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NATIONAL GENDER PROFILE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

Bosnia and Herzegovina



**COUNTRY
GENDER
ASSESSMENT
SERIES**

**EUROPE AND
CENTRAL ASIA**

NATIONAL GENDER PROFILE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT SERIES

Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Foreword

We are proud to present this flagship Country Gender Assessment report for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It represents the first structured and all-encompassing attempt to collect and analyse the available secondary data and development indicators for the country, while applying a gender perspective throughout this process. We hope that this report contributes to the existing body of social and sustainable development research in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a number of reasons. First, it is a collaborative initiative, jointly undertaken by FAO and UN Women under the “Delivering as one” approach, which the UN family endorses throughout its development work. Second, this report consolidates the fragmented pieces of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data, and insights from expert stakeholders, into one “snapshot” assessment, while also highlighting critical gaps in the data. Lastly, this assessment is designed to be of a practical nature for use by a wide audience, including, but not limited to, development practitioners, policymakers and non-governmental organizations. It offers a crucial evidence base for gender-sensitive and gender-responsive policymaking and programming in agriculture and rural development. Both the FAO and UN Women teams can make significant use of this research in their future work, in particular drawing upon the recommendations included in the report.

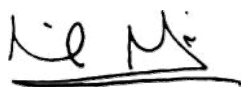
This work highlights the essence of the saying that “data is precious”. It is especially important during times of uncertainty that policymakers have access to this relevant data and analysis to enable a more inclusive and gender-equal recovery in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although the research team has been severely constrained in their ability to conduct fieldwork due to physical and social distancing, they have gone above

and beyond in their efforts to complete this work. On behalf of the FAO and UN Women senior management, we would like to sincerely thank all our colleagues and national partners who made the publication of this report possible.

We are very pleased about the key positive findings reported in the CGA. The assessment provides valuable information about the gender dimensions of agriculture and rural development, including the significant yet invisible role played by rural women in agricultural production. In addition to this, the report demonstrates that women perform unpaid work, they lack access to productive resources, and they are underrepresented in formal decision-making at all levels. The outbreak of COVID-19 has exposed the vulnerabilities of certain women and girls to the increased risk of domestic violence, for example, as well as adding to the burden of unpaid care work due to the widespread closure of schools. Women who are especially at risk of being left behind include those who are living in rural areas, women with disabilities, women from ethnic minority groups, such as Roma women, women who have been internally displaced, and many more.

This Country Gender Assessment marks the first fundamental milestone of collaboration by FAO, UN Women, the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and non-governmental partners in working towards a more inclusive society. Now it is time for us to start implementing concrete actions: raising the visibility of women in rural development and acknowledging their roles; granting women equal access to land and farming assets; incorporating women into power structures; and achieving development which is truly sustainable and leaves no one behind.

Nabil Gangi



FAO Deputy Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia; De-Facto Head of FAO Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina

David Saunders



UN Women Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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2. Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina
3. Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina
4. Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
5. Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

6. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska
7. Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska
8. Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics
9. Foundation for Women's Empowerment Bosnia and Herzegovina
10. Association of Roma Women BOLJA BUDUĆNOST (Better Future)
11. Female Agriculture Cooperative DANICA (Association of Women's Smile) – Laktaši
12. Consultants for UN Women

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Acronyms

BAM	Bosnia and Herzegovina convertible mark	HDI	Human Development Index
BD BiH	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina	ICT	information and communication technologies
BHAS	Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina	IDP	internally displaced person
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
CGA	Country Gender Assessment	MHH	male-headed household
CPF	Country Programming Framework	MoFTER	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSO	civil society organization	MSME	micro, small and medium-sized enterprise
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	NGO	non-governmental organization
FARMA	Fostering Agricultural Markets Activity (Sida/USAID project)	RS	Republika Srpska
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	RSIS	Institute for Statistics of Republika Srpska
FHH	female-headed household	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
FIS	Institute for Statistics of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
GAP	gender action plan	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GBV	gender-based violence	UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GDI	Gender Development Index	VET	vocational education and training
GDP	gross domestic product		
GII	Gender Inequality Index		

A note about the COVID-19 pandemic

The research for this Country Gender Assessment was undertaken between February and May 2020, a period that coincided with the outbreak of a novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) across Europe, including in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It was not possible to adequately analyse the impact of the pandemic on food security and agriculture, nor to determine how women and men living in rural communities will be affected in the immediate and long term in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The situation was changing as this report was finalized.

However, the experience of other emergency situations, which can include natural disasters and human-made events, has demonstrated that existing disparities grow wider in times of crisis. This includes gender disparities as well as marginalization based on poverty, education levels, settlement type and minority status, for example. As the United Nations has explained, "Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls simply by virtue of their sex" (UN Secretary-General, 2020). Women and girls in rural and isolated locations are in especially vulnerable situations, given their more limited access to health information and health services, their overrepresentation among the unemployed and in the informal workforce, the burden of unpaid care work, which has increased with the widespread closure of schools, workplaces and non-essential services, the risk of domestic violence, and poor infrastructure in rural areas (such as inadequate clean water).

In May 2020, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina issued a set of recommendations calling for a gender perspective to be integrated into the processes of planning and implementing decisions, measures and plans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including measures for a gender-responsive economic recovery (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2020).¹ The agency noted that special attention should be devoted to women from marginalized groups, including women living in rural areas. The recommendations were submitted to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, entity and cantonal governments, and staff responsible for civil protection and crisis management in ministries of health at all levels of government.

FAO and UN Women continue to monitor the situation on the ground and are providing policy advice and guidance on the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the following publications:

- » The gendered impacts of COVID-19 and equitable policy responses in agriculture, food security and nutrition (FAO, 2020f)²
- » COVID-19 and rural poverty: Supporting and protecting the rural poor in times of pandemic (FAO, 2020d)³
- » Addressing inequality in times of COVID-19 (FAO, 2020b)⁴
- » Social Protection and COVID-19 response in rural areas (FAO, 2020g)⁵
- » Brief on the gender perspective and guidance for all efforts related to COVID-19 (UN Women, 2020c)⁶
- » Bosnia and Herzegovina: The impact of COVID-19 on women's and men's lives and livelihoods (UN Women, 2020b)⁷

1 Available at <https://arsbih.gov.ba/preporuke-za-integriranje-perspektive-ravnopravnosti-spolova-u-borbi-protiv-pandemije-covid-19/>.

2 Available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca9198en/>.

3 Available at <http://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1273345/>.

4 Available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8843en/>.

5 Available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8561en/>.

6 Available at <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/brief-on-the-gender-perspective-and-guidance-for-all-efforts-related-to-covid19>.

7 Available at <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/2020/07/factsheet-bosnia-fin-min.pdf?la=en&vs=1208>.

Executive summary

Gender equality is a human right. It is also crucial for the implementation of the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) because goals of achieving food security, enhancing agricultural productivity and improving the lives of people in rural areas all depend on eliminating social and economic inequalities between women and men (see FAO, 2020e). At the same time, UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN Women, 2020a). Both FAO and UN Women promote gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women and also mainstream gender throughout their strategies, policies and programming.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, as is true throughout the world, women in rural areas are vital contributors to their communities and the economies of their households. Yet, as noted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, rural women also face “systematic and persistent barriers to the full enjoyment of their human rights”; they disproportionately experience poverty and exclusion and face multiple forms of discrimination (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2016, para. 4). The FAO Country Programming Framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021 draws attention to the challenges faced by women in rural areas and their precarious position in terms of lack of access to key resources and disempowerment. The UN Women Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been strategically investing in the policy framework for improving the lives of women from rural areas for the past ten years.

According to the FAO Policy on Gender Equality (FAO, 2013), country programming must include a Country Gender Assessment (CGA). This Country Gender Assessment is not only a first for FAO in Bosnia and Herzegovina but it is also a unique joint undertaking with UN Women, which contributes its own institutional expertise in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This CGA for Bosnia and Herzegovina is intended to provide insights into the most prominent gender gaps in the agricultural sector

and concerning rural livelihoods, with the intention that the findings contained here will inform the future work of FAO and UN Women and will also assist the relevant state and entity institutions to ensure a more gender-sensitive approach to policymaking and programming.

Methodology and research limitations

This CGA was conducted through an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, based on a review of literature and statistical compilations and interviews with a number of stakeholders. The most significant limitation to developing the CGA is the lack of current, reliable and comprehensive data. Statistics concerning agriculture are fragmented and outdated. This had led to a situation in which evidence-based policymaking related to the development of agriculture and rural areas is severely constrained. Against this backdrop, gender statistics are available for a number of indicators relating to the social sphere but have not been produced for some of the most basic indicators relating to agriculture. Some official statistics are available for women and men separately, and often for rural and urban residents, but the two are rarely cross-tabulated. For the most part, proxy measures (such as data for women who are the heads of rural households and the number of women included in farm registries) are used to give a glimpse of the overall situation concerning women in rural areas and women farmers.

Country overview

Macro-level indicators of gender equality show that the most prominent gender disparities in Bosnia and Herzegovina concern women’s economic empowerment (specifically, the large gap in labour force participation rates between women and men) and their political empowerment (women’s low representation in political office). While these indicators mask the complexities of issues that women living in rural areas face, as they are general for the country as a whole, they do signal several important issues: women in rural areas play a significant role in unpaid work on family farms, but rural women also lack political voice,

which leaves them little influence over policy-setting in areas that impact on them directly.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a well-developed and extensive legal and policy base supporting gender equality and gender mainstreaming processes. The commitments to gender equality under the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and as part of accession to the European Union are complementary, and the processes for fulfilling these commitments are mutually reinforcing. The complexity of the administrative system for Bosnia and Herzegovina means that, in theory, there is a direct line of laws, strategies and policies on gender equality from the state to the entity, and then to the cantonal and municipal levels, creating a sound framework for including a gender perspective in government planning. The Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina sets forth the responsibilities of all public authorities at the state, entity and canton levels and local self-governance to apply gender equality standards. In practice, however, gender mainstreaming in public policy is inconsistent between sectors and entities, and often superficial, merely mentioning “gender” or “women” in key documents. The capacity of line ministries to mainstream gender varies by institution and may often depend on whether there is an understanding of the benefits of including a gender perspective in official policy and programming and a commitment from leadership. As a consequence, a great many strategies and policies that concern agriculture or implicate rural areas are gender blind. They are not consistent with the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina or the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022, nor do they support SDG 5.

The public institutions dedicated to promoting gender equality at the state and entity levels have specific competencies, but all have a role in implementing and monitoring the Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina, determining priorities, providing expertise on legislation, policies and strategic documents and conducting research and analysis, among other activities. The gender equality institutions do not have an oversight function over ministries or other public institutions and, thus, their influence over how gender mainstreaming functions in practice is connected to their advisory and supporting roles.

The development of gender action plans (GAPs) at the municipal level is promising, particularly as it builds awareness and capacity at the local level where many decisions are taken that affect the lives of women and men. Because they outline local priorities with a gender lens, potentially donors could refer to GAPs as “road maps” for project planning and implementation. However,

analysis of a sample of local gender actions plans indicates that, unfortunately, they have a very uneven approach to integrating gender considerations into local initiatives that concern agriculture or rural development. Many expired several years ago and there is limited institutional memory. This means that each local administration often begins the process of developing a GAP anew.

Demographic profile: Bosnia and Herzegovina has been described as one of the “most rural” countries in Europe based on the fact that almost 60 percent of the population lives in areas that are characterized as non-urban (UNDP, 2013). For this reason, the concept of rural development is very broad, not only encompassing increased agricultural production, but also improvements to the whole environment for the benefit of both women and men from rural areas. Special attention must also be paid to intersecting and multiple forms of marginalization that are experienced by some groups of rural women.

Socio-economic profile: While poverty rates have somewhat decreased for the country as a whole, rural poverty rates remain almost double those of the urban population (Intergovernmental SDG working group, 2019). Women comprise slightly more than half of the country’s poor, but poverty rates increase further among women with incomplete levels of education, older women and women living in rural areas. For instance, it has been estimated that rural male-headed households have a median net annual income that is 20 percent higher than that of rural female-headed households (IFAD, 2013). From the perspective of multidimensional poverty, women in rural areas are not only unlikely to be economically independent, but they are also more likely to be negatively affected by poor social and physical infrastructure and food insecurity, and are “time poor” in terms of the burden of unpaid work in households and on family farms.

Health profile: In terms of general lifetime health, average life expectancy has been increasing and is now 79 years for women and 74.3 years for men (BHAS, 2020b). The gender gap in life expectancy is consistent with global trends. The most problematic issue for rural communities is not necessarily poor health indicators but difficulties in accessing healthcare. Limited access to healthcare refers to the distance between rural settlements and healthcare providers, and particularly to specialized and preventative healthcare that women need (for example, gynaecological medicine or cervical and breast cancer screening). Women’s lack of health insurance is a particular problem in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, due to the way in which registration for health insurance for non-employed people is regulated. Women in rural areas

are disproportionately represented among those who are not in formal work or education, and they therefore often fall outside of health insurance schemes.

Education: One of the most significant gender differences in education is the pattern of female and male enrolment in distinct fields of study, an indication of the influence of gender stereotypes. At the level of secondary education, girls are far less likely to attend vocational schools and, generally, are less involved in courses in IT, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. At the post-secondary level, likewise, women form the majority of students in education and healthcare, but represent less than ten percent of students enrolled in mechanical and electrical engineering (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, para. 143). As a result, women are most often employed in the public sector or sectors in which the labour market is less active and wages are lower.

On average, rural residents attend school for less time than their urban counterparts, and have approximately 25 percent fewer years of education (CERD, 2019a). At the secondary level, rural children are more often out of school than those living in urban areas (World Bank *et al.*, 2015). Interruptions in education happen when boys are required to work, which could include on family farms, and girls are needed to help with domestic chores. The consequences of educational losses are serious for both girls and boys. However, the “work” performed by girls is invisible and seems to correlate with a future life in informal and unpaid labour. There are also marked gender differences in educational outcomes. In 2013, the female illiteracy rate was close to five times that of the male illiteracy rate (BHAS, 2016). Women from rural areas, elderly women, women with disabilities and Roma women are the most likely to have incomplete or no formal education.

Among women and men who lead agricultural households, most women have no more than partial primary education, compared with more than half of farming men who have secondary education.⁸ These differences suggest that women farmers may lack essential knowledge and information, and unless the gaps are addressed, projects for women in agriculture and income-generating activities will be limited in their effectiveness.

The labour market and employment patterns: As a reflection of the differences in the educational opportunities of women and men, the labour market

in Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by occupational segregation by gender. While women have higher educational achievements than men on average, they also face more difficulties finding work, retaining work (women’s unemployment rates are higher than men’s) and advancing in their careers. Women also have lower average salaries. For the rural population, the gender gap in labour force participation is wide, estimated at 30 percent (in favour of men) for rural areas compared with 16 percent for the urban population (World Bank *et al.*, 2015). These figures translate to a very large proportion of rural women considered to be out of the labour force (not due to retirement or study), and who are generally classified as “housewives”. The very term does not do justice to the fact that women in rural areas take on a large burden of unpaid work, including agricultural work on family farms, and that they also make up a significant proportion of the informal, or shadow, labour market.

Agricultural labour, farming and rural enterprises

The formal employment rate in agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina is lower than that of other sectors of the economy; only 20 percent of women and 16 percent of men are formally employed in agriculture (BHAS, 2019c). In comparison, two-thirds of women’s formal employment is in the service sector, and 41 percent of men find formal work in industry.

Informal work is neither limited to rural areas nor to agriculture, but informality is especially high in the agricultural sector. The typical male head of an agricultural household is formally employed off the farm and therefore has limited time to devote to farming. Much of the day-to-day farm work is therefore performed by women, with contributions from other family members. Rural men also work informally, mainly in construction. Both women and men engage in informal market trade and service sector work, and handicrafts, and women also undertake informal cleaning and childcare jobs. For women, however, informal and unpaid work often overlap. Their contributions to family-owned businesses and farms, which they undertake in addition to domestic chores, tend to be both unregistered and unpaid, and accrue no benefits (such as pensions, health insurance, maternity and childcare leave). Farm work itself also shows gendered patterns. Women are more often engaged in manual labour and tasks at the lowest end of value chains, such as harvesting fruit and vegetables, milking cows and preparing agricultural products for sale. They are less involved in sales and marketing that involve greater decision-making about and control over income earned from agriculture.

⁸ Data from the 2013 population census provided by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHAS) for the purposes of this assessment.

There is a need to diversify the economy of rural areas, both in agricultural and non-agricultural activities, and create new jobs for the population. Service jobs (such as childcare) and tourism have been highlighted as potentially offering rural women employment and income-generating opportunities. It is important that the occupational segregation that exists in the labour market as a whole not be replicated when promoting employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for rural women. Rather, such initiatives should be based on gender-sensitive value chain and market analyses.

Ownership of land and farms: Although the data are incomplete, the general pattern of land ownership in Bosnia and Herzegovina clearly favours men. Women are estimated to represent around 30 percent of landowners (and are most often the co-owners of land) – a pattern that has changed little in a decade (FAO, 2020a). Female-headed agricultural households have significantly smaller land plots than male-headed households. Women's ownership of real estate and other property follows a similar pattern. Only 12 percent of women in rural areas are the sole owners of a dwelling; the situation varies slightly in urban areas where women constitute 19 percent of sole owners (*ibid.*). As partial co-owners, women tend to own less than half of the share in property. Women's property ownership rights are enshrined in the law, but in practice, traditional attitudes prevail in which property is inherited by male family members. Several initiatives on land rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina have included awareness-raising on the importance of recognizing women's formal rights to property. Nevertheless, patrilineal patterns of property ownership mean that rural women are heavily engaged in farming but have limited rights over the very land they are using, particularly in terms of being able to sell or rent land or other property, or to use it as collateral for loans. This leaves them in a vulnerable and dependent position economically. For this reason, SDG 5 includes two indicators on women's ownership of agricultural land and women's equal rights to land ownership.

Precise sex-disaggregated data about farm ownership do not exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina at present. Rather, data from farm registries provide a picture of how women are represented among farmers. It is important to keep in mind that registration is voluntary (although it is a prerequisite in applying for agricultural and rural development incentives), registry data that are disaggregated by sex refers to registered family farms, and that registries are not unified for the country as a whole. Out of all rural households that were engaged in agriculture in 2013 (just over 360 000 households), 18

percent were female-headed households.⁹ Today, an analogous proportion of family farms are registered to women (18 percent in the registry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 17.6 percent in the registry of Republika Srpska). Both entity governments, the relevant ministries and gender centres have introduced special programmes, priorities and incentives for women farmers (for example, applications to public calls for agricultural incentives that are submitted by women holders are awarded additional points). These are credited with incrementally increasing the share of women among the total number of registered owners of family farms. While the trend is very important, concern has also been expressed that it should not necessarily be taken as an indicator of women's increased access to productive resources and greater empowerment in managing family farms. The additional incentives may have encouraged some households simply to re-register the farm under women's names.

Among women farmers who are interested in formal registration, the costs and process itself can be prohibitive. Women face a number of difficulties in navigating the registration process and rarely have the assistance of lawyers or accountants. For this reason, many forms of women's agricultural production, that they intend to manage as a business, are not registered. In addition, a considerable proportion of rural households engage in subsistence farming. These activities are often undertaken by women and are neither formalized nor market-oriented, but they are nevertheless important for the household because they contribute to food security.

Women's engagement in crop farming and livestock production mirrors that of their overall participation in farming: they have more limited resources but also tend to focus on certain crops and stages of agricultural production (for instance, milking animals and making cheese but not the marketing of it; cultivating and harvesting fruits, vegetables and herbs and selling them to intermediaries, but not processing these products to increase their value). Moreover, there has been no gender analysis of specific agricultural value chains. Yet this kind of assessment, as well as a comprehensive census that includes women's access to and use of agricultural inputs (including irrigation, fertilizers and technologies) and resources (extension and advisory services, training and networking opportunities), should be the foundation for policymaking and programming on the economic empowerment of women living in rural areas.

⁹ Data from the 2013 population census provided by BHAS for the purposes of this assessment.

The relevant ministries for agriculture in each entity give priority to women applicants for some incentives (for both agriculture and rural development). However, an analysis of the beneficiaries of these financial incentives, conducted for this Country Gender Assessment, shows that women who are registered family farm owners account for roughly between 20 and 30 percent of all beneficiaries. Moreover, they receive an even smaller proportional share of the funds. An evaluation of why women farmers appear to have more limited access to incentives was not found during this research. Similarly, it does not appear that monitoring has been conducted of positive developments among beneficiaries that can be attributed to the special incentive schemes for women.

