



GENDER RESPONSIVE POLICIES

LESSONS FROM SOUTH
EAST EUROPE EXPERIENCES
IN THE PERIOD 2011-2013

BUDGETS





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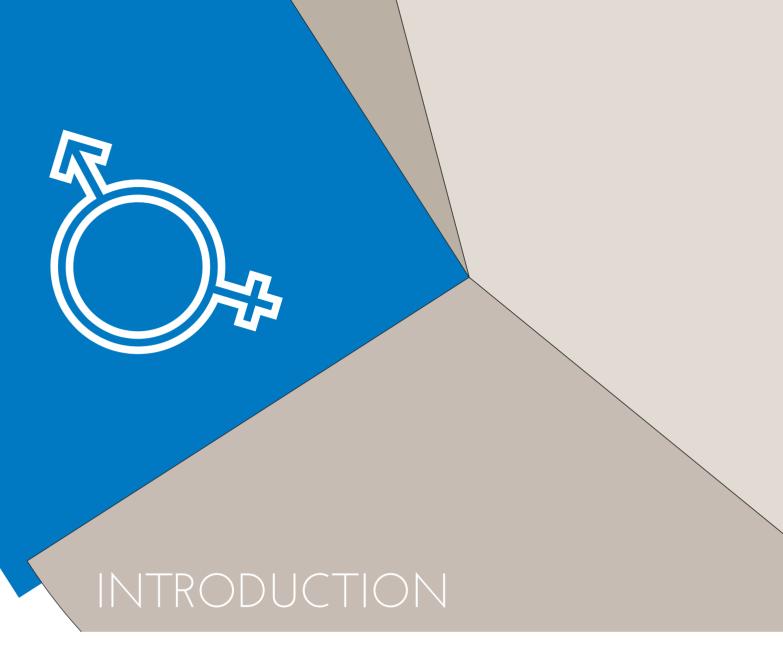
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ВіН	Bosnia and Herzegovina		
BMIS	Budget Management Information System		
CEDAW	Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women		
CSEE	Central and South Eastern Europe		
CSO	Civil Society Organization		
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers		
DEO	Department of Equal Opportunities (FYR Macedonia)		
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina		
FYR	Former Yugoslav Republic		
GC-RS	Gender Center of the Republic of Srpska (BiH)		
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting		
HERA	Health Education and Research (FYR Macedonia)		
MLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (FYR Macedonia)		
MNGS	Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo		
MOAFWM	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (FYR Macedonia)		
MOARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Albania),		
MOF	Ministry of Finance		

МОН	Ministry of Health (FYR Macedonia)	
МОЈ	Ministry of Justice (Albania)	
MOLSAEO	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (Albania)	
MP	Member of Parliament	
МТВ	Medium-Term Budgeting	
МТВР	Medium-Term Budgetary Program	
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization	
PGRP-SEE	Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South Eastern Europe	
RS	Republika Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina entity)	
SEE	South East Europe	
UN	United Nations	
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women (UN Women today)	



overnments around the world have made national and international commitments to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in many different areas of life. Several international conventions and platforms, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Beijing Platform for Action demonstrate governments' commitment to the realization of women's rights and the achievement of gender equality. Albania,

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and FYR Macedonia are all signatories of CEDAW and have committed to the UN Beijing Platform for Action. Implementation of those commitments at national level can be achieved only if adequate budgets are allocated.

The signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreements by Albania, BiH and FYR Macedonia as a first step in accession to the European Union has required that governments not only incorporate the Union's equality legislation into the national legal systems, but also that they introduce mechanisms to allocate resources and monitor progress in the area of gender equality and advancement of women's rights.

In 2000, the UN General Assembly called upon Governments to "incorporate a gender perspective into the design, development, adoption and execution of all budgetary processes, as appropriate, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation and develop the necessary analytical and methodological tools and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation" (GA RES S-23/3, annex, paragraph 73[c]). Subsequently, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), now part of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), began to offer technical support to governments across the world towards ensuring: 1) that national planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation processes incorporate a gender perspective, and 2) that budget policies and outcomes are gender-responsive.

One of the goals of UN Women's Strategic Plan (2011-13) was supporting technical capacity in national planning and budgeting, as well as advocating for the implementation of gender equality commitments through increased financing for gender equality. UN Women's work on governance and national planning focused on assisting countries to set up good governance frameworks that enable implementation of gender equality goals such as women's economic empowerment, health and education rights and the elimination of violence against women. One of the four pillars of this area of work involved supporting participatory and adequate financing for gender equality.

Another of the pillars involved enhancing the leadership and influence of gender equality advocates in policy, planning and budgeting processes.

At a regional level, support for genderresponsive policies, programming and budgets has been an important priority area of UN Women's Sub-Regional Office for Central and South Eastern Europe. In 2011, the Sub-regional Office launched a three-year project on Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe (PGRP-SEE) financed by the Austrian Development Agency. This project followed on a regional project "Gender-Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability" implemented between August 2006 and June 2010. PGRP-SEE covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and FYR Macedonia. The ultimate goal of the project is that policies, programs and budgets in the three project countries contribute to the effective implementation of commitments towards women's empowerment and gender equality in targeted sectors.

Alongside country-specific initiatives, the project facilitated cross-country exchange of experiences and knowledge among government and non-government partners and across target sectors, among others through exchanges among civil servants from line ministries in the region; regional experts meetings and conferences; and regional capacity workshops for civil society organizations (CSOs). In addition, the project produced regional knowledge products and tailored manuals for different actors. The goal was to create an enabling environment and channels for sustainable transfer of knowledge and good practice, build a regional pool of experts, and create a regional GRB knowledge network.

THIS PUBLICATION

This publication summarizes the learning that emerged from the implementation of PGRP-SEE in the period 2011-2013. It captures the most important lessons learnt, the approaches used, and accomplishments and challenges related to promoting GRB in the three countries and at the regional level.

The publication focuses, in particular, on efforts oriented to improving individual as well as collective and institutional capacities to implement GRB. It aims to describe for readers the diversity of strategies, accomplishments and challenges of different interventions that took place in each of the countries but also to capture some of the common approaches that were developed to increase the capacity of civil society and government institutions to integrate gender into policies, planning, programming, budgeting and monitoring for results.



The publication is divided into two main chapters:

Increasing individual and institutional capacity to implement GRB:

A regional overview.

This chapter presents a synthesis of some of the common approaches used in the different initiatives supported by the project to increase institutional and individual capacity to implement GRB.



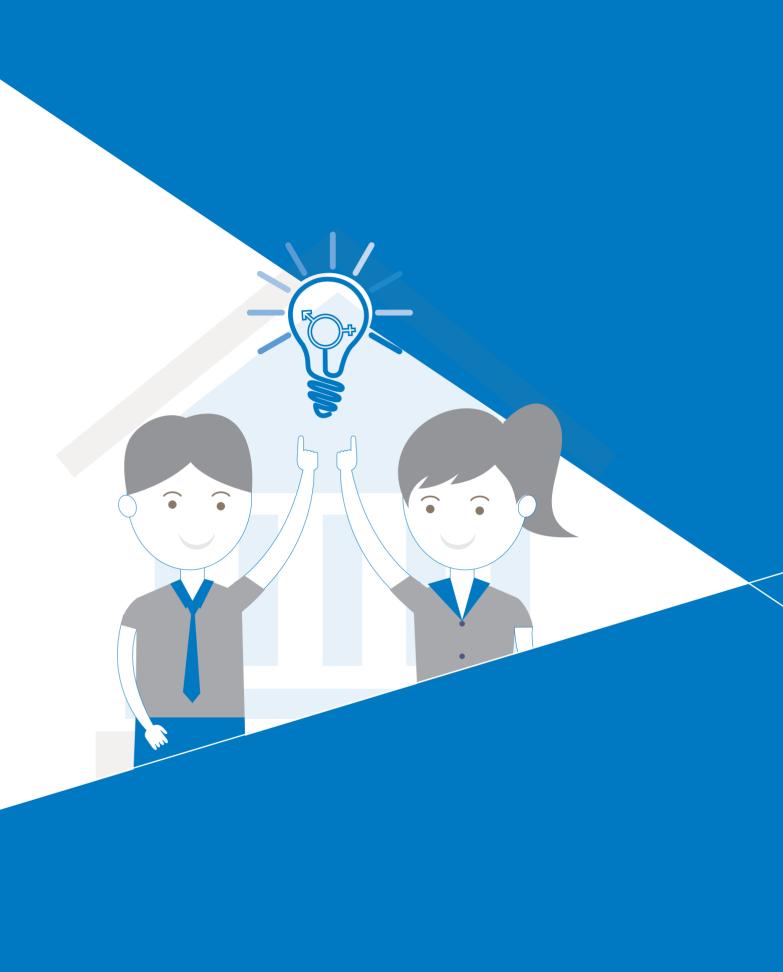


Gender-responsive budgeting in South Eastern Europe:

Case studies.

This chapter presents a selection of case studies documenting GRB initiatives in the three countries. It does not include all the interventions that were supported, but instead focuses on those that best illustrate the different routes towards increased capacity of a diverse range of actors to implement GRB. It is organized according to the main actors leading the different experiences.





INCREASING INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT GRB

A REGIONAL OVERVIEW

UN Women's 2010 theory of change for GRB names one of the types of change that GRB efforts seek to introduce as "Changes in national capacity to apply GRB at sector and local levels to address gender inequality and contribute to the realization of women's rights at the institutional and individual levels (skills, mandates, authorities and resources).

This chapter looks at the different actors who may be involved in GRB initiatives and may need their capacity increased, at the enabling factors for capacity building, and at different types of interventions that can be done under the broad umbrella of GRB.

1.1 WHOSE CAPACITY? ACTORS AND THEIR ROLES

GRB initiatives can involve a wide range of stakeholders inside and outside governments. Actors inside government include ministries of finance and planning, gender equality entities, sectoral ministries, local governments, and parliaments. Actors outside government include women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality, other civil society groups, and academia. Each one has a different role to play and therefore capacities needed to implement GRB may also differ.

		TYPE OF INSTITU-	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION		
	TION		NATIONAL/CENTRAL LEVEL	LOCAL LEVEL	
GOVERNMENT	Executive	Lead institution on budgetary policy	Ministry Economy and Finance	Department of Finance / Budget	
		Lead institution on gender equality and women's empowerment policy	National women's machinery or gender equality mechanism at central level	Gender equality mechanisms at local level	
GOVEI		Institutions implementing policies and programs	Line ministries at central level and governmental agencies	Sectoral department in local governments	
	Legislative	Legislative Legislative bodies	National Assembly, Parliament, Congress	Municipal councils	
	NON GOVERN- MENTAL Civil society organizations Women's organizations, civil society organizations working on gender equality and/or in transparency gender advocates, etc				
OTHER		Academic Institutions	Universities, research centers, public management schools		
		Independent gender experts			

LEAD INSTITUTION ON BUDGETARY POLICY:

Ministry of Finance (MOF) at central level or Department of Budget in local governments



One of the main responsibilities of these institutions is budget formulation. For that purpose, they develop and issue the budget instructions to be followed by all entities of government. They also design the formats in which the budgetary and financial information should be submitted to them. Additionally they are responsible for consolidating the information received in the submissions and preparing the budget. Once the budget is approved, they are responsible for financial control over the execution of resources and provision of information about budget implementation.



POSSIBLE ROLE OF THE LEAD INSTITUTION FOR BUDGETARY POLICY IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Include specific gender-related instructions in the budget circular and reporting requirements for spending entities.
- Include in the formats in which entities must present their proposed budget
 information space to record how the suggested programs and budgets contribute to
 gender equality (for example, by setting specific targets, including gender indicators
 and/or population data disaggregated by sex, including activities or programs
 specifically oriented to promote gender equality, etc).
- Include a rating of contribution to gender equality in the criteria for prioritizing programs and related allocations.

LEAD INSTITUTION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S POLICY:

National women's machinery, gender equality mechanisms at central and local level



One of the main responsibilities of these agencies is to promote gender mainstreaming in all government policies and to ensure compliance with the commitments made by government in respect of women's rights and gender equality. These actors usually formulate the policy framework (e.g. the national gender equality strategy) and also promote policies on priorities (e.g. addressing violence against women). They advocate for the allocation of public resources to ensure the implementation of such policies and for compliance by other actors with gender equality priorities in the country. Another key role is to provide support to women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality and to promote opportunities for dialogue with them.



POSSIBLE ROLES OF THE LEADING INSTITUTION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Promote GRB tools
- Engage in advocacy with decision makers to encourage implementation of GRB initiatives and ensure allocation of budgetary resources for gender equality.
- Advise on gender analysis of the various policies and programs within sectoral ministries/departments.
- In collaboration with the MOF, provide training and technical assistance to government institutions to mainstream gender throughout the budget cycle.
- Jointly with the MOF, oversee implementation of GRB across government.
- Monitor changes introduced through GRB initiatives, both in terms of budget execution as well as in the results achieved with that expenditure.
- Support women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality to get involved in GRB initiatives, including through advocating for women's demands to be included in the budget and monitoring implementation.
- Promote dialogue mechanisms between women's organizations and governments to discuss their demands and priorities in relation to the budget and as a space for accountability.



LEGISLATIVE BODIES:

National Assembly, Parliament, Congress (at central and entity level), municipal councils (at local level)

These bodies have the responsibility to discuss and approve the budget proposed by the executive. They also play an oversight role in respect of budget implementation. As part of their legislative role, they have the power to promote and adopt measures to promote GRB in the legislation that regulates the fiscal and budgetary policy (finance laws, tax laws, etc.).



POSSIBLE ROLES OF LEGISLATIVE BODIES IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Approve legislation to institutionalize the implementation of GRB.
- Defend the specific measures and resources that promote gender equality during the parliamentary debate on the budget. Propose amendments and recommendations to improve the resources allocated to gender equality.
- Monitor the utilization of resources allocated to gender equality.
- Include mechanisms to ensure the allocation of resources for implementation in any new law oriented to promoting gender equality.
- Provide opportunities for women's organizations and other advocates of gender equality to provide evidence to and engage in legislative debates.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS:

Women's organizations, organizations working on gender equality, gender advocates, civil society organizations working on transparency, etc.



One of the primary missions of women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality is to advocate for the respect of women's rights and advancement of gender equality. Some other civil society organizations work to promote transparency and accountability of the government. In both cases, the organizations try to influence policy making, advocating for the inclusion of their demands. They also oversee implementation of policies and related budgets, and demand transparency and accountability on the part of government.



POSSIBLE ROLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Conduct gender analysis of budgets and collect evidence to advocate for an increase in the allocation of resources to promote gender equality.
- Advocate for the incorporation of GRB in legal and policy frameworks.
- Advocate for the incorporation of women's priorities in the formulation of sectoral programs and related budgets.
- Where there is participatory planning and/or budgeting, develop women's agendas and demands and advocate for their incorporation in public plans and budgets.
 Raise women's awareness about the importance of participating and articulating their needs in relevant fora.
- Monitor and perform oversight over budget execution. This can be done independently or in partnership with the women's machinery or women parliamentarians.
- Play a watchdog role by raising gender issues related to budgets and policies.

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS:

Universities, research centers, think tanks, public management training centers for civil servants, etc



The main role of these actors is to carry out specialized capacity development and training activities and conduct research on different issues. Their activities focus on the generation and/or dissemination of knowledge and skills and they can assist in strengthening advocacy and public oversight of government.



POSSIBLE ROLES OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Carry out research related to GRB to support lead actors (governments or CSOs) in GRB initiatives.
- Carry out or support gender analysis of government policies and programs.
- Develop GRB courses or include GRB modules in other courses as part of the regular academic curriculum.
- Design and implement GRB training activities tailored to specific audiences (e.g. civil servants).

1.2 ENABLING FACTORS THAT FACILITATE INCREASED GRB CAPACITY

The SEE initiatives have highlighted elements that facilitate an increase in the capacity of individual and institutional actors to implement GRB. Some of the initiatives invested time and efforts in trying to achieve these facilitating factors. In other cases the facilitating factors were part of the existing context prior to the introduction of the GRB initiative. The enabling factors include:

GRB WITHIN THE POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In many countries, the fact that legal frameworks and policies require the implementation of GRB has been one of the most important elements in supporting interventions aimed at increasing capacity of different actors.



In **Albania** the Council of Minister's Decision on Gender Mainstreaming in the Medium-Term Budgetary (MTB) Program, issued on 18 July 2012, makes GRB obligatory (as of 2013) for all line ministries.

In **BiH** the Economic Policy of the Republika Srpska (RS) of 2013 includes the introduction of GRB into budget documents as one of its priorities.

In **FYR Macedonia**, the amended Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men requires that central and local government institutions incorporate the principle of gender equality into their strategic plans and budgets and that they monitor and report on the impact of their programs on women and men within their annual reports.

POLITICAL WILL.

Most GRB interventions require the existence of political will and commitment, particularly of decision makers in the institutions that participate in the budgetary process (ministries of finance and planning, sectoral ministries and legislators).¹



The organization of **study tours** was one of the most commonly used strategies to build political will in the SEE GRB initiatives. The Evaluation Report on the project noted that "the organization of study tours (to Austria, Belgium, Iceland and Italy) increased GRB awareness and helped to generate necessary political will and commitment of high-ranking civil servants towards GRB. The involvement of such high-ranking officials was a critical enabling factor for GRB implementation in the countries."

TRANSPARENCY

In order for gender equality and women's rights advocates to be able to analyze programs and budgets from a gender perspective and monitor GRB implementation and results, government officials must be willing to provide the information required. In some cases transparency of public policy and budget data is not a given, despite government commitments on access to information. There may, for example, be challenges in the form of classified information which cannot be made available to the general public. Access to information is also often dependent on the political and personal will of senior officials and on the nature of existing systems of collecting and processing data and budgetary information.



In the SEE GRB initiatives, ministries of finance and other civil servants already had a good understanding about the importance of budget transparency and participatory approaches to budgeting through the existing public reform processes. This provided an important entry point for GRB.

AVAILABILITY OF GENDER STATISTICS AND SEX-DISAGGREGATED INFORMATION

Identifying gender gaps and inequalities and ensuring alignment of policies, programs and budgets needed to address them requires the existence of sex disaggregated information and gender statistics. Hence many GRB initiatives invest substantial effort in strengthening the production and use of sex-disaggregated statistics and development of gender indicators for measuring progress.

Evaluation Report. Final Evaluation of the UN Women Project "Promoting Gender Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe" UN Women Sub-Regional Office for Central and South Eastern Europe. 25 August 2013.

In **Albania**, the new five-year Statistical Program (2012-2016) of the National Institute of Statistics makes the collection and provision of sex-disaggregated data mandatory. This should ensure a structured approach to collection and analysis of gender statistics.

1.3 DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO INCREASE GRB CAPACITY OF NATIONAL PARTNERS

This section discusses the different approaches used in the South Eastern Europe GRB initiatives supported by the project. The most commonly used approached included:

- Gender analysis of policies, programs and budgets
- Improvement of knowledge about the budgetary process
- Promotion of a critical mass of expertise on GRB
- Development of guidelines and methodological documents
- Introduction of changes in budgetary instruments and processes
- Costing exercises
- Strengthening institutional mechanisms
- Knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences among different target groups.

These approaches were implemented using a range of strategies, including training, mentoring, study tours, research, workshops, advocacy and policy dialogue among others.

GENDER ANALYSIS OF POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND BUDGETS

Gender analysis provides the actors involved in GRB initiatives with knowledge and increased understanding about the causes underlying gender inequalities and how policies, programs and budgets can contribute to addressing them.

In **Albania**, local NGOs in the municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra, together with civil servants, carried out a gender assessment of municipal services provided in several programs. The findings were shared with community members who made proposals as to how to improve the gender responsiveness of services. The consolidated recommendations were then presented and discussed in the city councils and included in the new budgets.

In **BiH**, the government's Employment Institute conducted gender analysis of their programs, procedures and budget. The analysis highlighted a lack of gender awareness among employee. Basic gender awareness training was then organized for all Institute employees. Employers also now receive government support for employment of people – mainly women – in specified occupations. Unemployed women are provided with opportunities to access additional training and new programs to support the employment of women have been designed. Additionally all statistics are sexdisaggregated and a monitoring and evaluation system with gender indicators has been developed and implemented.

