assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings, and by strengthening partnerships and cooperation between actors involved in combating trafficking. The police and judicial authorities at all levels of authorities in BiH, as well as the competent ministries of health and social protection, ministries of labour and other institutions, participate in the implementation of this action plan in accordance with their constitutional and legal competences.

Also, RS has completed the implementation of the **Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Persons 2013-2016 and a new plan for the period 2016-2019 has been adopted**. Standards for gender equality, that is, fight against violence against women, were applied in drafting both of the plans. In August 2014, the RS Ministry of the Interior adopted the MUPRS Action Plan for Combating Organized Crime 2014-2016 which prescribes preventive and repressive measures aimed at preventing trafficking in and smuggling of human beings and other emerging forms of crime.

**The Department for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the BiH Ministry of Security (MBBiH) has established regional monitoring teams** to which **representatives of all competent institutions and authorised organizations** working on anti-trafficking activities are appointed. The purpose of the regional monitoring teams is to **establish additional capacity** to improve the functional links between the competent authorities and non-governmental organizations in BiH participating in the implementation of anti-trafficking and prevention activities. Such institutionalization of the interlinks and cooperation of all entities, especially those operating at the regional and local level, is very important, especially given the fact that victims of trafficking are members of regional and local communities where they almost exclusively exercise their rights and obligations. Therefore, the planned and coordinated action of regional and local institutions and organizations is essential to improve the victim identification system and ensure their proper rehabilitation, reintegration and re-socialisation, and to prevent the causes of victimization and re-victimization of victims of trafficking. To date, MBBiH has organised training in recognising and dealing with victims of trafficking, especially children and women, for centres for social work and relevant cantonal ministries. Also, a regular reporting system has been established, using a unique form for gathering data on potential and/or identified victims of trafficking in human beings in BiH.

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<sup>9</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 40/15

<sup>10</sup> Official Gazette of FBiH, No. 46/16

<sup>11</sup> Official Gazette of RS, No. 67/13

<sup>12</sup> Official Gazette of the Brčko District of BiH, No. 33/13

Institutions and organizations involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings must pay particular attention to vulnerable groups being at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking in human beings, such as children, women, Roma women, women with disabilities, displaced women, low-income women and other vulnerable groups.

With the aim of strengthening the system of protection of victims of trafficking in BiH and meeting the strategic and action targets for combating human trafficking in 2015, MBBiH has drafted a document titled the **Guide for Multidisciplinary Cooperation in the Process of Rehabilitation, Re-socialisation, Reintegration and Repatriation of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in BiH**, which is a practical guide for all those involved in the process of protecting victims of trafficking, especially when it comes to personnel of centres for social works.

Continuation of activities aimed at combating trafficking in human beings and the prevention and suppression of this phenomenon implies, inter alia, further strengthening of coordination for improved assistance to victims and more effective prosecution of traffickers. Institutional mechanisms for gender equality will continue to raise awareness of the problem of trafficking in human beings, especially women and girls, for prostitution and sexual services, and preventive action to address the causes of trafficking, particularly among vulnerable categories.

### **Measures**

The basic goal of the envisaged measures is **preventing and combating gender-based violence 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 in women and children, including protection of potential and actual 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 and protection of their human rights;
- I.1.7. Support to programmes of psychosocial treatment of perpetrators or those who resort to aggressive behaviour in family and other environments, and 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 specific 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, about phenomenon of trafficking in human beings;

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

**Responsibility:** The authorities at the state and entity level, the Brčko District of BiH bodies, cantonal bodies and bodies of local self-government, in accordance with the departmental competences prescribed by the applicable legal regulations.

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## 1.2. Public life and decision making

### Introduction

The whole idea of parliamentary democratisation rests on the representation of all of 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 of 1995, and Recommendation Rec (2003) 3** of the Committee of Ministers to States Parties on equal participation of women and men in political and public decision making, adopted in 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 authority. 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 of 1999, democracy and equal gender representation guarantees better economic development. Also, the **UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and the European Parliament Resolution on participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution (2000/2025(INI))** invite State Parties to take appropriate measures to improve the position of woman in society and prevent violent conflict resolution. The equal participation and division of responsibilities between women and men in public life and decision making has been defined by **Article 20 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH**. The gender equality issue in BiH 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 authority in BiH, during the revision of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, Article 20 was harmonized with the Recommendation Rec (2003) 3 of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE, which prescribes that: "Balanced participation of women and men is taken to mean that the representation of either women or men in the State bodies at all levels of government and local self-government bodies, including legislative, executive and judicial powers, political parties should not fall below 40%..."

### Situation assessment

Different legal and political measures have been implemented with the aim of increasing the participation and influence of women in public and political life. However, **women are, with the exception of the judiciary, still less represented in public life and decision-making, and there is a noticeable trend of traditional perception of gender roles in public and private life. By the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Election Law of BiH<sup>13</sup>** and its harmonisation with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, the quota for the less represented sex for the candidate

<sup>13</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 18/13

lists increased to 40%, which contributed to the representation of women on the candidate lists but did not produce the desired outcome in the electoral results of female candidates who are still extremely under-represented in the representative bodies.

Following the results of the **2014 General Elections**<sup>14</sup>, the representation of women in the **House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH (PDPSBiH)** is **23.8%**. There is a noticeable **trend of increase in the number of women in the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH (PSBiH)**, and the attitude of the electorate towards the women elected, because (4) women who were elected in 2010 were re-elected in 2014. The first deputy of the Collegium of the PDPSBiH is a woman, of three members (chairman, a female deputy and a deputy). This data is an example of the impact of the measure referred to in the Rules of Procedure of the PDPSBiH.

**According to current data of GCFBiH and GCRS, in the Parliaments of the Entities, the average number of woman is about 20% (FBiH Parliament 22,4%, RS National Assembly 18%), indicating that in the FBiH Parliament the number of women increased by about 4%, while in the RS National Assembly there was a drop in the number of women elected by 5%. However, after the Local Elections 2016 there were some changes in the National Assembly of RS, and women occupy 23% of the seats. In the FBiH, at the cantonal level, the average number of women currently stands at 19.4% (which is an increase by 2.5% compared to 2010), with the highest percentage of women elected in the West Herzegovina Canton with 30.4% of female representatives, while the lowest number was registered in the Una-Sana Canton and amounts to 6.7% of female representatives.**

Currently, **two female ministers are part of SMBiH**. The **FBiH Government** includes **25% of female ministers**, which is a significant increase compared to 2010. **The RS government has 25% of female ministers and a female prime minister who leads the government in the second term. Cantonal governments have reduced the representation of women** at ministerial positions. All three members of the BiH Presidency as well as the Presidents of FBiH and RS are men. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of BiH and Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as all cantonal prime ministers are men, while **a woman holds a position of Deputy Prime Minister FBiH**.

At the **Local Elections 2016**<sup>15</sup>, 6.22% of women and 93.78% of men were nominated for mayor/head of municipality with executive power, and 41% of female candidates and 59% of male candidates were nominated for councils/assemblies. At Local Elections in 2016, women formed 49% of the voting body. The results of the Local Elections 2016 indicate a slight increase in the number of women elected.

Of 140 Heads of Municipality and Mayors elected in October 2016, **only six of them (4.3%) are women**, compared to 5 (3.6%) women elected in 2012. This increase in the number of female Heads of Municipality/Mayors is very small but significant, bearing in mind that the number of female candidates for Head of Municipality/Mayor positions has actually decreased from 39 in 2012 to 26 in 2016. Of the newly elected female Heads of Municipality, only one is from FBiH (Visoko), while five of them were elected in RS (Eastern Drvar, Mrkonjić Grad, Jezero, Kalinovik and Novo Goražde). The representation of women in councils/assemblies is not much better. Women were elected to only 566 of 3,144 council/assembly seats. This **share of 18.2% represents a slight improvement** compared to 16.2% of women elected in councils/assemblies in 2012.

One of the obstacles to the equal representation of women in political life is insufficient support of political parties to female members in creating political programmes and political

<sup>14</sup> Data of the Central Election Commission of BiH (available at: [www.izbori.ba](http://www.izbori.ba))

<sup>15</sup> Data of Central Election Commission of BiH (available at: [www.izbori.ba](http://www.izbori.ba))

affirmation even though statutes of political parties do not contain a provision on prohibition of women's participation in the work of the party's bodies. A certain smaller number of political parties defined in their acts the obligations to achieve 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, affect underrepresentation and insufficient participation of women in public life and decision making bodies. It is necessary that all actors, including political parties and the media take part in affirming women as equal holders of political functions at all levels of authority in BiH.

Women's participation in the judiciary reaches 64% at some levels of authority (members of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of BiH and predominantly at local level), and a lower percentage refers to women in leadership positions in the judiciary (40% at courts and 16.6 % at Prosecutor's Offices).

**In most of the civil service managerial positions** in BiH ministries are **men, as much as 78.5%**, and there are no women in three ministries - senior civil servants, while in not more than two ministries, only 20% of the senior civil servants are women. These data are worrying given that more women than men (about 55%) are represented in the civil service at the level of BiH institutions. In the FBiH and RS institutions, the gender structure shows a higher number of women - civil servants (53% in FBiH and 57.8% in RS), but their representation is smaller in managerial positions, which indicates that the percentage of male representation in managerial positions in civil services in both entities is about 59%.

All of the foregoing data show women's underrepresentation in political and public life and decision-making, which calls for the continuation and intensification of the implementation of active measures to increase women's participation in these areas.

## Measures

The primary goal of the provided measures is **the achievement of equal gender representation in creating policies and decision making at all levels of organisation of authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

- I.2.1. Integration of 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 disaggregated 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. Development and implementation of measures to equalize gender representation in public life and decision making bodies;
- I.2.4. Organisation of trainings to help with strengthening 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, implementation of 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 organisation of authorities, at regional and international level.

**Responsibility:** Executive and legislative authorities at state and entity level, bodies of the Brčko District of BiH, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the sectoral responsibilities regulated by the relevant and applicable legal regulations - Central Election Commission of BiH (CIK BiH).

**Period of implementation: 2018 - 2022**

### 1.3. Labour, employment and access to economic resources

#### Introduction

Economic development is a multi-dimensional process which is greatly dependent upon preservation of macroeconomic stability and economic openness in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Economic growth and steady economic development provide the assumption for a greater employment rate and more effective social protection system, which ultimately leads to the decrease in poverty. According to the standards of the United Nations: **“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 and intellectual growth of human beings”**.

Countries preparing for accession to the European Union must carry out the economic reforms having a clear macroeconomic policy. BiH, with its aim of joining European integration in the forthcoming period, is tasked with harmonising the state and entity regulations with the European documents that regulate the 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 (5 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, and the **Recommendation of the CoE Parliamentary Assembly 1700(2005)** for 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)**, and a great step forward has been made over the last period in relation to the harmonisation of the labour laws with international legislative framework.

According to the existing labour laws, 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 the legal system of BiH. 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, to prevent advancement or professional development at work, exclude equal conditions for education, to provide unequal suitability of work premises or auxiliary premises and equipment between employees of both genders, to apply different treatment due to pregnancy, birth or use of maternity leave, or any kind of unfavourable treatment of parents or tutors in harmonising obligations from

professional and private life, or any other activity or act representing any of the forms of direct or indirect discrimination, defined by Article 4, paragraphs (1) and (2) 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 within the economic structures is of vital importance for the achievement of gender equality. In BiH there is a strong connection between the social role of a woman and her education, profession and status in the labour market. It is also very important to note that research conducted so far regarding incomes and benefits from a gender perspective in BiH is insufficient and general knowledge and awareness of the impact of unpaid work on society, economy, development and reduction of poverty is extremely low.

### Situation assessment

Compared to many countries in the region with similar transition processes, **BiH has the lowest level of women's participation in the labour market.** The general characteristics of the labour market in BiH are: mismatch between labour offer and demand, a large number of long-term unemployed persons, low employment growth, low activity rates and employment (especially for women), high unemployment rate (especially women, young and unskilled labour force) low levels of workforce mobility, high levels of employment in informal/grey economy, inadequate human resource development, limited capacities of policy and labour market institutions, and inadequate social dialogue in the field of employment.