Experts interviewed for this County Gender Assessment drew attention to the fact that there have been a great many projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina that have focused on assisting rural women to launch businesses, to undertake agricultural production and to establish cooperatives. The need to support such start-up activities for new groups of women continues. However, there are now women who require higher-level and specialized support in areas such as registering a farm, scaling-up farming activities that require new equipment (for example, greenhouses or refrigerators for storage), in transportation and marketing of agricultural and other products, and navigating certification processes to access the wider European market. There are various models for this type of support, including business incubators, associations or clusters, that would allow resources to reach a greater number of women who need these services.

Rural infrastructure

Inadequate household infrastructure in rural areas affects entire households but also has a particular impact on women because it increases their domestic work burden. Rural households predominantly use solid fuels for heating (wood or coal), and gas or electricity are more often used for cooking. Heating homes and water as well as preparing meals using unclean solid fuels increases indoor pollution. This can have a harmful impact on women's health, because they are mainly engaged in cooking, as well as on the health of young children and elderly people who spend more time inside the home.

Virtually all households use improved sources of drinking water, most often piped into the home. This pattern differs little between rural and urban areas, but a few rural households use water piped into their yard, water from wells and springs or water piped to a public

tap. Almost all rural households use private improved sanitation facilities.

Nevertheless, rural communities face isolation and limited access to the social infrastructure. More than half of rural residents live at least three kilometres from the nearest clinic, hospital, bank or post office (where rural residents pay bills, and send and receive money), but are closer to local primary schools and shops. For women in rural settlements, who rely more on public transport than private cars, irregular bus services and timetables that do not match their needs can make daily chores more complicated.

Rural areas are generally well connected to the mobile phone network, and 44 percent of rural households report that they have an internet connection, 39 percent have a broadband connection, and half own personal computers (UNDP, 2013). The technological base is important as it increases the potential to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to transform how farmers and entrepreneurs operate in rural areas. In order to ensure that women can benefit equally from ICTs, gender differences in their access and use must be studied. Women in rural areas are often marginalized when it comes to use of ICTs, based on the "triple divide" – a digital, rural and gender divide.

Rural women are also affected by their limited access to certain social protections, namely difficulties receiving social benefits (such as retirement pensions and maternity leave) that accrue through formal employment. Both entities have undertaken measures to support unemployed mothers. However, the fact that a large proportion of elderly women receive no pension payments makes them financially dependent on other family members and at a high risk of poverty. Children in rural areas are far less likely to attend preschools than their peers in urban areas, which is mainly due to the lack of such facilities outside of cities and towns. It may also reflect a certain societal ambivalence towards the importance of early education, not only for children, but in freeing women's time. Childcare responsibilities, coupled with other domestic work, place restrictions on a number of other opportunities for rural women: to engage in paid employment outside the home, to undertake entrepreneurial activities, to take part in training or other development projects, and to participate in civic meetings and local decision-making.

Food security and nutrition

Bosnia and Herzegovina has low levels of hunger and undernourishment, but it does exhibit a trend in increasing rates of overweight and obesity, both signs of poor nutritional status. Differences appear

along gender lines for both children and adults; rates are generally higher for men and boys, compared with women and girls. It appears that on the whole, overweight and obesity rates are higher in urban areas, which may well be an indication of the fact that rural households with gardens or family farms are more likely to have access to a variety of fresh foods. However, higher poverty levels in rural areas tends to correspond with consumption poverty, or the inability to meet more than basic food requirements through purchases. And for the Europe and Central Asia region generally, women experience food insecurity at severe or moderate levels more often than men, especially women who are poor and less educated. For women of reproductive age in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the rate of anaemia is quite high – almost a third of women. Anaemia indicates the existence of micronutrient deficiencies.

Climate change in Bosnia and Herzegovina poses a threat to food security, because it could affect agricultural practices (such as the need for increased irrigation) and crop yields. In general, women and men experience climate change differently, and gender inequalities (such as economic disparities, differences

in access to productive resources, different levels of education and cultural norms) affect their abilities to successfully adapt. Further analysis is needed about this subject, as well as about how women in Bosnia and Herzegovina can contribute to finding long-term solutions to climate change.

This Country Gender Assessment concludes with several recommendations for FAO and UN Women for medium- and longer-term actions that can support the relevant ministries, gender agencies and statistics agencies, as well as local stakeholders, to increase the gender sensitivity of policy directed towards rural development and support for agricultural production. Women in rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina represent a critical but untapped resource for the country. A key challenge will be to ensure continued support for women who have already taken the initiative to launch businesses, cooperatives or farm enterprises but who can further benefit from targeted assistance to increase profit and growth. It is equally critical to identify other women in rural areas who are less empowered and remain in vulnerable situations. Efforts should be made to ensure that they do not become further marginalized.

1. Introduction

1.1. Why is gender relevant to sustainable agriculture and rural development?

Gender equality is not only a human right, as enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), but it is also a central component of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with vital links to rural development, poverty alleviation and food security. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) recognize that rural women and girls are major agents of change in rural communities. Yet due to extensive gender gaps, women and girls face a number of specific constraints in reaching their full potential.

Globally, rural women are vital contributors to their communities and the economies of their households. Yet, “rural women continue to face systematic and persistent barriers to the full enjoyment of their human rights”; they disproportionately experience poverty and exclusion and face multiple forms of discrimination (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2016, para. 4). All too often, policies and initiatives on rural development are not gender-responsive. The rights and needs of rural women, “remain insufficiently addressed or ignored in laws, national and local policies, budgets, and investment strategies at all levels” (ibid.). Rural women are too frequently excluded from the processes of determining the very measures from which they might benefit.

Furthermore, globally women represent a large proportion of the agricultural labour force; they form the majority of food producers, play key roles in the management of natural resources and also contribute significantly to the care of their households. FAO also recognizes, however, that in every country, women are not able to fully contribute to agricultural production or to engage in the rural economy due to a number of constraints. Not least, women face “discrimination in access to key productive resources such as land and to

services... and are more likely than men to be in part-time, seasonal and/or low-paying jobs when engaged in rural wage employment; and they often work without remuneration on family farms” (FAO, 2013, p. 3).

Such inequalities reduce women’s contributions to the agricultural sector by diminishing their productivity, and this, in turn, negatively impacts on the wellbeing of rural families and communities.

Mandates on gender equality and women’s empowerment are embedded across the UN family. The FAO Policy on Gender Equality (2013) reflects the commitments to promote and protect human rights and gender equality and to ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is inclusive and *leaves no one behind*. By eliminating or even minimizing gender gaps, agricultural productivity would increase, which would result in less poverty and a reduction in hunger and nutrition insecurity, and foster economic growth.

1.2. About the implementing organizations

Both FAO and UN Women promote gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women and mainstream gender throughout their strategies, policies and programming. One of the minimum standards for gender mainstreaming outlined in the FAO Policy on Gender Equality is to conduct a Country Gender Assessment (CGA) as part of country programming, for example when preparing a Country Programming Framework (FAO, 2013). FAO must also carry out a gender analysis for all strategic objectives at the country level and ensure that gender is taken into consideration in project design, approval and implementation.

This Country Gender Assessment is unique for the Europe and Central Asia region in that it is a joint undertaking by FAO and UN Women. While fulfilling FAO mainstreaming requirements, this CGA also builds upon UN Women’s technical role in promoting gender

equality and women's empowerment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One of the core principles that guides cooperative work between the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UN system is human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. Thus, gender mainstreaming is a strategy that cuts across the joint Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2021–2025 and informs all programming.

1.2.1. FAO in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Since Bosnia and Herzegovina joined FAO in 1993, cooperation with the authorities has focused on five priority areas: (1) policy advice and institutional capacity building in the process of accession to the European Union; (2) improving the quality and safety of food at all stages of the food chain; (3) sustainable management of forests and trees; (4) integration of family farms into value chains for sustainable improvements in smallholder livelihoods and rural development; and (5) enhancing disaster risk reduction and management for resilient livelihoods.

The FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) for Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021 guides country-level work. It is based on two priority areas that have been agreed with the relevant ministries and agencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at both the state and entity levels. The priorities for FAO work in Bosnia and Herzegovina until 2021 are:

- » strengthening the competitiveness of small-scale family farming and value chains, and developing rural livelihoods for women and men through enhanced food safety, and phytosanitary, veterinary and institutional systems; and
- » the sustainable management of natural resources and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Gender equality is one of several cross-cutting themes that are to be mainstreamed across FAO's projects and work under the CPF. The CPF draws attention to gender differences in the ownership of family farms and agricultural labour and, in its implementation, anticipated several partnerships with inter-ministerial consultative gender centres, farmers' associations representing the interests of both women and men, and UN Women (the latter being specifically involved in the preparation of this Country Gender Assessment). Gender is mainstreamed into the CPF monitoring plan, with several targets related to rural women's economic empowerment.

The CPF for Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021 is in line with the FAO Regional Gender Equality Strategy

and Action Plan for Europe and Central Asia (2019–2022). Namely, the main areas of work for FAO offices in the European region are:

- » Developing capacity and raising awareness about issues related to gender equality, social protection and rural development. The aim of knowledge generation is to improve the evidence base for policymaking.
- » Economically empowering rural women through the development of inclusive and gender-sensitive value chains, diversifying income, and creating employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for improved food security and rural livelihoods of smallholders in the areas affected by land degradation and climate change.
- » Mainstreaming gender into FAO technical assistance, and in particular, providing technical guidance and support for collecting and using sex-disaggregated data to monitor progress in closing the gender gaps in key areas of FAO's mandates, as well as enhancing national and regional capacities for better integration of gender concerns in formulating, implementing, monitoring, reporting and evaluating development and humanitarian interventions.

The Regional Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan, in addition to recommendations contained in this CGA, offer guidance on how the work that is being undertaken by the CPF for Bosnia and Herzegovina can be further developed to be even more responsive to critical gender gaps concerning agriculture and rural livelihoods.

1.2.2. UN Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina

UN Women established a project office in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2008, which then expanded to a country office in 2013. The core work of UN Women is concentrated around three themes: ending violence against women; peace and security; and national planning and budgeting. The status and rights of women in rural areas is cross-cutting in UN Women programming, and the office has devoted particular attention to supporting gender mainstreaming in national planning and strategies on agriculture.

UN Women programming on capacity building in gender-responsive budgeting has led to the development of gender action plans at the municipal level, as well as budget analysis conducted by line ministries. UN Women supports sector-specific analysis and the development of gender mainstreaming tools related to the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), a European Union programme that provides

significant financial and technical assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina (as well as to other candidate countries).¹⁰ For the period 2018 to 2020, two sectors that are relevant to this CGA were earmarked for IPA II funds in Bosnia and Herzegovina: (1) agriculture, rural development and environment and (2) climate action and energy. The knowledge base generated by UN Women in support of gender mainstreaming of IPA assistance contributes to this Country Gender Assessment, and the CGA also includes recommendations for areas upon which UN Women could focus in future programming.

1.3. Scope and purpose of the gender assessment

The purpose of this Country Gender Assessment is broader than supporting FAO programming. The report aims to analyse how gender issues intersect with topics such as agriculture, rural livelihoods, nutrition and food security, and the management of natural resources. The CGA contributes to the knowledge base about gender inequalities affecting agricultural production and rural life. Due to the fact that a CGA has not been conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina before, the report also sets out to highlight critical gaps where information and data are lacking. The assessment provides recommendations on how differences between women and men in access to productive resources, inputs and information, gender roles and expectations, as well as gender stereotypes, should be taken into consideration during strategic planning around agriculture and rural development.

The findings and recommendations of this Country Gender Assessment are aimed primarily at FAO and UN Women in order to strengthen the integration of a gender perspective into programme and project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The assessment also aims to serve as a resource for the work of both FAO and UN Women with their strategic partners, in the government and also among donor organizations.

The report may be of use to other UN agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs) and researchers, alongside diverse professionals in the fields of agriculture and rural development.

1.4. Methodology

The methodology used to conduct this CGA follows the format recommended by FAO's internal guidance on preparing a Country Gender Assessment (FAO, 2017). The assessment process was conducted mainly

through a review and analysis of literature and statistical compilations related to the topics covered in this report. Additionally, interviews were carried out with expert stakeholders from several key institutions at both state and entity levels.

In terms of the overall research methodology, two shortcomings are worth mentioning. First, the statistical base for agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not reliable. Much of the data is obsolete and statistics are also inconsistent. The Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021 identifies this as a core political, legal and institutional weakness. The difficulties are compounded by the fact that there is no state-level ministry for agriculture, but the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoFTER) has a coordination role in this area. Lack of political consensus concerning the division of competencies for agriculture and rural development between the state, the entities (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina [FBiH] and Republika Srpska [RS]) and the Brčko District of BiH (BD BiH) have resulted in many asymmetries and gaps, meaning that the available data are often not representative of the country as a whole. FAO has determined that for 31 domains related to agriculture, aquaculture, forestry and food consumption, data were produced for only 11 domains in the last five years in Bosnia and Herzegovina (FAO, 2019b).

Second, although gender analysis of state policy in all sectors, the collection of sex-disaggregated data and regular monitoring of the status of gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina are legal requirements, there is a lack of publicly available documentation of the results of such activities carried out by public authorities. There is very limited analytical work on gender themes on official websites, for example. Gender analysis concerning agriculture or rural development issues either is not being made publicly available or is not regularly conducted by state and entity-level authorities. The Gender Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and entity gender centres, however, have supported research and analysis relevant to the topics of the CGA, some of which is available in both local languages and English on the relevant websites. These are referenced throughout this report.

The European Union and major bilateral donors supporting projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina also follow gender mainstreaming practices, but gender analysis conducted within agriculture projects is typically not available to external researchers. Thus, a great many of the resources used for the literature review for this CGA either concern gender equality themes that include some references to rural residents or they consist

¹⁰ IPA II is the current instrument for pre-accession assistance for 2014–2020. IPA III for 2021–2027 is still in the proposal stage.

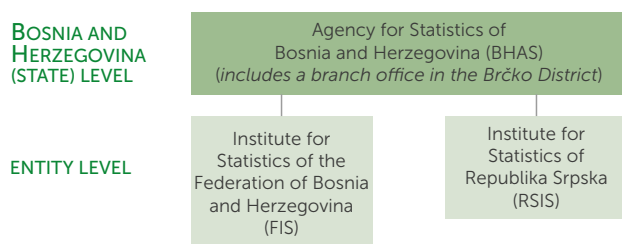
of reports on agricultural themes that make passing mention of the specific situation of women. Notable exceptions are research projects supported by UN Women, specifically a cross-cutting country-level review of gender equality and a sectoral gender analysis relevant to agriculture and rural development.

1.4.1. Data sources and gender statistics

Gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data are required for inclusive policymaking on rural development and agriculture and are the starting point for a Country Gender Assessment. Gender statistics reveal critical disparities that would otherwise be overlooked.

While quite extensive statistical databases are available in Bosnia and Herzegovina, at state and entity levels, there are weaknesses in the overall statistical base relevant to gender issues, mainly in the form of gaps in gender statistics related to agriculture and rural livelihoods. In addition, gender statistics are not entirely harmonized across the three institutions responsible for official data collection, and so one entity-level statistics agency may collect data for an indicator that the other does not.

The statistical system in Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of three institutions:



Each institution produces regular bulletins of gender statistics, with the BHAS publication, *Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, comprising both the agency's own survey data and consolidated data from each entity. The most recent bulletins (*Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2019; *Women and Men in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2018; and *Women and Men in Republika Srpska*, 2019) share common indicators that correspond to the UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators in the areas of health, education, labour force participation, public life and decision-making, and human rights (including violence against women). Absent from these collections of gender statistics, however, are data that are further disaggregated by residence, rural or urban. Likewise, the compilations of gender statistics have very limited indicators related to agriculture or rural livelihoods (namely, labour force participation rates and enrolment in agriculture departments of higher education institutions). These shortcomings – the lack of sectoral statistics disaggregated by sex and the inconsistent methodology for data collection – have been identified

as complicating the production of aggregated gender statistics for the country as a whole, as well as limiting the planning, implementation and evaluation of measures to improve gender equality (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018).

The statistical institutions produce regular agricultural bulletins. These agricultural bulletins, that are based in part on annual surveys of farms and agricultural holdings, report on economic activities (agricultural production, yields, harvests, sales and price indices), but they do not generate any sex-disaggregated data.

Other potential sources of data on agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina were identified when conducting research for this CGA, but many of these are not publicly available and not all of the collected data can be disaggregated by sex. For example, the relevant entity-level ministries for agriculture maintain registries of agricultural holders, some categories of which are disaggregated by the sex of the holder. The registration of a farm is voluntary; it is only required in order to receive public funds in the form of incentives. Therefore, the records cover many but not all farming enterprises or farming households. Farm registry data are not compiled or published for the country as a whole. Similarly, work has been ongoing to improve the land registry and cadastre system, and activities have been dedicated to raising awareness of women's rights as land owners. The cadastre systems are said to include sex-disaggregated data on real estate ownership. However, it seems the data have not been used to generate statistics about the representation of women among farm owners (with the exception of statistics on women property owners in Republika Srpska).

Several experts interviewed in the process of assessment preparation noted that one of the key roadblocks to improving the knowledge base on women's and men's representation in agricultural production is the lack of agricultural census data. The last full agricultural census was conducted in 1991. Without updated census data, the precise number of agricultural holdings, including family farms, is not known, and the role of women in particular remains obscure. In 2010, field data were collected under a pilot agricultural census project that covered five municipalities (in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Brčko District) and 866 households, 847 of which were farms.¹¹ The pilot was not gender-sensitive, although some preliminary analysis produced sex-disaggregated

11 Strengthening and Harmonisation of the BiH Agriculture and Rural Sectors Information System of the European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2009–2011.

statistics for indicators related to women and men as farm managers.

Presently, plans for a full agricultural census are continuing, but significant political discussions have arisen concerning the methodology and territorial boundaries of the country. It is not expected that a census will be carried out before 2023. Several other agricultural information systems in line with the European Union Association Agreement are under development (see Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018). It remains to be seen whether the new systems will be sufficiently gender-sensitive.

In order to improve the collection and analysis of gender-sensitive data in agriculture and rural areas, the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia has developed a suggested core set of gender indicators that can be integrated into the official agricultural statistical system (FAO REU, 2016). When conducting this CGA, requests were made to several stakeholders to provide any data that correspond to the core set of gender indicators in agriculture. Due to the specific competencies of the state and entity-level ministries, the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHAS) was able to provide data for seven of the suggested 18 indicators covering Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole (and derived from the 2013 population census). The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of

Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoFTER) has access to 2019 data that covers 8 of the 18 indicators for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina only (derived from the farm registry maintained by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina). Annex 1 documents the full list of gender indicators in agriculture, as well as those available for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The data sources that were consulted for this CGA, as well as other potential sources, are listed below along with a brief summary of their limitations.

Work is currently underway to develop a Gender Equality Index for Bosnia and Herzegovina, an assessment tool used in the European Union, that is a composite indicator measuring gender equality in six core domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power and health. The indicator would allow monitoring of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, enable comparisons to be made with other countries and would contribute to more responsive policymaking. The main obstacles to initiating the index are the lack of research needed to develop the indicators, the need to devise methodologies and the need to implement specific surveys, that are standard in the European Union, in order to calculate the indicators. Collaborative work between the state-level gender institution and statistics agency, with the European Institute for Gender Equality, began in 2020 (Agency for Gender Equality of

Table 1: Data sources

Data source	Description
Gender statistics of BHAS, FIS and RSIS	<i>Women and Men</i> publications produced at least every two years and covering a number of indicators. Data are not disaggregated by settlement; limited indicators on agriculture.
Databases of BHAS, FIS and RSIS	Some indicators from household budget surveys, labour force surveys and on employment/unemployment/wages are disaggregated for urban and rural areas. However, most of the data are not also disaggregated by sex.
Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2011–2012) UNICEF	Household survey data for indicators linked to the Millennium Development Goals (for example, nutrition, health, education, child protection, water and sanitation); some data are disaggregated by rural/urban household. A new round of the MICS was being designed in 2020.
Population census of 2013	The census produced data about agricultural households with some data disaggregated by the sex of the household head.
Annual surveys of farms/agricultural holdings	Conducted at the entity level in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska; data are based on samples and cover agricultural production (crop and livestock production), labour force and value of agricultural land. No sex-disaggregated data.
Registries of agricultural holders	The registries are voluntary for those receiving subsidies and so do not cover all farms. The records are said to be sex-disaggregated by farm owner. Such records are not publicly available.
Cadastral and land registration authorities	Databases of land and real estate owners are said to be sex-disaggregated. Such records are not publicly available.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a). The Gender Equality Index has the potential to provide much-needed information about issues such as differences for women and men in living conditions, working conditions, quality of life and time use. It appears, however, that the Gender Equality Index, as used in the European Union, aggregates data for each country and does not highlight specifics for rural men and women as distinct from those in urban areas.