In **FYR Macedonia**, the local government of the City of Skopje carried out gender analysis of the "Program for social, child and health protection for 2012". The analysis aimed to identify institutional entry points and barriers for GRB. It revealed that in 2012 the program included a priority goal related to advancing gender equality for the first time. However, it lacked a gender-based needs assessment and systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data to enable tailoring of measures to the gender-specific needs of the users. It also lacked gender indicators to track progress.

In **FYR Macedonia**, local CSOs of selected municipalities, in partnership with their respective local governments, carried out gender assessments which looked at the extent of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities between women and men, the policy approaches adopted and existing gender gaps in the program and consultative mechanisms at local level. The analysis identified low awareness among officials of how gender inequalities manifest in the work of the municipalities; lack of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities and strategies on gender equality; and an evident need for strengthening the institutional capacities on gender equality and GRB as ways of tackling gender inequalities at local level.

IMPROVEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE BUDGETARY PROCESS

Many gender advocates (including those in the women's machinery) see the budgetary process as a "black box" which is very difficult to understand. This is why one of the common approaches used was analysis of the budgetary process itself so as to demystify the process and identify possible entry points for the implementation of GRB measures.

In **BiH** the RS Gender Center and MOF completed gender analysis of budget documents and prepared a guide for budget users on how to implement GRB within the budget process. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) a report was produced on the budget preparation process in selected pilot institutions (Ministry of Development, Water Management and Forestry, Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Agriculture and Employment Institute). The report was used by the GRB Working Group when preparing and implementing their Action Plan for Introduction of GRB in the period 2010–2013.

In **FYR Macedonia**, analysis of the budget processes and reforms in the budget policies from a gender equality perspective was produced in 2012. The Government GRB taskgroup – composed of representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the General Secretariat, the Employment Agency and the City of Skopje – used the entry points identified to develop the outline of the five-year National Strategy on GRB

PROMOTION OF A CRITICAL MASS OF EXPERTISE ON GRB

GRB implementation relies on the availability of expertise ranging across gender, public finance and management systems, sectoral issues and other areas. It also requires expertise relating to the GRB tools, practices and strategies that have been developed over the years. Within PGRP-SEE initiatives considerable effort and resources were invested in generating such expertise locally. The project engaged GRB experts to serve as resources and to provide technical support at local, national and regional levels.



In **Albania**, through training, mentoring, exchanges, a knowledge platform, e-learning, UN Women supported the formation of a pool of national experts on GRB. The experts participated in all training initiatives organized within the project and were also engaged to assist other partners in the GRB processes.

In **BiH** strategic partnerships were developed between UN Women and academic institutions to include GRB in the curricula. Thus, the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Sarajevo introduced a GRB course in its Masters in Gender Studies Program curriculum and the RS Gender Center at the University of Banja Luka organized a five-day Summer Gender School.

In **FYR Macedonia**, a team comprised of an international and a national expert on GRB developed a "CSO toolkit on gender responsive budgeting" and designed and delivered a comprehensive training to CSOs focusing on advocacy for GRB. The combination of their experiences and perspectives ensured that the training and toolkit are closely tailored to the needs of the CSOs and applicable in the institutional context of FYR Macedonia.

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES AND METHODOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS

GRB initiatives support the application of a range of tools for identifying needs, setting priorities, planning, programming, budgeting, tracking and monitoring and evaluation. Different actors are involved at each of the stages and each actor and stage requires tailored strategies and tools. Therefore an important element in creating individual and institutional capacity to engage in GRB has been the development of guidelines and methodological documents that advise different actors how to go about the process.



In **Albania**, the Guideline on GRB in the Medium Term Budget jointly developed by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO) provides detailed procedures for implementation of the Council of Minister's decision on Gender Mainstreaming in the MTB which makes GRB obligatory as of 2013 for all line ministries.

In BiH a methodology for local level GRB with a focus on rural women was developed. In Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa and Vukosavlje (RS), the methodology was used by inter-sectoral local teams which brought together representatives of the gender commissions, the departments for budget and finances and the departments for agriculture and economy, representatives of local political parties and local women's NGOs. The teams drew up recommendations that were sent to municipal councils for adoption. In Tesanj and Gracanica (FBiH) the methodology was used by advisory groups made up of municipal authorities, commissions for gender equality, CSOs active in the area of rural development and support to improvement of the position of rural women, and businesses linked to rural and agricultural resources, products and services. These groups developed three-year (2014–2016) action plans to improve the position of rural women.

At the entity level, in **FBiH** a publication was produced to guide the Implementation of the action plan for the period 2010–2013. The document describes the steps for introducing GRB in pilot institutions in the FBiH. In the RS, the Gender Center and MOF, after completing the gender analysis of budget documents, prepared a guide for budget users on how to implement GRB within the budget process.

In **FYR Macedonia**, at central level, the Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO) produced a handbook for civil servants to introduce the concept of GRB, describe methodologies used globally, and present a draft methodology for introducing GRB at central level. The draft methodology was based on the experiences of pilot institutions in terms of selection of a program, development of gender-sensitive output indicators and production of a gender budget statement. At the local level, the City of Skopje developed a gender checklist to support civil servants in the development of gender-responsive programs.

INTRODUCTION OF CHANGES IN BUDGETARY INSTRUMENTS AND PROCESSES

Budget formulation and implementation are carried out through a set of pre-defined processes that use a variety of instruments (guidelines, accounting systems, templates, etc). Therefore, capacity to implement GRB also requires the introduction of the necessary changes in those processes and instruments that allow such implementation to happen.

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In **Albania** the Ministry of Finance and MOLSAEO issued a Joint Instruction on Preparation of the MTB 2014–2016, requiring all line ministries to define goals, indicators and targets related to gender equality in one or two budget programs. This was piloted in two ministries in which specific goals, targets and indicators related to gender equality were introduced in two different programs.

In **FBiH**, the Ministry of Finance issued budget instructions which required the inclusion of gender analysis and information on their programs by pilot budget users, namely those included in the FBiH GRB working group.

In **RS**, gender requirements were included in the budget framework paper for 2012–2015. The Gender Center of RS and the Ministry of Finance accordingly together elaborated specific recommendations for inclusion of a gender perspective in the Budget Management Information System (BMIS).

In **FYR Macedonia** the 2013 and 2014 budget circulars for central level budget users included provisions requiring specified ministries to select programs for gender budget analysis and develop gender indicators.

COSTING EXERCISES

Costing exercises allow one to compare the real cost of specific interventions and compare this with the resources allocated in budgets, thus defining the "financial gap".² In costing exercises, gender priorities of national agendas are identified and interventions required to address them are defined, establishing also who is responsible for their implementation.



Costing exercises of gender equality policies can be defined as "The financial valuation of the added monetary and non-monetary resources and efforts that have to be invested for the implementation of a public policy headed towards the achievement of gender equality."

Source: Raquel Coello. Costing of interventions and policies for gender equality. Concepts, methodologies and practical experiences UNDP and UN Women. 2013

² Raquel Coello. Costing of interventions and policies for gender equality. Concepts, methodologies and practical experiences UNDP and UN Women. 2013.

In **Albania**, in response to a request from MOLSAEO, UN Women supported a study to estimate the cost of the implementation of the Law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations" and the Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) "On the mechanism of the co-ordination of work for the referral of cases of violence in family relations and its ways of procedure" in the municipalities of Tirana, Durres, Korça, Kukës and Vlora.

The costing study estimates the cost incurred by different actors. It provides, among others, a clear picture of financial resources required to strengthen the organizational and institutional response of the central and local government to domestic violence. For example, the findings help local authorities estimate the budget required to address domestic violence effectively at local level, taking into consideration the social service standards of the municipalities, as well as the extent of domestic violence in each municipality.

The study is also an advocacy instrument in the hands of gender advocates and civil society as increased awareness of the costs of violence strengthen arguments for the intervention of government, social service institutions, businesses and community.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

As noted above, implementation of GRB involves a range of stakeholders each playing different roles. Appropriate institutional mechanisms can assist in ensuring that the actors work in a coordinated way and provide a space for developing joint proposals based on each one's capacity and responsibilities.



In **FYR Macedonia**, as noted above, a government task–group developed the National Government Strategy for the introduction of GRB (2012–2017). Once it was adopted, a gender responsive budgeting sub–group was established within government's existing Intersectoral Consultative and Advisory Group on Gender Equality to monitor and advise on implementation of the GRB strategy. At local level the Mayor of Skopje established the first working group on gender equality and gender responsive budgeting. The group was composed of civil servants representatives of all units of the local government. The members agreed to act as an advocacy group to increase the visibility of gender equality and GRB in the City. They developed a work plan which identified three programs which would pilot GRB in 2014; decided to improve coordination between the sectors and establish stronger cooperation with the councilors, particularly the Commission for Equal Opportunities between women and men, in order to ensure systematic implementaiton of GRB.

As noted above, in BiH local GRB teams were created in six municipalities of the RS while in FBiH advisory groups were established in the municipalities of Tesanj and Gracanica.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AMONG DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS

Being supported by a regional program has given the country initiatives the chance to share with peer stakeholders from other countries going through similar experiences. Facilitating learning from different initiatives and promoting the exchange of experiences has been one of the most commonly used approaches to achieve an increase in capacity for different stakeholders to implement GRB. In the case of the SEE, regional sharing has been complemented by study tours and attendance at international conferences and seminars.

A study tour is a group travel experience with specific learning goals. The learning goals of each study tour vary, but they all emphasize experiential learning that enables learners to explore "how others do". The PGRP-SEE program supported the organization of study tours to Austria, Belgium, Iceland and Italy. According to the program's final evaluation report, these tours increased GRB awareness and helped to generate the necessary political will and commitment of high-ranking civil servants. Civil servants and parliamentarians who participated in the study tours stressed the value these had in building GRB champions and creating an understanding of how GRB was practically implemented in different countries. The study tours also encouraged co-operation and co-ordination among key actors responsible for GRB implementation.

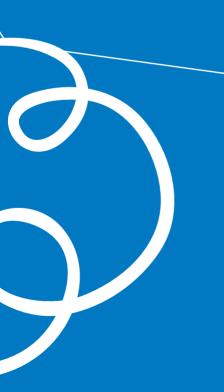
In **BiH**, a regional conference for universities was organized by UN Women in November 2013 in Sarajevo. Participants at the conference included academics from BiH, Turkey, Macedonia, Albania and Serbia. The conference was the first one organized for academics of the region on GRB. It provided the opportunity to discuss the different possibilities for introducing the theme in the official curricula at the universities of the SEE countries.

In **FYR Macedonia**, the findings of the assessments produced by CSOs at local level on social policies and budgets in seven different municipalities were presented at a conference entitled "Gender responsive budgeting at local level". The conference provoked debate on the challenges facing reflection of gender equality commitments in the programs and budgets of the local self-governments and on possible partnerships between local self-governments and CSOs to advance gender equality using GRB tools.

DER ANALYSIS OF POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND BUDGETS OLITICAL VAILABILITY OF GENDER STATISTICS D SEX-DISAGGREGATED INFORMATION RB WITHIN THE POLICY CAPACITY OF NATIONAL PARTNER TRANSPARENCY MPROVEMENT OF KNOWLED OUT THE BUDGETARY PROCES OMOTION OF A CRITICAL MASS OF EXPERTISE ON EVELOPMENT OF GUIDELIN D METHODOLOGICAL DOCUMEN



GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE



This chapter describes initiatives undertaken by national partners in the three countries. It highlights initiatives that are particularly helpful in illustrating the different routes towards increased capacity to implement GRB by the diverse range of actors involved. It is organized according to the main actors leading the experiences.

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1

MINISTRIES OF FINANCE LEADING THE WAY TO GRB: GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE MEDIUM-TERM BUDGETING PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA

Name of the experience	Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Medium-Term Budgeting Program of the Government of Albania	
Place of the experience	Albania, Central level	
Partnerships		
*Lead actor(s)	Ministry of Finance (MoF) and UN Women	
*Other partners	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MOARD), Department for Strategy and Donor Coordination.	



BACKGROUND

Since 2008 the Government of Albania has shown increased interest and political will to promote human rights and gender equality. Over the last few years the country has built a good legal and policy basis for achieving gender equality. The first "Gender Equality in Society" law was passed by the Albanian Parliament in 2008. The National Strategy on Gender Equality, Eradication of Gender Based Violence and of Domestic Violence and the related Action Plan for 2011–2015 were approved in June 2011.

The ambitious targets set by the Government in terms of the improved legal and policy frameworks required budget-related changes so as to ensure adequate resources for implementation. UN Women supported seven government authorities to develop a model of gender mainstreaming in policies and budgets using GRB tools and methodologies. The initial steps involved introduction of GRB tools through capacity building exercises targeting civil servants at central and local level. In parallel, civil society activists and gender advocates were supported by UN Women to ensure demand for accountability and transparency of public finance.



WHAT WAS DONE?

UN Women Albania, in partnership with the Austrian Development Agency,

organized a three-day study visit to Vienna for Albanian government officials from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior, MLSAEO as well as representatives of the Department for Strategy and Donor Coordination. The study tour enabled participants to exchange experiences and get direct exposure to Austrian examples of mainstreaming gender in policies and budgets. In particular, the Albanian delegation leant about the Austrian experience of GRB and budget reform, implementation and monitoring mechanisms for GRB, quality management systems, and campaigning at local level.

"The visit was very helpful to see concretely how gender issues were prioritized in the budget formulation by the Government of Austria,"

Iva Zajmi, Deputy Minister of Interior of Albania.

After the visit, a working group was established under the leadership of MOLSAEO and with participation by the ministries of Finance, Interior, Department for Strategy and Donor Coordination and UN Women. The group's mandate was to asses to what extent the Austrian experience could be applicable in Albania and take concrete steps to move the process ahead. UN Women then worked together with government for more than a year providing technical and financial support.

Finally on 18 July 2012, the Albanian Council of Ministers approved the decision no. 465 "on Gender Mainstreaming in the Medium-term Budgetary Program". This important milestone on the road toward gender equality in the country refers to GRB as "a specific methodology which requires well-thought, socially inclusive, planning and budgeting". It states that "all line ministries should take measures to integrate gender specific objectives, products and targets in budgetary programs". Moreover, line ministries must consider the objectives of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Reduction of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence, 2011–2015 when drawing up their budgets. The decision is also relevant for GRB at local level as it proposes the application of gender equality criteria for Regional Development Funds, a central government grant that supports local governments.

In June 2013 the joint Ministerial Instruction on "Procedures to mainstreaming gender issues in the Medium-Term Budgetary Program (MTBP)", cosigned by MOLSAEO and MOF, was issued. The instruction embeds GRB in the budgeting practices of central, line ministries and local governments. It provides detailed, step-by-step procedures for implementation of GRB. In the case of line ministries, the actions to be taken include: 1) selection of two or three budgetary programs that contribute to achieving equality; 2) establishing gender equality priorities – defining gender equality objectives, identifying budget outputs and targets within each of the selected programs

for a three-year period; and 3) defining of the management structure for planning, implementing and monitoring the respective MTBP, including consultation with the Gender Equality Department within MOLSAEO.

The implementation of the instruction was piloted by two ministries – MOARD and MOLSAEO. As a result, the MTBPs 2014–2016 in each ministry included gender objectives, indicators and gender-specific budgetary allocations.

The piloting with MOARD built on a gender assessment of two programs conducted by a local CSO and technically supported by UN Women. The findings and recommendations of the assessment were discussed with ministry representatives towards the end of 2012. Both programs were subsequently included in the main GRB exercise in 2013.

In parallel, UN Women efforts over the last four years to build the capacity of civil society and national experts in GRB through trainings, mentoring, exchange, knowledge platform, and e-learning resulted in the formation of a pool of eight national GRB experts. Three experts from the pool started worked closely with program and budget specialists in the two pilot ministries in early 2013.

As a result of the GRB exercise, 798 women farmers will benefit from \$1 million (9% of total subsidy budget) from the Agriculture Subsidy Program in 2014; 878 women farmers will benefit from \$1.1 million (10%) in 2015, and a further 966 from \$1.2 million (10%) in 2016. The support through Agriculture Counselling and Information Program will reach 7,700 women farmers (11% of all farmers) in 2014, 10,200 (15%) in 2014, and 13,600 (20%) in 2016. In line with the poverty reduction objectives established by MOLSAEO, about 10,910 vulnerable families with a woman head of household (11% of total beneficiary families) will be included within the social assistance scheme (cash transfer) in 2014; 10,810 (11%) in 2015 and 10,695 (12%) in 2016.

In 2013, UN Women provided the technical support that, in close partnership with MOF and MOLSAEO, saw the development of a supplementary Practical GRB Guide that describes, in detail, the compliance requirements of the national policy and budgetary frameworks, the benefit of using GRB tools, and other requirements deriving from the Decision 465/2012. The guide explains how line ministries should implement gender mainstreaming in the MTBP. It includes examples of piloting GRB in four budgetary programs.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Changes in high-level decision-makers together with the high turn-over rates of civil servants remains an ongoing challenge, requiring a continuous effort to build capacity, understanding and relationships on GRB. This seems likely to continue for some time due to the restructuring of ministries.

Another difficulty relates to correct implementation of budgetary reforms. Adopting new gender-sensitive targets, indicators and products within the budgetary programs requires planning and budgeting practices by all staff involved that are different from the traditional way of developing medium-term budgetary program.

One of the greatest challenges has been the limited availability of gender-related data. UN Women aims to promote evidence-based policy. However, sectoral analysis by CSOs and government institutions is hampered by the fact that sex-disaggregated data and gender-related indicators and targets are largely unavailable or inadequate for monitoring advancement of gender equality.

One of the main lessons from the Albanian process is that working closely with policy specialists is as important as work with budget specialists. It often requires capacity building and exchange of knowledge in order that sector specialists understand the use and benefit of GRB and plan effective interventions. It is also important to identify gender-sensitive allies at senior governmental levels and among experts. These individuals can service as GRB champions in their institutions.

Finally, the Albanian experience shows that even if institutional frameworks and budget policies are changed, implementation of gender-responsive planning and budgeting will not necessarily occur automatically, as implementation also requires knowledge and skills, and full commitment and leadership by all relevant government institutions to make the necessary changes in budget systems. For example, in the two piloting ministries, without the necessary guidance and mentoring provided by the UN Women pool of national experts, policy and budget specialists would have struggled to integrate gender.

CASE STUDY 2

WOMEN'S MACHINERIES AND MINISTRIES OF FINANCE IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP TO ENHANCE GRB IMPLEMENTATION: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.

Name of the experience	Cooperation with Ministries of Finance and gender mechanisms to bring gender into budget processes and documents	
Place of the experience	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Entities of Republic of Srpska and the Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Partnerships		
*Lead actor(s)	Agency for Gender Equality BiH Gender center of the Government of RS Gender center of FBiH	
*Other partners	Ministry of Finance and Treasury BiH, Ministry of Finance FBiH, Ministry of Finance RS, UN Women	



BACKGROUND

Public finance reform in BiH has been implemented since 2006 through projects funded by the United Kingdom government's Department for International Development and currently the European Commission. The purpose of the reform is to introduce medium-term budget planning and program budgeting at all levels of government in BiH.

The efforts to integrate gender equality considerations in budget planning in BiH have been closely connected with the public finance reform. The first initiatives were supported by UN Women through the project "Gender-responsive budgeting in South Eastern Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through increased Transparency and Accountability (2009–2011)". In this period, ministries of finance were connected with gender mechanisms (Agency for Gender Equality BiH, Gender center FBiH and Gender center of RS Government) and attended initial training and awareness rising on GRB.

At the same time, the Gender Center FBiH initiated GRB in pilot institutions through the "Action plan to introduce GRB in employment in FBiH (2010–2013)". The plan was based on the Gender Center FBiH's report: "The Results of the Gender Analysis of the Regulations Governing the Budgeting Process with Recommendations".