Women in BiH face multiple barriers in the labour market, such as longer waiting for a first job, lengthy gaps in the years of service due to maternity leave or the care of elderly or sick family members, or the inability to re-engage in the labour market due to the old age because of changes in the market and the ceased need for a certain type of work.

There are still stereotypes about "women's and men's jobs" and the lack of mechanisms to harmonise family and professional life, which is an obstacle to greater participation of women in labour and employment. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, remuneration for maternity/parental leave is uneven and depends on the place of residence of the mother, i.e. on the place of payment, while in Republika Srpska the remuneration is equalized regardless of the place of residence of the mother.

In the publication **Gender Disparities in the Exploitation of the Rights and Opportunities offered by the Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina**, produced in 2015 by the World Bank in cooperation with the BiH Agency for Statistics (BHAS), the FBiH Statistical Office and the Republic Institute for Statistics of RS, states that **"there are visible gender disparities in the hourly wages in favour of men, which are noticeable at all levels of education, in all age groups, occupations and industries."**

The development of human resources is a special challenge to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Education of population is at a low level, with great differences between the sexes, and there is a gap between skills and labour market demands. Furthermore, vulnerable and hard-to-employ groups such as Roma and people with disabilities face particular challenges in terms of social inclusion and integration into the labour market. Large taxes and difficult access to bank loans, along with administrative barriers, slow down the development of small and medium-sized

enterprises. This is also supported by the fact that men, much more often than women, are owners of land, housing units, business premises, or movable property, and these inequalities are even more pronounced in rural environments.

In BiH, there is a **gender gap** in the use of paid and unpaid work, wherein the **share of women in unpaid work is far greater**. According to the BiH Labour Force Survey of 2017, the share of women (aged 15 to 45 years and over) in unpaid household work, including agriculture, is estimated to about 70%. The reason for this is the stereotypical perception of gender roles, unequal division of family responsibilities, insufficiently developed and widespread childcare and elderly care services, as well as the permanence of the gender-segregated labour market.

Women are prevalent among the lowest paid workers in the labour market and concentration of women in sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture and informal sector is especially high. Also, much more women participate in unpaid work as a form of help. A large number of women work under the fixed-term labour contracts, part-time labour contracts or are excluded from the formal labour market by working within “grey economy”. Especially vulnerable categories include internally displaced women, rural women and Roma women. Legal support and protection systems for the unemployed are well adapted to the requirements of the market economy, although there are significant differences in the execution of these rights by entities, and in particular in the payment of maternity benefits which are treated as social benefits, which again leads to the large number of mothers in the Federation of BiH who do not receive compensation at all.

During the implementation of GAP BiH 2013-2017 significant results were achieved in overcoming the abovementioned challenges and in creating preconditions for greater gender equality in the area of labour, employment and access to economic resources. By adopting the **Law on Amendments and Supplement to the Labour Law in BiH Institutions** and the **new Entity Labour Laws**, significant steps forward have been made with respect to the use of **maternity or parental leave**. The possibility for men to also use parental leave contributes to the **strengthening of the role and promotion of paternity**, which is one of the factors for achieving greater gender equality in the area of labour and economic relations. **Progress has been made with changes in certain legal solutions in the entity’s labour laws** when it comes to specifying a ban on termination of a labour contract.

Also, the adoption of certain **Entity bylaws and the introduction of structural policy measures that enable the implementation of specific programmes in the rural entrepreneurship segment**, including financial stimulation and incentives, have contributed to the greater affirmation of women in the field of rural development.

Numerous programmes and measures have been implemented with a view to equal inclusion of women in the labour market and their access to economic resources, and protection against discrimination based on gender in the work and employment relationships. In recent years, the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, through the Federation Employment Service, in cooperation with cantonal employment services, has implemented **active employment policy programmes** aimed at training, vocational employment and advanced training, additional training and retraining, preparing the unemployed for the labour market and creating equal opportunities for all to access the labour market. Support is provided to target groups of unemployed people who are identified by strategic documents as those who face more difficulty in finding employment, especially young people and women. These measures have proved to be short-term and inefficient, as they result in temporary improvements, given that recruits quickly return to the record of the unemployed.

There is a systematic approach to long-term solving the unemployment problem in BiH, and to equal treatment and participation of women and men in the labour market and access to economic resources.

## Measures

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

- I.3.1. Identification of 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 gender analysis of strategies, policies, programmes and projects within the labour market, employment, and access to economic resources, in order to identify disadvantages, advantages, actual needs and opportunities relating to gender equality;
- I.3.3. Regular collection, analysis and publication of 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, indefinite/fixed term work, conditions of business contract, access to bank loans, 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 coordinate implementation of these measures;
- I.3.5. Providing support to research and programmes geared toward increased participation of women in the workforce and reduced unemployment, development of women entrepreneurs, representation in agricultural production and informal sector, and economic and social empowerment of women;
- I.3.6. Support to research and social protection promotion programmes that address the specific position of women in the labour market and in social and economic life, for example: occasional work, career gaps, lower average salaries and other;
- I.3.7. Providing support to research and programmes to improve the status of women in the area of rural development and integration of gender issues into programmes for sustainable development and environmental protection;
- I.3.8. Organizing training programmes for women aimed at building their capacity of searching, selecting and obtaining adequate jobs, including requalification, self-employment, and entrepreneurship;
- I.3.9. 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 their professional and family obligations;
- I.3.10. Implementation of 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.3.11. 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.

**Responsibility:** Legislative and executive authorities at state and entity level, the bodies of the Brčko District of BiH, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the sectoral responsibilities prescribed by the applicable legislative provisions.

**Period of Implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## 1.4. Education, science, culture and sports

### Introduction

Education is one of the most important elements in achieving gender equality, especially at the time when there is a need for continued education and professional improvement regardless of age. Special attention should be paid to education of women, particularly those in rural areas and other vulnerable groups, in order to overcome traditional gender-based divisions of education, professions and positions in the labour market. This is of special importance in the period of transition in which BiH currently is.

According to the legal regulations pertaining to the educational sector, gender-based discrimination does not exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Numerous international and national documents, the most important of which are: **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted in 1979, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989, European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life of 1992, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995**, the Constitution of BiH part II.3 (L), and Constitutions of entities, Law on Gender Equality in BiH, Article 10, and Laws governing the area of education in BiH, guarantee the right to education without discrimination on any grounds, including gender. Special attention should also be paid 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 activities given in the Recommendations of the CoE 1701(2005)**.

The Framework Law on Preschool Education in BiH, the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in BiH and the Framework Law on Higher Education in BiH constitute a legal framework for education in BiH that is implemented at the state level. These Laws also bind the institutions and educational authorities of the Federation of BiH (including cantons), Republika Srpska and the Brčko District to implement and respect the principles and norms defined by these laws and to ensure education under equal conditions to all students, and to ensure equal opportunities of education and the possibility of choice at all levels of education, regardless of gender.

An integral part of the education system should be lifetime learning, open and accessible to everyone, because it contributes to social and economic revitalization, greater employment opportunities and competition in the knowledge market, and increased mobility and professional flexibility of each individual.

### Situation assessment

Even though an equal number of boys and girls, women and men are included in the educational 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 family life. Special attention should be paid to the issue of education among members of vulnerable

groups: members of national minorities (Roma in particular), persons from rural areas, persons with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons, because of the numerous obstacles they face. Also, there is an educational gap between women in urban, suburban and rural areas. Roma, as ethnic minority, are inadequately included in educational process. Within this population, there is a high level of illiteracy and a low level of persons with primary, secondary or higher education. Textbooks in BiH still contain gender stereotypes about men, women and their social roles.

The **Framework Laws on Primary, Secondary and Higher Education in BiH** provide for the possibility of education, continuation of education and the possibility of choice regardless of gender. In RS, the Law on Preschool Education and the Laws on Amendments and Supplements to the respective Laws on Primary and Secondary Education, as well as on professional titles acquired by completion of higher education were adopted. By the amendments and supplements to these laws the gender equality standards have been adopted in relation to equal gender representation in decision-making bodies, the use of gender sensitive language, and more severe violations of job responsibilities in cases of, inter alia, sexual harassment and abuse of pupils, peer violence, and violent behaviour towards students, teachers and other staff have been foreseen. In FBiH, education is regulated by cantonal legal regulations, and these laws have to be aligned with the framework laws in BiH.

According to the 2013 Census, Bosnia and Herzegovina has 2.82% of illiterate population, of which 4.76% are women over 10 years old. Of the total number of illiterate people in the age group of 60 to 70 years, 15.03% are women, and in the category of over the age of 70 there are not less than 49.1% of women.

The available data show that the percentage of representation of small girls and girls in pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education has not changed significantly over the last five years. According to BHAS data provided in the publication "**Demography and Social Statistics: Educational Statistics**" of 2016, participation in education in the school year 2015/2016 is as follows:

- 47.95% of girls in pre-school education;
- in primary schools, female pupils are represented in the percentage of 48.55%;
- 49.91% of female pupils enrolled in secondary schools;
- 54.20% of female students enrolled in higher education and 58.73% of them graduated;
- women made 59.58% of Masters of Science and Specialists and 45.4% of Doctors.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, gender parity has been achieved in preschool, primary, secondary and higher education, while women make the majority when it comes to acquiring a master's degree. Equality also exists when it comes to the Doctor of Science degree. However, men dominate at the high academic and research positions and managerial positions, which is why the "glass ceiling" phenomenon is present in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Also, BHAS 2016 data on participation of women in teaching and lecturing staff show that women are represented at all levels of education, except in higher education institutions. Participation of men as lecturers increases with the rise in the level of education:

- women make 92.54% of the total number of employed in preschool institutions,
- women make 71.22% of staff in primary schools,
- women make 59.85% of teaching staff in secondary schools,
- women make 43.58% of the total number of teaching staff at higher education institutions.

There are differences in the representation of men and women within certain categories of education. Women make majority in healthcare (pharmacy, dentistry, medicine) and language studies. Compared to this, only 10% of women are educated in fields such as mechanical and electrical engineering, and less than 25% of them are involved in areas such as physical culture, road traffic, criminology and mining. Areas in which number of men and women is approximately the same are the law, economics, architecture and biotechnical science. Such differences in profiling of occupations also have a direct impact on the labour market situation and there is a need to trigger changes in the stereotype understanding of professions, thus enabling equal representation in the labour market.

One of the important preconditions for harmonising professional and private life is the existence of adequate care services for preschool children. Due to the lack of preschool institutions in BiH, **only every sixth child participates in preschool education** which, among other things, negatively affects the economic potential of women who, traditionally, take care of children due to the lacking preschool education services.

To this end, the reference datum concerns the number of preschool institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which totalled 332 in the school year 2016/2017, with 24,918 registered children (11,832 girls). Compared to the previous school year, the number of preschool institutions increased by 4.7%, and the number of preschool child beneficiaries and employees increased by 8.8% and 7.2% respectively.

Furthermore, the analysis based on data of the Federation Office of Statistics shows that in the period 2013 - 2017 there was an increase in the number of preschool institutions in FBiH, from 156 to 197 kindergartens. The number of enrolled children increased from 11,808 to 14,405 (47% girls). However, in the same period, the number of children who were not admitted due to fully occupied facilities increased from 232 to 860, confirming the fact that there was a lack of necessary child care services and the need to expand these facilities in order to better align business and private life and to better exploit the economic potential of women.

Active measures within the GAP 2013 - 2017 influenced the introduction of **the gender component into the programmes and the expansion of the educational base**. The first doctoral theses of candidates, both male and female, are being prepared at the **doctoral gender studies** of the University of Sarajevo. The GCRS and the Faculty of Law in East Sarajevo organised three **“gender equality schools”**, which registered the great interest of the participants.