A note about the classification of rural areas

It should be noted that differing approaches are used to classify rural and urban areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, depending on the organization and purpose. Official statistics use the following typology: “urban” and “other”. Settlements that are classified as “other” include *both* rural and semi-urban areas. This approach, the settlement classification, is based on the size of the settlement or its administrative classification, regardless of where it is located. The settlement classification is standard in the former Yugoslav republics and also conforms to the FAO approach of identifying urban settlements and classifying all others as rural.

Another approach, also used in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the area approach, in which a region, municipality or county is defined as rural or urban according to its population density and size.

Neither classification system is better than the other because they measure and highlight some issues while also obscuring others. Statisticians point out that the settlement approach can be problematic in Bosnia and Herzegovina because it may not capture accurate information about settlements that, while classified as urban, have more in common with rural areas, such as poor infrastructure and limited access to basic services. Put another way, “the main town in a sparsely-populated municipality” would nevertheless be considered urban under a settlement classification (UNDP, 2013, p. 4).

Box 1: What “rural” means in the context of this Country Gender Assessment

The term “rural” is used throughout this report, but as noted, it may have different meanings depending on the source of the cited data or research. In fact, official statistics at the state and entity levels are generally not disaggregated by settlement type. At the same time, qualitative studies tend to use the term “rural” with its commonly-accepted meaning, without specifying whether semi-urban settlements are included in the research. Because there is no single definition of a rural area, research findings may not always be comparable.

For the sake of simplicity, this report also uses the term “rural” to refer to non-urban areas that are characterized by a low population density, small settlements, and engagement in agriculture, forestry and/or aquaculture. When necessary, other meanings are specified.

The settlement approach is useful for capturing information about access to land, basic infrastructure and local services because it does not distinguish between remote villages or small settlements near a major city. On the other hand, the area approach “treats all residents of a sparsely-populated municipality the same, whether they live on an isolated farm or on the top-floor flat in the principal town of the municipality,” and so it can shed light on widespread economic factors, such as employment and unemployment rates, but it is less effective in providing information about issues such as whether individual households have access to agricultural land or infrastructure, for example, water supply and sewerage (UNDP, 2013, p. 33). When gender analysis is also applied, the effectiveness of either method for classifying rural areas will depend on what is being assessed, for instance, the domestic burden on rural women when infrastructure is poor or factors that push men to migrate from rural areas for work.

2. Country overview

2.1. Macro-level view of gender equality

Indices that measure human development provide a bird's eye view of the progress that has been made in Bosnia and Herzegovina towards reducing gender inequality. These indices suggest that while there are some areas in which women and men are both faring well, significant gender inequalities persist in other areas.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a measure used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that takes into consideration a long and healthy life, average years in education, and a decent standard of living (income per capita). The HDI value for Bosnia and Herzegovina is 0.769, which corresponds to countries with high human development and places it 75 out of 189 countries.¹² From 2000 to 2018, the HDI value for Bosnia and Herzegovina increased by 15 percent (UNDP, 2019a).

The Gender Development Index (GDI) assesses gender differences in how people are faring in a particular

country against a global measure comparing the HDI calculated separately for women and men in three dimensions: health, education and economic empowerment (command over economic resources).¹³ The HDI value for women in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 0.735 in contrast to 0.796 for men, and this results in a GDI value of 0.924 (the female-male ratio). This value is below the average for the European and Central Asian countries combined (0.953; *ibid.*). Considering the three dimensions that constitute the GDI, women's human development in Bosnia and Herzegovina is hindered by their markedly more limited access to economic resources, followed by their average fewer years of schooling.

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures loss in potential human development due to disparities between female and male achievements in three dimensions (reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity, calculated as a composite of five indicators).¹⁴ The 2018 GII value for Bosnia and Herzegovina is 0.162, representing a 16 percent loss in human development due to gender inequality (and a rank of 38 out of 162 countries).

Table 2: Gender Inequality Index values for Bosnia and Herzegovina, compared with regional values (2018)

	2018 GII value	Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100 000 live births)	Adolescent birth rate (births per 1 000 women aged 15–19 years)	Share of seats in parliament (% held by women)	Population with some secondary education (% aged 25 years and over)		Labour force participation rate (% aged 15 years and over)	
					F	M	F	M
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.162	11	9.6	19.3	73.1	90.0	35.6	58.6
Europe and Central Asia Region	0.276	25	27.8	21.2	78.1	85.8	45.2	70.1
OECD countries	0.182	14	20.5	30.1	84.8	87.7	51.6	68.5

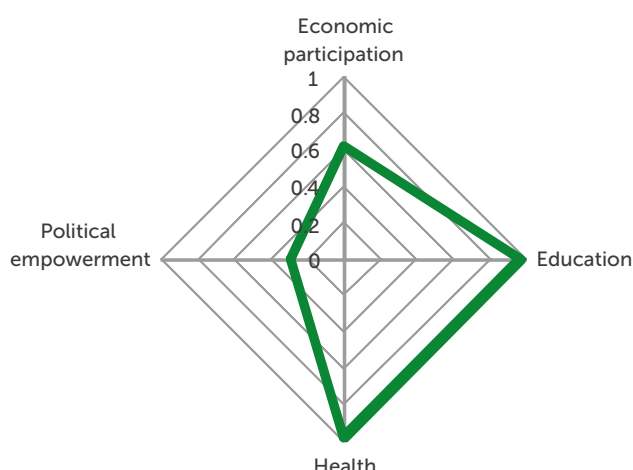
Source: UNDP, 2019b, p. 317, p. 319.

¹² In simple terms, HDI scores range from 1.00 (the highest possible level of human development) to 0 (the lowest level of human development).

¹³ The GDI uses the same scale as the HDI.

¹⁴ For the GII, a value of 0 indicates full equality and a value of 1.00 represents the highest level of inequality.

Figure 1: Global Gender Gap scores for Bosnia and Herzegovina, by dimension (2020)



Source: World Economic Forum, 2020, p. 99.

Since 2010, when the GII was introduced, changes in the value indicate that there has been a decrease in gender inequality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (the GII value in 2010 was 0.235; UNDP, 2020a).

As Table 2 illustrates, some of the positive indicators in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as low maternal mortality, are offset by the considerable gap in labour force participation rates, decreasing the overall value and ranking.

The Global Gender Gap, developed by the World Economic Forum, offers yet another perspective on progress towards gender parity in four dimensions: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. In 2020, the Global Gender Gap score for Bosnia and Herzegovina was 0.712¹⁵ which corresponds to a rank of 63 of 153 countries (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Considering each dimension separately, Bosnia and Herzegovina has particularly low scores in the areas of women's economic participation (taking into consideration factors such as labour force participation rates and earned incomes of women and men) and political empowerment, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The indices presented here provide a useful macro perspective on gender equality and disparities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and show changes over time. Areas of inequality, such as economic and political empowerment, also have important implications for the economic independence of women living in rural areas

and whether their interests are represented in formal decision-making. However, these methodologies do not capture differences in the lives of rural and urban populations (both women and men) in any detail, nor do they highlight disparities that are related to gender differences in the agriculture sector.

2.2. Key international commitments on gender equality

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party to the UN **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, with succession to the Convention in 1993 (the former Yugoslavia ratified CEDAW in 1982). The state has submitted six periodic reports on implementation of the treaty, the most recent of which was reviewed in 2019. Not only does CEDAW set forth the obligation of State parties to take measures to eliminate discrimination against rural women (Article 14), but the CEDAW Committee has issued general recommendations on the rights of rural women (no. 34) and on unpaid women who work in rural family enterprises (no. 16) that provide additional guidance on states' obligations under the Convention. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also undertaken commitments to advance the agenda of the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** which includes several strategic objectives pertaining to the risk of poverty and social marginalization among women in rural and remote areas, and a recommendation to governments to formulate and implement policies that enhance the access of female agricultural and fisheries producers to a range of productive resources.

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** is a global commitment to improve prosperity for all through many actions, including combating inequalities, promoting inclusivity, protecting human rights, and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Many of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** apply to the situation of women in rural areas, particularly the goals relevant to ending poverty (Goal 1), achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture (Goal 2), achieving gender equality and empowering women (Goal 5) and providing universal access to clean water and sanitation (Goal 6). In terms of Goal 5, only one of the global targets refers explicitly to gender equality related to agriculture: target 5.A on undertaking reforms to grant women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources. However, the pledge that the international community has undertaken to "leave no one behind" represents an obligation to consider the situation of women and girls in rural settlements throughout the 2030 Agenda.

¹⁵ A score of 1.00 represents gender parity and a score of 0 represents complete disparity.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and is in the process of adapting the SDGs to the national context. The adaptation process involves aligning the long-term strategic vision for 2030 with European Union accession and membership. Mapping has been undertaken of the SDGs and targets against the strategies and action plans at the entity and canton levels, the European Union Acquis chapters, international treaties and the national reform agenda.¹⁶

Beginning in 2016, a number of workshops and consultations were conducted in which citizens expressed their opinions about priority areas under the SDGs. The themes of gender equality and women's empowerment were most often mentioned in the context of equal pay, women in leadership, women's employment and opportunities for entrepreneurship (Hodzic-Kovac, 2017). A UN-led Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) mission, undertaken in 2018, found several highly relevant issues for Bosnia and Herzegovina that did not feature in stakeholder consultations. Gender equality was one such theme, and the MAPS mission concluded from discussions among the participants that "deeper reflection" is required in order to develop the SDG targets. Participants in the consultations tended to interpret the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has addressed gender equality through the law to mean that equality has been achieved in practice (UN, 2018). Furthermore, the issue of gender equality was understood to relate mainly to social sector issues such as employment and health (during stakeholder consultations by theme, gender equality was mainly identified as a priority under the "people" theme and not in thematic consultations on prosperity, peace or the planet). These views demonstrate that the complexity of gender disparities in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not fully recognized.

In the view of the MAPS team, gender is not properly understood as cross-cutting, and there is a "strong need to focus on those aspects that go beyond legal issues, including things like deeply held social norms and expectations related to gender roles, gender socialization etc." (UN, 2018, p. 15). The MAPS team recommended a greater emphasis on the cross-cutting nature of targets related to gender equality across the whole 2030 Agenda for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as increasing advocacy around this point.

Establishing the institutional framework for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Bosnia and

Herzegovina is still in progress. To date, national SDG targets and indicators have not been identified and baselines have not been set. In contrast, greater progress can be seen at the sub-national level. For instance, several city/municipal administrations (Sarajevo, Tuzla and Živinice, for example) have taken preliminary steps to localize the 2030 Agenda in their strategic planning. The city of Bijeljina (Republika Srpska) is the first municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina to have fully aligned its development strategy for 2019–2023 with the relevant SDG targets and indicators. It has also conducted a number of awareness-raising and training sessions for the public, private and civil society sectors (Intergovernmental SDG working group, 2019).

The Sustainable Development Index is a monitoring tool that has been used annually since 2016 to assess progress towards the SDG global targets by country. While Bosnia and Herzegovina received an overall score of 73.5 under the 2020 SDG Index, indicating that the country is almost three-quarters of the way towards its achievement of the SDGs, Goal 5 on gender equality was assessed as "stagnating," with significant challenges toward achievement (Sustainable Development Report, 2020). Of the four targets under Goal 5, all are considered to be stagnant with one, the female to male labour force participation rate, determined to be on a downward trajectory (ibid.). This finding suggests not only that significant support is required to reverse the stagnation around achieving gender equality, but also that it is unlikely that gender targets are being effectively addressed under other SDGs.

Agenda 2030, the SDGs and the **European Union** accession processes are complementary and mutually reinforcing. The European Union regards gender equality as a fundamental right, a core value and part of the accession conditions for candidate countries. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina, therefore, obliges the country to implement and enforce European Union directives on equality between women and men and non-discrimination. It also requires the adoption of a mainstreaming approach, as the European Union itself endorses. The European Union Common Agricultural Policy incorporates the principle of gender equality as a means to promote sustainable economic growth and rural development, and European Union Member States are required to consider the situation of women in their national rural development initiatives.

As a member of the **Council of Europe**, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party to the fundamental European human rights documents that guarantee gender

¹⁶ A database of the results of the mapping exercise is available at <https://zamisli2030.ba/dms-sdg/>.

equality and freedom from discrimination (specifically, the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter). Additionally, Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1806 (2011) on Rural Women in Europe sets forth a number of areas in which member states should take action in order to address the fact that rural women face many obstacles to enjoying their rights – a situation that is aggravated when states fail “to adequately ensure gender mainstreaming in the development and implementation of legislative and policy measures relating to agriculture and rural areas” (Parliamentary Assembly, 2011, p. 1).

At the policy level, the actions recommended by the Council of Europe and the European Union for national governments are echoed in the FAO Policy on Gender Equality. They centre on core objectives including:

- » reducing gender gaps in access to productive resources and services, through specific legal measures, policy, programmes and projects – in other words, a gender-sensitive approach to agriculture and rural development;
- » ensuring that rural women and men are involved in policy development and decision-making – this includes meaningful participation in governing bodies as well as other relevant bodies (for example, agricultural associations and cooperatives);
- » ensuring that rural women and men can fully take advantage of economic opportunities to improve their individual and household wellbeing; and
- » improving statistical data and information in order to develop policies that are more responsive to the situation and living conditions of women in rural areas.

2.3. Political and institutional profile

The system of administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina is complex, owing to the fact that the country comprises two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, as well as the Brčko District, a self-governing administrative unit. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided into ten cantons, each with their own government. These are sub-divided into 79 municipalities and cities. Republika Srpska has a centralized government and is divided into 64 municipalities. The relevance of this administrative structure for the CGA is that government mandates on agriculture and rural development, as well as related topics, are asymmetric, which means that information (data, official programmes, and so forth) for one entity are not necessarily relevant to another.

The task of identifying the relevant law, policy and key government bodies with mandates that cover gender equality, agriculture and issues connected to rural development is made complicated by the fact that there are over 160 ministries and hundreds of specialized agencies at the state, entity, canton and city/municipal levels that potentially could be engaged in any of these issues. Furthermore, it is at the municipal or city level where national or entity-level strategies concerning rural development and gender equality (or women’s empowerment) are interpreted and implemented by local authorities. In total, there are 145 local administrations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The political landscape is not only complex because it is extensive. There are also asymmetries in how gender equality, as well as issues related to agriculture and rural development, are addressed by the two entities, as well as from the state to the entity level. The result is a fragmentation and lack of consistency in how the law and policy on gender equality, in particular, are implemented in practice. This situation can also present challenges for developing country-wide programmes.

2.3.1. State legal and policy framework

The legislative base for gender equality is established by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which provides for equality before the law and freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Article 4). The same principles are reiterated in the constitutions of each entity. Two state laws expand on the constitutional guarantees and create the framework for gender equality:

- » Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (adopted in 2003 and amended in 2009)
- » Bosnia and Herzegovina Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination (adopted in 2016).

The Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Gender Equality Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal rights in all spheres, including but not limited to, education, the economy, employment and labour, social and health protection, and public life. Notably, the law draws attention to ensuring the equal treatment of and opportunities for women in rural areas, especially in respect to economic opportunities and access to resources (Article 15). The law further sets forth obligations for public authorities at the state, entity and canton levels and local self-governance, including: (i) ensuring equal representation of women and men at all levels of authority (at least 40 percent of either sex, Article 20); (ii) sex disaggregation of all statistical data by state bodies in addition to making gender statistics

available to the public (Article 22); (iii) conducting gender analysis and creating programmes to address gender disparities (Article 24); and (iv) producing special reports that reflect gender analysis and monitoring of state programmes (Article 26). The law establishes the state and entity-level institutions responsible for gender policy (discussed in the following section of this report). These actions taken together form an ambitious system for gender mainstreaming. However, as is described throughout this report, while the approach toward gender mainstreaming is comprehensive, it is in many ways unrealized in actuality.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted three strategic action plans to implement the standards set forth in the law: for 2006–2011, 2013–2017 and 2018–2022. The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 (BiH GAP) outlines the programmes for advancing gender equality in seven priority areas, strengthening the mechanisms and instruments for these tasks, and strengthening cooperation and partnerships. The BiH GAP deals with the situation of women and girls in rural areas as cross-cutting, with particular references to gender disparities such as women's informal and unpaid labour in agriculture and unequal access to education in rural areas that, in turn, impacts on women's opportunities in the labour market. Most notably, the BiH GAP outlines measures in the form of research and programmes on improving women's employment in agricultural production, improving the status of women in rural development and integrating "gender issues into programmes for sustainable development and environmental protection" (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, p. 28).

The first strategic goal of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 is the gender mainstreaming of public policies and strategic measures, an obligation for all relevant government institutions, including those with mandates related to agriculture and/or rural development. Therefore, in theory, strategies for the promotion of gender equality should address inequalities for rural populations, *and* conversely, strategies on agriculture and relevant to rural development are meant to include a gender perspective. Although important pieces of this policy framework are in place, there are also many gaps and missed opportunities in linking gender equality with development strategies within official policy.

The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 is based on the principle of cooperation, coordination and partnership between the state, the entity and local self-government. Under the

arrangement of shared responsibility, state-level policies are further refined and translated into specific measures to be carried out at the local level. In practice, the result is a large number of strategic documents – some directly addressing the status of women and others that include gender issues within sector strategies – that are not consistent from entity to entity or among the various local self-governing structures. Note that several policy documents are described here and a more complete list is provided in Annex 2 of this report.

Policy documents that directly address gender equality and improving the status of women

Policy directly addressing the situation of women in rural locations has been developed at the entity level. Republika Srpska has adopted two multi-year action plans. The first such action plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in the Republic of Srpska,¹⁷ in force until 2015, was jointly developed by the Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska and represented a temporary special measure within the Rural Development Strategic Plan of the Republic of Srpska for 2009–2015. The first action plan had five strategic goals related to rural women's economic position, living conditions, access to public services and social position, and relevant to general awareness of the contributions of rural women. Implementation of the plan was monitored and evaluated and, ultimately, many of the measures became part of the regular work of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska. The second action plan covers a two-year period (2019–2020) and has four objectives concerning rural women's access to social and health services, economic position, and participation in decision-making, as well as promoting gender equality in rural areas.¹⁸

The two action plans of Republika Srpska on rural women demonstrate a commitment to addressing the intersecting issues that rural women face, and the implementation of the first action plan generated a number of important lessons learned. For instance, the process of developing the action plan made visible the situation of women in rural areas among authorities, as well as civil society organizations and donors. However, a serious obstacle to implementing the first action plan was the multiple "push factors" for labour migration.

17 Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in the Republic of Srpska until 2015, adopted by the Republic of Srpska National Assembly, 15 December 2010.

18 Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in the Republic of Srpska for 2019–2020, adopted by the Republic of Srpska National Assembly, 31 January 2019.

These factors could not be addressed by the action plan, yet they had serious implications for whether initiatives to support rural women's income generation (such as through small business) would be viable due to the depopulation of rural areas. An evaluation of the implementation of the first action plan pointed to a number of prerequisites for long-term results that should be addressed in subsequent initiatives dedicated to women in rural areas. These include the need to localize gender policy, to engage local communities in the implementation of specific measures and to engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders (ministries, non-governmental organizations and donors included) in the process of gender mainstreaming (Hughson, no date). The first action plan of Republika Srpska offers a vivid "case study" of how a programme with broad interventions can help to improve the lives of women in rural locations, but it also highlights the other contextual issues that must be addressed. The initiative has been recognized as a good practice in the region, but it does not appear that the learning from the implementation of the first action plan has been disseminated or publicized widely within Bosnia and Herzegovina. In theory, promising initiatives and approaches could be replicated in other areas or expanded through the support of international and donor organizations such as FAO.

Other relevant strategic documents at the entity level address improving the climate for women's entrepreneurship. For example, the Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2020 corresponds to a strategic goal at the entity level to incentivize women's entrepreneurship. The programme aims to provide comprehensive support for women's entrepreneurship, both financial and non-financial (for example, education, networking, data collection and analysis). While there is no particular focus on women in rural areas, it is most likely that the programme has included these women. The Strategy for the Development of Women's Entrepreneurship of Republika Srpska for 2019–2023. dedicates a section to women's entrepreneurship in rural areas, and through a specific funding mechanism,¹⁹ special projects have been implemented that focus on women's entrepreneurship in agribusiness and in cooperatives.

Local gender action plans

The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013–2017 recognized the important role played by bodies

of local self-government (municipal or city and canton levels) and tasked them with establishing institutional mechanisms, programmes and measures to promote gender equality. One such measure was the development and adoption of local gender action plans (GAPs) to implement the high-level priorities of the state GAP. Work with local stakeholders, to build capacity to create GAPs and mainstream gender in municipal strategies and budgets, was intensive between 2012 and 2015.²⁰ During this period, 47 local GAPs were drafted and adopted in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 22 in Republika Srpska. As this was a first step and a new mechanism for authorities, early versions of local action plans were of poor quality because of "low capacities for gender analysis and limited sources of sex-disaggregated, statistically representative data" (MEASURE-BiH, 2016, p. 20).