The RS Gender Center, with the assistance of UN Women, has focused its GRB efforts on the "Action plan for Improvement of the position of rural women in RS" (see case study 6). Additionally, the RS Gender Center organized awareness-raising activities and cooperated with the Ministry of Finance RS in introducing GRB at the entity level by

the chapter on GRB in the budget framework paper that contains the expenditure framework for a three-year period. The chapter explained the concept of GRB, the reform in progress and planned steps for introducing gender equality into budget documents and processes.



WHAT WAS DONE?

UN Women supported the establishment of an informal working group of representatives of the three ministries of finance (Ministry of Finance and Treasury BiH, Ministry of Finance FBiH and Ministry of Finance RS) at the level of assistant ministers for budget and finance, heads of budget planning units, and the three gender mechanisms (Agency for Gender Equality BiH, Gender Center FBiH and Gender Center of the RS Government). The forum met to agree on the steps for including gender into budget planning. The initiative started with a joint study tour in which the group had an opportunity to learn about the Icelandic experience of GRB.

Discussions within the informal group resulted in agreement on the following, among others:

- An initiative to introduce gender equality consideration in the electronic BMIS;
- Amending budget instructions and budget documents to include gender equality;
- Organizing GRB training for MOF and budget users (line agencies) on GRB and gender analysis of budget programs.

In BiH the initiatives were carried out differently in the two entities.

In September 2012, the RS Government adopted the document "Application of Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Budget Reform Processes in RS/BiH". This directed the Gender Center of RS and the Ministry of Finance of RS to carry out activities to introduce a gender perspective into the budget system in RS. In addition, as a result of intervention by the RS Gender Center, the Economic

Policy of RS 2013 included GRB as one of its priorities. Recommendations were also provided in respect of inclusion of gender in the budget instructions. In accordance with these commitments the Gender Center of RS and the Ministry of Finance embarked on cooperation which resulted in:

- Analysis of the budget documents and processes to include gender considerations;
- Preparation of a GRB guide for budget users;
- Organization of GRB training for all budget users in RS;
- Recommendations for inclusion of a gender perspective in the BMIS.

In the FBiH entity, the efforts to include gender into budget planning were led by the FBiH Gender Center, within the framework of the Federation BiH Action Plan for the Introduction of GRB in pilot institutions related to employment. This plan had been developed with support from UN Women during a previous project on GRB.

One of the main results was the publication in 2012 of budget instructions for pilot budget users, namely those included in the FBiH GRB working group.

Another important result from the informal group formed by the Ministries of Finance and gender mechanisms in FBiH is that in December 2013 a module containing gender equality information was officially approved for integration in the BMIS. This will assist budget users at state level and within both BiH entities in considering the impact of their programs on gender equality.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

It is often difficult to convince Ministries of Finance to accept the lead role in GRB initiatives. In the case of BiH this challenge was overcome by close cooperation between the Ministry of Finance and gender mechanisms, starting from awareness raising and including joint study tours and workshops which led to better understanding of the benefits that GRB brings to the budget planning process.

A MULTI-AGENCY APPROACH: WOMEN'S MACHINERY TEAMING WITH MINISTRY OF FINANCE, LINE MINISTRIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR GRB IMPLEMENTATION IN FYR MACEDONIA

Name of the experience	Institutionalizing gender responsive budgeting in FYR Macedonia
Place of the experience	FYR Macedonia
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO), Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP)
*Other partners	Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM), Ministry of Health (MoH), General Secretariat (GS), Employment Agency, City of Skopje



BACKGROUND

The first initiatives to introduce GRB in FYR Macedonia's institutional context can be directly linked with the UN Women regional project "Gender-Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability" (2006–2009). In this project, UN Women partnered with the Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO) of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) as the central gender equality mechanism.

The pilot "Gender budget analysis of social protection and active labor market measures in the Republic of Macedonia" produced in 2010 demonstrated how GRB tools can support government institutions to identify the gender-specific needs of women and men and how reflecting them in programs and budgets of institutions can systematically contribute to advancing gender equality.

The findings were used, firstly, to raise awareness and increase the capacities of selected groups of civil servants to engage with GRB and, secondly, to define the technical support required to continue the process of institutionalization of GRB in the subsequent UN Women project.

WHAT WAS DONE?

The political commitment of the DEO, the availability of evidence and the increase in the capacity and awareness of civil servants laid the basis for the establishment of a Government task group composed of representatives of the MLSP, MOF, MAFWM, GS, Employment Agency and the City of Skopje.

The task group had two specific goals: promotion of the concept of GRB and development of a draft government strategy for introduction of GRB. Under the leadership of DEO and the guidance of international and national experts on GRB, the group initially received advanced training on GRB, which enabled members to participate in broader discussion on the its institutionalization. This training was necessary even though the members were either the coordinators for equal opportunities or part of the strategic planning and budgeting units of the ministries and hence very familiar with the institutional processes. The training not only increased their technical skills and capacities, but also equipped them to act as advocates for GRB and the adoption of the strategy.

Two parallel processes supported their work. First, "Analysis of the budget processes and reforms in the budget policies from gender equality perspective" was produced in 2012. The analysis identified the entry points for GRB in the budget system of FYR Macedonia which uses a combination of program and line budgeting. Second, the revision of the Law on Equal Opportunities between women and men in 2012 included articles 11 and 14, which for the first time formally required central and local governments to incorporate the principle of equal opportunities in their strategic plans and budgets, to monitor the impact and effects their programs have on the lives of women and men, and to report on progress in their annual reports.

The group used the entry points identified and new legal obligations to develop the outline and define the objectives of the strategy. It was agreed that the document should cover a five year period (2012-2017) which was considered sufficient for institutionalization of GRB. Following the five-year period, the group agreed that GRB should become an integral part of the country's Gender Equality Strategy.

The strategy proposed by the group featured three complementary strategic areas:

- 1. introduction of a gender perspective in the programs and budgets of the line ministries and the local self-government units;
- 2. improving the legal framework for GRB;
- strengthening the institutional mechanisms and capacity building of stakeholders for integration of gender issues in budget policies and processes.

After finalizing the first draft of the strategy, DEO organized consultative meetings with key stakeholders (civil servants from central and local

self-government units, civil society organizations and experts) and the Parliamentary Commission for Equal Opportunities, for quality assurance purposes. The feedback received from these actors was incorporated into the second draft of the strategy which was then shared with all ministries prior to the adoption of the document by the Government on 11 July 2012.

Once the document was part of government procedure, the task group went on a study visit to Belgium to learn about the experiences of applying GRB at central level. At the same time, the DEO established a GRB sub-group in the framework of the inter-sectoral Government working group on Gender Equality to monitor and advise on implementation of the strategy. Further, with the support of UN Women, DEO developed a handbook to introduce civil servants to the concept and to GRB methodologies used globally.

As a next step, the MoF amended the instructions for the preparation of the 2013 budget for central level budget users. The amended instructions for the first time obliged the MLSP, MAFWM, MOH and EA to identify programs for gender budget analysis and to identify gender-sensitive output indicators for these programs. Unfortunately, without a defined methodology on how to fulfill these obligations, provision in the budget templates or a system to track whether the obligations were respected, none of these institutions selected a program or developed gender indicators. The MOF nonetheless kept the provision in the instructions for 2014. UN Women meanwhile provide an external technical expert to mentor the four institutions in the selection of program, development of gender-sensitive output indicators and production of the first gender budget statements. Based on that experience, the external expert assisted in development of a methodology for GRB at central level.

As result, gender indicators were included in the selected programs (see textbox) and the gender budget statements developed through the mentorship program became part of the official budget requests of the institutions for 2014. The methodology developed by the expert outlined the steps each institution should take in preparing the annual budget request, and introduced an intrainstitutional coordination mechanism to support the implementation of GRB. The mechanism included officials responsible for implementing the program selected for gender budget analysis, the coordinators for equal opportunities as well as representatives of the strategic planning and budgeting units of the ministries in question. Finally, it envisaged three phases for the implementation of GRB at central level so as to achieve coverage of all central level institutions by 2020.

GENDER INDICATORS INCLUDED IN SELECTED PROGRAMS IN FYR MACEDONIA

"Self-employment program", implemented by the MLSP and Employment Agency

- number of women and men applying for the program;
- number of women and men involved in training for development of

business ideas:

- number of women and men who received a grant; number of women and men registered as managers;
- number of awareness raising campaigns on the power of enterpreneurship adapted to the various categories of beneficiaries;

"Program for agriculture and rural development", implemented by the MAFWM

• increased number of women in organic production;

"Program for early detection of cancer in Republic of Macedonia" implemented by the MoH covering subprograms of screening for cervical, colorectal and breast cancer,

- number and % of women who responded to a call from their gynecologist;
- number and % of women who did not respond to a call from their gynecologist;
- number of women who have had a PAP test;
- number and % of women and men who had foecal occult blood test (for colorectal cancer);
- number and % of women and men who received the results of their tests:
- number and % of women and men with unsatisfactory results;
- number and % of women and men covered by the program;
- number and % of positive test results (gender disaggregated);



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the main lessons learnt in the institutionalization of GRB in FYR Macedonia is that the process is complex and requires political will, strong institutional capacities and significant time to ensure its functionality and independence of external technical support.

Legal and policy obligations reflected through a law, strategy and the budget circular are important prerequisites for the institutionalization of GRB to succeed, but having these does not automatically mean that they will be respected and effectively influence the policy making framework of the country. Further strengthening of institutional capacities on GRB, a participatory process to define institutional steps and development of structures to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GRB are also likely to be necessary.

One of the most significant challenges is ensuring that GRB initiatives receive adequate institutional attention and support to become sustainable.

COSTING EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS: ALBANIAN LEGISLATION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Name of the experience	Costing of protection orders and community coordinated response mechanism to domestic violence, – a study of the economic costs for the implementation of the Albanian legislation against domestic violence	
Place of the experience	Albania, central level and municipalities of Tirana, Kukes, Korça, Durres and Vlora	
Partnerships		
*Lead actor(s)	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO), the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and UN Women	
*Other partners	Center for Civil and Legal Initiatives (NGO), District Courts and District Prosecution of Tirana, Kukes, Korça, Durres and Vlora, State Police, Ministry of Interior, Education Directorate, Health Care Services, Municipalities of Kukes, Durres, Korça, Tirana and Vlora	



BACKGROUND

Domestic violence represents a growing concern for Albanian society, government and civil society organizations. Two consecutive national domestic violence surveys³ reveal that from 2007 to 2013 the proportion of women between the ages of 18 to 55 who "ever" experienced domestic violence increased from 56.0% to 59.4%. In addition, the latest survey reveals that 53.7% of women were "currently" experiencing domestic violence in 2013.

In 2006, an alliance of non-profit organizations representing over 20,000 voters drafted a bill "On measures against violence in family relations" that was tabled in parliament. The introduction of the draft law was a milestone not only in terms of the importance of domestic violence but also because it was the first ever draft law drafted and introduced by civil society. The draft law provided for a number of concrete interventions in line with both the Constitution of Albania and CEDAW. The law placed responsibilities on

^{3 &}quot;Domestic Violence in Albania", National Survey. INSTAT, UNDP, and UNICEF, 2009 and "Domestic Violence in Albania", National population-based Survey. INSTAT and UNDP, 2013.

six state entities, led by MOLSAEO and including local government units, to respond as a coordinated network according to their different mandates and responsibilities. It also empowered the courts to grant a protection order or immediate protection order to support victims/survivors of domestic violence.

The bill was approved and entered into force in 2006. It was further amended in 2007 and 2010. However, the initial implementation of this law was supported mainly by donor contributions, with only partial allocation of funds by the Government.

With the adoption of the Law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations", the implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (2007–2010) and development of the revised National Strategy on Gender Equality, Against Gender-Based and Domestic Violence (2011–2015), the government response to domestic violence improved considerably. Consequently reporting of domestic violence increased from 2007 to 2010.

At the same time, government agencies and NGOs started building collaborative response systems in several districts of Albania. Thus, in February 2011, the Council of Ministers approved the Decision for "The Set Up and Proceedings of the Coordination and Referral Mechanism of Domestic Violence Cases", mandating the establishment of community coordinated response (referral mechanism) at municipal level to respond efficiently to domestic violence cases.

At this point, some fundamental question arose: What are the costs of implementing the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations? What costs are incurred by a domestic violence survivor who applies for a protection order? Without knowing these costs, State Police, District Prosecution, judicial district courts, local government units and social services were unable to budget effectively to address domestic violence.



WHAT WAS DONE?

In response to a request from MOLSAEO, UN Women supported a study to measure the cost of the implementation of the Law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations" and the subsequent Decision of the Council of Ministers in the municipalities of Tirana, Durres, Korça, Kukës and Vlora.

The study included the development of a methodology to estimate the cost of protection orders and community coordinated response for domestic violence. The focus was on measuring the time and costs incurred by state and non-state service providers and survivors of domestic violence.

UN Women engaged a team of international and national technical experts and

partnered with the Center for Civil and Legal Initiatives, a local organization with experience in counselling survivors of domestic violence. A team comprised of legal experts in the field of violence in family relations, gender equality experts and economists was established. In addition, international expertise brought in by UN Women assisted in developing the methodology for a good quality costing study.

Work started with a thorough study of the legal framework, including the laws that would imply costs and that had undergone recent legal changes. The review of the legislation helped in the preparation of questionnaires and in determining the sequence of work.

The questionnaires were prepared bearing in mind the concrete work that each actor performs in line with the tasks specified in the legislation and DCM. To test the validity of

the draft questionnaires, the experts held pilot interviews with actors responsible for the implementation of the DCM. Based on the results of the pilot interviews, the draft questionnaires were revised and finalized.

Interviews were held in the municipalities of Tirana, Vlora, Durres, Korça and Kukes with local coordinators, judges, prosecutors and police officers, representatives of the social services, free legal aid, the health care services, the education directorate, the employment office, the Prefecture, CSOs, shelter employees, the Bailiff's Office and representatives of the communes. The interviewees described the steps each actor follows when dealing with a simple or a complicated case of DV, as well as the time required for each step. The questionnaires also provided information about the time spent on other activities related to coordination between actors in addressing a domestic violence case over a period of one month. The responses on time spent handling a case of domestic violence and the salary of the responsible actors were then used to estimate the cost of service delivery.

Two technical round tables were held. The first was used to present and validate the preliminary findings of the study. The second was used for further consolidation of findings and recommendations for central and local governments. Police officers, judges, prosecutors, experts on domestic violence and representatives of social services and other state institutions involved in the referral mechanism as well as gender advocates were invited and contributed their respective opinions and experience to the study.

The costing study provides a clear picture of the financial resources required firstly for protection orders on the part of State Police, district courts and District Prosecution in a given municipality, and secondly for the community coordinated response at local level. The latter had up to that time been supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as well as from the state budget allocated to local government.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

As noted, the study was conducted in only five of Albania's districts. Even with only five districts, findings differed substantially between larger and smaller districts. A more comprehensive picture of the costs incurred in dealing with domestic violence cases requires more complete coverage of Albanian districts, and especially those with differences in culture, habits and customs, socioeconomic development and geographic location.

The costs also differ from one unit to another. This is due to several causes, including activities related to coordination of work for referral of cases, and secondly the existence of pilot projects of national and international organizations in the municipalities studies.

Lack of relevant data and statistics in the target institutions, such as the costs incurred by the court administration, the secretaries, and the officials that present the subpoena to the plaintiff were common because such costs were considered insignificant by the interviewees. This imposed limitations on the study. The study also did not include all costs imposed on individuals, families and society by domestic violence. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the study showed clearly that the costs of domestic violence are enormous.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS GRB CHAMPIONS: THE CITY OF SKOPJE IN FYR MACEDONIA

Name of the experience	Applying gender-responsive budgeting at local level – the experience of the City of Skopje
Place of the experience	Skopje, FYR Macedonia
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Department for social, child and health protection and Coordinator for Equal Opportunities between women and men in the City of Skopje
*Other partners	UN Women



BACKGROUND

The City of Skopje was the first local self-government unit in FYR Macedonia to adopt a Strategy on Gender Equality, with its first strategy covering the period 2010–2015. In 2011, in addition to the Strategy, an Action Plan (2011–2015) was adopted which, among others, includes activities to introduce GRB and strengthen the capacities of the City of Skopje on this aspect. The Action Plan also explicitly motivated for cooperation between the City of Skopje and UN Women within the framework of the regional project "Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe".

In 2012, the City of Skopje and UN Women signed a memorandum of understanding which outlined two areas of technical support to the City of Skopje to meet the legal and policy obligations of the gender equality strategy. The first area related to an increase in the technical capacities of civil servants on gender mainstreaming and GRB. The second area related to production of the first gender analysis of the "Program for social, child and health protection for 2012".



WHAT WAS DONE?

Development of the technical capacities of the civil servants in the City of Skopje started with awareness-raising activities. A representative of the City was invited to take part in the government task group on GRB formed at central level (see case study 3). In addition, eight representatives were invited to take part in a study tour to Vienna.

The internal institutional initiative started with gender analysis of the "Program for social, child and health protection for 2012". The analysis aimed to identify institutional entry points and barriers for the application of GRB. Two external experts – one on GRB and the other on public policy/administration – were hired to assess the content of the program, budget, intra-institutional mechanisms and overall policy-making environment from a gender perspective.

Based on the findings, a basic two-day training program on gender mainstreaming and GRB tailored to the needs of the City of Skopje administration was developed. The program was delivered to 15 representatives of different sectors outside of their workplaces. The training, which was highly rated by the participants, contributed to an increase in awareness and capacities to advance gender equality among the City administration and the creation of a motivated group of civil servants to drive the processes.

In 2013, the Mayor of Skopje established the first working group on gender equality and gender responsive budgeting in the City of Skopje. The group was composed of civil servants who participated in the basic training. The group received more advanced two-day training, and were given the opportunity to agree how prioritization of the issues on the City of Skopje agenda would be achieved. The members initially agreed to act as an advocacy group. They developed a work plan which identified three programs which would pilot GRB in 2014. They also decided to improve coordination between sectors and establish stronger cooperation with city councilors, particularly the Commission for Equal Opportunities between women and men, in order to ensure systematic implementation of GRB. The City of Skopje for the first time allocated financial resources to strengthen the capacities of the councilors on gender equality issues and developed a gender checklist to support civil servants in the development of more gender-responsive programs.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the main lessons learnt in the institutionalization of GRB in FYR Macedonia is that the process is complex and requires political will, strong institutional capacities and significant time to ensure its functionality and independence of external technical support.

Legal and policy obligations reflected through a law, strategy and the budget circular are important prerequisites for the institutionalization of GRB to succeed, but having these does not automatically mean that they will be respected and effectively influence the policy making framework of the country. Further strengthening of institutional capacities on GRB, a participatory process to define institutional steps and development of structures to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GRB are also likely to be necessary.

One of the most significant challenges is ensuring that GRB initiatives receive adequate institutional attention and support to become sustainable.

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND CSOS TO BETTER ADDRESS CITIZENS' NEEDS: THE INTRODUCTION OF GRB MODELS AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Name of the experience	Introducing GRB at municipal level in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Place of the experience	Bosnia and Herzegovina Municipalities: Novi Grad Sarajevo (MNGS), Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa Vukosavlje, Tesanj and Gracanica
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Gender Center of the Government of Republic of Srpska;
*Other partners	VESTA (NGO). Local governments of Novi Grad Sarajevo (MNGS), Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa Vukosavlje, Tesanj and Gracanica, UN Women



BACKGROUND

Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by a highly complex administrative structure, with two entities (Republic of Srpska and Federation BiH) and District of Brcko. FBiH is divided into ten cantons which are subdivided into municipalities. Republic of Srpska is divided into municipalities.

The Law on Gender Equality approved in 2003 contains provisions for gender equality which relate to all levels of Government in BiH. In most BiH municipalities there are municipal commissions whose main task is to ensure implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and gender equality standards at the local level.

In BiH the UN Women regional project "Promoting gender responsive budgeting in South East Europe (2011–2013)" was largely focused on the municipal level due to the level of interest of the selected municipalities and good cooperation with BiH gender mechanisms (primarily the Gender Center of the RS Government and FBiH Gender Center). The results of this cooperation were used as a starting point for initiating and deepening the work on GRB.



WHAT WAS DONE?