An initiative was launched to enable the award of academic, scientific and professional titles formulated in a manner to indicate either gender. An analysis of compliance of the Curricula in FBiH with the Law on Gender Equality of BiH has been carried out and, when approving the textbooks, an analysis of their compliance with this Law is also made. Guidelines for the preparation and approval of textbooks, worksheets and other teaching aids for primary and secondary schools have been prepared to serve as a basis for the adoption of cantonal laws on textbooks. Programmes that enable adults to complete primary school, with a focus on the female population, are being implemented. **The multiannual programme of the Federation Ministry of Education and Science** has resulted in a large number of registered adults who completed primary school and a greater number of Roma children attending primary, secondary and higher education.

According to data on **women’s representation in the fields of research and development**, published by BHAS in 2015 in the publication “Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, of the total number of researchers<sup>16</sup> 41% were women, and 59% were men. Among the employees

<sup>16</sup> Researchers are experts hired to create new knowledge, methods and systems, and implement the research projects

within each Research and Development sector (the business, the public sector, the higher education and the non-profit sector) **representation of men in managerial positions** (about 70% of men and 30% of women) **is evidently higher**. The draft strategy of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MCPBiH) for the development of science in BiH for the period 2017 - 2022 contains the part "Gender Equality in Research", which envisages the development of gender policy in research institutions in cooperation with all competent ministries.

In order to achieve **greater gender equality in the field of sports** in BiH, in 2016, **the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Sports of BiH<sup>17</sup>** was enacted in compliance with the Law on Gender Equality. The new law regulates **equal access to sport and equal participation regardless of gender, as well as the equal representation of men and women when appointed into the BiH Sports Council**. General and special criteria are applied in the budgetary allocations of the FBiH Government for culture and sport, including the criteria for gender equality and the contribution to equal rights, opportunities for participation and access in the fields of culture and sport to all, regardless of gender.

It is necessary to continue work on incorporating the principle of gender equality into legal, strategic, programme and other acts in the areas of culture and sport and to foster greater participation of women in these areas, by significant allocations for initiatives promoting gender equality, combating stigma and discrimination of marginalized groups of women, as well as more significant allocations for women's sports clubs.

### 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 gender-related analysis of strategies, policies, programmes and projects in the area of education, science, culture and sport, with the aim of defining disadvantages, advantages, actual needs and opportunities from the aspect of gender equality;
- I.4.3. Regular collection, analysis and publication of 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 postgraduate 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 in the management and co-ordination processes;
- I.4.5. Drafting and implementing the programmes of measures and activities for achieving equal rights and equal access to education, science, culture, and sport, including strengthening professional capacities for the implementation of national and international standards in referenced 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 to programmes focused on the elimination of

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<sup>17</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 66/16



- discriminatory and stereotypical attitudes in educational, scientific, cultural and sport events;
- I.4.7. Providing support to the programmes of lifelong education for priority target groups such as: adults without completed primary 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 and to improve their 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, 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.

**Responsibility:** Legislative and executive authorities at the state and entity level, bodies of the Brčko District of BiH, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by the applicable legal regulations.

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## 1.5. 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 efforts 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 especially 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.

A large number of international documents, of which the most important are: **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, 1996, Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 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, 1994, Constitution of BiH, 1995, Resolution on health policy for all citizens of BiH (*Official Gazette of BiH*, No. 12/2002), Law on Gender Equality in BiH- consolidated version, 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 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe** for member states on inclusion of gender differences in the 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>18</sup>**

The Law on Gender Equality in BiH defines the right of everyone to social and health protection regardless of gender. The Law prohibits discrimination in any form or on any ground in the enjoyment of all forms of rights defined by the applicable laws, while the responsible authorities should provide laws and other acts and mechanisms for the access and usage of social protection, which are not discriminatory against any person based on gender, directly or indirectly.

### Situation assessment

**Developing gender-accountable access to health care** for both healthcare users and service providers in this sector **has been set up - in line with the GAP goals, as an imperative** for all levels of authority, as well as for professional chambers, associations, managements of healthcare institutions, medical faculties. During the implementation of GAP BiH, progress has been made in harmonising laws, regulations and strategies regulating the area of health and healthcare with domestic and international standards for gender equality.

Based on the proposal of MCPBiH, SMBiH adopted the **Strategy for Response to HIV and AIDS in BiH and the Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in BiH**, in line with which promotional and affirmative activities are being carried out, which, inter alia, treat gender equality in terms of equal access to rights and health services. Primary health care for women, sexual and reproductive health and the adoption of gender-

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<sup>18</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.

responsible policies in the field of health have been improved through the amendments and supplements of entity policies, laws and important regulations in the field of health care, and numerous initiatives of non-governmental organisations dealing with education on sexual and reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections and HIV prevention have been implemented. The FBiH Health Care Law regulates the rights to health services of standard quality and equal coverage, while under compulsory health insurance coverage women are entitled to complete health care in terms of pregnancy and maternity, the right to treatment and medical resources, and the right to artificial insemination. The Law on Health Care of FBiH guarantees to all women (citizens of BiH) the right to free birth giving, postpartum care for the mother in the next six months and free health care for children under 18 years of age. In FBiH, the basic healthcare package also provides for a package of basic rights for uninsured persons who are funded by cantonal or municipal budget funds according to the last permanent residence of the uninsured person. However, it should be borne in mind that the application of the basic healthcare package for uninsured persons is conditioned by the provision of funds in the budgets of cantons and municipalities for these purposes.

Enhancement of the health system and services in BiH can be illustrated by the fact that the number of women dying of pregnancy-related complications over the last 20 years has halved, that the mother's mortality rate in BiH is significantly lower than the EU average, as well as that BiH continuously reduces the number of stillborn babies and the infant mortality rate is lower than the average in the region but is still higher than the average in the European Union. Elective courses in **Healthy Lifestyles** have been introduced in several primary schools in BiH, with the aim of influencing change of consciousness, ways of thinking, living habits, and the introduction of healthy lifestyles of young people, including awareness of sexual and reproductive health. **The artificial insemination** in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated differently, depending on the entity's health insurance funds, and in **Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no possibility of medical change of sex, and the procedure for the change of sex of transgender persons is performed abroad.**

**Programmes in the context of mental health protection as well as psychosocial assistance and support** have been implemented in the field of health care for persons who have survived sexual abuse and rape during war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The role of psychosocial and health care providers in many places has been taken over by **non-governmental organisations**, so that this support is often limited to those who live in their field of action. Mental health protection as well as psychosocial assistance and support in RS is provided in health facilities, namely, in Mental Health Centres, as well as in Centres for Social Work. There is still the impact of the stigma on the overall context of making efforts to provide assistance and support to both men and women, which considerably complicate the conditions for performing actions, inter alia, in the health sector as well.

#### **Measures**

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

- I.5.1. Identifying priority laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts in the area of healthcare 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 healthcare with the aim of identifying disadvantages, advantages, actual needs and possibilities from the aspect of gender equality;
- 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 for the implementation of national and international standards in the abovementioned areas, introducing gender responsible budgets, and establishing adequate institutional mechanisms to coordinate implementation of these measures;
- I.5.5. Organizing gender equality training for health professionals in order to secure health services which take into account different needs and interests of women and men;
  - I.5.6. Providing support to research on gender equality in the area 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 the media, health and educational 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.

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

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## 1.6. Social protection

### Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina is on its path toward European integration, and is obliged and tasked to harmonise the social and child care laws with international standards and to take actions for these international documents and laws to be implemented, with the aim of fulfilling conditions for accession to EU as soon as possible.

The most important international documents in this area are: **the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms, 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 the 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, European Commission Council Directive 86/378/EEC dated 24 July 1986 on the implementation of 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, the Constitution of BiH, Constitution of FBiH, Constitution of RS, and the Law on Gender Equality in BiH.**

Social security can be observed as general life security from the aspect of acquiring, using and protecting natural human rights and especially civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights, in compliance with universal international documents. Social security implies a system of organised legal-economic, normative and institutional, social measures and activities in all the areas of the establishment and fulfilment of social needs of a person and his/her family.

## Situation assessment

Laws on social protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina regulate certain rights of persons in need due to war events, natural disasters, general economic crisis, psycho-physical condition of an individual and other issues that cannot be eliminated without help of another person. The users of social protection are also children in special social need and generally persons with disabilities and those with mental and physical developmental disorders, financially not secured persons unable to work, elderly persons without family care, persons with socially negative behaviour, persons and families in social need who, due to special circumstances, require the adequate forms of social protection. Women usually appear as economically vulnerable persons.

Social protection on the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been regulated by the **Law on Basics of Social Protection, Protection of Civilian Victims of War and Protection of Families with Children**, while cantonal laws on social protection regulate in more detail the procedure of exercising the rights, scope, the amount and manner of exercising the social protection rights. Cantons differently approach the realization of the statutory rights of new mothers and other rights in the area of protection of families with children, which leads to disparities in the realisation of these rights in FBiH. Therefore, within the social protection reform, the preparation of a series of regulations has been launched in order to improve exercising the rights in the area of social protection.

When it comes to measures to improve the status of vulnerable categories of women, the **Strategy for the Advancement of Rights and Status of Persons with Disabilities in FBiH (2016-2021)** has been adopted, containing activities planned to improve the position of women and girls with disabilities.

In line with the objectives of the BiH GAP 2013-2017, a regulatory framework has been established or reform activities have been launched in the following important aspects of social policy: **deinstitutionalisation** and transformation of social protection institutions, **models of better targeting the poorest and most vulnerable categories of population**, arrangement for accommodation and support to **children without parental care**, adults without family care, and elderly, weak and disabled persons, by providing family-based care and protection.

Although statistics in the field of social protection have long been processed in a satisfactory manner, social policy, especially in the area of social welfare, does not pay enough attention to the problems of gender inequality, which has implications to the social and economic status of both male and female citizens. In this context, ARPMLJPIBiH and Gender Centres, in the **operational plans of institutions at all levels**, strived to incorporate a gender perspective into the development, implementation and assessment of the impact of the social protection policy, in order to enable meeting of different needs and interests of users, men and women alike.

Progress has been made in the **protection of victims of the criminal offence of Crimes against Humanity and Gender-Based Violence at War Times**. The issue of victims of torture, sexual violence and civilian victims of war in terms of achieving equal status and access to rights and protection is regulated at the RS and FBiH entity level and the level of BDBiH, and their access to rights depends on their place of residence. **Civilian war victims**, including **survivors of war-related sexual violence**, in both entities, continue to **face discrimination** compared to other categories of society. At the entity level, however, the results of work on **better regulation of status and access to rights** of these vulnerable categories of citizens are noticed. In FBiH, under the Law on Basics of Social Protection, Protection of Civilian Victims of War and Protection of Families with Children, persons who survived sexual abuse and war rape have been recognised

the status of a special category of civilian war victims. Victims are entitled to “monthly personal cash income” in a single monetary amount of BAM 586.15 and there is no discrimination in this respect on either territorial, national, sex or age ground. However, it should be noted that a large number of victims of sexual abuse and rape during the war are still not ready to claim this right or any other kind of assistance, due to possible stigmatization in the still traditional environment.

In 2013, the GCRS conducted its first survey of the status of women of Serb ethnicity who were victims of sexual violence during the war. Until then, this category of victims was invisible and never mentioned before in public. The Government and the RS National Assembly adopted information on the findings and recommendations of the research, and in 2017 the RS Law on Protection of Victims of War Torture was forwarded for adoption.

In order to ensure a more balanced access to social protection, it is necessary to include a gender perspective in drafting, implementing and evaluating the impact of regulations, strategies, policies and other acts in the area of social protection and to implement educational and counselling programmes for women and girls at risk of social exclusion, focusing on vulnerable groups of women. It is necessary to harmonise the legal regulations and practices in the field of protection of families with children and the right to maternity benefits, for both employed and unemployed mothers.