For this research, it proved difficult to confirm how many local GAPs were adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or how many local administrations in Bosnia and Herzegovina have them at present. According to the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska, around a third of municipalities have GAPs in Republika Srpska, and the Centre is advising on the drafting of nine additional GAPs. The Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have the precise number of local GAPs, but likewise, it is also supporting the work of local gender equality commissions and reports that several municipalities are ready to adopt GAPs. This centre is also improving coordination with the Association of Municipalities and Towns of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and this will help to monitor developments at the local level. In both entities, the adoption of local GAPs, which involves consultative processes, has been severely delayed due to the global pandemic in 2020.

For this Country Gender Assessment, 14 local GAPs that were available online were reviewed (12 on the municipal level and two on the cantonal level), almost all of which were drafted for three- to five-year terms and expired around 2016. Very few of the local GAPs targeted agriculture or rural development; most were not integrated with other local strategies or plans and did not include measurable goals or targets. Monitoring and evaluation of the plans was not done consistently or reported, and it appears that in many cases, implementation of the local GAPs was left to gender focal points or gender committees which were specifically established for this purpose.

Local GAPs are potentially an important tool for gender mainstreaming and to develop targeted strategies and

19 The Financial Mechanism for the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FIGAP), financed by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and four donors: Sida, DFID, SDC and ADA.

20 This work was conducted under an initiative to promote gender equality at the local level, supported by FIGAP-I.

assistance that responds to the needs of women in rural locations. However, it is difficult to assess whether they are being used effectively for this purpose. It appears that they mainly serve to raise awareness and increase capacity in data collection and gender-responsive budgeting. Nevertheless, when implementing programmes on the ground, organizations such as FAO and UN Women could engage with local authorities to outline interventions that would benefit women in line with local GAPs.

Sectoral policy documents that mainstream gender and women's issues

Despite the legal and policy foundation for gender mainstreaming, gender considerations have only marginally been integrated into state and entity policies on rural development or sectors related to agriculture. At the state level, the Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018–2021) addresses support for women as a cross-cutting initiative but fails to fully mainstream gender. Rather, the strategy includes a standalone sub-section on gender equality that presents a rather superficial analysis of gender disparities in rural areas and includes no strategic guidance. Measures are suggested for “young people/women” as a combined category and for improving access to business grants, rural loans and agricultural associations. One monitoring indicator measures “women’s participation” in investment programmes for agricultural holdings and diversification of the rural economy (Council of Ministers, 2018, p. 70).

Similar to the abovementioned strategic plan, at the entity level, the Rural Development Programme of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021²¹ describes gender equality as a “design principle” that underpins the programme, but it also leaves the development of mechanisms “to promote the interests of women and other under-represented groups” to the implementation stage. The programme document does not include any gender analysis. However, it anticipates targets to secure women’s participation in local action groups (part of a larger methodology for the development of rural communities), giving priority to projects submitted by women (for example, in activities related to organic production, renewable energy, climate change mitigation and enterprise development) and increasing the public aid available to women farmers for investment in farm infrastructure (5 percent added to a maximum of 50 percent of the total cost).

There are further examples of policies at the entity level that include measures that are gender-sensitive. For instance, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Employment Agency and the Employment Co-Financing Programme 2020 include some incentives for women’s employment. In Republika Srpska, annual action plans for employment address the situation of rural women; and the Strategy for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises for 2016–2020 highlights the important role of women entrepreneurs for the economy and includes measures for women, such as special grants and the creation of an advisory women’s council within the Chamber of Commerce. Lastly, the Ministry of Trade and Tourism of Republika Srpska participated in a project to assess the potential for women in rural areas to be engaged in tourism-based businesses, but it could not be confirmed during this assessment that the Strategy for Rural Tourism for Republika Srpska for 2011–2020 includes gender considerations.

Other relevant policy documents that are gender-blind

The abovementioned gender-sensitive policies cover some important aspects of rural women’s lives. However, they are also exceptions to the fact that gender mainstreaming is largely absent from strategic planning at the state and entity levels around for example agricultural development, economic planning, rural development, climate change, forestry and tourism. It was not possible to conduct a full-scale analysis of all of the potentially relevant policies for this report, but a recent review of the alignment of state policy with the SDGs closely examined 69 strategic documents. Of these, only 16 (or less than a quarter) even mention “gender equality” (Intergovernmental SDG working group, 2019, p. 16). The mechanisms that are meant to ensure gender mainstreaming at the state, entity or municipal/canton levels are said to be “side-lined due to the sometimes limited understanding of women’s roles and issues, and to a lack of clarity about these institutions’ exact roles” (World Bank *et al.*, 2015, p. 17). The resulting landscape is one in which there is a comprehensive legal framework but an inconsistent approach in applying the law as it relates to standards on gender equality. These inconsistencies mean that a fragmented picture of progress toward gender equality is presented, and it is difficult to assess improvements in the lives of women and men in rural areas across the country as a whole.

2.3.2. Institutional bodies responsible for gender policy

The institutional framework responsible for gender mainstreaming, as envisioned in the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, encompasses commissions and committees in the legislative branch and specialized

21 Developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017.

bodies in the executive branch at the state, entity and canton/municipal levels. Committees on gender equality and equal opportunities are convened in the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, both houses of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska. The Committee for Gender Issues operates within the Brčko District Assembly. Gender equality committees have been established in most cantonal assemblies and municipal councils.

The gender mechanisms of the executive branch have a greater relevance to the topics of this Country Gender Assessment. At the state and entity levels, there are three institutions dedicated to gender issues:



The Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina has a coordination role and a broad mandate that covers the scope of the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of their functions is strengthening the capacity of government representatives at the state level to conduct gender mainstreaming, which includes representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoFTER). While the Agency for Gender Equality advocates attention to rural women, it has not played an active role in developing state policy on the issue and does not appear to work closely with MoFTER. Because the relevant ministries for agriculture are at the entity level, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina views some of these tasks as more relevant for the gender centres. The Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska plays an expert advisory role to the government, and women in rural areas is a focal area for awareness raising and advocacy, policy development and specific projects. The Gender Centre of Republika Srpska regularly cooperates with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska, and also coordinates the work of ministerial gender focal points. Both institutions are part of the Commission for Gender Equality of the Coordination Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the BiH GAP in Republika Srpska (with representation from all ministries). The Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has similar functions, and while it does not have a strategy concerning women in rural areas, rural women are recognized as a vulnerable group that the Gender Centre addresses as cross-cutting for all sectors and in

its work connected to gender mainstreaming at the local level. Interactions between the Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina appear to be very limited..

Institutional mechanisms for gender equality are weakest at the municipal level, and in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular. There are no institutions for gender equality within the executive branch in any of the cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a, p. 62). However, some mayors' offices have established gender equality commissions or advisory boards. Generally, the functioning of the local-level committees and commissions (legislative and executive) is inconsistent, with many of these bodies not working either "adequately or continuously" (ibid.). Although local authorities are critical for the implementation of gender-related policies on the ground, in practice municipalities have very limited capacity for this task. According to one study, half of the municipalities and towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina "demonstrated no understanding, capacity or willingness to take the necessary measures to advance gender equality at that level" (UN Women Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019, p. 64).

In addition to specialized agencies and committees for gender equality, the institutional mechanism also included gender focal points in the legislative, executive and administrative bodies of all levels of authorities.²² According to the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, gender focal points were appointed in 90 percent of institutions at the state and entity levels (UN Women Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019, p. 65). While the system of gender focal points may have been a useful starting point, the system has proven less effective over time. It is common for the gender focal point to be tasked with all responsibilities for gender integration, but a single member of staff is "insufficient to provide technical advice and ensure the gender perspective is integrated into all policies, programmes and budgets, especially as most of these focal points do not hold decision-making positions" (ibid., p. 66). Furthermore, the existence of gender focal points alone has not necessarily resulted in more effective gender mainstreaming. In 2014, the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina conducted a survey of institutional capacity to implement gender equality commitments among civil servants. Although 40 percent of respondents were familiar with the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the

²² As described in the Law on Gender Equality, Article 9(f).

majority had not carried out any activities related to implementing public policy on gender equality; 16 percent of the respondents were unsure if they had, and only 9 percent had actually conducted such activities (Hughson, 2014).

After observing such tendencies, the gender centres recognized that placing responsibility on single gender focal points in line ministries was not an effective approach, and there have been initiatives to establish multi-disciplinary coordination bodies within institutions to improve gender mainstreaming. There are also coordinating boards for monitoring the implementation of the BiH GAP at the state level and in both entities. These include representatives of ministries and institutions of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

Given that issues related to rural development and agriculture are cross-cutting and may concern a number of different ministries and agencies, at various levels of authority, the formation of coordination bodies may also improve engagement for FAO and UN Women on relevant initiatives. Rather than having to rely on contact with specific gender focal points in different ministries and entities, it may become more efficient to work with coordination bodies.

Another important feature of gender mainstreaming is the process of obtaining an expert opinion on all government policies, strategies, plans and programmes for compliance with gender equality standards; this task is divided between the state and entity-level gender centres.²³ This practice, however, is not consistent. Based on information provided for this report, there are instances in which the ministry itself determines that an agricultural initiative is “gender neutral” and therefore it is not submitted for comment. At the state level, there does not seem to be a special mechanism for submitting policy documents. Rather, government plans can be reviewed through a public e-consultation web platform, and so it is the responsibility of the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina to monitor and track new policies, a task that is beyond the agency’s capacity. In contrast, the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska reported that all entity ministries are obliged to send policy documents to the centre to ensure that they are harmonized with the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina before they can be reviewed by the National Assembly. In addition to analysing the majority of ministerial policies, the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska also has the authority to participate in parliamentary hearings and provide expert opinions.

When conducting research for this assessment, it proved difficult to verify the existence of certain ministerial or sectoral strategies, plans and programmes that are mentioned in official documents as having a gender perspective. Such policy documents are not easily accessible on the websites of line ministries and have not been collected into a single database. There appears to be no clearing house agency that could serve this function. The gender equality institutions do not have an oversight function over ministries, and thus if line ministries do not communicate about gender-sensitive policies, programmes or the results of gender analysis, the institutions do not have the capacity to independently identify and compile information about the many policy documents in existence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It would be good practice, however, for the relevant line ministries, as well as UN agencies and international donors, to be proactive in engaging with the gender equality institutions, both to inform them about policy and programmatic developments but also to improve the practice of gender mainstreaming.

The inconsistent application of gender mainstreaming to policy development, and the very limited capacity of most line ministries to include a gender perspective in their core work, contribute to a situation in which gender equality is poorly reflected in official policies that concern agriculture and rural development.

2.4. Demographic profile

2.4.1. Rural population, sex ratios and household composition

The population of Bosnia and Herzegovina is just over 3.5 million people (data estimated for January 2018; BHAS, 2019a). Bosnia and Herzegovina is often characterized as one of the “most rural” European countries, with less than half of the population living in urban settlements. Some areas, namely Republika Srpska, are even less urbanized. The population distribution between urban and non-urban areas is as follows:

Note that as discussed in section 1.4.1. of this report, official statistics use the typology: “urban” and “other”. Settlements that are classified as “other” include both rural and semi-urban areas.

UNDP analysis of official statistics, using an “area approach” (that is, considering population density rather than settlement),²⁴ determined that the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina can be classified as illustrated

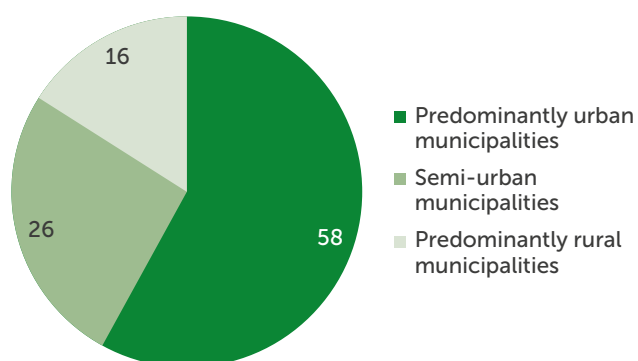
²³ As described in the Law on Gender Equality, Articles 26 and 27.

²⁴ The OECD and Eurostat use the area approach and classify territorial units, based on population density, as predominantly urban, intermediate and predominantly rural.

Table 3: Population, by type of settlement and location, in percentage (2015)

Type of settlement	Geographic area			
	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Urban	42.2	39.0	47.6	41.3
Other*	57.8	61.0	52.4	58.7

Source: BHAS, 2018a, p. 9.

Figure 2: Distribution of population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, by area type (percentage)

Source: Adapted from UNDP, 2013, p. 36.

in Figure 2, with a combined 42 percent living in areas that are not entirely urban.

UNDP points out that when considering population density, a large proportion of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina lives in municipalities that are considered rural and have populations of less than 100 people per square kilometre, even though they may be living in settlements that are formally classified as “towns” (UNDP, 2013, p. 36). Finally, the population distribution in Bosnia and Herzegovina reflects the fact that a minority of the population lives in the country’s six major cities (25 percent), while most people (60 percent of the population) live in “a series of villages of a few hundred to a few thousand people, whilst a small proportion lives in very small hamlets or isolated houses” (ibid., p. 38).

For the purposes of this Country Gender Assessment, it is less important to determine precisely the relative population of women and men living in urban and non-urban areas. Rather, the characteristics of the settlements where a large size of the population lives should be considered. Many people live in villages that are reasonably close to a town or city. Most “rural” households are surrounded by gardens and small land plots that can be used for home production; many households also own additional land nearby and use their land to cultivate crops and keep livestock

(UNDP, 2013). This means that for a large number of rural women and men alike, work in agriculture is part of daily life and something that is done alongside employment in a nearby town. It also means that “rural development” should take into consideration not only the most local situation but also the characteristics of peri-urban areas and whether the services and opportunities offered there are accessible to the rural population.

Household size varies slightly by settlement type, and rural households are larger. Of particular note, Roma households have more members than the average for either rural or urban areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina: 4.12 members (UNDP, 2018; see Table 4).

Over a quarter of all households in Bosnia and Herzegovina are headed by women (26.7 percent). This rate is slightly higher than the European average of 24 percent. Male-headed households (MHHs) are more predominant in rural areas, where 76 percent of households are headed by men (BHAS, 2019c). The characteristics of rural female- and male-headed households differ markedly. The typical male household head is married (79 percent of MHHs), while the large majority of women who head households in rural areas are widowed (86 percent of all female-headed households or FHHs) compared with being divorced or unmarried (ibid.). This group of elderly women living in rural areas is at particular risk of poverty and social isolation.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced significant migration since the early 1990s with distinct patterns and impacts on rural settlements. The war brought about mass population displacement, which was followed some years later with a large return of the refugee population. Currently, the country is experiencing intense rural to urban internal migration, mainly driven by the lack of work in rural areas. Official statistics indicate in and out migration patterns between entities, but these are not categorized in terms of rural or urban destinations. In 2019, a general decrease in immigration/emigration to and from Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and

Table 4: Average number of household members, by settlement and location (2015)

Type of settlement	Geographic area			
	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Urban	2.75	2.75	2.96	2.76
Other*	3.17	2.74	3.13	3.01

Source: BHAS, 2018a, p. 18.

the Brčko District was observed compared with the previous year. Most migrants are between 20 and 39 years old; and women accounted for 59.9 percent of internal migrants (17 081 women) and men 40.1 percent (11 442 men) in 2019 (BHAS, 2020a).

The age profile of internal migrants shows that the peak age range for female migration (the largest number of women migrants) is 20 to 29 years, whereas the peak is slightly later for men (between the ages of 25 and 35 years). These age groups correspond to the economically active population, suggesting that most internal migration is motivated by employment and that women are increasingly taking on the breadwinner role. It is also possible that women are migrating for their education as much as for work. The result of intense migration of the working age population means that, demographically, rural communities are ageing and may not have enough people in the younger generations to sustain them. When men migrate for work, women are left to “continue to perform the more labour intensive jobs” on family farms, which they usually combine with their domestic role (Halilovic *et al.*, 2017, p. 180).

Further information, for example about the marital status of women and men who migrate and the gender-specific drivers for migration, would be useful. There is also a lack of dedicated research on how immigration has impacted on women and children in rural areas and on families that are left behind by migration, for instance when the male breadwinner has migrated.

2.4.2. Vulnerable groups

Gender and other personal identities or characteristics (such as ethnicity, age, ability/disability, residence, socio-economic status and sexual orientation) interact and overlap in significant ways. Multiple or intersectional discrimination refers to the fact that the rights and opportunities of women who belong to particular groups are even more limited than those of either men or women from the majority population. From the point of view of policy development and programming, it is important that not only are gender differences given consideration but also that intersecting inequalities are both identified and understood. In other words, gender analysis should

include analysis based on the intersecting factors that make women or men particularly vulnerable.

The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 identified several groups of vulnerable persons, and vulnerable women specifically, for which special measures are needed to ensure equality. In addition to rural women, these groups include Roma women, low-income women, internally displaced women, single parents/single mothers, elderly people and people with disabilities.

The Roma are the largest national minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and estimations of the size of the community vary from 0.8 percent to 1.1 percent of the country's population (based on the 2013 population census). The Council of Europe (2012) estimates that between 40 000 and 76 000 Roma people live in Bosnia and Herzegovina (data from 2012). Although the state has made efforts to improve conditions for the Roma population since the early 2000s, the Roma remain marginalized in many ways, including having limited access to housing, employment, education, healthcare and political office as well as being confronted with discrimination. Roma women are particularly disadvantaged compared with non-Roma women and Roma men, pertaining to their much more limited opportunities for formal employment and education, often linked to high rates of early marriage. There is a need to empower Roma women, and research conducted for this CGA provided several examples of projects in which Roma women have been supported to become engaged in agricultural production, to the benefit of their households and the community.

According to the most recent population census (conducted in 2013), within the female population, 8.9 percent of women, and among the male population, 7.7 percent of men, are living with a disability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This translates to over 161 000 women and almost 133 000 men (BHAS, 2016). The Disability Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina estimates that every second household has a family member with a disability. This would make the actual number of people living with a disability considerably more than what the

census indicates. It also suggests that there are people living with disabilities in rural households who have less access to the specialized services that they need. Monitoring conducted by CSOs found that people with disabilities who live in rural areas experience acute social exclusion. They “have even less access to public institutions than in urban centres, with fewer appropriate sources of information, while they come up against more prejudice and taboo, which also acts to exclude socially” (MyRight – Empowers People with Disabilities, 2014, p. 23). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, women with disabilities face particular discrimination in accessing healthcare and employment and exercising their right to political participation. Women also take on the greatest share of care for children and other family members who have disabilities, and this can be especially challenging for women in rural areas, where adapted services are limited and special programmes and treatments are non-existent.

According to the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, 32 145 families (96 830 people in total) held the status of displaced persons in 2017 (UN, 2019). Women represent a slightly larger proportion of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees, and 32 percent of IDP households are headed by women, higher than the average for the population as a whole (MEASURE-BiH, 2016). Connected to the system of registration, IDP and returnee women encounter problems in accessing healthcare and in exercising their other rights.

Due to economic migration patterns, and also influenced by the returnee population, rural populations have a higher average age than those in urban areas. Older people in rural areas are greatly affected by the fact that some important services are non-existent and others are inaccessible for people who have limited mobility. The first state report on the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing identified the particular challenges that older people living in rural areas face in daily life, “where houses and facilities are remote due to insufficient road infrastructure, [in addition to] public transport, shops, cultural, sports and entertainment facilities and remote health care facilities” (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017, p. 7). There is an unmet need for social housing and care homes for elderly people in rural areas. Elderly widows living on their own in rural villages are in especially difficult circumstances; they are economically vulnerable and often socially isolated.

Whenever relevant, information about women and men who belong to particularly vulnerable groups is discussed in the relevant sections of this report.

2.5. Socio-economic profile

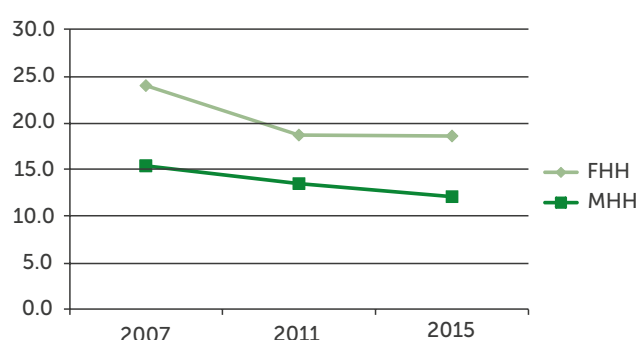
Compared with industry and trade, agriculture plays a relatively small role in the economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, agriculture accounts for six percent of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP; World Bank, 2020), with 18 percent of the total employed population working in this sector (BHAS, 2019a).