UN Women started to support the GRB initiatives at municipal level in the Municipality Novi Grad Sarajevo (MNGS), the largest municipality. MNGS

initiated the process of introducing gender equality aspect into policies, documents and budgeting in 2011. To support the process, representatives of the municipality representatives supported by the Gender Center of FBiH while UN Women provided technical assistance through

mentoring support in revision of all strategic documents of the municipality to include a gender equality perspective and development of the Gender Action Plan of the MNGS. In addition, extensive gender equality and GRB training took place for municipal staff, including municipal management and the mayor, and a guide to introducing local level GRB was prepared with specific examples from MNGS. Finally, gender analysis of two budget programs of the MNGS (Sports and Economy/Agriculture) was carried out and recommendations elaborated for restructuring of budget expenditures to response better to the needs of men and women. After the municipal elections in 2012 resulted in new leadership in the MNGS, the cooperation between this municipality and UN Women continued with technical expertise provided to assist the teams in preparing their new Development Strategy (2013–2016).

One of the main results of this process was that the new Development Strategy includes specific recommendations from GRB analysis of the programs as well as gender indicators relevant for equitable development. Other strategic documents of the municipality were also reviewed and improved from a gender perspective.

Using the experience gained in MNGS, UN Women supported GRB initiatives at local level as part of its cooperation with the Gender Center of the Republic of Srpska (GC-RS). This initiative focused on improving the situation of rural women. Six pilot municipalities (Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa and Vukosavlje) were supported through the GC-RS to create measures and programs to support and empower rural women. As a first step, a wellknow professor of BiH was engaged to develop an innovative methodology for local GRB initiatives focused on agriculture and rural development. The methodology seeks to understand the role of women in this sector and uses conventional GRB tools in considering issues relevant for rural women such as food safety and availability of food for family members; the role of women in agriculture production and additional sources of revenues for household; the role of women in the social life of rural communities and the quality of life of women in rural areas. As a second step, local teams were created in each of the 6 municipalities, with representatives of the gender commissions, departments for budget and finances, departments for agriculture and economy, local political parties and local women's NGOs. The GC-RS partnered with the NGO "Budućnost" Modriča to lead local GRB initiatives aiming to increase subsidies for rural women's economic empowerment in the six selected municipalities of RS. The teams received training on four modules related to gender equality, policy planning and GRB.

As a result of this process, and due to the work of the inter-sectoral local teams, recommendations for future measures in the municipalities were prepared

and sent to the municipal councils for adoption. Modriča and Derventa municipalities committed themselves to implementing the recommendations coming from the GRB analysis and to strengthening implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, with special emphasis on improving rural women's situation.

In the FBiH in the municipalities of Tesanj and Gracanica, NGO Vesta with the support of UN WOMEN, used the same methodology used by the RS Gender Center to promote cooperation and synergy between NGO, municipal government and local businesses with the purpose of improving the life of rural women in these municipalities.

The initiative went through the following steps: Firstly, the NGO Vesta signed a memorandum of understanding with the mayors of Tesanj and Gracanica that specified the obligations of the parties. Advisory groups were then established in the municipalities consisting of representatives of the municipal authorities, commissions for the gender equality, CSOs active in the area of rural development and support to improve the situation of rural women, and businesses linked to rural and agricultural resources, products and services. Vesta provided training in gender equality and GRB to the advisory groups. Also an analysis of the position of rural women in Tesanj and Gracanica was produced using the methodology previously developed in the RS pilot municipalities. The analysis included recommendations to improve the situation of rural women.

As a result of this process, action plans to improve the position of rural women over the period 2014–2016 were adopted by the municipal councils of Tesanj and Gracanica. The plans included measures for economic empowerment of rural women, political participation and employment. The advisory groups in both municipalities were officially mandated by the mayors to monitor implementation in 2014.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Initiatives at the municipal level are often perceived to be less complex than those at a higher level of government given the more limited jurisdiction of the local authorities. In the municipal initiatives success depends on the political commitment of the mayor and management. Employees of municipalities are often overburdened with their regular duties, and can perceive gender initiatives as an additional burden. Therefore, initiatives need to start with awareness rising, followed by capacity building and work in sectoral groups. Training can build a common knowledge base and stimulate enthusiasm. The inclusion of local business is an important partnership for the purposes of opening up employment possibilities for rural women. The active involvement of NGOs, in particular local ones, can bring analytical resources and knowhow necessary for GRB implementation. Partnership between the local actors can bring results beyond expectations.

CSOS INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKING THROUGH GRB: THE EXPERIENCE AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL IN ALBANIA

Name of the experience	Influence Local decision–making through GRB: The experiences of the municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra in Albania	
Place of the experience	Albania, Municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra	
Partnerships		
*Lead actor(s)	Local governments of the Municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra and UN Women	
*Other partners	Change Center in Vlora, Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance in Shkodra, Advanced Study Center in Tirana and National Center for Social Services in Elbasan, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.	



BACKGROUND

In 2011 UN Women supported the use of the community-based scorecard, a participatory needs assessment tool, in seven municipalities of Albania. The scorecards, which were known as "The Community Voice", enabled citizens to provide feedback on the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of public services such as health services, education, public transport, the supply of drinking water, urban waste, and social support.

One of the finding of the scorecard was the low level of participation of citizens, and particularly women and girls, in local decision-making processes. Also, local social services and the associated budgets were not responsive to women's and girls' needs in the regions. In response, UN Women provided training and coaching to CSOs to build their capacities to assess and monitor local policies and budgets from a gender perspective.

Soon after, in 2012, UN Women partnered with the Training Institute of Public Administration to deliver training sessions on GRB in 11 municipalities. Training modules were developed for municipal specialists and councilors covering topics such as gender and budgets, macroeconomics and gender, budgeting for all citizens, practical exercises on local GRB, and general gender assessment. Training sessions were attended by 248 participants (165

women and 83 men) who represented policy, program, finance and gender specialists from local government.

Subsequently, in 2012-2013 UN Women partnered with four municipalities and local CSOs to strengthen the capacities of local administrations, civil society and citizens to assess public policies and budgets and make them gender-responsive.



WHAT WAS DONE?

The overall objective of the initiative was to promote cooperation between local governments, civil society and citizens for better policy and budgetary decision-making at a local level to address the needs of women and men. Four local CSOs – Change Center in Vlora, Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance in Shkodra, Advanced Study Center in Tirana and National Center for Social Services in Elbasan – were contracted to facilitate the process. A four-step approach was introduced by UN Women and further developed in partnership with the participating municipalities and CSOs:

Step 1: Selection of key local services and policies that have impact on the community, especially on vulnerable groups, and that can help reduce gender inequality

Following a series of meetings and discussions with representatives of the four local governments and with civil society activists (including some representing vulnerable female and male citizens), two or three locally provided services were selected for each municipality. Economic aid, community-based service centers in Shkodra; transport service, tourism service and municipal social service in Vlora; pre-university education program, economic aid, sports and recreation program, and investment services in Elbasan; social services, social housing and municipal statistics in Tirana, were selected. Gender experts from the UN Women pool of national GRB experts sat with municipal staff and specialists to select the services. Gender-related concerns, efficiency, quality, transparency, data availability, budgetary allocations and area and population coverage were the main criteria considered in the selection.

Step 2: Analysis of selected program and services, including the associated budgets, from a gender perspective

A team of experts composed of municipal specialists, CSO experts and UN Women gathered all available data and conducted desk-based analysis of the programs. The analysis helped to identify the key purpose of such services, set clear objectives for budgetary allocations, summarize the importance of

the local services and programs based on evidence, and provide an overview of current availability of sex-disaggregated data. In most services and programs, gender gaps were identified either in terms of service coverage and beneficiaries or in terms of public participation by women and men in service design.

For instance, in Elbasan, parents and other community had concerns about the pre-university education program in relation to the adequacy of school facilities such as restrooms and changing rooms that can promote improved health and hygiene status of girls in schools. In Shkodra, the main concern was the lack of funding by the municipality for the four community social centers. Instead, daily activities of such centers were funded primarily by donors and the funds planned by the municipality were not fully disbursed to the centers. In Tirana, eligibility criteria for social housing were found to be gender-sensitive. However, the number of women beneficiaries of the low-interest loan for disadvantaged citizens was only half the number of men. This disparity was explained by the application requirements which included documents such as property certificates and utility bills to which women have limited access as the documents are often in the name of their spouse.

In Vlora, the transport system, which combined public and private transport, did not always cover late hours well. This was a concern especially for working women and girls who worked late shifts.

A team of experts prepared summaries of the findings and preliminary recommendations for public consultation.

Step 3: Consult on findings and recommendations through participatory meetings

Preliminary findings reflected the views expressed in the initial interviews and discussions conducted with municipal staff and specialists. In order to involve citizens and beneficiaries, the partner local CSO developed customized questionnaires and arranged a series of community and public meetings.

In addition, UN Women negotiated with the four municipalities to initiate further larger meetings where municipal service staff and specialists would come to listen and give answers to citizens' concerns and needs. Between October and November 2013 meetings were held with citizens in each neighborhood of the four municipalities. On average, between 25 and 35 citizens, women and men, attended each meeting. Gender advocates, civil society organizations and representatives of local social service organizations and municipal staff and specialists also attended the meetings. The local CSOs ensured that there was active participation of women and girls in order to hear their views, opinions and concerns. At each meeting the findings from the analysis of

local services were presented to the community, along with an introduction to the topic of GRB. The meetings yielded new information, as well as new recommendations.

"There are only few women head of household who benefit from the economic aid", said a woman beneficiary in neighborhood no. 3 in Vlora. "Both spouses should be entitled to access the economic aid, not only the man. Often men do not bring the cash assistance home", she noted.

"Returned citizens in need do not benefit from the economic aid because they aren't listed in the civil registry after 1990", said a divorced women who had returned to her natal family in Vlora.

Step 4: Advocate with local decision-makers for change in policies and budget cycle.

Advocacy briefs were then prepared in partnership with service delivery specialists to be used to address findings and recommendations and to show how policy and budget improvements can close the gender gap and the foster equal impact on women and men.

The final recommendations were formally submitted to the municipal authorities. In addition, . a group of civil society activists had individual meetings with local decision-makers, municipal councilors and high-level officials (such as mayors and deputy mayors) before the municipal discussion on the next budget cycle. Finally additional consultative meetings were conducted in each city, in which citizens had a final opportunity to raise their concerns directly in front of city councilors, directors of services and budgets and deputy mayors.

At the time of writing, there were already important changes in all four cities:

- In Elbasan, the municipal budget for the pre-university education program in 2013 allocated funds for investments to provide more adequate facilities in schools. The municipality also established a participatory budgeting model, enabling women and girls to participate throughout the budgeting process. Another important achievement was a planned budget line for 2013 to build a new day care center, responding to one of the strongest demands made by women during the participatory budgeting, as it eases the family care burden that many women face.
- In Vlora, the municipality allocated a budget line to complement the central budget for economic aid. This budget line will be used by the municipality to provide cash assistance to a new beneficiary category, namely divorced women who have returned to their hometown after 1990. In addition, an internal practice has been established, followed

by a municipal decision, to grant access to cash assistance for both spouses, enabling women to receive cash assistance directly for their families and children.

- In Shkodra, the municipal council approved the allocation of funds to one of the four local NGOs that run the community social centers, and have memoranda of understanding with the municipality to deliver social services in the community. The council approved the decision that all city departments must present a gender impact assessment of their key programs and budgets to the council for approval.
- In Tirana, as a result of an advocacy process with the deputy mayor and the municipal administration on the need for more social services addressing the needs of elderly women, youth and children, the 2014 draft municipal budget included a line for building two additional multifunctional community centers. In addition, concrete recommendations for policy changes to allow for inclusion of domestic violence survivors as beneficiaries of the social housing program were forwarded to the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The two-fold approach (capacitate municipal officials in GRB through training, support to conduct gender analysis and coaching on GRB on the one hand, and support citizens, women and men to articulate their needs and priorities and participate in planning and budgeting processes on the other hand) was one of the key successful elements of this initiative.

Further, given the often limited time and capacities of civil servants, the involvement of local CSOs and gender experts was key not only to facilitate the participatory process but also to add value to the overall service performance of the municipality. However, in order to build future capacity for gender-responsive planning and budgeting and ensure ownership of findings, it is important to support more direct involvement of civil servants.

This initiative demonstrated the potential of combining participatory needs assessment tools such as the community-based scorecard with GRB tools to ensure local policy and service platforms take into account the needs of women and men, girls and boys.

Narrowing the focus to services such as economic aid, housing, community social housing, transport, health care and education encouraged the involvement of women's groups and strengthened their capacity to be effective advocates for including a gender perspective in local service delivery.

CSOS AS ADVOCATES AND WATCHDOGS OF GRB: LESSONS FROM LOCAL INITIATIVES IN FYR MACEDONIA

Name of the experience	Civil society organizations: Advocates and watchdogs for gender-responsive budgeting	
Place of the experience	Municipalities of Kumanovo, Shtip and Strumica, Centar, Gostivar, Strumica, Debar and Tearce	
Partnerships		
*Lead actor(s)	Association for Equal Opportunities "Equal Access" Association for Health Education and Research (HERA) National Council for Gender Equality	
*Other partners	UN Women	



BACKGROUND

With the institutionalization of GRB (see case study 3), CSOs emerged as important actors to hold FYR Macedonia's central and local governments accountable to their new commitments. The technical support offered by the UN Women regional project to CSOs aimed at enabling them to advocate for the implementation of GRB strategies and to assume a role of watchdogs of government activity and spending from a gender equality perspective.



WHAT WAS DONE?

Two major project activities characterized UN Women's work with CSOs: 1) development of the first CSO watchdog reports on government activity and spending from a gender equality perspective; and 2) building of CSO advocacy capacities on GRB.

In the period 2012-2013 UN Women provided technical support to:

- the association for Health Education and Research (HERA) to produce "Gender assessment of local level social policies and budgets: the case of Kumanovo, Shtip and Strumica";
- the National Council on Gender Equality to produce "Gender issues

and social protection in the municipalities of Centar and Gostivar";

- the association Equal Access to produce "Assessment of the direct participation of women and men in the government and decision-making: case study of Strumica, Debar and Tearce".

UN Women actively contributed to the development of the research methodologies and final reports.

Prior to starting the research process, the CSOs signed memoranda of understanding with the selected municipalities defining the areas of cooperation. The memoranda required that the municipalities provide the CSOs with the available data on the programs to be assessed, carefully review the findings and recommendations of the final report and consider acting upon them.

The assessments covered different aspects of local level policy which provided insight in the level of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities between women and men (2012), the policy approaches adopted, gender gaps in the programs and consultative mechanisms at local level. The three assessments identified the following: 1) low awareness among officials about how gender inequalities are manifested in the work of the municipalities; 2) weaknesses in implementation of the Law on Equal opportunities and strategies on gender equality; and 3) an evident need for strengthening the institutional capacities on gender equality and GRB to tackle gender inequalities at local level.

More specifically, the "Gender assessment of local level social policies and budgets: the case of Kumanovo, Shtip and Strumica" found that social policies are not based on gender impact analysis, gender-disaggregated data, gender objectives and indicators. Municipalities rarely identify the disadvantages and vulerabilities women face on the basis of their gender. Also social policies and their budgets are generally not aligned with gender equality commitments or understand as tools to promote gender equality.

"Gender issues and social protection in the municipalities of Centar and Gostivar" found that social protection policy at local level does not consider gender as a cross-cutting issue. The municipalities do not have knowledge of the specific social needs and interests of women and men and lack gender-disaggregated data.

"Assessment of the direct participation of women and men in the government and decision-making: case study of Strumica, Debar and Tearce" suggests that women and men find municipalities to be distant from their needs and interests. There are forums for participation of citizens which include specific provisions to encourage the participation of women. However women are either not aware of these opportunities or are prevented from participating by social cultural and other reasons. Further, few initiatives that address women's needs are supported with allocations from the municipal budget.

The findings of these assessments were presented at a conference entitled "Gender responsive budgeting at local level". The conference opened up debate on the challenges faced in reflecting gender equality commitments in the programs and budgets of local self-governments and on possible partnerships between local self-governments and CSOs to advance gender equality using GRB tools. In response to the analysis, the municipality of Strumica requested technical support to apply GRB tools in the formulation of its new social protection policy.

In 2012, UN Women contracted international and national experts on GRB to design and deliver comprehensive training on GRB focusing on advocacy and to develop the first "CSO toolkit on gender responsive budgeting".



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

CSOs are generally open to new strategies and tools which can enhance the impact of their work on the lives of women and men in the country. While they have impressive lobbying and advocacy skills, CSOs can benefit from further strengthening of their analytical capacities to apply GRB tools in analyzing programs and budgets. The fact that the GRB initiatives recognized them as important actors for holding governments accountable paved the way for partnerships with government in the advancement of gender equality. However, to ensure CSOs are able to fulfill their role effectively, institutions need to demonstrate trust in their intention and openly cooperate. Hesitation of institutions to provide information and data will limit the potential to improve the quality and gender-responsiveness of government's programs.

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS KEY ACTORS TO ENHANCE AND DISSEMINATE GRB KNOWLEDGE: THE EXAMPLE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Name of the experience	Introducing GRB as a teaching subject at universities
Place of the experience	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIPS), University of Sarajevo, UN Women
*Other partners	RS Gender Center, the University of Banja Luka



BACKGROUND

The shortage of experts and expertise in GRB has been a global challenge. Implementing GRB requires specific knowledge on gender equality theory and practice, but also in-depth understanding of public finance. GRB is also a relatively new area of practice and, even at the international level, there is a shortage of academic courses and training in this field. In order to address this gap, and to bring GRB closer to the students and professors not only of gender studies but also economics and other fields, UN WOMEN initiated cooperation with academic institutions of BiH such as the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIPS) at the University of Sarajevo. CIPS is te only academic institution in BiH offering a master level program in gender studies, but GRB was not included in the program.



WHAT WAS DONE?

CIPS was supported to introduce GRB as an official teaching subject in the Master course in Gender Studies. This initiative included the following steps:

 A university-level course of GRB was developed. Twenty persons (masters-level graduates in gender studies and CIPS staff) participated in the five-day course, held in September 2011 at the University of Sarajevo. The course was participatory and focused mainly on practical experiences as well as comparative case studies from other countries. As the students already had sound theoretical knowledge about gender equality, the GRB course achieved its main purpose, namely expanding the pool of GRB experts in BiH. Several students were later used as researchers for the first GRB research at the University of Sarajevo, including as the research leader. The focus of the study was the allocation of funds of the University of Sarajevo, the modality of financing university projects, topics selected for research, the gender profile of leaders of the research teams, and beneficiaries of university projects. This research presented a starting point to introducing gender in budgeting processes at the university.

2. Syllabi and curricula for the GRB course were developed by the Head of the Macroeconomic Department of the Faculty of Economics and were adopted by the Senate of Sarajevo University. This presented a major breakthrough in mainstreaming gender on a scholarly level. CIPS included GRB in its Gender Studies Masters Program curriculum as an elective subject, with the first generation able to take GRB as a subject enrolled in 2014.

Using the experience gained with the University of Sarajevo, in the Republic of Srpska UN Women supported the RS Gender Center and the University of Banja Luka to organize a five-day Summer Gender School. This school for graduate and post-graduate level students included lectures on gender in legislation, feminist economics, GRB and gender and media. The school was organized in 2011 and 2012 in cooperation with UN Women. The materials from the Summer Gender School were produced as a book that can be used in future similar training events.

In addition, the first regional GRB textbook for universities was prepared by four recognized professors from the region (BiH, Serbia, FYR Macedonia) and Austria. The textbook was peer reviewed by globally recognized experts. The textbook was produced simultaneously in English, Bosnian, Albanian and Macedonian.