## Measures

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

- 1.6.1. Identification of 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 gender equality standards 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, actual needs and possibilities from the gender equality perspective;
- 1.6.3. Regular collection, analysis and publication of data classified by gender, on participation, access and use of social protection;
- 1.6.4. Drafting and implementation of programmes of measures and activities for the achievement of equal rights and equal access to social protection, including strengthening of professional capacities for the implementation of national and international standards in this area, introduction of gender-responsible budgets and establishment of adequate institutional mechanisms for coordination of the implementation of these measures;
- 1.6.5. Providing support to the pension system programmes pertaining to specific aspects of professional carrier and unequal distribution of duties between men and women (child care, care of other family members, etc.), including, when necessary, compensation measures to alleviate negative consequences of the existing pension system for women;
- 1.6.6. Providing support to the programmes intended to multiple marginalised groups exposed to the risk of poverty and isolation, which are usually made of women, in order to support their inclusion in labour market and exercising of rights to social protection;
- 1.6.7. Implementation of promotional activities, information/awareness-raising campaigns

- on the importance of gender equality in the access and use of social protection; and,
- I.6.8. 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.

**Responsibility:** Legislative and executive authorities at the state and entity level, bodies of the Brčko District of BiH, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by the applicable legal regulations.

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## 1.7. Gender and security

### Introduction

**The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security”**, adopted on 31 October 2000, is the first United Nations Security Council Resolution emphasizing the importance of women’s role and equality in preventing and resolving conflicts and building a sustainable peace. It calls upon Member States to ensure greater women’s participation in decision-making at all levels of decision-making processes. This is a prerequisite for greater inclusion of the gender perspective in the defence and security sectors, and greater protection and respect for the human rights of women and girls, both in war conflicts and in peace and security processes. Women and girls are involved in war conflicts, and abusing and raping women and girls around the world has become an important weapon of war and one of the methods of extreme torture. This calls for increased protection for women and girls, in both conflict and post-conflict situations, which is particularly emphasized by the adoption of accompanying resolutions based on the UN Resolution 1325, such as Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013).

The Secretary General of the UN Security Council has adopted Directive (S/PRST/2008/39) of 29 October 2008 concerning the implementation and reporting processes in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security”, which obliges Member States to draft national action plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Since 2010, two Action Plans have been adopted and successfully implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina. **The first Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (AP UNSCR 1325 in BiH)**<sup>19</sup> 2010-2013 was adopted by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010. **The second AP for implementation of UNSCR 1325 in BiH was adopted for the period 2014-2017**<sup>20</sup>, relying on the findings and recommendations of the independent assessment of the previous AP for implementation of UNSCR 1325, which pointed to all the positive aspects and challenges of its implementation and coordination. So far, SMBiH has **adopted two annual reports on the implementation of AP for UNSCR 1325 in BiH** confirming progress in the implementation of this resolution. Upon the expiry of another AP UNSCR 1325, ARPMLJPIBiH produced a **Final Report on implementation of AP for UNSCR covering the entire period of its implementation from 2014 to 2017** and which is in the adoption procedure. Adoption of the **Third Action Plan for implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” 2018-2022** is in progress. BiH is recognized at regional and international level by its examples of good and innovative practices in the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

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<sup>19</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 92/10

<sup>20</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 89/14

## Situation assessment

Progress was made in women's participation in the **police, army and peacekeeping missions**, although it is still **far from equal representation of sexes**. Women's participation in police forces at all levels of government amounts to 7.5%, mainly in the positions of police and senior officers, inspectors, junior and senior inspectors. There is a noticeable tendency to increase the representation of women in police structures, but a certain time distance is needed to bring this trend to the legally foreseen equal representation. The possibility of advancement of women in the police forces is also limited by the mode of scoring which requires continuity, which is in some cases interrupted due to pregnancy.

In BiH Armed Forces there are 6.8% of women (increase by 1.8% compared to 2010). Women's representation in UN peacekeeping missions continues to increase, where, according to MBBiH data, there are currently 30% of female police officers and, according to MOBiH data, 6.7% of female members of BiH Armed Forces, in such missions.

There is a clear progress in the systemic approach to introducing the principle of gender equality in the work of relevant defence and security sector institutions. In accordance with Article 24 of the BiH Law on Gender Equality, which stipulates the obligations of institutions at all levels of government, most institutions have adopted **internal acts with measures to improve the position and increase participation of women in the military, police and peacekeeping missions, including the decision-making places**. Members, both male and female, of the Coordination Board (KO) for monitoring AP for UNSCR 1325 are the main initiators of changes within the institutions they represent. However, this process is still not uniform in all institutions.

- Owing to affirmative measures and promotional activities, **women's interest in military and police service increased and the number of women sent to the peacekeeping missions increased significantly**. For instance, the percentage of women participating in peacekeeping missions currently amounts to 30% and increased by 6% compared to 2014, and by about 14% compared to 2010.
- **Contact persons for gender equality** issues have been appointed in all units of armed forces, all sectors of the MBBiH and law enforcement agencies in BiH, and the BiH contingents of peacekeeping missions.
- There has been a **significant increase in the number of acts (by about three times) that are regularly submitted for the opinion** of ARPMLJPIBiH, incorporating all suggestions for the alignment with the Law on Gender Equality.
- **Gender Equality Training** is included in regular training programmes of the defence and security sectors, and databases disaggregated by sex have been upgraded in different segments of the institution's work (employment policies, representation in commissions and committees, working groups and other bodies).
- Initiatives for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 have been initiated at the local level. **Five local action plans have been adopted** and activities were started to draw up plans in three other local communities.
- Continuous **regional cooperation and exchange of good practices** have been achieved. One of the concrete results of this cooperation is the adoption of the Local Action Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 in the City of Niš (Serbia), which is entirely drafted in accordance with local action plans in BiH.
- Good practices of BiH have been recognized at a **wider international level**. As a result, in 2016 and 2017, the ARPMLJPIBiH, at the invitation of the governments of the countries of Finland, Moldova and Albania, directly participated in the drafting of the national action plans of these countries, following the structure of AP in BiH.

Despite the achievements and the fact that BiH has been highlighted as an example of good practice



in the **Global Study on the Application of UN Resolution 1325**<sup>21</sup>, there are some challenges in the implementation of AP for UNSCR 1325. More work needs to be done to adjust the **conditions for participation in advanced vocational training and at different levels of decision-making in police and military structures** to match the status and needs of both sexes. It is also necessary to make additional efforts for reaching the **systemic solutions to the realization of the rights of victims of sexual violence and other forms of suffering during the war in BiH**.

Due to the lack of funds from the regular budgets of the institutions, the AP for UNSCR in BiH is partly financed from the FIGAP funds, which considerably contributed to the achievement of results. **It is necessary to provide funding for the activities** of the AP for UNSCR 1325 from the regular budgets of the competent institutions and agencies and to find additional donor funds. The introduction of the human security concept from the perspective of gender equality as the strategic goal of the AP for UNSCR 1325, in addition to the local level initiatives, has opened up the possibility of acting under the conditions of topical security threats and challenges, such as natural disasters (assistance to women and girls in the most vulnerable areas after floods in BiH), refugee crisis (assistance to refugees from Syria in Serbia), the use of small and medium-sized weapons in the context of gender-based violence, and violent extremism and terrorism (planning of preventive responses). **Measures for the actions under the conditions of topical security threats and challenges** from the perspective of gender equality should be systemically planned.

#### Measures

The main objective to be achieved by the measures envisaged is **the improvement of security of male and female citizens in BiH through equal participation of women in preventing and solving conflicts, and in building and preserving sustainable peace**.

- 1.1.1. Identification of priority laws, strategies, action plans, programmes and other acts in the field of defence and security with the aim of introducing and applying international and domestic gender equality standards in these areas;
- 1.1.2. Regular systematic collection, analysis and publication of data and information on the situation concerning gender equality in defence and security sectors;
- 1.1.3. Implementation of the UNSCR 1325 Action Plan activities in BiH for the period 2018-2022;
- 1.1.4. Providing or supporting research on “Women, Peace and Security”, with a special focus on current security threats and challenges;
- 1.1.5. Realization of promotional activities, information campaigns and campaigns to raise public awareness of the importance of equal participation in the defence and security areas;
- 1.1.6. Regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of institutions in the application of international and domestic gender equality standards in the areas of defence and security.

**Responsibility:** Legislative and executive authorities at the state and entity level, bodies of the Brčko District of BiH, cantonal authorities and authorities of local self-governance units, in accordance with the responsibilities prescribed by the applicable legal regulations.

**Period of implementation:** 2018 – 2022

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<sup>21</sup> The Global Study on the Application of UN Resolution 1325 was made at the request of the Secretary General of the UN Security Council (available at:<http://arsbih.gov.ba/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/UNW-GLOBAL-STUDY-1325-2015.pdf>)

## II STRATEGIC GOAL 2:

### Establishing and strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments for the achievement 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, and in many national constitutions, as is the case with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

General prohibition of discrimination on many grounds, including gender, was the first step in that process, therefore, in 1945 that approach was included in the **UN Charter and in 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights**, and also in two agreements reached 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 Council of Europe within 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 Council of Europe in the field of equality between women and men**.

For the state to fulfil its obligation to eliminate gender-based discrimination 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 required funding and human resources, and that their action is fully supported by the political authorities at all levels.

The implementation of GAP BiH by the end of 2016 was largely financed from the funds of the **Financial Mechanism to Support the Implementation of GAP BiH (FIGAP)**<sup>22</sup>. FIGAP is one of the important instruments for achieving gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is an innovative and recognizable financial mechanism in the region and an example of good practice that goes beyond the framework of individual programmes, projects and initiatives. In April 2016, SMBiH adopted the Information on Implementation of the Final Evaluation of FIGAP, which confirmed its efficiency and sustainability from the aspect of achievement of the set goals and expected results, with recommendations for continued funding.

**In cooperation with the entity Gender Centres, ARPMLJPIBiH made the FIGAP II (2017-2021) Draft. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has expressed readiness to further finance FIGAP II. The process of signing the Agreement between MLJPIBiH and SIDA is under way, thus providing significant funds for the financing of the next BiH GAP for the period 2018-2022, including support to the competent institutional and non-institutional partners. In this process, the ARPBiH, MLJPIBiH, GCFBIH and GCRS play a key role, as well as the mechanisms of co-operation between these institutions and other institutions at all levels of the BiH government organization and the non-governmental sector.**

<sup>22</sup> FIGAP - The Financial Mechanism to Support the Implementation of GAP BiH was established by the Agreement on Joint Financing between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Donor Group (Development Agencies of Sweden, Austria and Switzerland), which was signed at the end of 2009 and lasted until the end of 2016.

Implementation of the activities of the strategic goal II primarily falls within the responsibility of ARPMLJPiBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS, in accordance with Articles 26 and 27 of the Law on Gender Equality of BiH.

## Priority areas within Strategic Goal 2:

### II.1. Coordination and supervision over the implementation of the Gender Action Plan 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 the Gender Action Plan of BiH at all levels of government. The BiH Gender Equality Agency, MLJPIBiH and Entity Gender Centres are key institutional mechanisms for gender equality within the Council of Ministers, the Government of the Federation of BiH, i.e. the RS Government, which are tasked with directing efforts to combat discrimination and with achieving gender equality in BiH through the development of strategic documents and action plans.

Implementation of GAP BiH 2013-2017 has significantly contributed to **strengthening the influence, visibility and respectability** of the institutional mechanisms for gender equality within the executive and legislative authorities and in general public. ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS acted as powerful and proactive promoters of specific strategies for gender equality and also played a key role in creating gender sensitive policies in BiH and influenced the alignment of laws and policies at all levels of organization of the BiH authority with the principles of gender equality.

#### Situation assessment

At the 41<sup>st</sup> session, held on 28 January 2016, **SMBiH issued a Decision on the Establishment of the Steering Committee for Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of GAP BiH<sup>23</sup>**, which comprise the directors (female) of ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS and GCFBiH. The Council of Ministers of BiH, the Government of FBiH and the RS Government have established coordination boards of institutions at the state and entity level to monitor the implementation of GAP BiH.