Poverty rates in Bosnia and Herzegovina are measured using the relative poverty line and household consumption expenditure. While poverty rates have fallen somewhat (based on household surveys conducted in 2011 and 2015, the rate fell from 17.9 percent to 16.9 percent), one of the more significant challenges facing the country is the fact that the poverty rate for the rural population is almost double that for the urban population: 20.5 percent compared with 11.3 percent (Intergovernmental SDG working group, 2019). During processes for the implementation of Agenda 2030 for SDG 1 on ending poverty, several groups for which the poverty rate is higher than the national rate were identified: the elderly, children and the Roma community (ibid.). Roughly twice the number of rural households are poor compared with urban households (almost one quarter of all rural households, but 11 percent of urban households in one study), and this is due to household size as well as the age of the household head (UNDP, 2013).

Much of the rural population does not depend on agriculture as a source of income. The slight majority of rural households (52 percent in one survey) generate half or more of their income from regular employment, and 36 percent receive most of their income from support payments in some form. Only six percent of surveyed households “earned the majority of their income from agriculture, with even fewer depending on services and seasonal work, income from assets, or self-employment” (UNDP, 2013, p. 77).

The gender dimensions of poverty are also significant. Data on the structure of the poor population in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicate that women make up slightly more than half of the country’s poor (50.9 percent; BHAS, 2018b). Both education level and age affect the poverty rates of women and men. Women who have no education are the most at risk of poverty (and represent 41.8 percent of all poor women), while the same is not true for men. In fact, out of all poor men, almost half have completed secondary education (ibid.). In terms of poverty across lifetime, women’s poverty rates are highest in the age range 15 to 35 years (corresponding to working and childbearing years) and again over the age of 65 (retirement age). For men,

Figure 3: Relative poverty rates, by sex of household head in Republika Srpska



Source: Adapted from Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics, 2019, p. 44.

poverty rates are particularly high in the age range 15 to 35 years (*ibid.*). Women are far more vulnerable to poverty in old age than men: a reflection of their longer life expectancies combined with the fact that they have shorter work histories and are more often employed informally (therefore accruing smaller pensions).

It has been estimated that rural male-headed households have a median net annual income that is 20 percent higher than that of female-headed households (IFAD, 2013). Data about Republika Srpska specifically indicate that the relative poverty rate for female-headed households (FHHs) is markedly higher than that for male-headed households (MHHs), although both poverty rates have been declining in the past decade, as Figure 3 demonstrates.

The poverty of rural women is linked to their economic dependence, which is itself a reflection of their overrepresentation in informal and unpaid work and lack of coverage by the pension system. They also experience other forms of poverty, related to social exclusion when living alone after they are widowed and infrastructure deficiencies.

2.6. Health

Sustainable Development Goal 3 concerns promoting health and wellbeing for all, and several of the targets are specific to women – those relating to maternal health. Other targets, for example on strengthening treatment for substance abuse or reducing fatal road traffic accidents, could have a gender dimension as there are higher mortality rates among men associated with these causes. As noted earlier in this report, national SDG targets and priorities are still being determined for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 focuses on improving the health of women and men through increasing access to healthcare, with some emphasis on mental health, sexual and reproductive health and the health needs of vulnerable groups.

There is a lack of official data for health indicators that are also disaggregated by sex, but in terms of general lifetime health, average life expectancy has been increasing to 79 years for women and 74.3 years for men (BHAS, 2020b). Both women and men in Bosnia and Herzegovina enjoy higher life expectancies than the average for the Europe and Central Asia region combined, but life expectancy is several years shorter than the average for the OECD countries. However, the gender gap in life expectancy of around five years is consistent with global trends (based on data generated from UNDP, 2020b).

Most significantly, there is a lack of data about the health status of the rural population in particular. It has been suggested that people in rural areas have many indicators of healthy lifestyles, such as being more physically active, having better access to fresh and high-quality food and living in a cleaner environment (UNDP, 2013). This assessment does not, however, take into consideration any potential gender differences, such as how women who work on family farms are affected by many years of manual labour or whether female-headed households suffer from food insecurity to a greater degree than male-headed households.

Experts agree that access to healthcare is problematic for rural areas. When considering the gender dimension, “limited access” refers to the distance between rural settlements and healthcare providers, lack of healthcare insurance and the lack of quality health services for particular groups of women.

In terms of physical access, one survey estimated that 90 percent of the rural population lives more than three kilometres from the nearest hospital, and 62 percent lives this distance from the nearest clinic (UNDP, 2013). Local clinics in rural areas do not always have regular hours, and even ambulance services may not work due to staff shortages or during bad weather (CERD, 2019b). Some rural areas do not have major health centres, and in these cases, emergency medical assistance can be up to 60 kilometres away. This is a particular problem for poor women and women from rural areas who more often rely on public transport, which may be infrequent or costly (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a). The cost in time and money means that rural people in general do not often receive routine health checks.

An estimated 500 000 people do not have health insurance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and more than two-thirds of the uninsured reside in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (UN Women Country Office in BiH, 2019). Each entity regulates health insurance separately. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina,

the Law on Health Insurance and the Law on Mediation on the Employment and Social Security of Unemployed Persons require that unemployed persons register within 30 to 60 days of leaving education or losing work (employed persons are eligible for health insurance through their employer). In practice, marginalized women and men from rural areas in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are disproportionately affected by these provisions, because due to “a lack of financial resources and knowledge as well as patriarchal norms [they] fail to register [with employment offices] within the legal deadline and consequently lose their health insurance” (ibid., p. 45). While health insurance can be reactivated through employment, the high unemployment and economic inactivity rates among women in rural areas mean that many women simply remain uninsured. For women in farming families, it is possible that the head of the farm could register them as employees, but this is not a common practice. Furthermore, this situation puts women in a position in which their ability to access healthcare is dependent on whether their husband (or other male family member) reports their employment status.

In Republika Srpska, there are no deadlines and an unemployed person can register at any time in order to receive health insurance. However, the coverage of women living in rural areas is said to be unsatisfactory. Further difficulties in accessing healthcare for women, in addition to those mentioned above, relate to a lack of knowledge about the importance of regular health checks, even when family medical care exists in rural areas (Rakic, 2013).

Non-insurance rates are high among the Roma population, especially returnees, who are often unaware of health insurance deadlines. A 2017 survey found that almost a third (28 percent) of Roma people did not have health insurance (UNDP, 2018). The rate of health insurance coverage among Roma women is likely to be even lower. Concerted efforts have been made to address the social needs of the Roma population. In addition to allocating funds for healthcare, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, funding was dedicated to improving insurance coverage. From 2013 to 2016, 934 out of around 4 000 uninsured persons from Roma communities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina were assisted to receive health insurance (Council of Ministers, 2010). The gender breakdown is not known, however. Women IDPs also face problems obtaining health insurance.

In terms of the quality of services provided to the rural population, isolated communities lack access to preventative healthcare. This could have a particular impact on women who may be excluded from

services such as cervical or breast cancer screening/ mammograms. Even if such services are available, unemployed women who are not insured and are economically dependent may not be able to use preventative care if healthcare is not prioritized within the household budget (CERD, 2019b).

Most dedicated women’s health centres are located in cities, and so rural clinics are limited in specialized staff and equipment. Health ministries are not always sensitive to the particular needs of women in rural areas. One example is the assignment of male gynaecologists to rural clinics, “where conservative and patriarchal norms prevent women from consulting the gynaecologist” (UN Women Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019, p. 35). Consequently, rural women may not receive reproductive healthcare. Women with disabilities face even greater problems due to a lack of accessible equipment and staff who are not trained in their needs; this is especially the case for reproductive health and pregnancy care (MEASURE-BiH, 2016). Further assessment is needed to better understand the intersecting difficulties that people with disabilities who live in rural areas face in accessing healthcare. Furthermore, information and data related to the problems faced by women with disabilities, as well as women who care for family members with disabilities, would help to clarify the gendered impacts of limited health infrastructure in rural areas.

2.7. Education

The compulsory education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of nine years of primary education (divided into three cycles).²⁵ Secondary education takes two main forms: general secondary education (grammar schools) and vocational secondary education. Higher education has three stages (Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree and doctoral degree). From the perspective of gender equality, there is gender parity in enrolment rates at the primary and secondary school levels. Differences in female and male enrolment rates are observed in terms of type of secondary educational institutions, as well as in the choice of subjects that girls and boys, and women and men, pursue after their general education. In terms of educational attendance and attainment, there are differences based on both gender and on settlement type.

The clearest gender differences in educational enrolment are in vocational education and training (VET). As illustrated in Figure 4, girls and boys

²⁵ Note that preschool education is discussed in section 5.6 of this report.

Figure 4: Enrolment in secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the 2018–2019 academic year, by institution and sex (in percentage)



Source: Adapted from BHAS, 2019b, p. 14.

are streamed towards different educational institutions. While girls make up more than half of students enrolled in grammar schools, that provide a general education and are a prerequisite for higher education, boys represent almost three-quarters of all students enrolled in vocational schools.

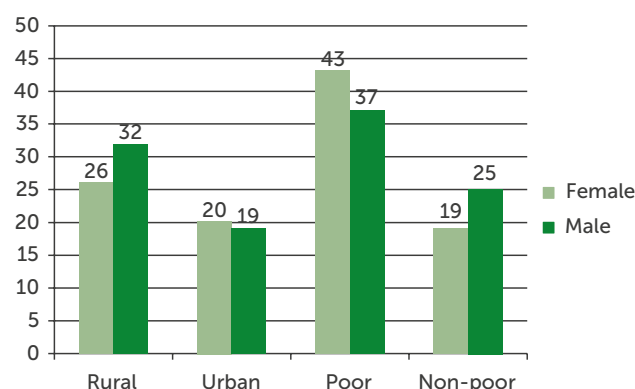
The number of young women entering vocational education and training has been increasing, from 67.5 percent of all female secondary students in 2010 to 70 percent in 2018 (European Training Foundation, 2019). This trend is curious because the female employment rate for VET graduates is considerably lower than it is for male VET graduates (only 31.1 percent for women compared with 53 percent for men). Both female and male graduates from general secondary schools have comparable employment rates. Women are also more likely than men to have enrolled in and completed higher education: in 2018 “the proportion of females who are highly skilled [was] significantly higher than males – 21.7% against 12.9%” (ibid., p. 19). However, these achievements are not reflected in the labour market overall. The differences in enrolment patterns reflect how gender stereotypes influence the choices of women and men concerning their own education, a topic that is discussed in more detail below.

School attendance and dropout rates

School attendance rates for girls and boys at the primary level are virtually the same, and also do not vary much between rural and urban locations. At the secondary school level, however, boys are more likely than girls to be out of school. This disparity is the largest for boys in rural secondary schools, which is likely to be a reflection of the fact that boys are needed to work on family farms or in other ways. Conversely, when poor and non-poor households are compared, it is more likely to be girls who do not attend secondary school (World Bank *et al.*, 2015).

Studies also suggest that there is a high secondary school dropout rate among rural girls as a direct result of household poverty and girls being required to help with domestic chores (CERD, 2019b). This

Figure 5: Secondary school non-attendance, by sex, household type and location, in percentage (2011)



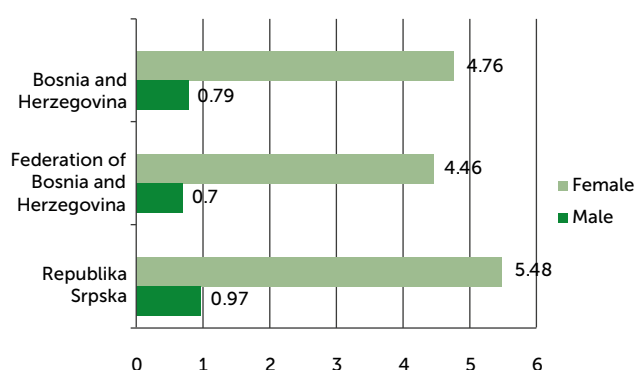
Source: Adapted from World Bank *et al.*, 2015, p. 69.

situation reflects the gendered division of labour, as well as stereotypes concerning expectations for girls and boys and the importance of their education. Boys in rural areas (aged 16 to 19) are more likely to be out of school because they are working, including undertaking work on family farms. For boys, even though the work interrupts their education, it has a degree of “market value” as boys gain skills that can be used in the job market. Girls are out of school when their help is needed in the household. Because this work is unpaid and not even considered “work,” it is not likely to translate to future employment. The impact of not completing education on girls is very significant, not only in terms of their right to education but also in limiting their future opportunities for decent employment. In poor households, families often prioritize boys’ schooling when having to make choices about which children to support in education, an indication of “patriarchal attitudes” that give male children more rights and are especially strong in rural areas (CERD, 2019a, p. 4).

Literacy and illiteracy rates

Educational attainment, which refers to how much education a person has completed and literacy rates, shows marked differences between women and men, but other factors (for example, age, ethnicity and residence) also have a bearing on these distinctions. The largest gender gaps in educational attainment are seen in the over 55 age group, with women far more likely to have only completed primary school, and most men having completed secondary school. Among the younger generations (ages 25 to 40), however, the educational attainment levels for women and men are more balanced, and in fact of those women and men who continue to higher (tertiary) education, women have greater educational attainment levels. While the trend appears to be towards girls becoming more educated, stereotypes

Figure 6: Illiteracy rates for the population over age 10, by sex, in percentage (2013)



Sources: Adapted from BHAS, 2018b, p. 25; Institute for Statistics of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, p. 56; Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics, 2019, p. 19.

also persist about the value of women's education. A public opinion poll conducted by UN Women in 2018 found that around a third of male respondents and close to a quarter of female respondents agreed with the statement: "girls must be taught to be good wives and care for domestic work; education, business and leadership are for boys" (UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, 2019, p. 5).

According to the 2013 population census, 2.82 percent of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was illiterate, but this translated to 4.76 percent of the female population and 0.79 percent of the male population (BHAS, 2016). The illiteracy rate was highest among older women (aged 60 to 70). Comparing entities, the illiteracy rates were slightly higher in Republika Srpska, as shown in Figure 6.

Illiteracy rates are highest among women living in rural areas, Roma women and women with disabilities, all of whom face distinct barriers to accessing education.

The situation for Roma women in Bosnia and Herzegovina is quite dire. In the 2011–2012 academic year, only 47 percent of all Roma girls were enrolled in primary school, and of these, 80 percent did not complete their primary education. At the secondary level, only 4.5 percent of Roma girls completed their studies, compared with 9.2 percent of Roma boys (a low proportion in its own right). Consequently, the literacy rate for Roma women, especially young women, is low compared with both non-Roma women and Roma men. While the literacy rate among non-Roma women in Bosnia and Herzegovina is almost 99 percent, it is only 69 percent for Roma women (ages 15 to 24), but 90.4 percent for Roma men in this age group (World Bank et al., 2015).

Gender stereotypes in education

Gender stereotypes are evident in the patterns of female and male enrolment in specific fields of study (and also found in girls' lower enrolment rate in VET compared with boys). Women form the majority of students in education, healthcare (pharmacy, dentistry, medicine) and the humanities. However, they represent less than ten percent of students enrolled in mechanical and electrical engineering (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, para. 143). Girls also tend not to choose courses in IT, science, technology, engineering and mathematics – the STEM subjects (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a). These tendencies illustrate widely-held views about what are considered to be "appropriate" academic disciplines for women and men. Such views mean that boys and young men are encouraged towards subjects that are linked to higher-paying jobs in industry, while girls and young women are streamed towards public sector jobs or sectors where the labour market is less active and wages are smaller. The result is that women, while on average having higher educational achievements than men, face more difficulties finding work, retaining work (women's unemployment rates are higher than men's) and advancing in their careers, and have lower average salaries.

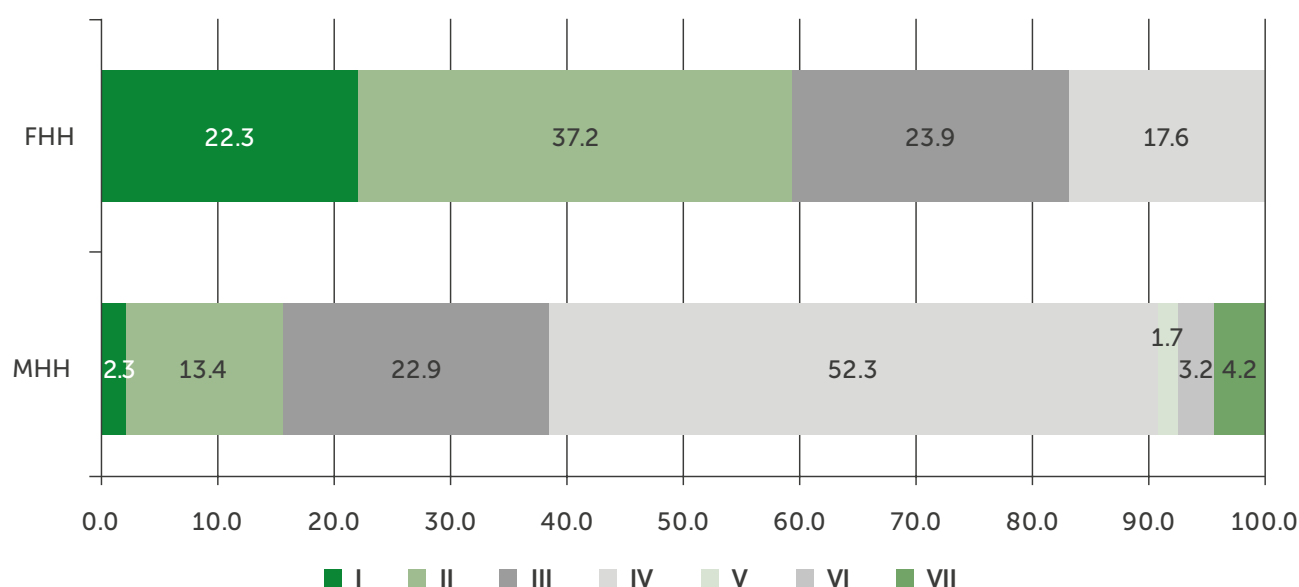
Education levels for the rural population

On the whole, rural residents have lower educational levels compared with the urban population: about 25 percent fewer years of education. Women, in both rural and urban areas, have "about 15% less education than men" (CERD, 2019a, p. 4). Rural women's lack of formal education severely limits their employment opportunities, which are already fewer than for women in urban centres.

The typical profile for members of rural agricultural households is partial or complete secondary education. Here, there are distinct differences in the educational attainment of women and men who are farmers (the head of an agricultural holding). Almost two-thirds of women in this group have either no education or have not completed primary education. More than half of men have secondary education in some form (see Figure 7). This pattern is indicated by the data on illiteracy rates and reflects the fact that female heads of households in rural areas are generally elderly widows, whose educational opportunities had been very limited.

Among farmers, both women and men, formal education in agriculture at any level is extremely rare. In 2018, slightly more women than men graduated

Figure 7: Educational attainment for female and male household heads for agricultural households in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in percentage (2013)



Source: Data from the 2013 population census provided by BHAS for this assessment.

Legend of educational levels:

- I - Without any education
- II - Incomplete primary education
- III - Complete primary education
- IV - Secondary education
- V - Secondary education with specialization
- VI - Higher education and first degree
- VII - Tertiary education/academy/university

with Master's and Doctor of science degrees in the combined fields of agriculture, forestry, fishery and veterinary studies: 457 women and 413 men (BHAS, 2020b). The pattern is very similar for enrolment in departments of agriculture, forestry, fishery and veterinary studies at the entity level (based on enrolment data for the 2017–2018 academic year in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 2018–2019 academic year in Republika Srpska). The numbers of students in any of these disciplines is very small compared with both the overall student body and with people who work in agriculture. For example, women holding degrees in agriculture in 2018 represented just 4.3 percent of all female degree holders (the figure is 5.7 percent for male degree holders). As noted in section 3.1 of this report, a relatively small number of people are formally employed in the agriculture sector when compared with other sectors of the economy and also considering the large number of people who engage in agricultural work informally.

For family farmers and the rural population, training, agricultural extension services and rural advisory services are critical because they can provide much-needed information and technical training. The gender gap in education levels among the rural population must also be considered in projects that aim to support women farmers. Not only do women in rural areas have

few opportunities to engage in education and training once they are no longer in compulsory schooling, they also have more limited access to agricultural extension services, as described in more detail in section 4.5 of this report. In order to assist women farmers to reach their full potential, they require more comprehensive support than financial incentives. Gaps in knowledge and information that they can apply to both agriculture and income-generating activities must also be addressed.