A regional conference for universities was organized by UN Women on November 2013 in Sarajevo to launch the textbook. Participants at the conference were academics from BiH, Turkey, Macedonia, Albania and Serbia. The conclusions and recommendations of the conference included the following:

- For successful introduction of GRB as teaching subject in the region, it is essential to establish cooperation and support for introduction of GRB between universities, but also between gender advocates and experts;
- UN Women should act as a coordinating mechanism for the introduction of GRB in the academic context and establishment of a coordination

group/board for this purpose should be considered;

 As budgeting is primarily studied in economic faculties, it is important that GRB is introduced in teaching programs of economics, primarily public finance programs.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Academic institutions (faculties and research institutes) are important partners in expanding the pool of GRB experts. Introducing GRB at university level requires carefully planned steps starting with awareness rising to capture the interest and capacity building of academics ("educating the educators"). To encourage integration of GRB as a teaching subject, it has proved valuable to engage professors from the region in discussions and round tables and support exchange of knowledge and experiences between professors and experts in the region. To support this thrust, it is important to compile all the materials produced within UN Women regional GRB projects (such as GRB guides, tool-kits and analysis) and make them available as additional materials for GRB studies.

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PROMOTING

GENDER RESPONSIVE POLICIES BUDGETS

LESSONS FROM SOUTH
EAST EUROPE EXPERIENCES
IN THE PERIOD 2011-2013





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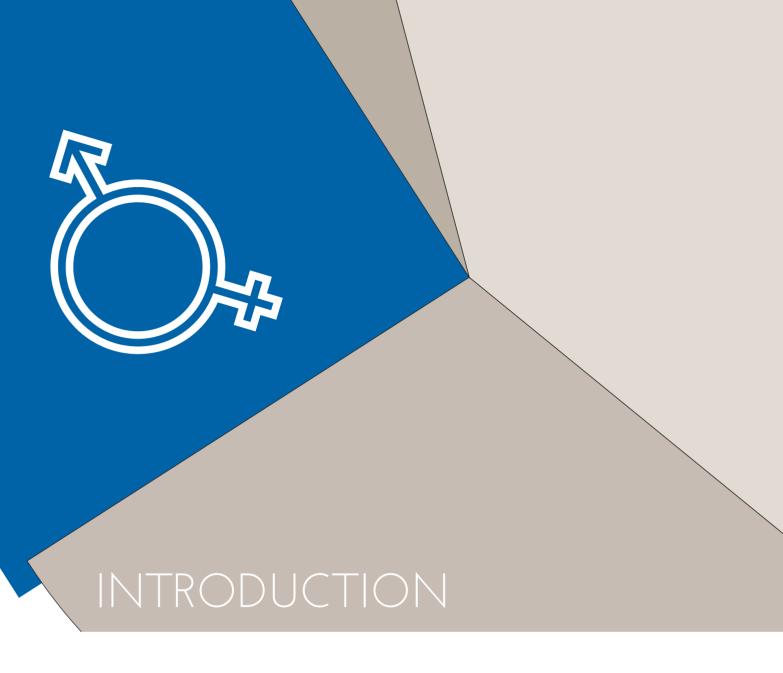
This publication was possible thanks to the knowledge generated and experience shared by the many partners and individuals in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia who were involved in the different gender-responsive budgeting initiatives supported by the Project Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe 2011–2013. We want to acknowledge their commitment and dedication, which are a continuous source of motivation for UN Women's work worldwide in support of more responsive planning and budgeting as a means to achieve gender equality commitments and the empowerment of women.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BMIS	Budget Management Information System
CEDAW	Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSEE	Central and South Eastern Europe
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers
DEO	Department of Equal Opportunities (FYR Macedonia)
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FYR	Former Yugoslav Republic
GC-RS	Gender Center of the Republic of Srpska (BiH)
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HERA	Health Education and Research (FYR Macedonia)
MLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (FYR Macedonia)
MNGS	Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo
MOAFWM	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (FYR Macedonia)
MOARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Albania),
MOF	Ministry of Finance

МОН	Ministry of Health (FYR Macedonia)
МОЈ	Ministry of Justice (Albania)
MOLSAEO	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (Albania)
MP	Member of Parliament
МТВ	Medium-Term Budgeting
МТВР	Medium-Term Budgetary Program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PGRP-SEE	Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South Eastern Europe
RS	Republika Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina entity)
SEE	South East Europe
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women (UN Women today)



overnments around the world have made national and international commitments to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in many different areas of life. Several international conventions and platforms, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Beijing Platform for Action demonstrate governments' commitment to the realization of women's rights and the achievement of gender equality. Albania,

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and FYR Macedonia are all signatories of CEDAW and have committed to the UN Beijing Platform for Action. Implementation of those commitments at national level can be achieved only if adequate budgets are allocated.

The signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreements by Albania, BiH and FYR Macedonia as a first step in accession to the European Union has required that governments not only

incorporate the Union's equality legislation into the national legal systems, but also that they introduce mechanisms to allocate resources and monitor progress in the area of gender equality and advancement of women's rights.

In 2000, the UN General Assembly called upon Governments to "incorporate a gender perspective into the design, development, adoption and execution of all budgetary processes, as appropriate, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation and develop the necessary analytical and methodological tools and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation" (GA RES S-23/3, annex, paragraph 73[c]). Subsequently, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), now part of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), began to offer technical support to governments across the world towards ensuring: 1) that national planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation processes incorporate a gender perspective, and 2) that budget policies and outcomes are gender-responsive.

One of the goals of UN Women's Strategic Plan (2011-13) was supporting technical capacity in national planning and budgeting, as well as advocating for the implementation of gender equality commitments through increased financing for gender equality. UN Women's work on governance and national planning focused on assisting countries to set up good governance frameworks that enable implementation of gender equality goals such as women's economic empowerment, health and education rights and the elimination of violence against women. One of the four pillars of this area of work involved supporting participatory and adequate financing for gender equality.

Another of the pillars involved enhancing the leadership and influence of gender equality advocates in policy, planning and budgeting processes.

At a regional level, support for genderresponsive policies, programming and budgets has been an important priority area of UN Women's Sub-Regional Office for Central and South Eastern Europe. In 2011, the Sub-regional Office launched a three-year project on Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe (PGRP-SEE) financed by the Austrian Development Agency. This project followed on a regional project "Gender-Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability" implemented between August 2006 and June 2010. PGRP-SEE covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and FYR Macedonia. The ultimate goal of the project is that policies, programs and budgets in the three project countries contribute to the effective implementation of commitments towards women's empowerment and gender equality in targeted sectors.

Alongside country-specific initiatives, the project facilitated cross-country exchange of experiences and knowledge among government and non-government partners and across target sectors, among others through exchanges among civil servants from line ministries in the region; regional experts meetings and conferences; and regional capacity workshops for civil society organizations (CSOs). In addition, the project produced regional knowledge products and tailored manuals for different actors. The goal was to create an enabling environment and channels for sustainable transfer of knowledge and good practice, build a regional pool of experts, and create a regional GRB knowledge network.

THIS PUBLICATION

This publication summarizes the learning that emerged from the implementation of PGRP-SEE in the period 2011-2013. It captures the most important lessons learnt, the approaches used, and accomplishments and challenges related to promoting GRB in the three countries and at the regional level.

The publication focuses, in particular, on efforts oriented to improving individual as well as collective and institutional capacities to implement GRB. It aims to describe for readers the diversity of strategies, accomplishments and challenges of different interventions that took place in each of the countries but also to capture some of the common approaches that were developed to increase the capacity of civil society and government institutions to integrate gender into policies, planning, programming, budgeting and monitoring for results.



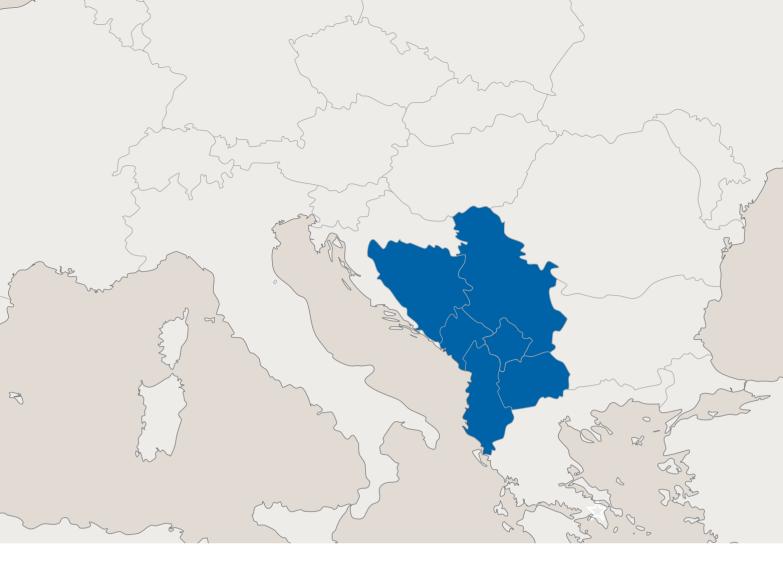
The publication is divided into two main chapters:

Increasing individual and institutional capacity to implement GRB:

<u>A regional overview.</u>

This chapter presents a synthesis of some of the common approaches used in the different initiatives supported by the project to increase institutional and individual capacity to implement GRB.





Gender-responsive budgeting in South Eastern Europe:

Case studies.

This chapter presents a selection of case studies documenting GRB initiatives in the three countries. It does not include all the interventions that were supported, but instead focuses on those that best illustrate the different routes towards increased capacity of a diverse range of actors to implement GRB. It is organized according to the main actors leading the different experiences.





INCREASING INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT GRB

A REGIONAL OVERVIEW

UN Women's 2010 theory of change for GRB names one of the types of change that GRB efforts seek to introduce as "Changes in national capacity to apply GRB at sector and local levels to address gender inequality and contribute to the realization of women's rights at the institutional and individual levels (skills, mandates, authorities and resources).

This chapter looks at the different actors who may be involved in GRB initiatives and may need their capacity increased, at the enabling factors for capacity building, and at different types of interventions that can be done under the broad umbrella of GRB.

1.1 WHOSE CAPACITY? ACTORS AND THEIR ROLES

GRB initiatives can involve a wide range of stakeholders inside and outside governments. Actors inside government include ministries of finance and planning, gender equality entities, sectoral ministries, local governments, and parliaments. Actors outside government include women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality, other civil society groups, and academia. Each one has a different role to play and therefore capacities needed to implement GRB may also differ.

		TYPE OF INSTITU- TION	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION	
			NATIONAL/CENTRAL LEVEL	LOCAL LEVEL
GOVERNMENT	Executive	Lead institution on budgetary policy	Ministry Economy and Finance	Department of Finance / Budget
		Lead institution on gender equality and women's empowerment policy	National women's machinery or gender equality mechanism at central level	Gender equality mechanisms at local level
		Institutions implementing policies and programs	Line ministries at central level and governmental agencies	Sectoral department in local governments
	Legislative	Legislative bodies	National Assembly, Parliament, Congress	Municipal councils
NON GOVERN- MENTAL		Civil society organizations	Women's organizations, civil society organizations working on gender equality and/or in transparency, gender advocates, etc	
OTHER		Academic Institutions	Universities, research centers, public management schools	
		Independent gender e	experts	

LEAD INSTITUTION ON BUDGETARY POLICY:

Ministry of Finance (MOF) at central level or Department of Budget in local governments



One of the main responsibilities of these institutions is budget formulation. For that purpose, they develop and issue the budget instructions to be followed by all entities of government. They also design the formats in which the budgetary and financial information should be submitted to them. Additionally they are responsible for consolidating the information received in the submissions and preparing the budget. Once the budget is approved, they are responsible for financial control over the execution of resources and provision of information about budget implementation.



POSSIBLE ROLE OF THE LEAD INSTITUTION FOR BUDGETARY POLICY IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Include specific gender-related instructions in the budget circular and reporting requirements for spending entities.
- Include in the formats in which entities must present their proposed budget information space to record how the suggested programs and budgets contribute to gender equality (for example, by setting specific targets, including gender indicators and/or population data disaggregated by sex, including activities or programs specifically oriented to promote gender equality, etc).
- Include a rating of contribution to gender equality in the criteria for prioritizing programs and related allocations.

LEAD INSTITUTION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S POLICY:

National women's machinery, gender equality mechanisms at central and local level



One of the main responsibilities of these agencies is to promote gender mainstreaming in all government policies and to ensure compliance with the commitments made by government in respect of women's rights and gender equality. These actors usually formulate the policy framework (e.g. the national gender equality strategy) and also promote policies on priorities (e.g. addressing violence against women). They advocate for the allocation of public resources to ensure the implementation of such policies and for compliance by other actors with gender equality priorities in the country. Another key role is to provide support to women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality and to promote opportunities for dialogue with them.



POSSIBLE ROLES OF THE LEADING INSTITUTION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Promote GRB tools
- Engage in advocacy with decision makers to encourage implementation of GRB initiatives and ensure allocation of budgetary resources for gender equality.
- Advise on gender analysis of the various policies and programs within sectoral ministries/departments.
- In collaboration with the MOF, provide training and technical assistance to government institutions to mainstream gender throughout the budget cycle.
- Jointly with the MOF, oversee implementation of GRB across government.
- Monitor changes introduced through GRB initiatives, both in terms of budget execution as well as in the results achieved with that expenditure.
- Support women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality to get involved in GRB initiatives, including through advocating for women's demands to be included in the budget and monitoring implementation.
- Promote dialogue mechanisms between women's organizations and governments to discuss their demands and priorities in relation to the budget and as a space for accountability.



LEGISLATIVE BODIES:

National Assembly, Parliament, Congress (at central and entity level), municipal councils (at local level)

These bodies have the responsibility to discuss and approve the budget proposed by the executive. They also play an oversight role in respect of budget implementation. As part of their legislative role, they have the power to promote and adopt measures to promote GRB in the legislation that regulates the fiscal and budgetary policy (finance laws, tax laws, etc.).



POSSIBLE ROLES OF LEGISLATIVE BODIES IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Approve legislation to institutionalize the implementation of GRB.
- Defend the specific measures and resources that promote gender equality during the parliamentary debate on the budget. Propose amendments and recommendations to improve the resources allocated to gender equality.
- Monitor the utilization of resources allocated to gender equality.
- Include mechanisms to ensure the allocation of resources for implementation in any new law oriented to promoting gender equality.
- Provide opportunities for women's organizations and other advocates of gender equality to provide evidence to and engage in legislative debates.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS:

Women's organizations, organizations working on gender equality, gender advocates, civil society organizations working on transparency, etc.



One of the primary missions of women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality is to advocate for the respect of women's rights and advancement of gender equality. Some other civil society organizations work to promote transparency and accountability of the government. In both cases, the organizations try to influence policy making, advocating for the inclusion of their demands. They also oversee implementation of policies and related budgets, and demand transparency and accountability on the part of government.



POSSIBLE ROLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Conduct gender analysis of budgets and collect evidence to advocate for an increase in the allocation of resources to promote gender equality.
- Advocate for the incorporation of GRB in legal and policy frameworks.
- Advocate for the incorporation of women's priorities in the formulation of sectoral programs and related budgets.
- Where there is participatory planning and/or budgeting, develop women's agendas and demands and advocate for their incorporation in public plans and budgets.
 Raise women's awareness about the importance of participating and articulating their needs in relevant fora.
- Monitor and perform oversight over budget execution. This can be done independently or in partnership with the women's machinery or women parliamentarians.
- Play a watchdog role by raising gender issues related to budgets and policies.

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS:

Universities, research centers, think tanks, public management training centers for civil servants, etc



The main role of these actors is to carry out specialized capacity development and training activities and conduct research on different issues. Their activities focus on the generation and/or dissemination of knowledge and skills and they can assist in strengthening advocacy and public oversight of government.



POSSIBLE ROLES OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN GRB INITIATIVES

- Carry out research related to GRB to support lead actors (governments or CSOs) in GRB initiatives.
- Carry out or support gender analysis of government policies and programs.
- Develop GRB courses or include GRB modules in other courses as part of the regular academic curriculum.
- Design and implement GRB training activities tailored to specific audiences (e.g. civil servants).

1.2 ENABLING FACTORS THAT FACILITATE INCREASED GRB CAPACITY

The SEE initiatives have highlighted elements that facilitate an increase in the capacity of individual and institutional actors to implement GRB. Some of the initiatives invested time and efforts in trying to achieve these facilitating factors. In other cases the facilitating factors were part of the existing context prior to the introduction of the GRB initiative. The enabling factors include:

GRB WITHIN THE POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In many countries, the fact that legal frameworks and policies require the implementation of GRB has been one of the most important elements in supporting interventions aimed at increasing capacity of different actors.



In **Albania** the Council of Minister's Decision on Gender Mainstreaming in the Medium-Term Budgetary (MTB) Program, issued on 18 July 2012, makes GRB obligatory (as of 2013) for all line ministries.

In **BiH** the Economic Policy of the Republika Srpska (RS) of 2013 includes the introduction of GRB into budget documents as one of its priorities.

In **FYR Macedonia**, the amended Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men requires that central and local government institutions incorporate the principle of gender equality into their strategic plans and budgets and that they monitor and report on the impact of their programs on women and men within their annual reports.

POLITICAL WILL.

Most GRB interventions require the existence of political will and commitment, particularly of decision makers in the institutions that participate in the budgetary process (ministries of finance and planning, sectoral ministries and legislators).¹



The organization of **study tours** was one of the most commonly used strategies to build political will in the SEE GRB initiatives. The Evaluation Report on the project noted that "the organization of study tours (to Austria, Belgium, Iceland and Italy) increased GRB awareness and helped to generate necessary political will and commitment of high-ranking civil servants towards GRB. The involvement of such high-ranking officials was a critical enabling factor for GRB implementation in the countries."

TRANSPARENCY

In order for gender equality and women's rights advocates to be able to analyze programs and budgets from a gender perspective and monitor GRB implementation and results, government officials must be willing to provide the information required. In some cases transparency of public policy and budget data is not a given, despite government commitments on access to information. There may, for example, be challenges in the form of classified information which cannot be made available to the general public. Access to information is also often dependent on the political and personal will of senior officials and on the nature of existing systems of collecting and processing data and budgetary information.



In the SEE GRB initiatives, ministries of finance and other civil servants already had a good understanding about the importance of budget transparency and participatory approaches to budgeting through the existing public reform processes. This provided an important entry point for GRB.

AVAILABILITY OF GENDER STATISTICS AND SEX-DISAGGREGATED INFORMATION

Identifying gender gaps and inequalities and ensuring alignment of policies, programs and budgets needed to address them requires the existence of sex disaggregated information and gender statistics. Hence many GRB initiatives invest substantial effort in strengthening the production and use of sex-disaggregated statistics and development of gender indicators for measuring progress.

Evaluation Report. Final Evaluation of the UN Women Project "Promoting Gender Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe" UN Women Sub-Regional Office for Central and South Eastern Europe. 25 August 2013.

In **Albania**, the new five-year Statistical Program (2012-2016) of the National Institute of Statistics makes the collection and provision of sex-disaggregated data mandatory. This should ensure a structured approach to collection and analysis of gender statistics.

1.3 DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO INCREASE GRB CAPACITY OF NATIONAL PARTNERS

This section discusses the different approaches used in the South Eastern Europe GRB initiatives supported by the project. The most commonly used approached included:

- Gender analysis of policies, programs and budgets
- Improvement of knowledge about the budgetary process
- Promotion of a critical mass of expertise on GRB
- Development of guidelines and methodological documents
- Introduction of changes in budgetary instruments and processes
- Costing exercises
- Strengthening institutional mechanisms
- Knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences among different target groups.

These approaches were implemented using a range of strategies, including training, mentoring, study tours, research, workshops, advocacy and policy dialogue among others.

GENDER ANALYSIS OF POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND BUDGETS

Gender analysis provides the actors involved in GRB initiatives with knowledge and increased understanding about the causes underlying gender inequalities and how policies, programs and budgets can contribute to addressing them.

In **Albania**, local NGOs in the municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra, together with civil servants, carried out a gender assessment of municipal services provided in several programs. The findings were shared with community members who made proposals as to how to improve the gender responsiveness of services. The consolidated recommendations were then presented and discussed in the city councils and included in the new budgets.

In **BiH**, the government's Employment Institute conducted gender analysis of their programs, procedures and budget. The analysis highlighted a lack of gender awareness among employee. Basic gender awareness training was then organized for all Institute employees. Employers also now receive government support for employment of people – mainly women – in specified occupations. Unemployed women are provided with opportunities to access additional training and new programs to support the employment of women have been designed. Additionally all statistics are sexdisaggregated and a monitoring and evaluation system with gender indicators has been developed and implemented.