**The Coordination Board (KO) for monitoring the GAP implementation at the level of the BiH institutions** was established by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of BiH<sup>24</sup>, consisting of representatives of 23 institutions at the BiH level and a female representative of the Government of the Brčko District of BiH, and chaired by ARPBiH (female) Director. This Board is also responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the activities of institutions at the state level and at the level of the Brčko District. In addition, members of the KO act as contact persons for gender equality issues in their respective institutions.

**KO for monitoring the GAP BiH implementation in Republika Srpska for the period 2013-2017** was established by the RS Government Decision<sup>25</sup> on the establishment. The Board is formed as the Government's cross-sectoral body for planning, implementing and monitoring of this document and is made up of male and female representatives of all ministries of the RS Government, and chaired by a (female) Director of GCRS

**KO for monitoring the GAP BiH implementation in the Federation of BiH has been set up by the Government of FBiH<sup>26</sup>** in 2015, as a working body the basic tasks of which are the drafting and adoption of annual operational plans, monitoring of the implementation of

<sup>23</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 40 of 31 May 2016

<sup>24</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 66/16 of 6 September 2016

<sup>25</sup> Official Gazette of RS, Nos. 77/15, 92/15

<sup>26</sup> Decision of the FbiH Government number: 922/2015

operational plans and making regular reports. KO consists of male and female representatives of thirteen ministries and institutions of the FBiH, and is chaired by a (female) Director of GCFBiH.

Performing GAP priority tasks takes place on the basis of the annual **operational plans of the competent institutions for implementation of the GAP BiH**, which are represented in the Coordination Boards. The annual operational plans of institutions at BiH level, and institutions in FBiH and RS, were adopted in 2016 and 2017. Depending on the competence and annual priorities, these plans elaborate the GAP BiH measures and define specific activities that some ministries have included in their regular action plans.

SMBiH has **adopted two annual reports on the implementation of GAP BiH 2013-2017**, which ARPMLJPIBiH has developed in cooperation with entity gender centres based on information provided by the institutions represented in the Coordination Boards. The 2014 Report on the GAP BiH implementation was adopted at the 41<sup>st</sup> session of SMBiH held on 28 January 2016, and the Report on the GAP BiH implementation in 2015 and 2016 was adopted at the 98<sup>th</sup> session of SMBiH held on 12 April 2017. Final Report on the implementation of GAP BiH 2013-2017 will be forwarded to the Council of Ministers of BiH after obtaining opinions of all competent institutions.

However, it is worth noting that the operational planning and reporting on GAP at the level of cantons and local self-government units is not carried out systematically. Gender Centres of FBiH and RS do not have sufficient capacity to provide expert support to this process. Authorities at these levels of administration do not recognize the importance of introducing and achieving gender equality standards, therefore, they have not taken the self-initiative steps and decisions related to the GAP BiH implementation and the development of local gender action plans. Although so far a significant number of local gender action plans have been adopted, they have largely passed at the initiative of non-governmental organizations, and in the case of Republika Srpska at the GCRS initiative. Cantons in the FBiH do not have the appropriate bodies/offices or public policies (strategies or action plans) due to which there is no desired advancement of gender equality, particularly in the area of employment, health or education at the cantonal level.

## Measures

The goals to be achieved by the measures envisaged concern the **coordinated implementation of GAP BiH** in accordance with the competences of certain levels of authority.

- II.1.1. Establishment of the Steering Committee for Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of GAP BiH (consisting of (female) Directors of ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS and GCFBiH);
- II.1.2. Establishment of the Coordination Board for monitoring the implementation of the GAP at the level of institutions of BiH (consisting of ARPMLJPIBiH and institutions of BiH).

**Responsibility:** SMBiH at the proposal of MLJPIBiH

**Period of implementation:** within three months of the adoption of GAP BiH

- II.1.3. Establishment of the Coordination Board for monitoring the implementation of GAP BiH in Republika Srpska (which is made up of GCRS and RS institutions);
- II.1.4. Establishment of the Coordination Board for monitoring the implementation of GAP BiH in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (which is made up of GCFBiH and FBiH institutions).

**Responsibility:** The RS Government, at the proposal of GCRS, and the Government of FBiH, at the proposal of GCFBiH

**Period of implementation:** within three months of the adoption of GAP BiH

II.1.5. Creation and adoption of annual operational plans for each year of implementation of GAP BiH

**Responsibility:** Coordination Board

**Period of implementation:** by the end of December of every year of the implementation of GAP BiH

II.1.6. Preparation and adoption of methodology for the preparation of annual and final reports on the implementation of GAP BiH.

**Responsibility:** Steering Committee

**Period of implementation:** within 6 months of the adoption of GAP BiH

II.1.7 Development of annual reports on the implementation of GAP BiH and their submission to entity governments for consideration and adoption, after which compiled reports are to be submitted to SMBiH for consideration and adoption.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS, GCFBiH and Coordination Boards

**Period of implementation:** until March of every year of the implementation of GAP BiH for the previous year

II.1.8. Preparation of the Final Report on the Implementation of GAP BiH 2018-2022 and its submission to entity governments for consideration and adoption, after which compiled reports are to be submitted to SMBiH for consideration and adoption.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS, GCFBiH and Coordination Boards

**Period of implementation:** until March 2023

## 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 gender equality mechanisms and legal responsibilities, concerns monitoring and improvement of the implementation of international and national gender equality standards in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Reports on the implementation of international documents, those of UN and the Council of Europe, related to gender equality and empowerment of women, in relation to which BiH is obliged to provide reports (CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, UN Resolution 1325, Recommendations of the Council of Europe and European directives) are regularly prepared and submitted to the competent institutions. In compliance with the obligation to report on the implementation, the **Sixth Periodic Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the CEDAW implementation has been developed for UN**, in cooperation with the institutions at the BiH level and entity gender centres. The Report was adopted by the SMBiH and 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 the period 2010 - 2013**, and was adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH<sup>27</sup>. The development of the third Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” in BiH for the period 2018 – 2022 is underway.

In accordance with Articles 26 and 27 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, the ARPMLJPIBiH and the entity Gender Centres are obliged to follow, participate in the

<sup>27</sup> Official Gazette of BiH, No. 92/10

preparation of, initiate and provide opinions on harmonisation of laws and other acts, policies, strategies, plans and programmes, passed at the level of the State and entities, with the provisions of this Law and other national and international gender equality standards.

### Situation assessment

BiH ratified the **Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (the Istanbul Convention) in November 2013 as the sixth member of the Council of Europe. Due to the obligations assumed by the ratification of the Convention, at its 16<sup>th</sup> session held on 23 July 2015, SMBiH adopted the **Decision on the adoption of the Framework Strategy for the Implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2015 – 2018** (the Framework Strategy). Within the scope of the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, BiH is obliged to submit reports to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the **expert group for combating violence against women and domestic violence - GREVIO**. ARPMLJPIBiH has intensified preparatory activities for the development of the report under the GREVIO Questionnaire. The (female) Director of ARPMLJPIBiH participates in the work of the Committee of the Contracting Parties to the Istanbul Convention.

In accordance with the obligations arising from the accession to international instruments for the protection of human rights and membership of international organizations, Bosnia and Herzegovina regularly and continually drafts reports on the fulfilment of its obligations towards international documents and bodies. In the period 2013 -2017 numerous reports have been submitted in accordance with international instruments, of which the following ones are most important:

- BiH Report on the Review of Progress in the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the results from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Session of the General Assembly (2000);
- Information of BiH to the UN CEDAW Committee on following priority concluding observations on the Combined Fourth and Fifth Periodic BiH reports on the implementation of CEDAW;
- Sixth Periodic Report of BiH on the Implementation of the CEDAW - UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of **Discrimination Against Women (2013-2016)**.

With the aim of the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security”, BiH has successfully implemented the second **AP for UNSCR 1325 in BiH for the period 2014-2017**. A Final Report on the Implementation of this Action Plan has been drafted and a third AP for UNSCR 1325 for the period 2018-2022 is being prepared.

ARPMLJPIBiH and entity Gender Centres were involved in drafting and amending the **Annexes of the BiH Institutions to the Progress Report in the EU Accession Process, and in responding to the European Commission’s BiH Accession Questionnaire**.

The Directorate for European Integration of BiH (DEI) instructed the BiH institutions to prepare annexes and amendments to the annexes to the Annual Report for the European Commission (EC), the development of which is coordinated by the DEI, in a manner to include the **gender aspect and statistical data classified by sex** in the analysis of the situation, where applicable.

The development of the **Gender Equality Index in BiH** is underway in line with EU standards in cooperation with ARPBiH, BHAS and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The index is recognized as one of the most important instruments for monitoring the situation of gender equality in the country, as well as for comparison with other countries in EU and the region.

According to **Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 5 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe** to the Member States on measures to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, the institutional mechanisms for gender equality in BiH, in close cooperation with the civil sector and relevant parliamentary committees, began to work more intensively on improving the rights of LGBTI persons in BiH. This has led to significant leaps, such as the extension of the list of grounds for discrimination, which now explicitly includes sexual orientation, gender identity and gender characteristics, or to changes in criminal legislation that are introduced in the prescribed definitions of hate crime and crimes committed because of sex, sexual orientation or the identity of another person. A draft of the Action Plan for Equality of LGBTI Persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2018-2020 has been prepared to be forwarded for the adoption.

ARPM LJPIBiH and entity gender centers continuously give opinions on legal and other acts, and propose ways of harmonisation with the Law on Gender Equality and other legal standards for gender equality. During the reporting period, **there was a continuous annual increase in the number of submitted acts by about 30, so that ARPM LJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS gave opinions to more than 400 Acts at different levels of authority. Recommendations for harmonisation have been included in the document proposals in 90% of cases, while special attention has been paid to the protection of persons belonging to vulnerable groups.**

The ARPM LJPIBiH has drafted the **Information on Compliance of Draft Laws and Other Regulations with the Law on Gender Equality** in 2015, and submitted it to the Legislature Office and the General Secretariat of the SMBiH in January 2016. All institutions have been submitted an act reminding them of the obligation to obtain an opinion from ARPM LJPIBiH on laws and bylaws prior to forwarding them to the adoption procedure.

The GCRS, in cooperation with all of its partners, is continuously working on the introduction of the gender equality principle in laws, bylaws and strategic documents covering various fields. During the period 2013-2017, the GCRS provided 170 opinions on laws and bylaws forwarded to the Government and National Assembly of RS for adoption, or passed by ministries (decrees, rulebooks and other internal acts). The GCRS has prepared a **Special Report on Compliance of laws** and other RS regulations with legal standards for gender equality and a **Special Report on cases of reviewing the violations of the rights based on sex** in the procedures before the GCRS. The Report was adopted by the RS Government in March 2017, and the former report was also adopted by the RS National Assembly. The referenced reports include data from the establishment of the GCRS until 31 December 2016.

Owing to the development of partnerships with the Federation ministries, **a large number of documents in the Federation of BiH have been harmonised with the BiH Law on Gender Equality**, wherein, at the initiative, the GCFBiH has been directly involved in their development and/or these documents were submitted for the opinion in a draft form. Certain number of policies are being harmonised by the relevant proponents themselves, without consultation with the GCFBiH, and they often only contain declaratory provisions on the prohibition of discrimination, with the absence of an analysis of the impact on gender equality and the creation of measures in accordance with different needs.