2.8. Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is both a violation of women's rights and an obstacle to achieving gender equality. This type of violence can take many forms, including physical, sexual and emotional violence, perpetrated by a family member, intimate partner or by others.

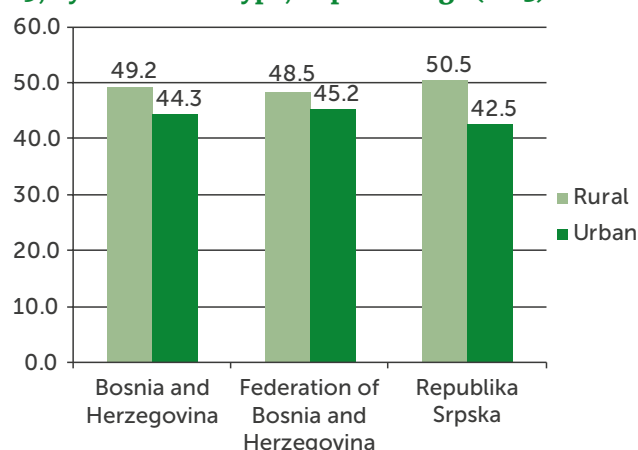
Gender-based violence impacts on a large number of women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is an issue that has received considerable state attention. As a member of the Council of Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina was among the first countries to ratify the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention), and this action has prompted

a number of legal and policy changes, as outlined in the the Framework Strategy for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2015–2018. In 2019, a Board for Monitoring and Reporting on Implementation of the Istanbul Convention and Femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina was established at the state level. While the Istanbul Convention applies throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is implemented through entity-level laws on domestic violence (in Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District). Because combating violence against women is an entity responsibility, laws and regulations are aligned with international standards but they are not necessarily harmonized for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole.

One of the greatest obstacles to assessing the prevalence of gender-based violence, and its particular impact on women in rural areas, is the lack of harmonized administrative data on any form of GBV (each entity collects these data, but they are not compiled for Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, systematic collection and analysis of data is included in the BiH GAP). UN Women has supported the work of the gender agencies at the state and entity levels to develop indicators to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention that would also generate data about violence against women and domestic violence for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole. Available data, collected and published by each entity, suggest that domestic violence is a widespread form of GBV, but that it also remains a latent problem. Although the comparison is imperfect, the hidden nature of domestic violence is suggested in the data from Republika Srpska. While a total of 7 085 women victims of domestic violence called a dedicated SOS telephone hotline in 2017–2018, only 661 women officially reported domestic violence to law enforcement in the same period (Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics, 2019). Thus, administrative data are considered to represent only the “tip of the iceberg”.

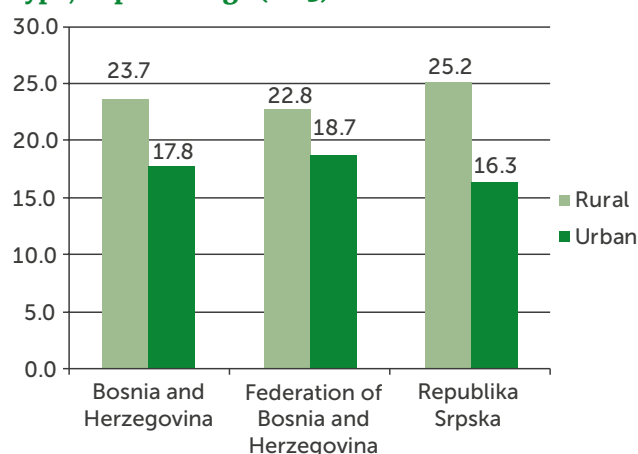
In 2013, a large-scale study was conducted to determine the prevalence of various forms of violence against women for the entire country. This study highlights the particular vulnerabilities of women in rural areas. More than half of the women surveyed had experienced at least one form of violence since the age of 15: specifically, 47.2 percent in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 47.2 percent in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 47.3 percent in Republika Srpska (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013). Although the difference is small, women in rural areas reported being subjected to violence over their lifetimes at a higher rate than urban women, as illustrated in Figures 8 and 9.

Figure 8: Proportion of women who have experienced any form of violence since the age of 15, by settlement type, in percentage (2013)



Source: Adapted from Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 51.

Figure 9: Proportion of women who have experienced domestic violence, by settlement type, in percentage (2013)



Source: Adapted from Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 85.

When a subset of women was surveyed about their experiences of domestic violence, the type of settlement in which the family lived was a more significant predictor for this form of violence. Around a quarter of women living in rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been subjected to violence by a partner.

Living in a rural area is not in itself a risk factor for gender-based violence. Rather, the survey indicated that the women respondents living in rural areas were generally elderly, had left education early with low or no qualifications (most often due to responsibilities for agricultural or domestic work), and were mainly economically inactive. These characteristics all suggest a lower level of empowerment among women in rural settlements, which does contribute to the increased risk that they will suffer gender-based violence. Material

deprivation, which is more pronounced in rural areas, “significantly increases risk of domestic violence against women. [Also in] families where the domestic violence has been detected, patriarchal opinions on gender roles are stronger” (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 88). The survey did not indicate that attitudes toward gender equality are more conservative in rural areas, but, in fact, patriarchal views of gender roles were high throughout the survey sample.

There is strong adherence to traditional gender roles in which men are permitted to exert control and dominance over women. For instance, while over 80 percent of survey respondents held the opinion that a person would be punished for physically abusing a spouse, the same respondents were much more ambivalent about whether the following acts would be punished: forcing a spouse to have sexual relations; forcing a woman to have an abortion; committing economic violence against another person; and committing psychological violence against another person (UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, 2019). These behaviours are all characteristic of domestic violence. It is also significant that among those surveyed, men “showed greater support for traditional gender roles that limit the opportunities and self-determination of women” (*ibid.*, p. 4). For example, women and men expressed diverging opinions in support of the statements “a good woman obeys her husband even if she disagrees” and “it is important for a man to show his wife/partner who is the boss,” with almost 45 percent of male respondents agreeing, but only around 25 to 35 percent of female respondents in agreement (*ibid.*, p. 5).

Prevailing attitudes that justify violence against women very often deter victims from seeking assistance or even revealing information about personal experiences of abuse. According to a 2018 survey, a quarter of women felt that domestic violence is a private matter that should be resolved within the family; 43 percent of women were either not well informed about or did not know what to do if they experienced violence. Women in rural areas were even less aware of support organizations (OSCE, 2019b). While a support system for victims/survivors of domestic violence exists, the number of services is insufficient, as is financing to support the operation of safe houses. Safety and quality standards must still be harmonized with the Istanbul Convention. The system of support for women victims of domestic violence includes eight safe houses (shelters) with a combined 181 beds for victims and their children. All of the safe houses are run by CSOs and located in municipal centres: five in the Federation

of Bosnia and Herzegovina²⁶ and three in Republika Srpska²⁷ (Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2020). Since 2005, there have been two SOS telephone helplines operating for victims of domestic violence in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. The relevant gender agencies supported the expansion of dedicated helplines that had previously been run by NGOs to establish single lines that cover the whole territory of each entity and operate free of charge on a 24/7 basis. Women’s non-governmental organizations are central to the operation of the helplines and safe houses.

The accessibility of public services is especially challenging for women in rural areas, due to the distance from NGOs and safe houses, and the cost and limited availability of public transportation. Not only are rural women isolated from the organizations that provide specialized assistance in cases of domestic violence, but they are also unable to access basic health services or legal assistance without travelling a considerable distance. Women in rural areas also experience social isolation, and if they are victims of domestic violence they will generally be “prohibited from seeing or contacting friends or wider family” and may only have access to SOS helplines – at limited times when they are not with the abuser (UN Women, 2018). Such complications are further compounded for women with disabilities or women from the minority Roma community who also live in rural settlements.

The Framework Strategy for the Implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2015–2018 is the roadmap for implementing the Istanbul Convention and it sets forth a programme of legal, institutional and organizational change. A number of by-laws and policies have also been adopted at the entity level. For instance, both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska have adopted dedicated strategies for preventing and combating domestic violence. While most of these policies apply to women generally, the Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska to 2015 highlighted the need to eliminate violence against women as one of the most critical issues facing rural areas. The action plan recommended measures on the prevention of gender-based violence, especially domestic violence, to eliminate stereotypes and promote a life free of violence, and to increase protection of rural women and access to health and social services. A final evaluation report of the implementation of the action plan identified several

²⁶ In Bihac, Mostar, Sarajevo, Tuzla and Zenica.

²⁷ In Banja Luka, Bijeljina and Modriča.

areas where further activities are needed to address the elimination of violence against rural women. These points can serve as useful recommendations for the future planning of rural development projects throughout the country: research into the links between women's property ownership and domestic violence; specialized training and sensitization for social protection services to better meet the needs of women in rural areas concerning domestic violence; and community-based programmes for women and men that include themes related to violence against women in the context of healthy lifestyles, stress management, parenting, addiction and so forth (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska, 2016a).

Violence against women is also relevant for planning and policymaking around agriculture, because domestic violence has a direct link to food security and poverty. Women who experience violence in the home are disempowered and economically dependent, leading to further household poverty. Projects that aim to improve women's skills in agriculture or in other forms of income-generating activities, to provide them with financial and legal literacy and to foster their self-confidence, can transform women's position in households. Likewise, rural advisory and extension activities can also work with men and women together to promote the value of contributing equally to the household.

3. Gender issues in rural households and family farming

3.1. The labour market, and rural and agricultural employment

Formal employment

One of the most significant gender disparities in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the large gap between the labour participation rates of women and men. Although women represent slightly more than half of the working age population, they are only about a third of those who are economically active. According to the most recent labour force survey, a total of 51.7 percent of men (between the ages of 15 and 64) are actively participating in the labour force compared with only 32.9 percent of women from the same age group (BHAS, 2019c). To put this another way, of all women in Bosnia and Herzegovina of working age, around two-thirds are economically inactive (67.1 percent); that is, they are neither employed nor looking for work. The equivalent figure for working age men is 48.3 percent (ibid.). This pattern of women's participation in the labour market varies by entity. The lowest *inactivity* rate of 59.9 percent of all working age women is found in Republika Srpska, followed by 70.2 percent of women in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the highest inactivity rate, 82.2 percent of women classified as inactive, is in the Brčko District (ibid.).

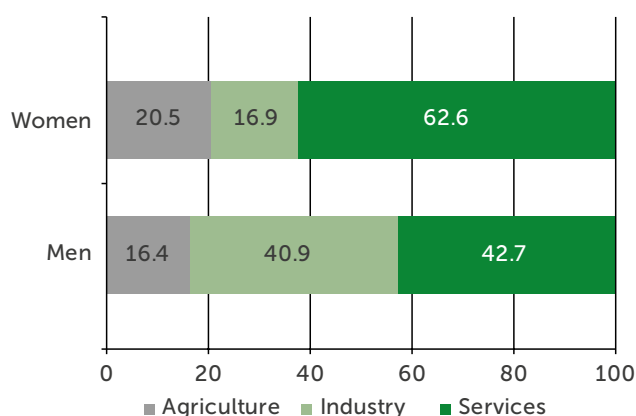
The gender gap in labour force participation increases considerably for the rural population. For rural areas, the gap in labour force participation was 30 percent, in favour of men, compared with 16 percent for the urban population in 2013 (World Bank *et al.*, 2015). Out of the surveyed female population, more than half of rural women (53 percent) were considered to be "out of the labour force" for reasons other than retirement or study. This figure compares to only a quarter (24 percent) of urban women, and 13 percent of rural men

and three percent of urban men (ibid., pp. 81–82). It is important to mention that the very high inactivity rate of rural women refers to formal employment. As is discussed elsewhere in this report, rural women take on a large burden of unpaid work, including agricultural work on family farms, and they also represent a significant proportion of the informal, or shadow, labour market.

The gender gaps in employment and unemployment rates are even more significant. The employment rate for women is 26.7 percent compared with the rate for men which is 44.6 percent. Likewise, women's unemployment rate (21.7 percent) is higher than men's (16.3 percent; BHAS, 2019c).

Considering the sectors of the economy where women and men are employed, agriculture is not the primary employer for either women or men. However, almost a quarter of employed women do work in this sector compared with 16 percent of men (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Formal employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by sex and sector of economic activity, in percentage (2019)



Source: Adapted from BHAS, 2019c, p. 99.

Agriculture is an even more significant employer for women in Republika Srpska, where 33.9 percent of all employed women are working in this sector compared with less than ten percent in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHAS, 2019c). One explanation for this may be the larger rural population in Republika Srpska, but it may also be that women have more opportunities for formal work in the agricultural sector compared with informal farm work.

The larger number of women employed in the agricultural sector reflects the fact that it is less profitable than other sectors due to the lack of infrastructure and modern equipment. Men are expected to play a breadwinner role and so are influenced to seek higher-paying work in industry and manufacturing or even to migrate for better paying jobs.

Differences in work undertaken by women and men contribute to significant gender disparities in income. According to the Human Development Report for 2019, the estimated gross national income per capita (based on purchasing power parity, PPP) is USD 8 432 for women and USD 17 123 for men, a difference of more than a half (UNDP, 2019b). Studies of hourly wages across occupations, industries, sex, age and education levels indicate that the wage gap is consistent; the average hourly wage for women was estimated to be nine percent of men's average wages in 2013 (World Bank *et al.*, 2015). One exception to this trend appears in formal employment in agriculture and mining, in which the wage gap marginally favours women. However, this is also a sub-sector of the economy in which a small number of women are employed.

Women's concentration in low-paying sectors of the labour market, which in addition to agriculture also include healthcare and education, contributes to the persistent gender wage gap. Additionally, women are more likely to have working arrangements that are associated with lower salaries, such as "fixed-term labour contracts, part-time labour contracts" or they are simply "excluded from the formal labour market by working within the 'grey economy'" (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, p. 27). Rural women, women with disabilities, women from ethnic minority groups such as Roma women, and women who have been internally displaced face particular challenges in finding formal employment and therefore are vulnerable to accepting informal work.

Work in agriculture is not necessarily considered to be employment for women. While agricultural work is perceived as a job for men, it is generally viewed as

additional work for women. Thus, unemployed women and unpaid home workers are involved in agriculture "as part of their unpaid labour duties or as a last resource for providing household incomes" (Somun-Krupalija, 2011, p. 4). In a study on public perceptions, the majority of rural respondents felt that none of the following activities would be considered employment: selling home grown produce; unpaid work in a family business; agricultural work on one's own land/off season farming; agriculture on another person's land/off season farming; and construction. These activities are not associated with regular salaries, although some do generate income (Davalos *et al.*, 2016). Notably, there were not large differences between how women and men view the kinds of labour that would be considered employment. Women were slightly less likely to see work on their family farms and selling their produce as employment, whereas a smaller group of men, compared with the women, viewed construction work as employment. These opinions point to the fact that for rural residents, a great deal of their labour is simply considered a means by which unemployed people can survive. This includes short-term or seasonal solutions (such as construction) and subsistence farming.

Informal work

Estimates of the proportion of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina engaged in informal work varies by source and definition, ranging from ten percent to 25 percent of the workforce, or about 120 000 to 300 000 people (Efendic and Williams, 2018). Informal work is characterized by insecure working conditions, irregular working hours, irregular or lower salaries and limited workplace safety measures.

Informal work is neither limited to rural areas nor to agriculture, but informality is especially common in the agricultural sector. A survey (of just over 6 000 individuals) found that those who stated they had informal work that generated income (and excluding those who had both formal and informal work at

Box 2: Definition – Informal employment

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the informal sector as one in which labour relations – where they exist – are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees (OECD, 2003). The European Union favours the term "undeclared work," defined as any paid activities that are lawful as regards their nature but not declared to public authorities (Eurofound, 2020).

the same time) were more prevalent in rural areas compared with urban and sub-urban areas, although the difference was not large. Typical forms of informal work for men include construction and manual labour. Both women and men engage in informal market trade and service sector work, handicrafts and farming. Women also undertake informal cleaning and childcare/elderly care jobs.

While there may be more men in informal work in numbers, women may be overrepresented among informal workers proportionally, due to their limited opportunities for formal work and the need for more flexible working arrangements that can be combined with domestic duties. The Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 highlights the need for both increased research into the phenomenon and support for moving women from the informal to the formal sector.

Unpaid work

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, wage differences can also be explained by the fact that women take on a much larger share of unpaid work which also includes agricultural work. The 2019 labour force survey estimates that almost six percent of all employed women are unpaid family workers compared with only 1.4 percent of all employed men (BHAS, 2019c).

For women, informal and unpaid work often overlap. For example, women's contribution to family-owned businesses and farms tends to be both unregistered and unpaid and accrues no benefits (such as pensions, health insurance, and maternity and childcare leave). Women also take on a large share of unpaid care work

Women's predominance in unpaid work is explained by widely-held perceptions about women's primary responsibilities for childcare and elderly care, combined with underdeveloped services in these sectors (for example, nurseries, homes for the elderly and laundry services), which is especially acute in rural areas. The impact of gender stereotypes is further discussed in a later section of this report.

There are examples in Bosnia and Herzegovina of initiatives to reduce or redistribute unpaid care work, focusing on enhancing paid maternity and paternity leave and encouraging men and boys to take on a greater share of care and domestic work. The Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska to 2015 was a noteworthy attempt to address the burden of unpaid work on rural women. The action plan anticipated measures such as the inclusion of data about female unpaid work in official statistics and valuing the contribution of women's unpaid work to the local economy.

Gender distribution of agricultural labour

In rural households, women who are classified as "housewives" frequently undertake non-paid agricultural work in addition to housework (while men seldom take on housekeeping activities). Analysis of data obtained under a 2010 pilot agricultural census project suggests that women's labour is a crucial contribution to family farms.²⁸ When labour rates on family farms were compared, the wife of the household head (the farm manager or farmer) dedicated the most time to household labour, followed by the son (or son-in-law) of the head of household, and then the daughter (or daughter-in-law). Hired labour was insignificant. One of the clear reasons for this division of labour is because the household head is most often in formal employment elsewhere (usually construction, followed by work in the public sector, services or industry).

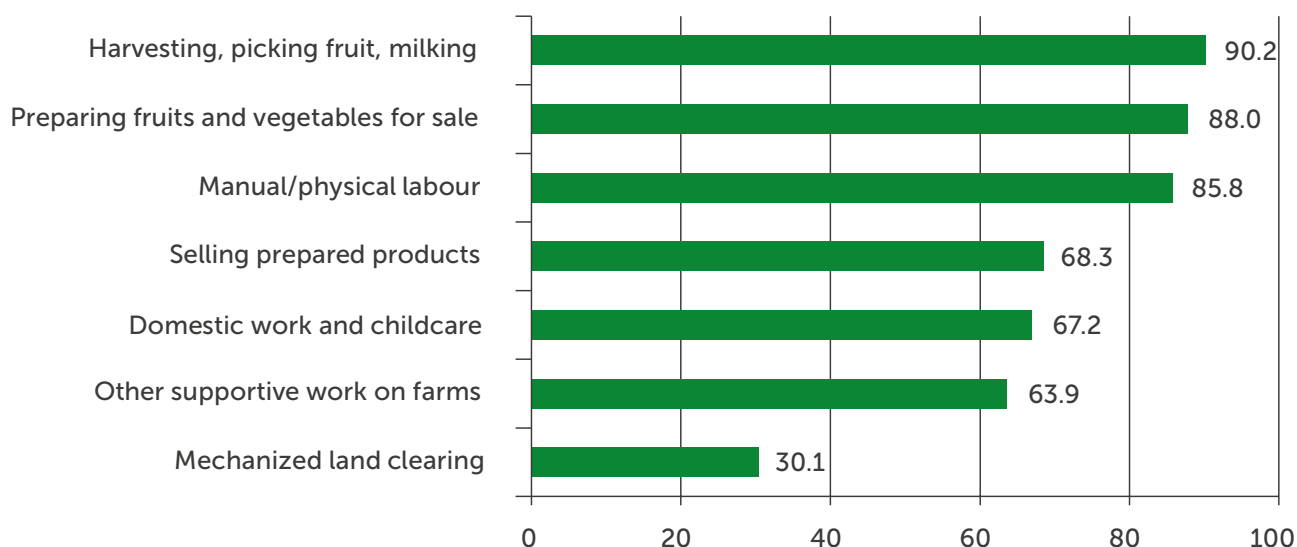
Men and women also perform distinct types of farming work. A small-scale survey of people engaged in farming highlighted the types of activities that women generally undertake. Figure 11 depicts the proportion of surveyed women who said they perform specific tasks.