In **FYR Macedonia**, the local government of the City of Skopje carried out gender analysis of the "Program for social, child and health protection for 2012". The analysis aimed to identify institutional entry points and barriers for GRB. It revealed that in 2012 the program included a priority goal related to advancing gender equality for the first time. However, it lacked a gender-based needs assessment and systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data to enable tailoring of measures to the gender-specific needs of the users. It also lacked gender indicators to track progress.

In **FYR Macedonia**, local CSOs of selected municipalities, in partnership with their respective local governments, carried out gender assessments which looked at the extent of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities between women and men, the policy approaches adopted and existing gender gaps in the program and consultative mechanisms at local level. The analysis identified low awareness among officials of how gender inequalities manifest in the work of the municipalities; lack of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities and strategies on gender equality; and an evident need for strengthening the institutional capacities on gender equality and GRB as ways of tackling gender inequalities at local level.

IMPROVEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE BUDGETARY PROCESS

Many gender advocates (including those in the women's machinery) see the budgetary process as a "black box" which is very difficult to understand. This is why one of the common approaches used was analysis of the budgetary process itself so as to demystify the process and identify possible entry points for the implementation of GRB measures.

In **BiH** the RS Gender Center and MOF completed gender analysis of budget documents and prepared a guide for budget users on how to implement GRB within the budget process. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) a report was produced on the budget preparation process in selected pilot institutions (Ministry of Development, Water Management and Forestry, Ministry of Labor and Ministry of Agriculture and Employment Institute). The report was used by the GRB Working Group when preparing and implementing their Action Plan for Introduction of GRB in the period 2010–2013.

In **FYR Macedonia**, analysis of the budget processes and reforms in the budget policies from a gender equality perspective was produced in 2012. The Government GRB taskgroup – composed of representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the General Secretariat, the Employment Agency and the City of Skopje – used the entry points identified to develop the outline of the five-year National Strategy on GRB

PROMOTION OF A CRITICAL MASS OF EXPERTISE ON GRB

GRB implementation relies on the availability of expertise ranging across gender, public finance and management systems, sectoral issues and other areas. It also requires expertise relating to the GRB tools, practices and strategies that have been developed over the years. Within PGRP-SEE initiatives considerable effort and resources were invested in generating such expertise locally. The project engaged GRB experts to serve as resources and to provide technical support at local, national and regional levels.



In **Albania**, through training, mentoring, exchanges, a knowledge platform, e-learning, UN Women supported the formation of a pool of national experts on GRB. The experts participated in all training initiatives organized within the project and were also engaged to assist other partners in the GRB processes.

In **BiH** strategic partnerships were developed between UN Women and academic institutions to include GRB in the curricula. Thus, the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Sarajevo introduced a GRB course in its Masters in Gender Studies Program curriculum and the RS Gender Center at the University of Banja Luka organized a five-day Summer Gender School.

In **FYR Macedonia**, a team comprised of an international and a national expert on GRB developed a "CSO toolkit on gender responsive budgeting" and designed and delivered a comprehensive training to CSOs focusing on advocacy for GRB. The combination of their experiences and perspectives ensured that the training and toolkit are closely tailored to the needs of the CSOs and applicable in the institutional context of FYR Macedonia.

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES AND METHODOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS

GRB initiatives support the application of a range of tools for identifying needs, setting priorities, planning, programming, budgeting, tracking and monitoring and evaluation. Different actors are involved at each of the stages and each actor and stage requires tailored strategies and tools. Therefore an important element in creating individual and institutional capacity to engage in GRB has been the development of guidelines and methodological documents that advise different actors how to go about the process.

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In **Albania**, the Guideline on GRB in the Medium Term Budget jointly developed by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO) provides detailed procedures for implementation of the Council of Minister's decision on Gender Mainstreaming in the MTB which makes GRB obligatory as of 2013 for all line ministries.

In BiH a methodology for local level GRB with a focus on rural women was developed. In Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa and Vukosavlje (RS), the methodology was used by inter-sectoral local teams which brought together representatives of the gender commissions, the departments for budget and finances and the departments for agriculture and economy, representatives of local political parties and local women's NGOs. The teams drew up recommendations that were sent to municipal councils for adoption. In Tesanj and Gracanica (FBiH) the methodology was used by advisory groups made up of municipal authorities, commissions for gender equality, CSOs active in the area of rural development and support to improvement of the position of rural women, and businesses linked to rural and agricultural resources, products and services. These groups developed three-year (2014–2016) action plans to improve the position of rural women.

At the entity level, in **FBiH** a publication was produced to guide the Implementation of the action plan for the period 2010–2013. The document describes the steps for introducing GRB in pilot institutions in the FBiH. In the RS, the Gender Center and MOF, after completing the gender analysis of budget documents, prepared a guide for budget users on how to implement GRB within the budget process.

In **FYR Macedonia**, at central level, the Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO) produced a handbook for civil servants to introduce the concept of GRB, describe methodologies used globally, and present a draft methodology for introducing GRB at central level. The draft methodology was based on the experiences of pilot institutions in terms of selection of a program, development of gender-sensitive output indicators and production of a gender budget statement. At the local level, the City of Skopje developed a gender checklist to support civil servants in the development of gender-responsive programs.

INTRODUCTION OF CHANGES IN BUDGETARY INSTRUMENTS AND PROCESSES

Budget formulation and implementation are carried out through a set of pre-defined processes that use a variety of instruments (guidelines, accounting systems, templates, etc). Therefore, capacity to implement GRB also requires the introduction of the necessary changes in those processes and instruments that allow such implementation to happen.

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In **Albania** the Ministry of Finance and MOLSAEO issued a Joint Instruction on Preparation of the MTB 2014-2016, requiring all line ministries to define goals, indicators and targets related to gender equality in one or two budget programs. This was piloted in two ministries in which specific goals, targets and indicators related to gender equality were introduced in two different programs.

In **FBiH**, the Ministry of Finance issued budget instructions which required the inclusion of gender analysis and information on their programs by pilot budget users, namely those included in the FBiH GRB working group.

In **RS**, gender requirements were included in the budget framework paper for 2012–2015. The Gender Center of RS and the Ministry of Finance accordingly together elaborated specific recommendations for inclusion of a gender perspective in the Budget Management Information System (BMIS).

In **FYR Macedonia** the 2013 and 2014 budget circulars for central level budget users included provisions requiring specified ministries to select programs for gender budget analysis and develop gender indicators.

COSTING EXERCISES

Costing exercises allow one to compare the real cost of specific interventions and compare this with the resources allocated in budgets, thus defining the "financial gap".² In costing exercises, gender priorities of national agendas are identified and interventions required to address them are defined, establishing also who is responsible for their implementation.



Costing exercises of gender equality policies can be defined as "The financial valuation of the added monetary and non-monetary resources and efforts that have to be invested for the implementation of a public policy headed towards the achievement of gender equality."

Source: Raquel Coello. Costing of interventions and policies for gender equality. Concepts, methodologies and practical experiences UNDP and UN Women. 2013

² Raquel Coello. Costing of interventions and policies for gender equality. Concepts, methodologies and practical experiences UNDP and UN Women. 2013.

In **Albania**, in response to a request from MOLSAEO, UN Women supported a study to estimate the cost of the implementation of the Law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations" and the Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) "On the mechanism of the co-ordination of work for the referral of cases of violence in family relations and its ways of procedure" in the municipalities of Tirana, Durres, Korça, Kukës and Vlora.

The costing study estimates the cost incurred by different actors. It provides, among others, a clear picture of financial resources required to strengthen the organizational and institutional response of the central and local government to domestic violence. For example, the findings help local authorities estimate the budget required to address domestic violence effectively at local level, taking into consideration the social service standards of the municipalities, as well as the extent of domestic violence in each municipality.

The study is also an advocacy instrument in the hands of gender advocates and civil society as increased awareness of the costs of violence strengthen arguments for the intervention of government, social service institutions, businesses and community.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

As noted above, implementation of GRB involves a range of stakeholders each playing different roles. Appropriate institutional mechanisms can assist in ensuring that the actors work in a coordinated way and provide a space for developing joint proposals based on each one's capacity and responsibilities.



In **FYR Macedonia**, as noted above, a government task–group developed the National Government Strategy for the introduction of GRB (2012–2017). Once it was adopted, a gender responsive budgeting sub–group was established within government's existing Intersectoral Consultative and Advisory Group on Gender Equality to monitor and advise on implementation of the GRB strategy. At local level the Mayor of Skopje established the first working group on gender equality and gender responsive budgeting. The group was composed of civil servants representatives of all units of the local government. The members agreed to act as an advocacy group to increase the visibility of gender equality and GRB in the City. They developed a work plan which identified three programs which would pilot GRB in 2014; decided to improve coordination between the sectors and establish stronger cooperation with the councilors, particularly the Commission for Equal Opportunities between women and men, in order to ensure systematic implementaiton of GRB.

As noted above, in BiH local GRB teams were created in six municipalities of the RS while in FBiH advisory groups were established in the municipalities of Tesanj and Gracanica.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES AMONG DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS

Being supported by a regional program has given the country initiatives the chance to share with peer stakeholders from other countries going through similar experiences. Facilitating learning from different initiatives and promoting the exchange of experiences has been one of the most commonly used approaches to achieve an increase in capacity for different stakeholders to implement GRB. In the case of the SEE, regional sharing has been complemented by study tours and attendance at international conferences and seminars.

A study tour is a group travel experience with specific learning goals. The learning goals of each study tour vary, but they all emphasize experiential learning that enables learners to explore "how others do". The PGRP-SEE program supported the organization of study tours to Austria, Belgium, Iceland and Italy. According to the program's final evaluation report, these tours increased GRB awareness and helped to generate the necessary political will and commitment of high-ranking civil servants. Civil servants and parliamentarians who participated in the study tours stressed the value these had in building GRB champions and creating an understanding of how GRB was practically implemented in different countries. The study tours also encouraged co-operation and co-ordination among key actors responsible for GRB implementation.

In **BiH**, a regional conference for universities was organized by UN Women in November 2013 in Sarajevo. Participants at the conference included academics from BiH, Turkey, Macedonia, Albania and Serbia. The conference was the first one organized for academics of the region on GRB. It provided the opportunity to discuss the different possibilities for introducing the theme in the official curricula at the universities of the SEE countries.

In **FYR Macedonia**, the findings of the assessments produced by CSOs at local level on social policies and budgets in seven different municipalities were presented at a conference entitled "Gender responsive budgeting at local level". The conference provoked debate on the challenges facing reflection of gender equality commitments in the programs and budgets of the local self-governments and on possible partnerships between local self-governments and CSOs to advance gender equality using GRB tools.

CASE STUDY 1

MINISTRIES OF FINANCE LEADING THE WAY TO GRB: GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE MEDIUM-TERM BUDGETING PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA

Name of the experience	Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Medium-Term Budgeting Program of the Government of Albania
Place of the experience	Albania, Central level
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Ministry of Finance (MoF) and UN Women
*Other partners	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MOARD), Department for Strategy and Donor Coordination.



BACKGROUND

Since 2008 the Government of Albania has shown increased interest and political will to promote human rights and gender equality. Over the last few years the country has built a good legal and policy basis for achieving gender equality. The first "Gender Equality in Society" law was passed by the Albanian Parliament in 2008. The National Strategy on Gender Equality, Eradication of Gender Based Violence and of Domestic Violence and the related Action Plan for 2011–2015 were approved in June 2011.

The ambitious targets set by the Government in terms of the improved legal and policy frameworks required budget-related changes so as to ensure adequate resources for implementation. UN Women supported seven government authorities to develop a model of gender mainstreaming in policies and budgets using GRB tools and methodologies. The initial steps involved introduction of GRB tools through capacity building exercises targeting civil servants at central and local level. In parallel, civil society activists and gender advocates were supported by UN Women to ensure demand for accountability and transparency of public finance.



WHAT WAS DONE?

UN Women Albania, in partnership with the Austrian Development Agency,

organized a three-day study visit to Vienna for Albanian government officials from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior, MLSAEO as well as representatives of the Department for Strategy and Donor Coordination. The study tour enabled participants to exchange experiences and get direct exposure to Austrian examples of mainstreaming gender in policies and budgets. In particular, the Albanian delegation leant about the Austrian experience of GRB and budget reform, implementation and monitoring mechanisms for GRB, quality management systems, and campaigning at local level.

"The visit was very helpful to see concretely how gender issues were prioritized in the budget formulation by the Government of Austria,"

Iva Zajmi, Deputy Minister of Interior of Albania.

After the visit, a working group was established under the leadership of MOLSAEO and with participation by the ministries of Finance, Interior, Department for Strategy and Donor Coordination and UN Women. The group's mandate was to asses to what extent the Austrian experience could be applicable in Albania and take concrete steps to move the process ahead. UN Women then worked together with government for more than a year providing technical and financial support.

Finally on 18 July 2012, the Albanian Council of Ministers approved the decision no. 465 "on Gender Mainstreaming in the Medium-term Budgetary Program". This important milestone on the road toward gender equality in the country refers to GRB as "a specific methodology which requires well-thought, socially inclusive, planning and budgeting". It states that "all line ministries should take measures to integrate gender specific objectives, products and targets in budgetary programs". Moreover, line ministries must consider the objectives of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Reduction of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence, 2011–2015 when drawing up their budgets. The decision is also relevant for GRB at local level as it proposes the application of gender equality criteria for Regional Development Funds, a central government grant that supports local governments.

In June 2013 the joint Ministerial Instruction on "Procedures to mainstreaming gender issues in the Medium-Term Budgetary Program (MTBP)", cosigned by MOLSAEO and MOF, was issued. The instruction embeds GRB in the budgeting practices of central, line ministries and local governments. It provides detailed, step-by-step procedures for implementation of GRB. In the case of line ministries, the actions to be taken include: 1) selection of two or three budgetary programs that contribute to achieving equality; 2) establishing gender equality priorities – defining gender equality objectives, identifying budget outputs and targets within each of the selected programs

for a three-year period; and 3) defining of the management structure for planning, implementing and monitoring the respective MTBP, including consultation with the Gender Equality Department within MOLSAEO.

The implementation of the instruction was piloted by two ministries – MOARD and MOLSAEO. As a result, the MTBPs 2014–2016 in each ministry included gender objectives, indicators and gender-specific budgetary allocations.

The piloting with MOARD built on a gender assessment of two programs conducted by a local CSO and technically supported by UN Women. The findings and recommendations of the assessment were discussed with ministry representatives towards the end of 2012. Both programs were subsequently included in the main GRB exercise in 2013.

In parallel, UN Women efforts over the last four years to build the capacity of civil society and national experts in GRB through trainings, mentoring, exchange, knowledge platform, and e-learning resulted in the formation of a pool of eight national GRB experts. Three experts from the pool started worked closely with program and budget specialists in the two pilot ministries in early 2013.

As a result of the GRB exercise, 798 women farmers will benefit from \$1 million (9% of total subsidy budget) from the Agriculture Subsidy Program in 2014; 878 women farmers will benefit from \$1.1 million (10%) in 2015, and a further 966 from \$1.2 million (10%) in 2016. The support through Agriculture Counselling and Information Program will reach 7,700 women farmers (11% of all farmers) in 2014, 10,200 (15%) in 2014, and 13,600 (20%) in 2016. In line with the poverty reduction objectives established by MOLSAEO, about 10,910 vulnerable families with a woman head of household (11% of total beneficiary families) will be included within the social assistance scheme (cash transfer) in 2014; 10,810 (11%) in 2015 and 10,695 (12%) in 2016.

In 2013, UN Women provided the technical support that, in close partnership with MOF and MOLSAEO, saw the development of a supplementary Practical GRB Guide that describes, in detail, the compliance requirements of the national policy and budgetary frameworks, the benefit of using GRB tools, and other requirements deriving from the Decision 465/2012. The guide explains how line ministries should implement gender mainstreaming in the MTBP. It includes examples of piloting GRB in four budgetary programs.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Changes in high-level decision-makers together with the high turn-over rates of civil servants remains an ongoing challenge, requiring a continuous effort to build capacity, understanding and relationships on GRB. This seems likely to continue for some time due to the restructuring of ministries.

Another difficulty relates to correct implementation of budgetary reforms. Adopting new gender-sensitive targets, indicators and products within the budgetary programs requires planning and budgeting practices by all staff involved that are different from the traditional way of developing medium-term budgetary program.

One of the greatest challenges has been the limited availability of gender-related data. UN Women aims to promote evidence-based policy. However, sectoral analysis by CSOs and government institutions is hampered by the fact that sex-disaggregated data and gender-related indicators and targets are largely unavailable or inadequate for monitoring advancement of gender equality.

One of the main lessons from the Albanian process is that working closely with policy specialists is as important as work with budget specialists. It often requires capacity building and exchange of knowledge in order that sector specialists understand the use and benefit of GRB and plan effective interventions. It is also important to identify gender-sensitive allies at senior governmental levels and among experts. These individuals can service as GRB champions in their institutions.

Finally, the Albanian experience shows that even if institutional frameworks and budget policies are changed, implementation of gender-responsive planning and budgeting will not necessarily occur automatically, as implementation also requires knowledge and skills, and full commitment and leadership by all relevant government institutions to make the necessary changes in budget systems. For example, in the two piloting ministries, without the necessary guidance and mentoring provided by the UN Women pool of national experts, policy and budget specialists would have struggled to integrate gender.

CASE STUDY 2

WOMEN'S MACHINERIES AND MINISTRIES OF FINANCE IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP TO ENHANCE GRB IMPLEMENTATION: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.

Name of the experience	Cooperation with Ministries of Finance and gender mechanisms to bring gender into budget processes and documents
Place of the experience	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Entities of Republic of Srpska and the Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Agency for Gender Equality BiH Gender center of the Government of RS Gender center of FBiH
*Other partners	Ministry of Finance and Treasury BiH, Ministry of Finance FBiH, Ministry of Finance RS, UN Women



BACKGROUND

Public finance reform in BiH has been implemented since 2006 through projects funded by the United Kingdom government's Department for International Development and currently the European Commission. The purpose of the reform is to introduce medium-term budget planning and program budgeting at all levels of government in BiH.

The efforts to integrate gender equality considerations in budget planning in BiH have been closely connected with the public finance reform. The first initiatives were supported by UN Women through the project "Gender-responsive budgeting in South Eastern Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through increased Transparency and Accountability (2009–2011)". In this period, ministries of finance were connected with gender mechanisms (Agency for Gender Equality BiH, Gender center FBiH and Gender center of RS Government) and attended initial training and awareness rising on GRB.

At the same time, the Gender Center FBiH initiated GRB in pilot institutions through the "Action plan to introduce GRB in employment in FBiH (2010–2013)". The plan was based on the Gender Center FBiH's report: "The Results of the Gender Analysis of the Regulations Governing the Budgeting Process with Recommendations".

The RS Gender Center, with the assistance of UN Women, has focused its GRB efforts on the "Action plan for Improvement of the position of rural women in RS" (see case study 6). Additionally, the RS Gender Center organized awareness-raising activities and cooperated with the Ministry of Finance RS in introducing GRB at the entity level by

the chapter on GRB in the budget framework paper that contains the expenditure framework for a three-year period. The chapter explained the concept of GRB, the reform in progress and planned steps for introducing gender equality into budget documents and processes.



WHAT WAS DONE?

UN Women supported the establishment of an informal working group of representatives of the three ministries of finance (Ministry of Finance and Treasury BiH, Ministry of Finance FBiH and Ministry of Finance RS) at the level of assistant ministers for budget and finance, heads of budget planning units, and the three gender mechanisms (Agency for Gender Equality BiH, Gender Center FBiH and Gender Center of the RS Government). The forum met to agree on the steps for including gender into budget planning. The initiative started with a joint study tour in which the group had an opportunity to learn about the Icelandic experience of GRB.

Discussions within the informal group resulted in agreement on the following, among others:

- An initiative to introduce gender equality consideration in the electronic BMIS;
- Amending budget instructions and budget documents to include gender equality;
- Organizing GRB training for MOF and budget users (line agencies) on GRB and gender analysis of budget programs.