Although the number of submitted documents for which an opinion on compliance with the Law on Gender Equality of BiH has increased during the previous years, it is still noticeable that this is not a standard practice, as prescribed by Law on Gender Equality. The Rules of Procedure of the SMBiH and the Rules of Procedure of the Government of FBiH have not yet been amended and supplemented by the provisions to bind the competent proponents to obtain the opinion of ARPMLJPIBiH or GCFBiH before submitting the documents to the regular adoption procedure. This leads to a fragmented approach to the harmonisation of public policies, strategies, regulations, programmes and plans with the provisions of the Law on Gender Equality, and further insistence on fulfilling this obligation under the Law on Gender Equality of BiH is required. The Rules of Procedure of the RS Government of 2009 stipulate the obligation that prior to being forwarded to the legal procedure for adoption, all acts should also be submitted to GCRS for its opinion. By stipulating this obligation, the number of acts submitted for an opinion increased. Until 2009, about 10% of laws and 8% of bylaws were forwarded for an opinion on average, and in the period 2009-2016 approximately 38.84% of laws and 14.45% of bylaws were submitted thereof. From the beginning of work to 2009, on average, there were 50% of positive opinions and 50% of opinions containing recommendations for harmonisation of regulations. Since 2009, progress has been made in the work of the processing party or the proponent of legislation in the process of harmonisation with the standards for gender equality: on average, 70% of positive opinions and 30% of opinions containing recommendations for harmonisation. All of the foregoing indicates that, by regulating this obligation, the Rules of Procedure of the Government of Republika Srpska considerably advanced the work on harmonisation of regulations in Republika Srpska with the standards of gender equality. Nonetheless, bylaws have still been rarely and infrequently submitted to the Gender Centre for the opinion and, as a consequence, they often remain non-harmonised with the Law and other legal standards for gender equality, which is why they are not implemented in practice.

## Measures

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. Implementation, coordination, monitoring and reporting of BiH meeting the obligations towards the UN and the CoE documents in the field of gender equality;
- II.2.2. 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 Council of Europe;
- II.2.3. Launching an initiative for holding negotiations, making conclusions and ratification of international documents for gender equality;
- II.2.4. Giving opinion on harmonisation of draft laws, bylaws and other normative acts, strategies, plans and programmes with the Law on Gender Equality of BiH;
- II.2.5. Forwarding initiatives and participation in drafting laws, bylaws and other acts, strategies, policies and programmes in order to define measures for the achievement of equality of genders in all fields of social life.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS, GCFBiH

**Period of implementation:** 2018-2022

## II.3. Strengthening and cooperation of institutional gender equality mechanisms

### Introduction

Instructions, responsibilities, objectives and guidelines for strengthening and sustainability of all national mechanisms, their cooperation and capacity building, are contained in **Chapter 37 of the Memorandum 21 “National mechanisms and international cooperation for capacity building in 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 Council of Europe member states** (2004), state mechanisms: action plans and gender integration in the CoE member states from the 4<sup>th</sup> 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 the 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). Bosnia and Herzegovina has established institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the legislative and executive authority at the state, entity, cantonal and municipal levels, thus providing the 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 true driver of the initiatives and proposals for activity measures, and the key actors in this process are the ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS. 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 at the local level.

For the purpose of better implementation of the Law and sustainability of these mechanisms, further strengthening of their capacities as well as mutual cooperation and coordination is necessary. Cooperation with and technical support to other institutions in the application of principles of gender equality is of essential importance, too.

### Situation assessment

**The network of institutional mechanisms for gender issues** at all levels of legislative and executive authorities in BiH is constantly expanding – by initiatives and the establishment of Gender Equality Commissions at the local level, as well as by appointing contact persons for gender issues within institutions at all levels of authority in BiH. A key role in the process of introduction and application of the gender equality principle is played by ARPBiH, MLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS. In order for gender equality institutions to provide continuous professional and administrative support to other institutions during the implementation of GAP BiH, efforts have been made to strengthen the human, technical and financial capacities of institutional mechanisms for gender issues.

However, there is still a problem of insufficient human resources and budgetary resources for the functioning of ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS, so as to be able to meet their duties, in particular due to a continuous increase in the workload. This shortfall is overcome by a proactive common approach to international donors that support the strengthening of human, professional and financial capacity of all three institutions.

Therefore, mutual cooperation of ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS is of key importance and has been especially strengthened by joint management, planning, realisation and reporting on FIGAP. The **FIGAP Steering Committee** continued to work in the same composition after the end of the programme, as the **GAP BiH Steering Committee**, which proves sustainability of the management structures established through the implementation of the programmes/projects.

**By establishing coordination boards** for the implementation of GAP BiH, the work on **planning, implementation and reporting on the implementation of GAP BiH** has been improved at the level of BiH and entity institutions. Cooperation between ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS has been improved with institutions at all levels of authority. The **mechanism of coordination** between the gender quality institutions and all other institutional and non-institutional partners has been improved at all levels of authority, including local self-government units.

ARPMLJPIBiH and entity gender centres seek to maintain continuous cooperation with the **Gender Equality Commission of the House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH (KORPPDPSBiH), the Gender Equality Commissions of the FBiH Parliament and the Committee of Equal Opportunities of the RS National Assembly**, by working jointly on the amendments and supplements to laws and policies, elaborating regular reports on the status of gender equality, organizing thematic sessions and promotional activities. This always poses a particular challenge after every new convocation of the commission, so that after each selection cycle, there are introductory workshops for members of the parliamentary committees to establish cooperation and inform the selected officials of the work of the institutional mechanisms for gender issues so far.

During 2014 and **in the Assembly of the Brčko District of BiH, a Gender Equality Commission was established** and a gender equality workshop was organised for members of the Commission, thus enhancing the process of establishing institutional mechanisms for gender issues in BiH.

**In the reporting period**, the entity gender centres established cooperation and supported the work of the Gender Equality Commissions at the local level of authority, realising training programmes and initiating various activities. Although this process is slow, it can be concluded that there are good and functional working models in some municipalities, and that the number of municipalities that have drawn up local plans to improve gender equality, including budgets, has increased. However, it is important to emphasize that some cantonal (FBiH) and municipal level commissions are not functional and it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the commissions in order to carry out the activities falling within their mandates.

Also, within the executive authority of FBiH, cantonal committees for gender equality at the level of cantonal governments are mostly non-functional, and so are the Gender Equality Commissions within the Offices of Heads of Municipalities. These bodies were functional while GCFBiH was able to provide programme and financial support, however, GCFBiH does not have the capacity to continuously provide expert support and initiate activities at the local level.

In 2014, GCFBiH produced a **Handbook for the Achievement of Gender Equality at the Local Level**. The Handbook is a very important step in supporting the functioning of the local gender equality committees and administrative officers working on these issues.

Persons previously nominated to address the gender equality issues in the Federation/Cantonal ministries and institutions are no longer active. GCFBiH has established a programme cooperation by forming the coordination bodies, working groups and similar, which are set up at the GCFBiH initiative by the FBiH Government's decisions on the implementation,

monitoring and reporting on strategic documents in the field of gender equality. As a rule, all these bodies are coordinated by the GCFBiH, all activities and proposed measures are initiated by the GCFBiH, most of the planned activities and measures are included in the work plans of the competent ministries, and most of the “costs” of the bodies and programme activities are funded by donations. In order to fully implement the standards, the legal and strategic framework for gender equality, this problem needs to be solved in a standardised way, so that we have an adequate network of institutional mechanisms for the implementation of ZoRP and GAP BiH in the FBiH.

**In RS, the implementation of activities on the preparation of local action plans for gender equality for the period 2014-2017** has been completed, in cooperation with the OSCE BiH Mission. Local Action Plans for Gender Equality are planned in 21 local self-government units, of which 19 have been adopted. The development of local action plans also results in planning the budget in local communities for the work on the gender equality issues and the implementation of ZoRP.

### **Measures**

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. Organisational and professional strengthening of institutional mechanisms for gender equality (increase in human capacities, professional development, publication and distribution of educational and professional materials, improvement of resource-educational and documentation centre);
- II.3.2. Continuous coordination between ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS (within the framework of the Steering Committee for Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of GAP BiH);
- II.3.3.** Continuous coordination between the ARPMLJPIBiH and the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (through the work of KO for coordination and monitoring of the GAP BiH implementation at the level of BiH institutions);
- II.3.4. Continuous coordination between GCRS and Republika Srpska institutions (through the work of KO for coordination and monitoring of the GAP BiH implementation at the level of RS institutions);
- II.3.5. Continuous coordination between the GCFBiH and the institutions of the Federation BiH (through the work of KO for coordination and monitoring of the GAP BiH implementation at the level of institutions of the Federation BiH);
- II.3.6. Support of KORPPDPSBiH;
- II.3.7. Support to Gender Equality Commissions of the FBiH Parliament and the Equal Opportunities Committee of the RS National Assembly;
- II.3.8. Implementation of joint programmes, projects and activities, participation in conferences, round tables, public discussions, educational and promotional events;
- II.3.9. Support to the work of the existing institutional gender equality mechanisms and to the establishment of new ones at the local level of organization of authority in BiH.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS, GCFBiH

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

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

### Introduction

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

**The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Declaration on Equality between Women and Men of the Council of Europe, Annex 1 to the Dayton Peace Agreement, EU Gender Roadmap and Gender Action Plan of BiH,** in their essentials require presentation of women and men on an equal and non-stereotyped manner, with full respect of their human dignity. In accordance with international and domestic legal standards, print and electronic media in BiH should, through editorial policy, ensure respect of equality based on sex, gender, sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation through:

- Presentation of positive examples of non-discrimination and respect for human rights on the aforementioned grounds, in the public and private spheres of life,
- Elimination of sexism, genderphobia, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia in the media language,
- Raising awareness of the public on the presence of various forms of violence based on sex, gender, sex identity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation and disastrous influence of such violence on victims and society as a whole,
- media promotion and equal visibility of political candidates, both male and female, irrespective of their gender, sex, sex identity, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation,
- educating male and female journalists on equality based on sex, gender, sex identity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation and use of gender-sensitized language,
- promotion of equal participation and representation of persons of different sex identities, gender identities, gender expression and sexual orientation in decision-making positions in the media, especially in the management, programme and regulatory bodies.

The Beijing Platform for Action states that the area of “Women and Media” is 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 available results so far 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.

### Situation assessment

Institutional mechanisms for gender issues regularly organise and participate in promotional activities and campaigns to raise public awareness of the importance of equal participation of men and women, boys and girls in all areas of life. The public awareness is being raised through media campaigns on important dates and by organizing and participating in round tables, conferences and seminars for different target groups. Promotional activities in the reporting period included **marking important dates in the area of Human Rights and Gender Equality, within the Gender Week, the international campaign “16 days of activism against gender-based violence”**, and other significant dates. Since 2014 and 2016 were the years

of general and local elections, that also implied additional activities related to the promotion of women in decision-making positions.

ARPLJPIBiH, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to BiH, worked on the promotion of political parties that signed the **Declaration of Commitment to Gender Equality** as well as on the promotion of equal participation of women-candidates in the media programmes. GCFBiH has implemented the campaign “**Equal in Differences**”, and the GCRS campaign “**Elect Equally**” - **General elections in BiH 2014** and “**Elect Equally**” **on the occasion of Local Elections 2016**, during which promotional materials were created and distributed (video animation, USB, roll up, infographic poster and electronic brochure), and special reports on the results and participation of women in the electoral process.

Every year, the following important dates related to gender equality are marked:

- The Week of Gender Equality which is traditionally marked in the first half of March (including March 8) with a traditionally created joint calendar of activities that includes all activities of institutions, international and domestic NGOs;
- “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence” within the framework of an international campaign to carry out the thematic campaigns “Non Violent Life” and “White Ribbon – Men’s “No” to Violence Against Women”, which indicates the commitment to zero tolerance of violence against women;
- International Girls’ Day in Information Communication Technologies (ICT), last Thursday in April;
- International Family Day, May 15;
- International Day Against Homophobia, May 17;
- World Women’s Entrepreneurship Day, May 19;
- International Day of Rural Women, October 15;
- International Day of Men, November 19;
- International Day of Human Rights, 10 December;
- Every year, the GCRS marks a Week of Men, Young Men and Boys in Republika Srpska in order to highlight the importance of their contribution to achieving gender equality

Strengthening cooperation with the media was of utmost importance, given the influence of the media on raising public awareness, which is an essential prerequisite for achieving equality and full application of standards in this area. The implementation of the foregoing promotional activities, campaigns and events contributed to the systematic inclusion of the media in the work of institutional mechanisms for gender issues and the promotion of their results. ARPLJPIBiH and gender centres have achieved good cooperation with the media in order to monitor and promote the activities undertaken.