Women tend to perform manual labour and may be also involved in the primary production of agricultural products, such as cheese-making. Activities that are "performed almost exclusively by women include milking, picking fruit, and activities that require greater precision" (MEASURE-BiH, 2016, p. 60). Women also

Box 3: Definition – Unpaid work

"Unpaid work" is predominantly performed by women. This term is not defined in the law of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the issue is highlighted in the BiH GAP as linked to discrimination against women in the labour market. The ILO (2014, p. 21, p. 85) describes unpaid work as: "work that is undertaken to maintain the wellbeing of household members, such as cooking, cleaning, and taking care of children, or elderly and sick family members. Much unpaid work is unrecognised, both statistically and economically". Unpaid work also includes contributory family work in an economic unit (a family business or farm), as well as volunteer work and fetching water or fuel for household consumption.

²⁸ Data provided by BHAS for the purposes of this assessment.

Figure 11: Most common activities that women perform on farms (in percentage)

Source: Sarajevo Economic Institute, 2018, p. 18.

undertake the bulk of supporting tasks on family farms, such as preparing food for farm workers, and cleaning clothes and equipment. Men are typically responsible for operating farm equipment, transporting goods, marketing agricultural products and negotiating contracts, usually as formal labour.

The gendered division of labour largely reflects stereotypes about the types of activities that are “acceptable” for women and men to perform. Women are less engaged in processes that are higher along value chains, such as dealing with marketing, and are concentrated at levels that involve less decision-making about and control over income earned from agriculture. Moreover, the long-term impacts of heavy physical labour on the health of women in rural areas is not clear.

Opportunities in off-farm work for women in rural areas

There is a need to diversify the economy of rural areas, both in agricultural and non-agricultural activities, and create new jobs for the population. Based on a limited review of several projects on the economic empowerment of women in rural areas, most have been restricted to training in “the agriculture, handicraft, and textile sectors, with several projects also focusing on... care giving and rural tourism” and some small-business support, mainly in catering, trade, agriculture, healthcare services and freelance activities (World Bank, 2018b, p. 6).

Service jobs (such as childcare) and tourism have been highlighted as potentially offering employment and income-generating opportunities for women in rural areas. For instance, in 2014, the Ministry of Trade and Tourism of Republika Srpska and the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska carried out a project to increase

the “knowledge and skills of women in managing rural holdings rendering tourism services,” in line with one of the priorities identified in the Strategy of Rural Tourism for 2011–2020 (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a, p. 23). A number of preconditions must be met to support women’s employment in sectors that are currently under-developed. Gender-sensitive value chain analysis, for instance of home-based models for hospitality (for example, B&Bs), would be especially helpful to identify how policies and programmes can be targeted to best assist women.

There is a tendency for projects on women’s economic empowerment to replicate the occupational segregation that exists in the labour market as whole. Thus, the sectors that are prioritized for women often reflect stereotypes about what is “acceptable” work, rather than where women can be supported to enter areas that are most in demand on the current labour market. Further analysis and research are needed to determine where there may be opportunities to empower women from rural communities to enter non-traditional jobs.

3.2. Land and property ownership

Around 43 percent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is agricultural land (22 million hectares out of a total of 51.2 million hectares) and an additional 43 percent is forest area (estimates for 2016 in FAO, 2020c).

Gender equality in the ownership and control over land “contributes to economic efficiency and has positive multiplier effects for the achievement of a range of... SDGs including poverty reduction (Goal 1), food security (Goal 2) and the welfare of households,

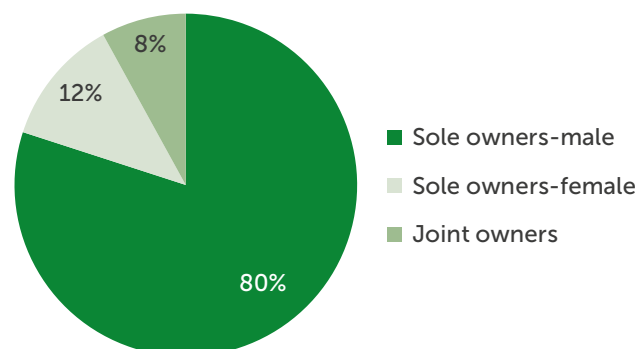
communities and countries (Goals 3, 11 and 16, among others)" (FAO, 2018c, p. 2). Women's access to land, and other forms of property, is essential to their economic empowerment, which, in turn, can be a platform for political participation, business start-ups, increasing food security and lessening dependency in cases of domestic violence, for example. FAO is the "custodian agency" for indicators 5.a.1. and 5.a.2. of SGD 5 (on women's ownership of agricultural land and women's equal rights to land ownership), and is supporting capacity building in how to develop and report on statistical data for these indicators.

Land and property rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina are recorded through a system consisting of land registry and land cadastre.²⁹ Reform and improvements to the accuracy of the land administration systems has been ongoing since the early 2000s, implemented at the entity level. At least one project in this area had a gender component, with a focus on raising awareness of women's equal right to own land.³⁰ Determining the extent to which women and men have access to and control over land, as full owners, co-owners or renters, as well as the size of their land parcels, is complicated by the fact that official sex-disaggregated data for these indicators are not publicly available for the country as a whole.

There is a significant gender gap in land and property ownership in favour of men in Bosnia and Herzegovina. From 2003 to 2013, men consistently represented over 70 percent of land owners, with a marginal increase in women's land ownership from 24.7 percent to 26.8 percent across the decade (World Bank *et al.*, 2015). The situation has improved since 2013, however, which could be a result of varied initiatives to facilitate land registration processes. In 2019, 38.3 percent of land registry records indicated women as owners or co-owners (FAO, 2020a).

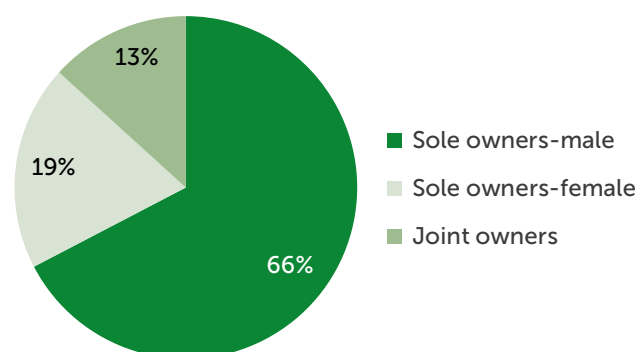
Women remain the minority of registered land owners, and they also tend to have (or to have use of) smaller parcels of land. According to farm registry data for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the average size of the agricultural plot for female-headed households is 1.61 hectares, compared with 2.60 hectares in male-headed households (data for 2019, provided by MoFTER). The pattern is similar in Republika Srpska,

Figure 12: Dwelling ownership patterns in rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina, by sex (2011)



Source: Adapted from World Bank *et al.*, 2015, p. 79.

Figure 13: Dwelling ownership patterns in urban areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina, by sex (2011)



Source: Adapted from World Bank *et al.*, 2015, p. 79.

where the average household farm in the official registry includes 4.47 hectares of agricultural land, but the average FHH has only 2.75 hectares (Rokvic, 2020).

According to a household budget survey (2011) that recorded information about ownership of dwellings, 74 percent of all dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina were owned by men solely, with women as the sole owners of just 15 percent of dwellings (the remainder were jointly owned; World Bank *et al.*, 2015). This disparity in the ownership of dwellings is more pronounced in rural than in urban areas.

Women own or co-own 29.6 percent of all real estate in Republika Srpska and 38.4 percent in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2017 data; Rokvic, 2020). When considering urban and rural areas separately, public records of the Republic Geodetic and Property Law Administration of Republika Srpska indicate that 36.5 percent of real estate owners/co-owners are women in urban areas compared with around 30 percent for rural areas (data from 2019; *ibid.*). In general, when women are co-owners of real estate, they own less than half a share; this is the arrangement

29 Further information about gender equality and property rights, along with practical guidance for notaries on exercising due diligence to strengthen the protection of women's rights, can be found in the following publication: Guidelines on strengthening gender equality in notarial practices South – East Europe (available at <http://www.fao.org/3/ca2953en/CA2953EN.pdf>) and a national annex for Bosnia and Herzegovina (forthcoming).

30 The Capacity Building for Improvement of Land Administration and Procedures (CILAP) project conducted by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency from 2013 to 2019.

for 40.2 percent of women who co-own real estate (a combination of land and buildings) in Republika Srpska (Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics, 2019).

There are no legal impediments to women owning land or other property in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rather, patterns of male and female property ownership are largely based on traditional attitudes towards inheritance in which property passes to men in the household. In a public opinion poll that included the statement “a woman cannot claim to inherit land/property from her family of origin, because she belongs to her husband’s family,” a minority of respondents agreed with this statement, but men were around twice as likely to hold this attitude than women (UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, 2019, p. 5). Even in cases where women do inherit property, it is not uncommon for them to “voluntarily” cede their right to a male relative or [women] simply are not included in the deeds for land or housing” (MEASURE-BiH, 2016, p. 58). Thus, married women typically do not receive property from their fathers or male relatives, and often do not acquire rights to marital property because it is registered in the husband’s name. This pattern is less common among young married couples who are increasingly registering as co-owners of property; however, this trend is more typical in urban areas.

Traditional patrilineal patterns of property ownership mean that women in rural areas are heavily engaged in farming but have limited rights over the very land they are using, in terms of being able to sell/rent land or other property, or use it as collateral for loans. This leaves them in an economically vulnerable and dependent position. Men are also impacted on by this arrangement, especially younger sons who have limited ownership rights over the property that they are farming. Unresolved issues around land ownership, use and division within households are said to be a push

factor for young men to migrate away from rural areas (Blagojevic, 2007).

3.2.1. Farm ownership and management

The conflict in the former Yugoslavia had a significant impact on ownership of agricultural land, due to massive displacement of the rural population, as well as subsequent legal changes to landholders’ rights (legislation prior to 1992 only permitted individual holdings of up to ten hectares of flat land and up to 15 hectares of hilly land) and the dismantling of state-owned enterprises.

Data about farm structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina are outdated and incomplete. The most recent official calculation of the total number of farm structures indicating the size of the farm was collected in 1991. At the time, there were 540 301 farms in total. Around half of them (54 percent or 291 000 farms) were less than two hectares, and only three percent (or 15 669 farms) were larger than ten hectares (Council of Ministers, 2018). An unofficial calculation from 2007 provided a similar estimate of 515 000 agricultural holdings in total, although at the time only 135 000 holdings were recorded in official registries (ibid.).

To further complicate matters, reports on the agricultural sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina often use imprecise terms to describe rural agricultural producers, such as “farm,” “commercial farm,” “family farm,” and “holding,” which can lead to confusion between small private farms and non-commercial farming households. In fact, the typical “farm” in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a rural household that engages in agriculture on a small scale. Because registration of a household farm is voluntary, the official registries do not necessarily capture information about all farms; the precise proportion of registered to unregistered household farms was not found during this research. In the case of

Table 5: Number of rural households undertaking agricultural activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013)

	Geographic area			
	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Households engaged in agricultural activities	217 061	141 629	4 704	363 394
Number (and share) of which were commercial/market-oriented farms	30 089 (13.9%)	25 395 (18.0%)	1 125 (23.9%)	56 609 (15.6%)

Source: BHAS, 2016, p. 245.

Republika Srpska, households that engage in agriculture may register the “family farm” as either commercial or non-commercial.

According to the 2013 population census, over 360 000 households in Bosnia and Herzegovina were engaged in agriculture in some form, representing around a third of all households in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina combined. Yet, out of all agricultural households, only 16 percent were considered market-oriented. The majority of these “family farms” were subsistence farms.

In 2018, the total number of registered agricultural holdings in Bosnia and Herzegovina was 118 000, with almost two-thirds of these holdings located in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These figures represent small-holder or household farms, such as those described above.

In addition to a lack of comprehensive data about sizes and types of farms, there is no unified database that indicates the sex of farm owners or managers. But because data about family/household farms are sex-disaggregated in registries, they provide information about the general representation of women who head farming households.

The overall trend has been an increase in the total number of farms that are now included in farm

registries in both of the entities and the Brčko District. A parallel trend has been an increase in the proportion of female-headed households that are engaged in agriculture, as well as an increase in those that are included in farm registries. This latter change has been attributed to special measures that give women farmers priority and additional support for some agricultural incentives.

Of the 363 394 households engaged in agriculture in 2013, 18.3 percent were female-headed households and 81.7 percent were male-headed households, meaning that women were leading approximately 66 500 household farms. In Republika Srpska particularly, the entity-level action plan aimed at rural women is credited with an increase in the share of female-headed farming households from 12.5 percent in 2011 to 22.7 percent in 2017 (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a). For the country as a whole, the proportion of women registered as heads of family farms increased from 10 percent in 2016 to around 18 percent at present, as depicted in Table 7.

As noted in the previous section of this report, women farmers have smaller land plots on average compared with men who head household farms. This difference reflects land ownership patterns generally, but may also indicate women’s more limited economic resources (to lease land) and difficulties accessing the machinery and equipment needed to tend a larger land plot. Generally,

Table 6: Number of registered agricultural holdings in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018)

	Geographic area			
	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Number of registered holdings	76 003	42 403	[3 400]*	118 406

*Note: the farm registry of the Brčko District uses a different classification system from those of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. Therefore, the data cannot be merged and are not included in the data for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Source: Data provided by BHAS.

Table 7: Share of women heading registered family farms in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska

Structure	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina			Republika Srpska		
	Total number	Number headed by women	% headed by women	Total number	Number headed by women	% headed by women
Family farm	74 933	13 495	18.0	41 393	7 292	17.6

Source: Rokvic, 2020, p. 19.

smaller farms are associated with smaller harvests and lower yields, but this is not always the case if women farmers are able to apply modern farming practices and technologies. Further information is needed to complete the profiles of women farmers, both those who run commercial farms and non-commercial farms. Information, such as the types of farming women engage in, whether their farms are profitable, whether they lease land or equipment and whether they hire labourers should inform strategic planning around the development of agriculture.

The trend towards formally recognizing women as the heads of farms is an important one. For instance, in Republika Srpska, family farms are legally obliged to pay towards health and pension insurance, with the lowest payments for unemployed household members. This requirement has reportedly prompted farmers to transfer holdings to non-employed household members, usually a woman (Rokvic, 2020). The positive impact for women being registered as holders is that they then become eligible for pensions and their economic independence may increase as a result. However, it would be useful if women's status as legal farm holders could also be linked to their increased access to productive resources and greater empowerment in managing family farms. Concern has been expressed that the trend of an increase in the number of women being officially registered is a reflection of the fact that rural households use this process as a means to apply for special incentives for which women have priority, as described above. While the registration process confers the legal status of the "farmer" to women, in reality, they do not necessarily become more empowered to take on the day-to-day decision-making concerning family farms.

A significant and related issue that was raised by several interviewees during research for this assessment is the fact that administrative difficulties and the costs associated with registering a farm are prohibitive for many women farmers. Information provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of Economy and Entrepreneurship of Republika Srpska was analysed to better understand the difficulties that women face in registering a farm. While costs can only be roughly estimated, due to variations in the registration procedure between municipalities, the type of registration of the agricultural holding and whether additional approvals or certificates are required, they build a general picture of the funds that farmers must be able to access. The basic cost of registration varies from BAM 200 to 250 (equivalent to USD 120 to 150), depending on the entity and municipality (excluding fiscalization and registration in the VAT system). If the

agricultural holding enters the fiscalization system and registers with the VAT system, the cost increases by between BAM 650 and 750. Thus, the initial outlay to register an agricultural holding ranges from BAM 850 to 1000, and additional costs include the following:

- » Monthly contributions for pension and disability insurance, health insurance, unemployment insurance, for child protection and others (approximately BAM 250, with variations by entity, municipality and type of agricultural holding, or about BAM 3 000 annually).
- » Income tax paid on an annual basis (approximately BAM 400 to 900).
- » Other annual fees may also apply that range from BAM 24 to 250 (for example, a special tax in Republika Srpska; water taxes paid to the municipality; a membership fee for the Chamber of Crafts and Entrepreneurship; and other administrative fees for registering a business name).

Excluding the costs of registering the farm, a single agricultural holding must allocate at least BAM 3 500 per year. This figure is only relevant for holdings that do not employ outside labour and pay salaries, and it does not take into account funds that must be invested in planting and production. Women farmers also report the difficulties of navigating the registration process, which requires collecting and submitting documents to multiple institutions under a centralized system that cannot be managed at the local or municipal level. For women who live in rural areas, even the act of submitting documents is a complex one, as it requires travel to urban centres for each procedure. Women also face challenges, due to constraints on their time and their often lower levels of education, to understanding the legal and administrative processes for registration. When undertaking this assessment, it was found that there is no one repository of information on the exact costs for each stage of the farm registration process, even in general terms. For these reasons, strategic plans to increase the number of women as registered farm owners must also address the gender-specific barriers. Measures could include "one-window" processes, providing legal and accounting consultations to women farmers at the local level, farm/business incubators that allow women to increase their farming activity with limited risk, and support for cooperatives.

Women are already active in agriculture cooperatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but because cooperatives engage in business activities, they are discussed in section 4.7 of this report.

A considerable proportion of rural households engage in subsistence farming. These activities are not formalized (as they would be if they were registered), but they are nevertheless important for the household because they contribute to food security. A UNDP-led survey of just under 3 000 rural households provides the following picture: one-third (36 percent) of households managed smallholdings, producing fruit, vegetables and livestock primarily for their own consumption; around 13 percent could be classified as “farms,” meaning they had at least three hectares and/or three livestock units; 16 percent of rural households had gardens; and 35 percent of households did not participate in agriculture at all (UNDP, 2013, p. 83). Of particular significance, only six percent of all rural households depended on agriculture for the majority of their income, and these were usually larger holdings of up to ten hectares. Only a fractional percentage of rural households can be considered a full-time commercial farm that derives the majority of its income from agriculture.

From the perspective of gender analysis, these findings suggest that women and men may be engaged in agriculture in a number of different ways, and very often informally and additionally to other forms of employment. This has important implications for whether they have equal access to key resources and information that they can apply to their own activities. At the same time, the findings indicate that improving income-generating and employment opportunities for the rural population must be diverse to accommodate women and men who are not engaged in farming at all.

3.3. Status of women in rural areas: gender roles, leadership and empowerment

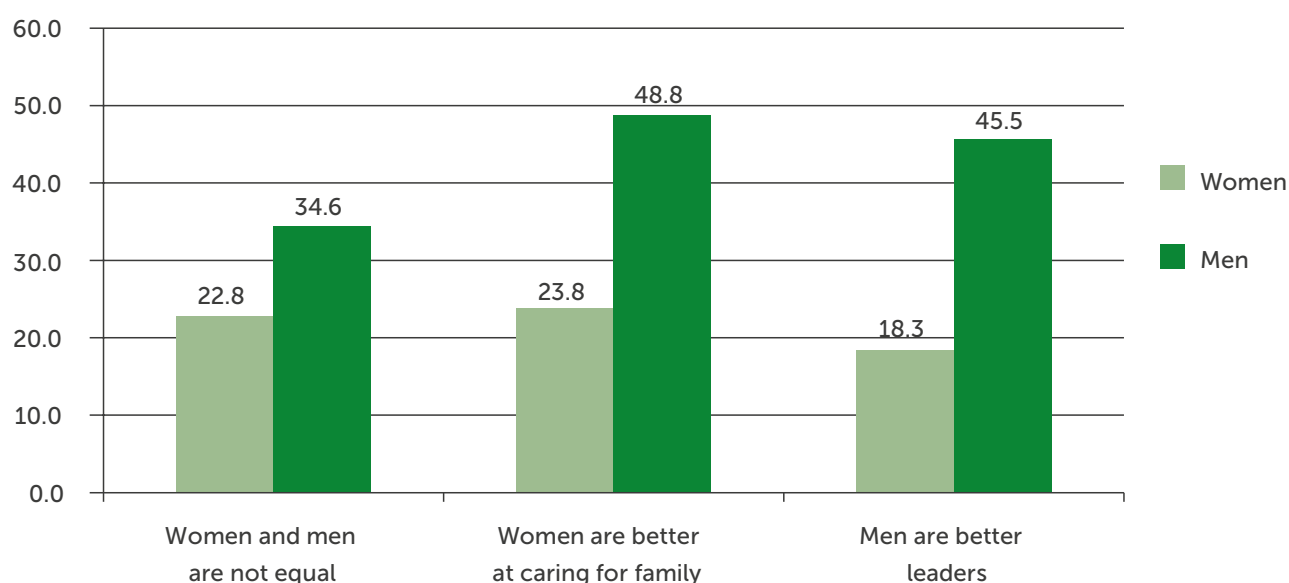
Gender stereotypes and perceptions about gender roles limit opportunities for women and men, both in the family and society. While the principle of gender equality is fully supported by the legal and policy frameworks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, stereotypes remain deeply-rooted in society. Patriarchal views on gender roles still influence the perception of men as breadwinners and leaders, while women are seen to be responsible for the domestic sphere and play a more limited public role. An opinion poll, conducted in 2019, found that more than a third to almost half of male respondents agreed with the following statements:

- » women and men are not equal by nature, therefore they cannot have the same social role;
- » women are better adjusted to take care of the family than to work outside the home; and
- » men are better leaders than women.