In BiH the initiatives were carried out differently in the two entities.

In September 2012, the RS Government adopted the document "Application of Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Budget Reform Processes in RS/BiH". This directed the Gender Center of RS and the Ministry of Finance of RS to carry out activities to introduce a gender perspective into the budget system in RS. In addition, as a result of intervention by the RS Gender Center, the Economic

Policy of RS 2013 included GRB as one of its priorities. Recommendations were also provided in respect of inclusion of gender in the budget instructions. In accordance with these commitments the Gender Center of RS and the Ministry of Finance embarked on cooperation which resulted in:

- Analysis of the budget documents and processes to include gender considerations;
- Preparation of a GRB guide for budget users;
- Organization of GRB training for all budget users in RS;
- Recommendations for inclusion of a gender perspective in the BMIS.

In the FBiH entity, the efforts to include gender into budget planning were led by the FBiH Gender Center, within the framework of the Federation BiH Action Plan for the Introduction of GRB in pilot institutions related to employment. This plan had been developed with support from UN Women during a previous project on GRB.

One of the main results was the publication in 2012 of budget instructions for pilot budget users, namely those included in the FBiH GRB working group.

Another important result from the informal group formed by the Ministries of Finance and gender mechanisms in FBiH is that in December 2013 a module containing gender equality information was officially approved for integration in the BMIS. This will assist budget users at state level and within both BiH entities in considering the impact of their programs on gender equality.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

It is often difficult to convince Ministries of Finance to accept the lead role in GRB initiatives. In the case of BiH this challenge was overcome by close cooperation between the Ministry of Finance and gender mechanisms, starting from awareness raising and including joint study tours and workshops which led to better understanding of the benefits that GRB brings to the budget planning process.

CASE STUDY 3

A MULTI-AGENCY APPROACH: WOMEN'S MACHINERY TEAMING WITH MINISTRY OF FINANCE, LINE MINISTRIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR GRB IMPLEMENTATION IN FYR MACEDONIA

Name of the experience	Institutionalizing gender responsive budgeting in FYR Macedonia
Place of the experience	FYR Macedonia
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO), Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP)
*Other partners	Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM), Ministry of Health (MoH), General Secretariat (GS), Employment Agency, City of Skopje



BACKGROUND

The first initiatives to introduce GRB in FYR Macedonia's institutional context can be directly linked with the UN Women regional project "Gender-Responsive Budgeting in South East Europe: Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability" (2006–2009). In this project, UN Women partnered with the Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO) of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) as the central gender equality mechanism.

The pilot "Gender budget analysis of social protection and active labor market measures in the Republic of Macedonia" produced in 2010 demonstrated how GRB tools can support government institutions to identify the gender-specific needs of women and men and how reflecting them in programs and budgets of institutions can systematically contribute to advancing gender equality.

The findings were used, firstly, to raise awareness and increase the capacities of selected groups of civil servants to engage with GRB and, secondly, to define the technical support required to continue the process of institutionalization of GRB in the subsequent UN Women project.

WHAT WAS DONE?

The political commitment of the DEO, the availability of evidence and the increase in the capacity and awareness of civil servants laid the basis for the establishment of a Government task group composed of representatives of the MLSP, MOF, MAFWM, GS, Employment Agency and the City of Skopje.

The task group had two specific goals: promotion of the concept of GRB and development of a draft government strategy for introduction of GRB. Under the leadership of DEO and the guidance of international and national experts on GRB, the group initially received advanced training on GRB, which enabled members to participate in broader discussion on the its institutionalization. This training was necessary even though the members were either the coordinators for equal opportunities or part of the strategic planning and budgeting units of the ministries and hence very familiar with the institutional processes. The training not only increased their technical skills and capacities, but also equipped them to act as advocates for GRB and the adoption of the strategy.

Two parallel processes supported their work. First, "Analysis of the budget processes and reforms in the budget policies from gender equality perspective" was produced in 2012. The analysis identified the entry points for GRB in the budget system of FYR Macedonia which uses a combination of program and line budgeting. Second, the revision of the Law on Equal Opportunities between women and men in 2012 included articles 11 and 14, which for the first time formally required central and local governments to incorporate the principle of equal opportunities in their strategic plans and budgets, to monitor the impact and effects their programs have on the lives of women and men, and to report on progress in their annual reports.

The group used the entry points identified and new legal obligations to develop the outline and define the objectives of the strategy. It was agreed that the document should cover a five year period (2012-2017) which was considered sufficient for institutionalization of GRB. Following the five-year period, the group agreed that GRB should become an integral part of the country's Gender Equality Strategy.

The strategy proposed by the group featured three complementary strategic areas:

- 1. introduction of a gender perspective in the programs and budgets of the line ministries and the local self-government units;
- 2. improving the legal framework for GRB;
- strengthening the institutional mechanisms and capacity building of stakeholders for integration of gender issues in budget policies and processes.

After finalizing the first draft of the strategy, DEO organized consultative meetings with key stakeholders (civil servants from central and local

self-government units, civil society organizations and experts) and the Parliamentary Commission for Equal Opportunities, for quality assurance purposes. The feedback received from these actors was incorporated into the second draft of the strategy which was then shared with all ministries prior to the adoption of the document by the Government on 11 July 2012.

Once the document was part of government procedure, the task group went on a study visit to Belgium to learn about the experiences of applying GRB at central level. At the same time, the DEO established a GRB sub-group in the framework of the inter-sectoral Government working group on Gender Equality to monitor and advise on implementation of the strategy. Further, with the support of UN Women, DEO developed a handbook to introduce civil servants to the concept and to GRB methodologies used globally.

As a next step, the MoF amended the instructions for the preparation of the 2013 budget for central level budget users. The amended instructions for the first time obliged the MLSP, MAFWM, MOH and EA to identify programs for gender budget analysis and to identify gender-sensitive output indicators for these programs. Unfortunately, without a defined methodology on how to fulfill these obligations, provision in the budget templates or a system to track whether the obligations were respected, none of these institutions selected a program or developed gender indicators. The MOF nonetheless kept the provision in the instructions for 2014. UN Women meanwhile provide an external technical expert to mentor the four institutions in the selection of program, development of gender-sensitive output indicators and production of the first gender budget statements. Based on that experience, the external expert assisted in development of a methodology for GRB at central level.

As result, gender indicators were included in the selected programs (see textbox) and the gender budget statements developed through the mentorship program became part of the official budget requests of the institutions for 2014. The methodology developed by the expert outlined the steps each institution should take in preparing the annual budget request, and introduced an intrainstitutional coordination mechanism to support the implementation of GRB. The mechanism included officials responsible for implementing the program selected for gender budget analysis, the coordinators for equal opportunities as well as representatives of the strategic planning and budgeting units of the ministries in question. Finally, it envisaged three phases for the implementation of GRB at central level so as to achieve coverage of all central level institutions by 2020.

GENDER INDICATORS INCLUDED IN SELECTED PROGRAMS IN FYR MACEDONIA

"Self-employment program", implemented by the MLSP and Employment Agency

- number of women and men applying for the program;
- number of women and men involved in training for development of

business ideas:

- number of women and men who received a grant; number of women and men registered as managers;
- number of awareness raising campaigns on the power of enterpreneurship adapted to the various categories of beneficiaries;

"Program for agriculture and rural development", implemented by the MAFWM

• increased number of women in organic production;

"Program for early detection of cancer in Republic of Macedonia" implemented by the MoH covering subprograms of screening for cervical, colorectal and breast cancer.

- number and % of women who responded to a call from their gynecologist;
- number and % of women who did not respond to a call from their gynecologist;
- number of women who have had a PAP test;
- number and % of women and men who had foecal occult blood test (for colorectal cancer);
- number and % of women and men who received the results of their tests:
- number and % of women and men with unsatisfactory results;
- number and % of women and men covered by the program;
- number and % of positive test results (gender disaggregated);



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the main lessons learnt in the institutionalization of GRB in FYR Macedonia is that the process is complex and requires political will, strong institutional capacities and significant time to ensure its functionality and independence of external technical support.

Legal and policy obligations reflected through a law, strategy and the budget circular are important prerequisites for the institutionalization of GRB to succeed, but having these does not automatically mean that they will be respected and effectively influence the policy making framework of the country. Further strengthening of institutional capacities on GRB, a participatory process to define institutional steps and development of structures to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GRB are also likely to be necessary.

One of the most significant challenges is ensuring that GRB initiatives receive adequate institutional attention and support to become sustainable.

CASE STUDY 4

COSTING EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENTS: ALBANIAN LEGISLATION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Name of the experience	Costing of protection orders and community coordinated response mechanism to domestic violence, – a study of the economic costs for the implementation of the Albanian legislation against domestic violence
Place of the experience	Albania, central level and municipalities of Tirana, Kukes, Korça, Durres and Vlora
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MOLSAEO), the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and UN Women
*Other partners	Center for Civil and Legal Initiatives (NGO), District Courts and District Prosecution of Tirana, Kukes, Korça, Durres and Vlora, State Police, Ministry of Interior, Education Directorate, Health Care Services, Municipalities of Kukes, Durres, Korça, Tirana and Vlora



BACKGROUND

Domestic violence represents a growing concern for Albanian society, government and civil society organizations. Two consecutive national domestic violence surveys³ reveal that from 2007 to 2013 the proportion of women between the ages of 18 to 55 who "ever" experienced domestic violence increased from 56.0% to 59.4%. In addition, the latest survey reveals that 53.7% of women were "currently" experiencing domestic violence in 2013.

In 2006, an alliance of non-profit organizations representing over 20,000 voters drafted a bill "On measures against violence in family relations" that was tabled in parliament. The introduction of the draft law was a milestone not only in terms of the importance of domestic violence but also because it was the first ever draft law drafted and introduced by civil society. The draft law provided for a number of concrete interventions in line with both the Constitution of Albania and CEDAW. The law placed responsibilities on

^{3 &}quot;Domestic Violence in Albania", National Survey. INSTAT, UNDP, and UNICEF, 2009 and "Domestic Violence in Albania", National population-based Survey. INSTAT and UNDP, 2013.

six state entities, led by MOLSAEO and including local government units, to respond as a coordinated network according to their different mandates and responsibilities. It also empowered the courts to grant a protection order or immediate protection order to support victims/survivors of domestic violence.

The bill was approved and entered into force in 2006. It was further amended in 2007 and 2010. However, the initial implementation of this law was supported mainly by donor contributions, with only partial allocation of funds by the Government.

With the adoption of the Law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations", the implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (2007–2010) and development of the revised National Strategy on Gender Equality, Against Gender-Based and Domestic Violence (2011–2015), the government response to domestic violence improved considerably. Consequently reporting of domestic violence increased from 2007 to 2010.

At the same time, government agencies and NGOs started building collaborative response systems in several districts of Albania. Thus, in February 2011, the Council of Ministers approved the Decision for "The Set Up and Proceedings of the Coordination and Referral Mechanism of Domestic Violence Cases", mandating the establishment of community coordinated response (referral mechanism) at municipal level to respond efficiently to domestic violence cases.

At this point, some fundamental question arose: What are the costs of implementing the Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations? What costs are incurred by a domestic violence survivor who applies for a protection order? Without knowing these costs, State Police, District Prosecution, judicial district courts, local government units and social services were unable to budget effectively to address domestic violence.



WHAT WAS DONE?

In response to a request from MOLSAEO, UN Women supported a study to measure the cost of the implementation of the Law "On Measures against Violence in Family Relations" and the subsequent Decision of the Council of Ministers in the municipalities of Tirana, Durres, Korça, Kukës and Vlora.

The study included the development of a methodology to estimate the cost of protection orders and community coordinated response for domestic violence. The focus was on measuring the time and costs incurred by state and non-state service providers and survivors of domestic violence.

UN Women engaged a team of international and national technical experts and

partnered with the Center for Civil and Legal Initiatives, a local organization with experience in counselling survivors of domestic violence. A team comprised of legal experts in the field of violence in family relations, gender equality experts and economists was established. In addition, international expertise brought in by UN Women assisted in developing the methodology for a good quality costing study.

Work started with a thorough study of the legal framework, including the laws that would imply costs and that had undergone recent legal changes. The review of the legislation helped in the preparation of questionnaires and in determining the sequence of work.

The questionnaires were prepared bearing in mind the concrete work that each actor performs in line with the tasks specified in the legislation and DCM. To test the validity of

the draft questionnaires, the experts held pilot interviews with actors responsible for the implementation of the DCM. Based on the results of the pilot interviews, the draft questionnaires were revised and finalized.

Interviews were held in the municipalities of Tirana, Vlora, Durres, Korça and Kukes with local coordinators, judges, prosecutors and police officers, representatives of the social services, free legal aid, the health care services, the education directorate, the employment office, the Prefecture, CSOs, shelter employees, the Bailiff's Office and representatives of the communes. The interviewees described the steps each actor follows when dealing with a simple or a complicated case of DV, as well as the time required for each step. The questionnaires also provided information about the time spent on other activities related to coordination between actors in addressing a domestic violence case over a period of one month. The responses on time spent handling a case of domestic violence and the salary of the responsible actors were then used to estimate the cost of service delivery.

Two technical round tables were held. The first was used to present and validate the preliminary findings of the study. The second was used for further consolidation of findings and recommendations for central and local governments. Police officers, judges, prosecutors, experts on domestic violence and representatives of social services and other state institutions involved in the referral mechanism as well as gender advocates were invited and contributed their respective opinions and experience to the study.

The costing study provides a clear picture of the financial resources required firstly for protection orders on the part of State Police, district courts and District Prosecution in a given municipality, and secondly for the community coordinated response at local level. The latter had up to that time been supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as well as from the state budget allocated to local government.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

As noted, the study was conducted in only five of Albania's districts. Even with only five districts, findings differed substantially between larger and smaller districts. A more comprehensive picture of the costs incurred in dealing with domestic violence cases requires more complete coverage of Albanian districts, and especially those with differences in culture, habits and customs, socioeconomic development and geographic location.

The costs also differ from one unit to another. This is due to several causes, including activities related to coordination of work for referral of cases, and secondly the existence of pilot projects of national and international organizations in the municipalities studies.

Lack of relevant data and statistics in the target institutions, such as the costs incurred by the court administration, the secretaries, and the officials that present the subpoena to the plaintiff were common because such costs were considered insignificant by the interviewees. This imposed limitations on the study. The study also did not include all costs imposed on individuals, families and society by domestic violence. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the study showed clearly that the costs of domestic violence are enormous.

CASE STUDY 5

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS GRB CHAMPIONS: THE CITY OF SKOPJE IN FYR MACEDONIA

Name of the experience	Applying gender-responsive budgeting at local level – the experience of the City of Skopje
Place of the experience	Skopje, FYR Macedonia
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Department for social, child and health protection and Coordinator for Equal Opportunities between women and men in the City of Skopje
*Other partners	UN Women



BACKGROUND

The City of Skopje was the first local self-government unit in FYR Macedonia to adopt a Strategy on Gender Equality, with its first strategy covering the period 2010–2015. In 2011, in addition to the Strategy, an Action Plan (2011–2015) was adopted which, among others, includes activities to introduce GRB and strengthen the capacities of the City of Skopje on this aspect. The Action Plan also explicitly motivated for cooperation between the City of Skopje and UN Women within the framework of the regional project "Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe".

In 2012, the City of Skopje and UN Women signed a memorandum of understanding which outlined two areas of technical support to the City of Skopje to meet the legal and policy obligations of the gender equality strategy. The first area related to an increase in the technical capacities of civil servants on gender mainstreaming and GRB. The second area related to production of the first gender analysis of the "Program for social, child and health protection for 2012".



WHAT WAS DONE?

Development of the technical capacities of the civil servants in the City of Skopje started with awareness-raising activities. A representative of the City was invited to take part in the government task group on GRB formed at central level (see case study 3). In addition, eight representatives were invited to take part in a study tour to Vienna.

The internal institutional initiative started with gender analysis of the "Program for social, child and health protection for 2012". The analysis aimed to identify institutional entry points and barriers for the application of GRB. Two external experts – one on GRB and the other on public policy/administration – were hired to assess the content of the program, budget, intra-institutional mechanisms and overall policy-making environment from a gender perspective.

Based on the findings, a basic two-day training program on gender mainstreaming and GRB tailored to the needs of the City of Skopje administration was developed. The program was delivered to 15 representatives of different sectors outside of their workplaces. The training, which was highly rated by the participants, contributed to an increase in awareness and capacities to advance gender equality among the City administration and the creation of a motivated group of civil servants to drive the processes.

In 2013, the Mayor of Skopje established the first working group on gender equality and gender responsive budgeting in the City of Skopje. The group was composed of civil servants who participated in the basic training. The group received more advanced two-day training, and were given the opportunity to agree how prioritization of the issues on the City of Skopje agenda would be achieved. The members initially agreed to act as an advocacy group. They developed a work plan which identified three programs which would pilot GRB in 2014. They also decided to improve coordination between sectors and establish stronger cooperation with city councilors, particularly the Commission for Equal Opportunities between women and men, in order to ensure systematic implementation of GRB. The City of Skopje for the first time allocated financial resources to strengthen the capacities of the councilors on gender equality issues and developed a gender checklist to support civil servants in the development of more gender-responsive programs.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the main lessons learnt in the institutionalization of GRB in FYR Macedonia is that the process is complex and requires political will, strong institutional capacities and significant time to ensure its functionality and independence of external technical support.

Legal and policy obligations reflected through a law, strategy and the budget circular are important prerequisites for the institutionalization of GRB to succeed, but having these does not automatically mean that they will be respected and effectively influence the policy making framework of the country. Further strengthening of institutional capacities on GRB, a participatory process to define institutional steps and development of structures to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GRB are also likely to be necessary.

One of the most significant challenges is ensuring that GRB initiatives receive adequate institutional attention and support to become sustainable.

CASE STUDY 6

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND CSOS TO BETTER ADDRESS CITIZENS' NEEDS: THE INTRODUCTION OF GRB MODELS AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Name of the experience	Introducing GRB at municipal level in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Place of the experience	Bosnia and Herzegovina Municipalities: Novi Grad Sarajevo (MNGS), Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa Vukosavlje, Tesanj and Gracanica
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Gender Center of the Government of Republic of Srpska;
*Other partners	VESTA (NGO). Local governments of Novi Grad Sarajevo (MNGS), Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa Vukosavlje, Tesanj and Gracanica, UN Women



BACKGROUND

Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by a highly complex administrative structure, with two entities (Republic of Srpska and Federation BiH) and District of Brcko. FBiH is divided into ten cantons which are subdivided into municipalities. Republic of Srpska is divided into municipalities.

The Law on Gender Equality approved in 2003 contains provisions for gender equality which relate to all levels of Government in BiH. In most BiH municipalities there are municipal commissions whose main task is to ensure implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and gender equality standards at the local level.

In BiH the UN Women regional project "Promoting gender responsive budgeting in South East Europe (2011–2013)" was largely focused on the municipal level due to the level of interest of the selected municipalities and good cooperation with BiH gender mechanisms (primarily the Gender Center of the RS Government and FBiH Gender Center). The results of this cooperation were used as a starting point for initiating and deepening the work on GRB.



WHAT WAS DONE?

UN Women started to support the GRB initiatives at municipal level in the Municipality Novi Grad Sarajevo (MNGS), the largest municipality. MNGS

initiated the process of introducing gender equality aspect into policies, documents and budgeting in 2011. To support the process, representatives of the municipality representatives supported by the Gender Center of FBiH while UN Women provided technical assistance through

mentoring support in revision of all strategic documents of the municipality to include a gender equality perspective and development of the Gender Action Plan of the MNGS. In addition, extensive gender equality and GRB training took place for municipal staff, including municipal management and the mayor, and a guide to introducing local level GRB was prepared with specific examples from MNGS. Finally, gender analysis of two budget programs of the MNGS (Sports and Economy/Agriculture) was carried out and recommendations elaborated for restructuring of budget expenditures to response better to the needs of men and women. After the municipal elections in 2012 resulted in new leadership in the MNGS, the cooperation between this municipality and UN Women continued with technical expertise provided to assist the teams in preparing their new Development Strategy (2013–2016).