At the proposal of the MLJPBiH, at its 91<sup>st</sup> session, held on 27 February 2017, SMBiH adopted a **Human Rights Education Action Plan for Journalists and Media Professionals 2016 -2019**. The aim of this Action Plan is to create specific measures to improve the access and presentation of marginalized and minority groups in the media environment, and to develop guidelines for media reporting from the perspective of protection and promotion of human rights, including gender equality.

In July 2017, ARPLJPIBiH made a **Recommendation regarding gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes and language in the media in BiH**, submitted it to the media and published it on its web site ([www.ARPBiH.gov.ba](http://www.ARPBiH.gov.ba)). In the abovementioned Recommendation, ARPBih has invited the media to define, by developing their professional standards, the measures to prevent the reproduction of gender stereotypes and prejudices in their work, to raise awareness of journalists, both male and female, so as to include the gender equality dimension in journalism and the media as well to strive for a more balanced representation of women in the media.

At the Entity level, the GCRS and the “Lara” Foundation from Bijeljina, with the support of the OSCE Mission to BiH, prepared in 2014 a **Handbook and Recommendations for Action: Gender and Disasters - Gender Responsive Media Reporting**. The Handbook contains a gender-sensitive analysis of reporting by electronic and print media on floods in May 2014 and on landslides on a selected sample of media reports, and the guidelines and recommendations for gender responsive media reporting.

An example of good and systematic cooperation is the direct involvement of the media in the implementation of the Strategy for Preventing and Combating Violence in FBiH (2013-2017). Namely, a public service (female) representative is involved in the work of an expert team for the implementation of this strategy while, at the lower levels of authority, the representatives of local media houses participate in the work of the coordination bodies, which enables continuous and adequate media reporting on this issue. An integral part of cross-sectoral education is the field of media reporting.

News on the activities of ARPMLJPIBiH and gender centres, including promotional ones, is regularly published on their respective websites, which is regularly updated in accordance with technical capabilities and improved, if necessary. **The increase in the number of visits to websites** indicates an increased level of received gender equality information, both within institutions and by general public in BiH.

## Measures

The main objective of the envisaged measures is to have **gender sensitive electronic and print media in place throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

- II.4.1. Raising awareness of the public by marking significant gender equality dates (a gender equality week – *Gender Week*, international campaigns “16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence”, and other important gender equality dates);
- II.4.2. Organizing promotional events, campaigns, conferences, workshops, roundtables, thematic gender equality sessions in various fields of social life, including the development and distribution of promotional and educational materials;
  - II.4.3. Improvement and regular updating of websites of ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH, GCRS;
- II.4.4. Encouraging the adoption and implementation of measures, guidelines, codes of conduct or other provisions within the electronic and print media, which include elimination of gender-based discrimination and harmful gender stereotypes in the media, considering the influence of the media on forming the value judgements and behaviours, needs and interests of women and men in all phases of life;
- II.4.5. Regular evaluation of representation of women at managerial and administrative levels and in technical services of electronic and print media, both public and private, as well as in advisory, regulatory and supervisory bodies within the media sector;
- II.4.6. Encouragement and support to the production of the media content that displays women and men in equal and non-stereotypical ways, promotes their equal status and role in the private and public spheres, with full respect for their human dignity.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH, GCRS, Professional Associations of Journalists, Regulatory Media Bodies, Media Houses

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## II.5. Support to institutional and non-institutional partners in the process of inclusion of the gender equality principle

### Introduction

The introduction of the gender equality principle into the plans, programmes and budgets of institutions at all levels of authority in BiH included, during the GAP implementation, continuous strengthening of the capacities of institutions with professional support provided by ARPMLJPIBiH and gender centres. That implied continuous training of civil servants, support to gender analysis, regulatory compliance initiatives and the introduction of special measures to achieve gender equality, as well as the support to the work of coordination bodies established to monitor current strategies and policies. ARPMLJPIBiH and entity Gender Centres supported the relevant institutions and coordinated the implementation of valid strategies, action plans, and the introduction of special actions in the areas critical for the advancement of the status of women and the promotion of gender equality.

Over the past period, the greatest contribution to systemic introduction of gender equality into the priority areas of social activities was achieved by the implementation of FIGAP. **FIGAP** was established by signing the Agreement on Mutual Funding between SMBiH and the Donor Group at the end of 2009, which secured considerable funds for the implementation of GAP BiH until the end of 2016. It was directly conducted and administered by ARPMLJPIBiH and entity Gender Centres, allocating most of the budget funds to programmes and projects of institutions and non-governmental organizations. Special attention was paid to strengthening of partnership and cooperation between institutions and civil society organizations as non-institutional partners.

In April 2016, SMBiH adopted the **Information on the implementation of the final evaluation of FIGAP**, which confirmed its efficiency and sustainability from the aspect of achievement of the set goals and expected results, with recommendations for continued funding. ARPMLJPIBiH has drafted a **programme proposal for FIGAP II (2017-2021)** in cooperation with entity Gender Centres. SIDA expressed its willingness to further finance FIGAP II. The procedure for signing the Agreement between the MLJPIBiH and SIDA is in progress, thus providing considerable funds for financing the next GAP BiH for the period 2018-2022, including the support to the competent institutional and non-institutional partners. ARPBiH, MLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GC RS, and mechanisms for cooperation between these institutions and other institutions at all levels of the organization of authority in BiH and non-governmental sector, play a key role in this process.

### Situation assessment

Within the implementation of the GAP BiH, institutional mechanisms for gender issues have consistently provided professional and consultative support to institutional and non-institutional partners in the implementation of programmes and projects **funded from the FIGAP funds** and aimed at introducing the principle of gender equality in various areas of GAP BiH. Programmes and projects pertained to prevention of domestic violence, application of the UN Resolution 1325, women's political participation, gender responsive budgeting, economic empowerment of women, support to the work of local authorities on the introduction of gender equality standards, and other specific topics. Support was provided to approximately **70 projects of institutions and 80 projects of non-governmental organisations** implemented in partnership with institutions at all levels of authority. More than 100 consultations and 500 training sessions on gender equality issues were organised and mainly included in regular training programmes for different target groups at both BiH and entity levels.



Gender Equality Education, Gender Sensitization, Standards and Instruments for the Implementation of ZoRP BiH, and training in gender-responsive budgeting contributed to readiness of institutions to take specific measures and to increasingly plan, introduce, implement and monitor the programmes and measures in their regular work, which are aimed at improving the position of women and/or gender equality situation. In line with the goals of the BiH GAP and based on the obligations arising from the BiH ZoRP, the practice of **adopting internal acts (decisions, guidelines, recommendations) on the introduction of specific measures for the achievement of gender equality** in the competent institutions has come to life. These internal acts have been adopted by more than 10 institutions and state-level agencies.

In line with the goals and priority areas of the BiH GAP, gender mechanisms have continually supported the process of introducing **gender responsive budgeting (ROB) into the BiH budget system**, being an important instrument, and a practical measure to promote and enhance gender equality as well. The main objective to be achieved by these measures is to secure that the application of the gender equality standards becomes part of the regular programmes and budget of the institutions. Thus, the prerequisites have been provided for the gender equality aspect to be included in the entire BiH budget process by applying the programme budgeting.

All of the foregoing confirms the increased **participation and commitment of the competent institutions to the implementation of gender sensitive policies and measures** and commitment of civil society organizations to focusing on the priorities of GAP BiH. However, most institutions still depend on the technical support of ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH and GCRS. Existing basic and advanced training of civil servants in the gender equality concept and obligations are insufficient to adequately strengthen the partner's capacity, in line with the planned and expected results.

On the other hand, the human and financial capacities of institutional mechanisms for gender issues are limited and there are no indications that the regular budgets for this purpose will soon increase. Hence, institutional mechanisms for gender issues rely heavily on international support and invest efforts in finding additional donations.

Support to institutional and non-institutional partners is envisaged within FIGAP II and from the abovementioned USAID \$ 750,000 grant for the project "Strengthening the Capacity of Institutions for Addressing Gender-Based Violence in BiH".

## Measures

The main goal of the envisaged measures is to ensure **that the application of gender equality standards becomes an integrated part of regular programmes and budgets of the institutions, and the establishment of true partnership between institutions and NGOs.**

- II.5.1. Basic and advanced training of civil servants in the concept of gender equality and obligations under domestic and international normative-legal standards for gender equality and other trainings in the application of these standards based on the needs of target groups;
- II.5.2. Coordination and support to institutions in adopting programmes of measures for the introduction and application of gender equality standards, including the introduction of gender-responsive budgeting in budget planning and execution;
- II.5.3. Establishing other forms of formal and informal cooperation with government institutions in all sectors and at all levels with the aim of exchanging information, planning and implementation of joint programmes and activities, participation (upon invitation) at conferences, round tables, public hearings, educational and promotional events;

- II.5.4. Assigning resources, expert support and monitoring of the implementation of projects by institutional and non-institutional partners (non-governmental and other civil society organizations) at all levels of organization of authority funded from donations (FIGAP II).

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH, GCRS, civil service agencies

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

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

### Introduction

Gender responsive statistics, analyses and research from the perspective of gender equality in all social areas are among the most important tools for effective planning, implementation and evaluation of the effects of measures to improve gender equality. To this end, it is necessary to further promote the collection of data disaggregated by sex in accordance with Article 22 of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, and to make analysis and research in all social areas. Quantitative and qualitative analyses and surveys are the basis for a family assessment and assessment of the status of women and men, and for effective planning and developing policy based on actual needs. In accordance with the BiH ZoRP, ARPMLJPIBiH and gender centres are obliged to analyse and monitor the implementation of the BiH ZoRP, the implementation of GAP BiH, and the overall gender balance in BiH. Based on the collected data and analysis, reports, opinions, suggestions and recommendations are regularly produced to be forwarded to competent bodies.

### Situation assessment

The Agency and Gender Centres **regularly collect and analyse the data** provided by institutions, non-governmental and international organizations for the purpose of producing regular reports on gender equality in BiH and the implementation of adopted strategies and action plans. These reports are forwarded to the SMBiH and Entity governments (**reports on the gender status in BiH, reports on the implementation of GAP BiH, reports on the implementation of AP for UNSCR 1325 in BiH, reports on the implementation of the Framework Strategy, reports on the implementation of entity Strategies for Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence, etc.**) for consideration and adoption.

In addition, special analyses and reports on the implementation of current sectoral strategies and action plans are produced and submitted to competent bodies, such as **Information on recommendations for advancement of the status of women with disabilities in RS, Action Plan for the advancement of the status of women in rural environment in Republika Srpska, Action Plan for introducing gender responsible budgeting in FBiH, Strategic Plan for Prevention of Domestic Violence in FBiH 2009-2010, and other occasional analyses and reports at the request of the competent authorities in BiH.**

**Joint implementation of FIGAP has contributed to the improvement of reporting mechanisms and exchange of information**, although ARPMLJPIBiH and gender centres have differently prescribed formats of annual work reports to be delivered to SMBiH or Entity governments. However, joint reporting related to national strategies, action plans, international commitments is largely harmonised and increasingly focused on the **results reporting and the effects of the activities carried out**. The reports to international organizations contain comparable data for state and entity levels, in accordance with data collected and processed by ARPMLJPIBiH and entity gender centres.

**Collecting, processing and publishing gender-classified statistics** is key to planning, implementing and evaluating the effects of measures to improve gender equality in all social areas.

**However, there is still a lack of sectoral statistics disaggregated by sex, and an inconsistent methodology of data collection at entity level in certain areas, making it difficult to aggregate data for the country as a whole.**

The Agency for Statistics of BiH and Entity Statistics Institutes keep publishing the publication **“Women and Men”**. The publication includes data from various statistical and other fields, classified by gender, such as: population, health and mortality, education, science and research, employment, social protection, crime, political power, public administration and violence against women.

In cooperation with the Agency for Statistics of BiH and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), ARPMLJPIBiH has initiated the production of the **Gender Equality Index for BiH**, under the EIGE methodology, i.e. EU standards. The index is recognized as one of the most important instruments for monitoring the situation concerning gender equality in the country, and for comparison with other EU countries and regions.