One of the main results of this process was that the new Development Strategy includes specific recommendations from GRB analysis of the programs as well as gender indicators relevant for equitable development. Other strategic documents of the municipality were also reviewed and improved from a gender perspective.

Using the experience gained in MNGS, UN Women supported GRB initiatives at local level as part of its cooperation with the Gender Center of the Republic of Srpska (GC-RS). This initiative focused on improving the situation of rural women. Six pilot municipalities (Doboj, Modrica, Samac, Brod, Derventa and Vukosavlje) were supported through the GC-RS to create measures and programs to support and empower rural women. As a first step, a wellknow professor of BiH was engaged to develop an innovative methodology for local GRB initiatives focused on agriculture and rural development. The methodology seeks to understand the role of women in this sector and uses conventional GRB tools in considering issues relevant for rural women such as food safety and availability of food for family members; the role of women in agriculture production and additional sources of revenues for household; the role of women in the social life of rural communities and the quality of life of women in rural areas. As a second step, local teams were created in each of the 6 municipalities, with representatives of the gender commissions, departments for budget and finances, departments for agriculture and economy, local political parties and local women's NGOs. The GC-RS partnered with the NGO "Budućnost" Modriča to lead local GRB initiatives aiming to increase subsidies for rural women's economic empowerment in the six selected municipalities of RS. The teams received training on four modules related to gender equality, policy planning and GRB.

As a result of this process, and due to the work of the inter-sectoral local teams, recommendations for future measures in the municipalities were prepared

and sent to the municipal councils for adoption. Modriča and Derventa municipalities committed themselves to implementing the recommendations coming from the GRB analysis and to strengthening implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, with special emphasis on improving rural women's situation.

In the FBiH in the municipalities of Tesanj and Gracanica, NGO Vesta with the support of UN WOMEN, used the same methodology used by the RS Gender Center to promote cooperation and synergy between NGO, municipal government and local businesses with the purpose of improving the life of rural women in these municipalities.

The initiative went through the following steps: Firstly, the NGO Vesta signed a memorandum of understanding with the mayors of Tesanj and Gracanica that specified the obligations of the parties. Advisory groups were then established in the municipalities consisting of representatives of the municipal authorities, commissions for the gender equality, CSOs active in the area of rural development and support to improve the situation of rural women, and businesses linked to rural and agricultural resources, products and services. Vesta provided training in gender equality and GRB to the advisory groups. Also an analysis of the position of rural women in Tesanj and Gracanica was produced using the methodology previously developed in the RS pilot municipalities. The analysis included recommendations to improve the situation of rural women.

As a result of this process, action plans to improve the position of rural women over the period 2014-2016 were adopted by the municipal councils of Tesanj and Gracanica. The plans included measures for economic empowerment of rural women, political participation and employment. The advisory groups in both municipalities were officially mandated by the mayors to monitor implementation in 2014.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Initiatives at the municipal level are often perceived to be less complex than those at a higher level of government given the more limited jurisdiction of the local authorities. In the municipal initiatives success depends on the political commitment of the mayor and management. Employees of municipalities are often overburdened with their regular duties, and can perceive gender initiatives as an additional burden. Therefore, initiatives need to start with awareness rising, followed by capacity building and work in sectoral groups. Training can build a common knowledge base and stimulate enthusiasm. The inclusion of local business is an important partnership for the purposes of opening up employment possibilities for rural women. The active involvement of NGOs, in particular local ones, can bring analytical resources and knowhow necessary for GRB implementation. Partnership between the local actors can bring results beyond expectations.

CASE STUDY 7

CSOS INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKING THROUGH GRB: THE EXPERIENCE AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL IN ALBANIA

Name of the experience	Influence Local decision–making through GRB: The experiences of the municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra in Albania		
Place of the experience	Albania, Municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra		
Partnerships			
*Lead actor(s)	Local governments of the Municipalities of Elbasan, Vlora, Tirana and Shkodra and UN Women		
*Other partners	Change Center in Vlora, Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance in Shkodra, Advanced Study Center in Tirana and National Center for Social Services in Elbasan, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.		



BACKGROUND

In 2011 UN Women supported the use of the community-based scorecard, a participatory needs assessment tool, in seven municipalities of Albania. The scorecards, which were known as "The Community Voice", enabled citizens to provide feedback on the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of public services such as health services, education, public transport, the supply of drinking water, urban waste, and social support.

One of the finding of the scorecard was the low level of participation of citizens, and particularly women and girls, in local decision-making processes. Also, local social services and the associated budgets were not responsive to women's and girls' needs in the regions. In response, UN Women provided training and coaching to CSOs to build their capacities to assess and monitor local policies and budgets from a gender perspective.

Soon after, in 2012, UN Women partnered with the Training Institute of Public Administration to deliver training sessions on GRB in 11 municipalities. Training modules were developed for municipal specialists and councilors covering topics such as gender and budgets, macroeconomics and gender, budgeting for all citizens, practical exercises on local GRB, and general gender assessment. Training sessions were attended by 248 participants (165

women and 83 men) who represented policy, program, finance and gender specialists from local government.

Subsequently, in 2012-2013 UN Women partnered with four municipalities and local CSOs to strengthen the capacities of local administrations, civil society and citizens to assess public policies and budgets and make them gender-responsive.



WHAT WAS DONE?

The overall objective of the initiative was to promote cooperation between local governments, civil society and citizens for better policy and budgetary decision-making at a local level to address the needs of women and men. Four local CSOs – Change Center in Vlora, Foundation for Local Autonomy and Governance in Shkodra, Advanced Study Center in Tirana and National Center for Social Services in Elbasan – were contracted to facilitate the process. A four-step approach was introduced by UN Women and further developed in partnership with the participating municipalities and CSOs:

Step 1: Selection of key local services and policies that have impact on the community, especially on vulnerable groups, and that can help reduce gender inequality

Following a series of meetings and discussions with representatives of the four local governments and with civil society activists (including some representing vulnerable female and male citizens), two or three locally provided services were selected for each municipality. Economic aid, community-based service centers in Shkodra; transport service, tourism service and municipal social service in Vlora; pre-university education program, economic aid, sports and recreation program, and investment services in Elbasan; social services, social housing and municipal statistics in Tirana, were selected. Gender experts from the UN Women pool of national GRB experts sat with municipal staff and specialists to select the services. Gender-related concerns, efficiency, quality, transparency, data availability, budgetary allocations and area and population coverage were the main criteria considered in the selection.

Step 2: Analysis of selected program and services, including the associated budgets, from a gender perspective

A team of experts composed of municipal specialists, CSO experts and UN Women gathered all available data and conducted desk-based analysis of the programs. The analysis helped to identify the key purpose of such services, set clear objectives for budgetary allocations, summarize the importance of

the local services and programs based on evidence, and provide an overview of current availability of sex-disaggregated data. In most services and programs, gender gaps were identified either in terms of service coverage and beneficiaries or in terms of public participation by women and men in service design.

For instance, in Elbasan, parents and other community had concerns about the pre-university education program in relation to the adequacy of school facilities such as restrooms and changing rooms that can promote improved health and hygiene status of girls in schools. In Shkodra, the main concern was the lack of funding by the municipality for the four community social centers. Instead, daily activities of such centers were funded primarily by donors and the funds planned by the municipality were not fully disbursed to the centers. In Tirana, eligibility criteria for social housing were found to be gender-sensitive. However, the number of women beneficiaries of the low-interest loan for disadvantaged citizens was only half the number of men. This disparity was explained by the application requirements which included documents such as property certificates and utility bills to which women have limited access as the documents are often in the name of their spouse.

In Vlora, the transport system, which combined public and private transport, did not always cover late hours well. This was a concern especially for working women and girls who worked late shifts.

A team of experts prepared summaries of the findings and preliminary recommendations for public consultation.

Step 3: Consult on findings and recommendations through participatory meetings

Preliminary findings reflected the views expressed in the initial interviews and discussions conducted with municipal staff and specialists. In order to involve citizens and beneficiaries, the partner local CSO developed customized questionnaires and arranged a series of community and public meetings.

In addition, UN Women negotiated with the four municipalities to initiate further larger meetings where municipal service staff and specialists would come to listen and give answers to citizens' concerns and needs. Between October and November 2013 meetings were held with citizens in each neighborhood of the four municipalities. On average, between 25 and 35 citizens, women and men, attended each meeting. Gender advocates, civil society organizations and representatives of local social service organizations and municipal staff and specialists also attended the meetings. The local CSOs ensured that there was active participation of women and girls in order to hear their views, opinions and concerns. At each meeting the findings from the analysis of

local services were presented to the community, along with an introduction to the topic of GRB. The meetings yielded new information, as well as new recommendations.

"There are only few women head of household who benefit from the economic aid", said a woman beneficiary in neighborhood no. 3 in Vlora. "Both spouses should be entitled to access the economic aid, not only the man. Often men do not bring the cash assistance home", she noted.

"Returned citizens in need do not benefit from the economic aid because they aren't listed in the civil registry after 1990", said a divorced women who had returned to her natal family in Vlora.

Step 4: Advocate with local decision-makers for change in policies and budget cycle.

Advocacy briefs were then prepared in partnership with service delivery specialists to be used to address findings and recommendations and to show how policy and budget improvements can close the gender gap and the foster equal impact on women and men.

The final recommendations were formally submitted to the municipal authorities. In addition, . a group of civil society activists had individual meetings with local decision-makers, municipal councilors and high-level officials (such as mayors and deputy mayors) before the municipal discussion on the next budget cycle. Finally additional consultative meetings were conducted in each city, in which citizens had a final opportunity to raise their concerns directly in front of city councilors, directors of services and budgets and deputy mayors.

At the time of writing, there were already important changes in all four cities:

- In Elbasan, the municipal budget for the pre-university education program in 2013 allocated funds for investments to provide more adequate facilities in schools. The municipality also established a participatory budgeting model, enabling women and girls to participate throughout the budgeting process. Another important achievement was a planned budget line for 2013 to build a new day care center, responding to one of the strongest demands made by women during the participatory budgeting, as it eases the family care burden that many women face.
- In Vlora, the municipality allocated a budget line to complement the central budget for economic aid. This budget line will be used by the municipality to provide cash assistance to a new beneficiary category, namely divorced women who have returned to their hometown after 1990. In addition, an internal practice has been established, followed

by a municipal decision, to grant access to cash assistance for both spouses, enabling women to receive cash assistance directly for their families and children.

- In Shkodra, the municipal council approved the allocation of funds to one of the four local NGOs that run the community social centers, and have memoranda of understanding with the municipality to deliver social services in the community. The council approved the decision that all city departments must present a gender impact assessment of their key programs and budgets to the council for approval.
- In Tirana, as a result of an advocacy process with the deputy mayor and the municipal administration on the need for more social services addressing the needs of elderly women, youth and children, the 2014 draft municipal budget included a line for building two additional multifunctional community centers. In addition, concrete recommendations for policy changes to allow for inclusion of domestic violence survivors as beneficiaries of the social housing program were forwarded to the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The two-fold approach (capacitate municipal officials in GRB through training, support to conduct gender analysis and coaching on GRB on the one hand, and support citizens, women and men to articulate their needs and priorities and participate in planning and budgeting processes on the other hand) was one of the key successful elements of this initiative.

Further, given the often limited time and capacities of civil servants, the involvement of local CSOs and gender experts was key not only to facilitate the participatory process but also to add value to the overall service performance of the municipality. However, in order to build future capacity for gender-responsive planning and budgeting and ensure ownership of findings, it is important to support more direct involvement of civil servants.

This initiative demonstrated the potential of combining participatory needs assessment tools such as the community-based scorecard with GRB tools to ensure local policy and service platforms take into account the needs of women and men, girls and boys.

Narrowing the focus to services such as economic aid, housing, community social housing, transport, health care and education encouraged the involvement of women's groups and strengthened their capacity to be effective advocates for including a gender perspective in local service delivery.

CASE STUDY 8

CSOS AS ADVOCATES AND WATCHDOGS OF GRB: LESSONS FROM LOCAL INITIATIVES IN FYR MACEDONIA

Name of the experience	Civil society organizations: Advocates and watchdogs for gender-responsive budgeting			
Place of the experience	Municipalities of Kumanovo, Shtip and Strumica, Centar, Gostivar, Strumica, Debar and Tearce			
Partnerships				
*Lead actor(s)	Association for Equal Opportunities "Equal Access" Association for Health Education and Research (HERA) National Council for Gender Equality			
*Other partners	UN Women			



BACKGROUND

With the institutionalization of GRB (see case study 3), CSOs emerged as important actors to hold FYR Macedonia's central and local governments accountable to their new commitments. The technical support offered by the UN Women regional project to CSOs aimed at enabling them to advocate for the implementation of GRB strategies and to assume a role of watchdogs of government activity and spending from a gender equality perspective.



WHAT WAS DONE?

Two major project activities characterized UN Women's work with CSOs: 1) development of the first CSO watchdog reports on government activity and spending from a gender equality perspective; and 2) building of CSO advocacy capacities on GRB.

In the period 2012-2013 UN Women provided technical support to:

- the association for Health Education and Research (HERA) to produce "Gender assessment of local level social policies and budgets: the case of Kumanovo, Shtip and Strumica";
- the National Council on Gender Equality to produce "Gender issues

and social protection in the municipalities of Centar and Gostivar";

- the association Equal Access to produce "Assessment of the direct participation of women and men in the government and decision-making: case study of Strumica, Debar and Tearce".

UN Women actively contributed to the development of the research methodologies and final reports.

Prior to starting the research process, the CSOs signed memoranda of understanding with the selected municipalities defining the areas of cooperation. The memoranda required that the municipalities provide the CSOs with the available data on the programs to be assessed, carefully review the findings and recommendations of the final report and consider acting upon them.

The assessments covered different aspects of local level policy which provided insight in the level of implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities between women and men (2012), the policy approaches adopted, gender gaps in the programs and consultative mechanisms at local level. The three assessments identified the following: 1) low awareness among officials about how gender inequalities are manifested in the work of the municipalities; 2) weaknesses in implementation of the Law on Equal opportunities and strategies on gender equality; and 3) an evident need for strengthening the institutional capacities on gender equality and GRB to tackle gender inequalities at local level.

More specifically, the "Gender assessment of local level social policies and budgets: the case of Kumanovo, Shtip and Strumica" found that social policies are not based on gender impact analysis, gender-disaggregated data, gender objectives and indicators. Municipalities rarely identify the disadvantages and vulerabilities women face on the basis of their gender. Also social policies and their budgets are generally not aligned with gender equality commitments or understand as tools to promote gender equality.

"Gender issues and social protection in the municipalities of Centar and Gostivar" found that social protection policy at local level does not consider gender as a cross-cutting issue. The municipalities do not have knowledge of the specific social needs and interests of women and men and lack gender-disaggregated data.

"Assessment of the direct participation of women and men in the government and decision-making: case study of Strumica, Debar and Tearce" suggests that women and men find municipalities to be distant from their needs and interests. There are forums for participation of citizens which include specific provisions to encourage the participation of women. However women are either not aware of these opportunities or are prevented from participating by social cultural and other reasons. Further, few initiatives that address women's needs are supported with allocations from the municipal budget.

The findings of these assessments were presented at a conference entitled "Gender responsive budgeting at local level". The conference opened up debate on the challenges faced in reflecting gender equality commitments in the programs and budgets of local self-governments and on possible partnerships between local self-governments and CSOs to advance gender equality using GRB tools. In response to the analysis, the municipality of Strumica requested technical support to apply GRB tools in the formulation of its new social protection policy.

In 2012, UN Women contracted international and national experts on GRB to design and deliver comprehensive training on GRB focusing on advocacy and to develop the first "CSO toolkit on gender responsive budgeting".



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

CSOs are generally open to new strategies and tools which can enhance the impact of their work on the lives of women and men in the country. While they have impressive lobbying and advocacy skills, CSOs can benefit from further strengthening of their analytical capacities to apply GRB tools in analyzing programs and budgets. The fact that the GRB initiatives recognized them as important actors for holding governments accountable paved the way for partnerships with government in the advancement of gender equality. However, to ensure CSOs are able to fulfill their role effectively, institutions need to demonstrate trust in their intention and openly cooperate. Hesitation of institutions to provide information and data will limit the potential to improve the quality and gender-responsiveness of government's programs.

CASE STUDY 9

ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS KEY ACTORS TO ENHANCE AND DISSEMINATE GRB KNOWLEDGE: THE EXAMPLE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Name of the experience	Introducing GRB as a teaching subject at universities
Place of the experience	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Partnerships	
*Lead actor(s)	Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIPS), University of Sarajevo, UN Women
*Other partners	RS Gender Center, the University of Banja Luka



BACKGROUND

The shortage of experts and expertise in GRB has been a global challenge. Implementing GRB requires specific knowledge on gender equality theory and practice, but also in-depth understanding of public finance. GRB is also a relatively new area of practice and, even at the international level, there is a shortage of academic courses and training in this field. In order to address this gap, and to bring GRB closer to the students and professors not only of gender studies but also economics and other fields, UN WOMEN initiated cooperation with academic institutions of BiH such as the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (CIPS) at the University of Sarajevo. CIPS is te only academic institution in BiH offering a master level program in gender studies, but GRB was not included in the program.



WHAT WAS DONE?

CIPS was supported to introduce GRB as an official teaching subject in the Master course in Gender Studies. This initiative included the following steps:

 A university-level course of GRB was developed. Twenty persons (masters-level graduates in gender studies and CIPS staff) participated in the five-day course, held in September 2011 at the University of Sarajevo. The course was participatory and focused mainly on practical experiences as well as comparative case studies from other countries. As the students already had sound theoretical knowledge about gender equality, the GRB course achieved its main purpose, namely expanding the pool of GRB experts in BiH. Several students were later used as researchers for the first GRB research at the University of Sarajevo, including as the research leader. The focus of the study was the allocation of funds of the University of Sarajevo, the modality of financing university projects, topics selected for research, the gender profile of leaders of the research teams, and beneficiaries of university projects. This research presented a starting point to introducing gender in budgeting processes at the university.

2. Syllabi and curricula for the GRB course were developed by the Head of the Macroeconomic Department of the Faculty of Economics and were adopted by the Senate of Sarajevo University. This presented a major breakthrough in mainstreaming gender on a scholarly level. CIPS included GRB in its Gender Studies Masters Program curriculum as an elective subject, with the first generation able to take GRB as a subject enrolled in 2014.

Using the experience gained with the University of Sarajevo, in the Republic of Srpska UN Women supported the RS Gender Center and the University of Banja Luka to organize a five-day Summer Gender School. This school for graduate and post-graduate level students included lectures on gender in legislation, feminist economics, GRB and gender and media. The school was organized in 2011 and 2012 in cooperation with UN Women. The materials from the Summer Gender School were produced as a book that can be used in future similar training events.

In addition, the first regional GRB textbook for universities was prepared by four recognized professors from the region (BiH, Serbia, FYR Macedonia) and Austria. The textbook was peer reviewed by globally recognized experts. The textbook was produced simultaneously in English, Bosnian, Albanian and Macedonian.

A regional conference for universities was organized by UN Women on November 2013 in Sarajevo to launch the textbook. Participants at the conference were academics from BiH, Turkey, Macedonia, Albania and Serbia. The conclusions and recommendations of the conference included the following:

- For successful introduction of GRB as teaching subject in the region, it is essential to establish cooperation and support for introduction of GRB between universities, but also between gender advocates and experts;
- UN Women should act as a coordinating mechanism for the introduction of GRB in the academic context and establishment of a coordination

group/board for this purpose should be considered;

• As budgeting is primarily studied in economic faculties, it is important that GRB is introduced in teaching programs of economics, primarily public finance programs.



CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Academic institutions (faculties and research institutes) are important partners in expanding the pool of GRB experts. Introducing GRB at university level requires carefully planned steps starting with awareness rising to capture the interest and capacity building of academics ("educating the educators"). To encourage integration of GRB as a teaching subject, it has proved valuable to engage professors from the region in discussions and round tables and support exchange of knowledge and experiences between professors and experts in the region. To support this thrust, it is important to compile all the materials produced within UN Women regional GRB projects (such as GRB guides, tool-kits and analysis) and make them available as additional materials for GRB studies.

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