**The BiH Citizens’ Perception Survey**, conducted every year within the USAID project **“MEASURE - BiH”**, at the initiative and with the technical assistance of ARPMLJPIBiH, has been expanded in the part concerning the gender equality issues.<sup>28</sup>

**The research on gender inequalities in RS from the perspective of life flows** was initiated by the GCRS and supported by UN Women, during 2016. The research was carried out with a view to providing quality records on gender inequalities at different stages of life, which should serve as the empirical basis for effective gender equality policies.

The GCRS, supported by the OEBSE Mission to BiH, conducted the first **research on the status and needs of men in RS**, on a representative sample. The research was conducted with the aim of examining the status, needs and roles of men in RS in order to define recommendations, measures and activities in the future work on improving the status of men and achieving gender equality in the RS.

Partnership between the GCFBiH and relevant ministries in the FBiH developed in the previous period of the implementation of GAP BiH, resulted in having all legally established sector registers and databases in FBiH designed in a manner to enable the generation of reports with data classified by sex. This is a prerequisite for their use in the process of developing new and tracking the effects of already existing policies, in accordance with the applicable regulations governing the process of designing, adopting and monitoring public policy impacts, including their impact on gender equality.

## **Measures**

- II.6.1. Implementation of or support to the development of quantitative and qualitative analyses and studies on gender status in Bosnia and Herzegovina in various areas of public and private life, which is the basis for effective planning based on real needs, and the assessment of the introduction of gender equality in laws, strategies, policies and programs;
- II.6.2. Regular reporting on the status of gender equality in BiH based on the reports of the competent institutions;
- II.6.3. Regular reporting on the implementation of sectoral strategies and action plans in the area of gender equality on the basis of reports of the relevant institutions.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH, GCRS

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

<sup>28</sup> Citizens’ Perception Survey, available at: [http://www.measurebih.com/anketa-percepcija-gradjana-\(nscp-bih\)-3o3sizv](http://www.measurebih.com/anketa-percepcija-gradjana-(nscp-bih)-3o3sizv)

### III STRATEGIC GOAL 3:

#### Establishment and strengthening of cooperation and partnership

##### Introduction

Considering that reaching of gender equality is a common goal of society in general, the establishment and development of cooperation is a key strategy for effective promotion and achievement of results in the field of gender equality. Institutional mechanisms for gender equality are constantly working on the establishment and strengthening of formal and informal aspects of cooperation with other institutions at all levels of authority, non-governmental and other civil society organizations, academic and research communities, social partners and other relevant social actors, including wider cooperation on regional and international level.

Cooperation with partners takes place through a cross-sectoral approach, depending on the competences and priorities, sometimes at the initiative of ARPMLJPIBiH and entity Gender Centres, sometimes in a form of joint activities and sometimes at the initiative of institutional or non-institutional partners and international organizations. This ensures a participatory approach and participation of all, exchange of experiences and good practices, which provides a new quality of work on the implementation of policies and strategies aimed at improving gender equality. Regional cooperation with interested institutional mechanisms for gender issues in the region as well as cooperation with international organizations has been strengthened. Civil society organizations, social partners and the academic community are key partners in the implementation of programs, projects and activities to improve gender equality.

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

#### III.1. Cooperation at regional and international level

##### Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina has initiated regional co-operation in the field of gender equality by signing the **Regional Declaration on Cooperation of Gender Institutional Mechanisms of the Western Balkans** 2005, which was extended to the Mediterranean countries (North African Countries) in 2013. Referring to the Regional Declaration, in July 2014, a **Joint Declaration on Cooperation of Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Equality of the Western Balkan Countries** was signed.

Regional cooperation is part of the regular ARPMLJPIBiH work programmes. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina gained a leading position in the region with regard to regional cooperation. Also, other countries in the region are increasingly paying attention to this kind of cooperation through their work programmes and budgets. This secures continuity in regular meeting and exchange of information between the interested representatives of the legislative, executive and independent bodies in BiH and the countries of the region through the exchange of good practices, professional and financial resources.

Cooperation with international organizations, such as Swedish SIDA, Austrian ADA, the Swiss SDC, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway in BiH, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, IOM, EUPM, NATO, OSCE and others has been established through joint programmes, projects and activities tailored to the needs and priorities of the institutional mechanisms for gender equality and provides direct support to the implementation of GAP BiH and sectoral strategies and action plans.

## Situation assessment

In the implementation of GAP BiH, cooperation with the relevant institutional gender equality actors at the regional level has been intensified in carrying out the joint activities. Cooperation has been developed within a number of regional and international events, which also **promoted good BiH practice** in introducing and applying international gender equality standards in various areas, in particular through the implementation of UNSCR 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

From 2013 to 2017, regional meetings and conferences were held in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Zagreb and Belgrade for the purpose of planning joint regional initiatives and activities. Continuity and regularity of regional cooperation strengthened the existence of the **Regional Coordination Body**, with the support of the **Regional Network of Non-Governmental Organizations “Balkan Region”**, with which a Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed and which increasingly assumes the role of the Secretariat of the Regional Coordination Body.

Regional cooperation hitherto, joint projects, activities and initiatives have proven to be very useful and of **common interest for all countries in the region**. However, it is necessary to establish a continuous flow of information, exchange of experience and good practice, exchange and use of expert knowledge in the field of gender equality and human rights, initiate bilateral and multilateral agreements and projects on gender equality, particularly in the context of developing joint projects of cross-border cooperation within the EU funds. There is a need and mutual interest in the formal establishment of the Regional Coordinating Authority to be responsible for planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of all joint regional projects and activities.

During the implementation of GAP BiH 2013 - 2017, ARPMLJPIBiH continued to cooperate with international partners in order to better coordinate and guide the implementation of international donor projects towards current strategies and action plans in the field of gender equality. In that respect, the establishment of a **mechanism for regular coordination of relevant international community representatives and partners in the field of gender equality has been established**. During 2016, two co-ordination meetings of international community were held, attended by more than 40 representatives of foreign embassies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and leading international organizations. These activities have contributed to a better synchronization of activities and the elimination of overlapping in the joint efforts in this area and in specific provision of donations to support the implementation of GAP BiH, through the continuation of FIGAP.

ARPBih, GCRS and GCFBiH have coordinated and implemented, or are being implementing, a range of joint initiatives, programmes, projects and activities in cooperation and with the support of international organizations, in particular UN Women, USAID, OEBS, SIDA and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway, which focused mainly on the support to the UN Resolution 1325 at the local level, the fight against gender-based violence, the introduction of gender-responsive budgeting, economic empowerment of women victims of war, improvement of the status of women in the rural environment, and strengthening of the role of women in politics and decision making.

Readiness of Swedish SIDA to **further fund the Proposal for the FIGAP II Programme (2017-2021)**, developed by ARPBih, MLJPI and entity Gender Centres is particularly worth noting. In this way, funds in the amount of BAM 2.9 million have been provided to support the implementation of the next GAP BiH 2018-2022. Furthermore, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway signed in 2017 an Agreement with ARPMLJPIBiH to support **the advancement of women’s safety and response to gender-based discrimination and violence in BiH**, in the amount of BAM 185,000.

## Measures

The aim of the planned measures is to **further improve regional and international cooperation and coordination in the implementation of programmes, projects and activities to improve gender equality.**

- III.1.1. Strengthening of co-operation of institutional mechanisms for gender equality at the regional level, including the development of regional policies and programmes for the advancement of gender equality, as well sharing of experiences and best practices by organizing regional meetings, conferences and study visits;
- III.1.2. Cooperation with international organizations through exchange of information and coordination of donor assistance, planning and implementation of joint programmes, projects and activities, participation (upon invitation) in conferences, round tables, educational and promotional events.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH, GCRS

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

## III.2 Cooperation with civil society organisations, social partners, academic community

### Introduction

Institutional mechanisms for gender issues recognize civil society organizations, social partners and the academic community as their real partners in the achievement of gender equality in BiH, and significant efforts have been made to improve the model of cooperation with non-governmental and other civil society organizations. This cooperation is particularly intensified in the implementation of activities in the area of domestic violence, security, health, education, gender sensitive budgeting, etc., in line with the priorities of GAP BiH and sectoral strategies and action plans. Partnership has been partially strengthened through the implementation of projects supported by FIGAP funds, and by signing a Memorandum of Understanding, as well as agreements on co-operation with non-governmental organizations.

### Situation assessment

**The Memorandum of Understanding between KO for monitoring the implementation of the AP for UNSCR 1325 in BiH and 17 NGOs** constitutes a platform for strengthening the sustainable cooperation and exchange of information between relevant institutions and key NGOs dealing with women's issues, peace and security. Two representatives of this group of NGOs are also members of the KO of institutions for monitoring of implementation of the AP for UNSCR 1325. This provides a better mechanism for coordination and involvement of NGOs in the annual planning and reporting processes related to the implementation of AP UNSCR 1325.s

In order to provide consultations and strengthen cooperation and strategic partnership with non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and the **Framework Strategy for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in BiH 2015-2018**, ARPMLJPIBiH signed a **Cooperation Agreement with the Safety Network**, comprised of 22 non-governmental organizations from the territory of BiH, including all safe houses in BiH. Non-governmental organizations are strategic partners in the implementation of this strategy and play an important role in preventing and protecting victims of gender-based violence, as well as in promotional activities and campaigns with clear messages on stopping violence.

A Safe Network (female) representative is involved in the work of an expert team in drafting and monitoring the implementation of the Strategy for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence in the Federation of BiH (2013-2017). This has ensured continuous cooperation and planning and realization of joint and comprehensive activities in this field. Special cooperation has also been established by introducing the SOS line 1265.

In addition to continuous and systemic cooperation within the abovementioned memoranda and agreements with the non-governmental sector, cooperation was also reflected in the **implementation of projects funded** by FIGAP funds by ARPMLJPIBiH and entity gender centres. During the period 2013-2015, 37 projects of non-governmental organizations, which pertained to the priority areas of GAP BiH and FIGAP were supported.

During the year 2017, the projects of non-governmental organizations were financed from the grants provided through the regular budget of ARPMLJPIBiH for the **“Support to Building Partnerships between NGOs and Institutions for the Application of the Istanbul Convention”** in the total amount of BAM 44,000. The projects were implemented with a view to contributing to more effective prevention and protection of victims of gender-based violence with a particular emphasis on support to vulnerable categories of society.

Sustainable and constructive co-operation has been achieved with several NGOs which have continuous communication with ARPMLJPIBiH, GCRS, GCFBiH and other institutions. One of the positive examples concern cooperation of institutional mechanisms for gender issues with the Sarajevo Open Centre in taking joint activities on the promotion of LGBTI persons' rights in BiH. However, it is not possible to establish a viable partnership with a certain number of NGOs. The reason for this lies in the fact that many donor-driven organizations see institutional mechanisms for gender issues as competitors in mobilizing donor resources rather than as potential partners in achieving the same goal by exchanging professional and financial resources. Shadow reports indicate that NGOs, due to insufficient knowledge of functioning of the public administration, sometimes have expectations from institutions which cannot be met. This often leads to unjustified criticism without the solutions offered, making it difficult to cooperate and exchange mutual knowledge, skills and resources in a quality manner.

## **Measures**

The aim of the measures envisaged is to **improve cooperation and establish a real partnership with non-governmental and other civil society organizations.**

- III.2.1. Strengthening cooperation with non-governmental organizations, planning and implementation of joint projects and activities, participation (upon invitation) in conferences, round tables, public discussions, educational and promotional events;
- III.2.2. Promotion of regular formal and informal cooperation with other civil society organizations, including media organizations, social partners, research and academic institutions, professional organizations and specific interest groups to raise the level of awareness of gender equality.

**Responsibility:** ARPMLJPIBiH, GCFBiH, GCRS, Civil Society Organizations, Social Partners, Academic Community.

**Period of implementation:** 2018 - 2022