While women were less likely to share these views than men, a significant proportion of women nonetheless agreed with the above statements, as illustrated in Figure 14.

A large survey on gender roles in Republika Srpska confirms that the patriarchal model is common in

Figure 14: Respondents who agreed to the following statements on attitudes towards gender equality, by sex, in percentage (2019)



Source: Adapted from OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a, p. 30.

families: men are the main decision-makers concerning household management, and women take virtually all responsibility for unpaid domestic and care work. Men exercise control over household finances, although women are often engaged in day-to-day expenditures. Of particular significance, this pattern appears to change little even when women contribute more to the household budget, but the tendency for joint decision-making about expenses is greater when women contribute more, and least when they do not (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska, 2012).

There is no indication that these attitudes and patterns are any less prevalent in rural areas. Rather, indicators, such as the high level of economic inactivity and disproportionate share of unpaid work, suggest that stereotypes limit women in rural areas from realizing their full potential. This is also linked to women's empowerment. Not only do time constraints impede women from participating in public or educational events, but they are often disempowered in terms of decision-making by attitudes that present men as leaders. As a result, women's voices are lacking from public discussions about rural development, and their views are not adequately considered in policymaking concerning support for agriculture. Lastly, if projects on increasing

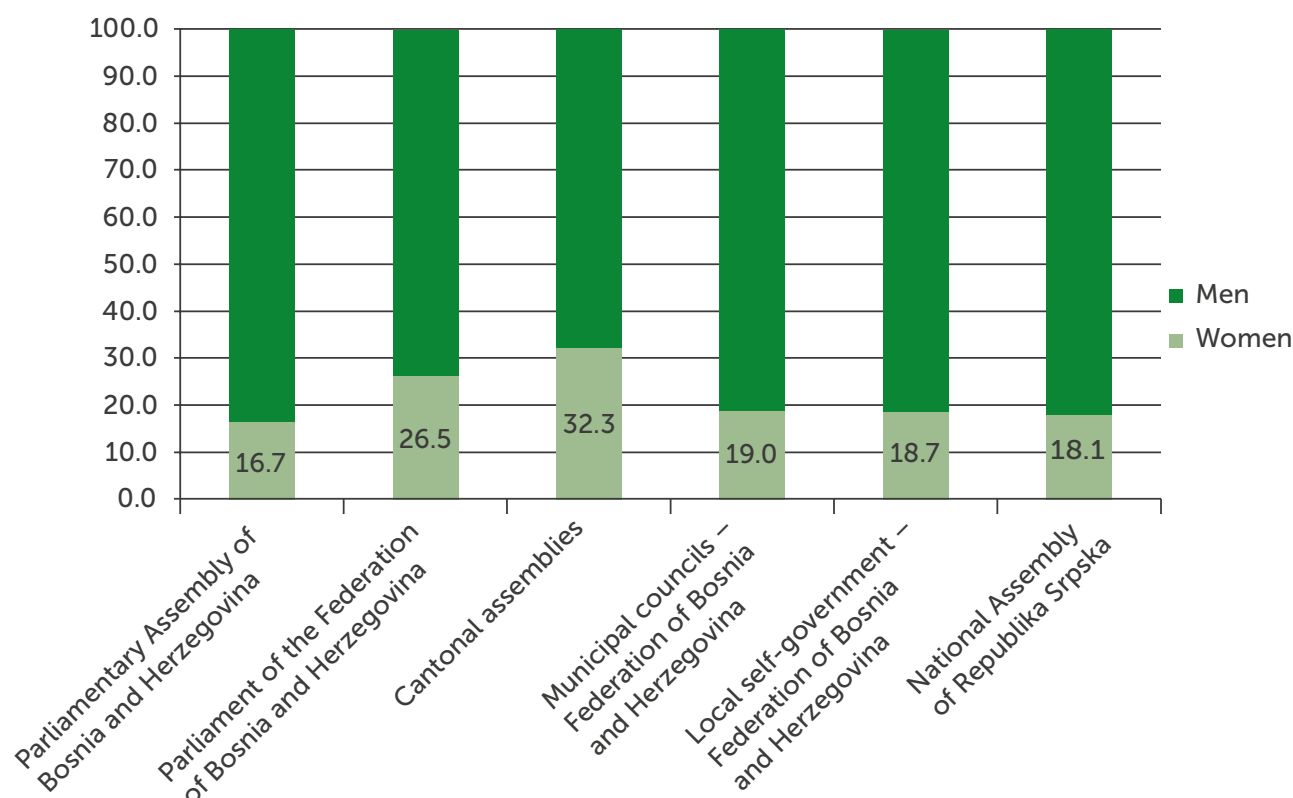
opportunities for women in rural areas to engage in income generation do not also consider how gender stereotypes may limit women's authority in deciding how such money will be used, they may have very little impact in terms of empowering women economically.

3.3.1. Women's role in leadership: political office, civil society and agricultural associations

Historically, women have been active in the political life of the country and remain so today. However, their low representation in public office translates to a low level of empowerment overall. Special measures have been taken in Bosnia and Herzegovina to increase women's representation in leadership through legislating a quota for at least 40 percent of the less represented sex in public office and on candidate lists. The Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina calls for the 40 percent threshold in relevant public bodies, which is also implemented through amendments to the Election Law. While these initiatives have had a positive effect in terms of increasing the number of women in office, progress remains slow, and the target of at least 40 percent women has not yet been reached.

Among elected officials at the state level, women make up only 16.7 percent of members of the Parliamentary

Figure 15: Comparison of women's representation in elected office, by level (in percentage)



Sources: BHAS, 2020b, p. 82; Institute for Statistics of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, pp. 98–99.

Note: all data are from 2018, with the exception of the proportion of women on municipal councils and local self-government representative bodies of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which refer to 2016.

Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BHAS, 2020b). Women are marginally better represented in legislatures at the entity level in the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Assembly of Republika Srpska. It is a common phenomenon for women to encounter fewer obstacles to entering political office at the local level, where candidates may be better known by their constituents and the offices hold less influence, than at the regional or national levels. This pattern does not seem to be the case in by the legal and policy frameworks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, however. Patterns of women's representation are neither consistent by entity or level of office. For example, women's representation is the highest in cantonal assemblies (32.3 percent). In local council elections held in 2016, women comprised 41 percent of candidates, but ultimately, they were elected to only 18.2 percent of the seats (UN Women Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019).

Women's participation on municipal councils and assemblies ranges from just eight percent to 24 percent. At the level of local community councils (*mjesne zajednice*), women's participation is also very low. For instance, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, women represent less than one in five councillors elected to municipal council seats and to representative bodies of local self-government (Institute for Statistics of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018).

Figure 15 illustrates the disparities between elected offices, based on available data. The data indicate that women's representation is generally far from 30 percent, which is the proportion thought to be the minimal "critical mass" to have an impact on decision-making, to say nothing of reaching the 40 percent envisioned by the quota.

In terms of elected mayors, out of 140 mayors, only six women were elected to this post in 2016 (one in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and five in Republika Srpska).

Considerable efforts have gone into localizing state-level actions on gender equality, for instance through the establishment of municipal commissions on gender equality and the adoption of local GAPs. Thus, it is surprising that progress towards increasing women's political participation has been minimal over two decades. It is also concerning that in recent elections, women have been active in campaigning for public office, but because of serious barriers, their progress into office has stagnated. Women living in rural areas are even more distant from power structures and local decision-making, and there is a real risk that their perspectives about issues that impact

on their communities and livelihoods are given no consideration.

Formal political office is not the only means for women in rural areas to be involved in local activities, but, in fact, they also face serious difficulties in taking advantage of other avenues, such as public meetings. According to research conducted by the Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska in cities and municipalities, while there are no formal barriers to women attending public events in rural communities, structural and traditional barriers limit their participation. For example, it is generally accepted that male family members will be able to adequately convey women's views, according to a patriarchal model of decision-making. Women are virtually non-existent in local government structures in rural areas and therefore have almost no involvement in the development of local economic or agricultural policies (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska, 2011).

On a positive note, projects that have engaged directly with women at the local level in order to empower them to become more engaged in decision-making indicate that such "investments" have yielded positive results, confirming that "When women are supported with development of skills and provided with opportunities to engage with decision makers they themselves become drivers of change" (UN Women and UNDP, 2019, p. 52).

Civil society organizations (CSOs) offer rural women opportunities to unite around common interests. Women's CSOs have a long history in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and such organizations are diverse, undertaking lobbying, conducting research and providing services. There are also examples of CSOs that represent specific groups of women, such as Roma women, and which focus on rural development. Civil society organizations cooperate and interact with local government in various ways (for instance, in the financing of CSO-led projects, co-organizing educational and public events, and providing support for specialized services, such as safe houses for victims of domestic violence). However, the influence of CSOs on the broader reform agenda concerning gender equality, rural development or support for women in agriculture is negligible. Women's rights organizations themselves contend that they "are not sufficiently involved in the adoption, implementation or monitoring of regulations, policies and reform processes in general" (PRAVA ZA SVE, 2017, p. 8).

Membership in agricultural or farmers' associations could offer women farmers an avenue for networking,

to build mutual support and to have a greater influence over agricultural policy than they would as individuals. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are over 900 registered farmers' associations, operating at the state level and others that are active in specific entities (Zvikov, 2013). In general, many such associations are inactive; this may reflect the fact that establishing an association is often a prerequisite for agricultural support. The representation of women among association members or association leadership could not be determined for this report. However, according to research conducted among rural households in Republika Srpska, around 75 percent of agricultural producers are not members of any association or cooperative, and for women specifically, the rate increases to 88 percent. The main reason given by men for not joining farmers' organizations was their dissatisfaction with how they function and, presumably, men are not convinced of the benefits of membership. The primary reasons given by women for not joining

associations reflects their lack of empowerment and the fact that they rarely view themselves as farmers. More than half (53 percent) of surveyed women stated they believed that membership in an agricultural association is "a man's job," while 39 percent of the women said that they were not capable of joining an association. Men also share similar views of where the limits are to women's engagement in agriculture. In the same study, 81 percent of interviewed men said they would accept their wives joining an agricultural association. However, only 43 percent were accepting of the idea that their wives could become a president of such an association (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of the Republic of Srpska, 2009, p. 31). In other countries of the Western Balkans (Albania for example), women-only voluntary agricultural associations have been recognized as a means to mobilize women and also to overcome the perception that women are "farmers' wives" and not farmers in their own right (FAO, 2016).

4. Gender issues in agriculture and rural livelihoods

4.1. Crop production and horticulture

Of the agricultural land in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 46.5 percent is arable (the rest is pastures, meadows, orchards and vineyards). The approximately 1.5 million hectares of arable land is distributed between approximately 364 000 agricultural households; on average, each household has 4.20 hectares of arable land. Cultivated land is primarily used for growing cereals (60 percent), followed by forage crops (24 percent), vegetables (13 percent), industrial crops (2.7 percent), aromatic and medicinal plants (0.2 percent) and berries (0.08 percent; Rokvic, 2020).

Although natural conditions favour crop production, the sector faces challenges related to climate issues as well as “lack of farm investment, high prices and poor quality of inputs (such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides), subsistence agriculture and traditional extensive farming practices. The result is low productivity and significantly lower yields,” compared with the sub-region of Southern Europe or Europe as a whole (Zurovec *et al.*, 2015, p. 250). These challenges also explain the lower level of industrial crop production. In fact, vegetable production is mainly for local markets and “takes place in mixed farming systems, often as a supplementary source of income” (*ibid.*, p. 251). Orchards and vineyards were extensively damaged during the war but are being regenerated, primarily growing plums, apples and pears. A rural household survey carried out by UNDP found that growing fruit, vegetables and grapes is vital for many households, but it is usually small-scale, in gardens, and would not necessarily be classified as agriculture (UNDP, 2013).

There are no national statistics about patterns of crop production or horticulture, harvest and yields, disaggregated by farms owned or managed by women

and men (or by farm size). A survey of rural households engaged in agriculture found that holdings are generally small. FHHs have on average even smaller holdings across all categories of land use, with the exception of fish ponds. The gender differences could be explained by patterns of land ownership that favour men or the fact that women have fewer resources, such as machinery and other equipment, that would be needed.

A review of donor projects and a small-scale survey suggest that there is differentiation in the specific crops and types of horticulture in which women and men are engaged. When 311 farmers were surveyed, women were more likely than the men to be involved in growing fruit and vegetables (62 percent of all respondents who grew these crops, for both

Table 8: Average area of agricultural land, by use and sex of the householder for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013)

Type of agricultural land use:	Average area of agricultural land (in hectares)	
	FHH	MHH
Arable land and gardens	0.467	0.747
Orchards	0.081	0.159
Vineyards	0.003	0.005
Plant nurseries	0.004	0.007
Meadows and pastures	0.458	0.568
Fish ponds	0.005	0.005

Source: Data provided by BHAS, from the 2013 population census.

categories; Sarajevo Economic Institute, 2018). Among the core beneficiaries of the FARMA project – those to which farm ownership or management could be attributed (24 women and 117 men) – women, while underrepresented overall, were more likely to be engaged in cultivating medicinal and aromatic plants, followed by fruits and vegetables (Vukotic *et al.*, 2015). The FARMA project also identified berry cultivation as an appropriate area for investment, considering the small size of the average farm in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the high value of berry crops and potential profit margins. FARMA, as well as several other donor-led projects, have promoted berry cultivation (blueberries, raspberries and strawberries)³¹ as an income-generating activity for women specifically. While berries are a high-value crop, they are also labour-intensive to grow and require other investments to maximize profits (for example, cold storage, processing and juice bottling machines).

In the absence of an agricultural survey, information from donor projects only offers suggestions about the areas in which male and female farmers are engaged, because each project pre-selected specific sub-sectors of agriculture. A fuller picture of the primary crops grown by women farmers, and women's land use, harvests and yields could be obtained if it was possible to disaggregate existing agricultural data by individual farm and by sex. An agricultural census could supply this type of information.

Several experts who were interviewed for this report pointed out that women who are engaged in farming in Bosnia and Herzegovina generally lack the capital to construct greenhouses or to purchase refrigerators and processing equipment. They also have very limited capacity to conduct research in order to expand their market reach. Women who sell their own agricultural products (such as vegetables, but not limited to crop products) are not empowered to demand fair prices at markets (or lack access to markets in urban centres) and so they often sell to an intermediary or engage in low-level selling in local markets. Some Roma women also reported that they face particular problems because prejudice prevents some potential customers from buying their products. Therefore, women mainly occupy the first levels of value chains that are related to horticulture and crop production.

Donors have tended to focus on start-up activities for women and provide initial investments, but there does not seem to have been rigorous monitoring and evaluation of what has worked for women and where

31 For example, projects supported by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and Oxfam.

Box 4: Medicinal and aromatic plant production

Use of medicinal herbs has a long tradition in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and while they are not cultivated on a large scale, there is a market for these plants and their products (for example, teas, syrups and essential oils for cosmetics) both within and outside of the country. Production and processing of medicinal plants and herbs has been recognized as a sub-sector in which there is potential for women's entrepreneurship. A business development project that focuses on plant collectors, growers and processors offers a useful case study of some of the challenges that women farmers face in Bosnia and Herzegovina generally.

The key obstacles identified by women who are cultivating medicinal plants are as follows:³²

- » difficulties formally registering a business;
- » lack of financial resources (connected to not being able to receive incentives);
- » lack of know-how and technical knowledge (on subjects such as plant processing and product standardization and certification for the European Union market);
- » limited market access (linked to lack of education in marketing and branding and how to effectively use e-commerce); and
- » a lack of associations for plant processing.

Associations, or clusters, were recognized as especially important because they could serve as hubs for training, information-sharing and networking that would address some of the other issues that women entrepreneurs face.

further support is needed to ensure that agricultural production is sustainable or could expand. Without targeted support, there is a risk that women will remain at the level where labour is most intensive and returns are minimal.

32 Information from research conducted under a regional project supported by the Association of Business Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see the Entrepreneurship portal, Sektoru ljekovitog bilja nedostaje poticaja [The herbal sector lacks initiatives], 29 June 2018, available at <https://www.poduzetna.ba/novost/452/sektoru-ljekovitog-bilja-nedostaje-poticaja> and the STRONGER interregional project Cluster Analysis, available at <https://www.stronger-project.eu/clanak?id=GaoLi30mpNxYbix1IXIt>).

4.2. Livestock and livestock products

Livestock production accounts for a considerable share of the total value of agricultural production (37 percent in 2016). Key livestock products are milk, dairy and meat. Livestock productivity is low compared with other European countries, which reflects the fact that the most extensive production is done on small farms that have limited resources while a much smaller part of production is “organized on the modern, technologically well-equipped farms” (Zurovec *et al.*, 2015, p. 249).

There are no national statistics on livestock production or yields, disaggregated by farms owned or managed by women and men (or by farm size). Population census data indicate that FHHs that engage in agriculture have on average fewer livestock than MHHs, as illustrated in Table 9.

Information about ownership does not provide a complete picture of how women and men engage in livestock production, nor the extent to which women have a decision-making role in managing the financial resources from the sale of meat or animal products. Typically, on family farms, men have the primary responsibility for animal purchase and sale, breeding, slaughtering and marketing; these roles tend to involve financial transactions. Women are more often engaged with the day-to-day tending of livestock, such as grazing and feeding, milking and collecting eggs. They also prepare dairy products, such as cheese, and may sell the excess products locally. Clearly identifying how women and men are engaged at various points in value chains associated with livestock production is an important process for policymaking (such as determining incentives) and for organizations that offer

Table 9: Average number of livestock, by species and sex of the holder for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013)

Livestock (head/units):	FHH	MHH
Cattle	2.14	2.81
of which are dairy cows	1.57	1.9
Pigs	3.23	5.13
Sheep	12.93	18.45
Goats	3.57	4.76
Horses	1.77	1.56
Poultry	19.3	33.43
Beehives	16.63	21.41

Source: Data provided by BHAS from the 2013 population census.

training and extension services. Because of their greater involvement in market transactions involving livestock, men are more often identified as targets for training, which means that women can be excluded from opportunities to increase their knowledge and gain the skills that could improve their production.

4.3. Fisheries and aquaculture

Bosnia and Herzegovina is rich in natural resources (water basins, rivers, mountain lakes and groundwater) and this explains its long tradition of freshwater fish production. Although most of the country's fish farming infrastructure was destroyed during the war, the process of privatizing formerly state-owned farms, the introduction of new fish species, technologies and marketing, as well as government support, have managed to revive aquaculture. In addition to local markets, there is further potential to develop fish and fish product export to the European Union.

In 2012, only a small number of people were employed in aquaculture, equivalent to 0.1 percent of the whole workforce of Bosnia and Herzegovina (407 employees). Women represented just 16.5 percent of all aquaculture employees (67 women in 2012; FAO, 2015a).

According to FAO, the majority of fish farms (64 percent) are family enterprises. Out of all employees working on fish farms in 2012 (622 people in total), 97 (16 percent) were women (FAO, 2015a). Because women are overrepresented as informal and unpaid workers on family farms generally, it is very likely that the figure of 16 percent is an underestimate of the actual number of women who work in this field. Family fish farms, as is the case with family farms generally, rely heavily on women's unpaid labour, such as preparing feed, fish feeding, collecting juvenile fish (fry), cleaning and sorting.

In countries where data are available, women are well represented in secondary fisheries activities, such as fish processing and trading, although they have low rates of entrepreneurial activity in this sub-sector. As fisheries and aquaculture become more developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it will be increasingly important to identify how women are represented, as employees and as business owners and managers, as well as where there are opportunities for job creation that will benefit women in rural areas (for example in processing, fisheries-related tourism and hospitality).

4.4. Forestry

Around half of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is covered by forest and woodland, compared with

2.5 percent dedicated to agricultural land. Many forest areas were severely damaged during the war (and it is estimated that ten percent of forest land is still inaccessible due to uncleared landmines), and are further decreasing due to clear-felling, mining, reservoir construction and forest fires (IFAD, 2010).

The majority of forests and woodlands are state-owned, but rural populations can access the land. It has been estimated that 97 percent of private forest owners are men, “a result of the socio-cultural characteristics of Bosnia and Herzegovina society where women rarely share formal ownership rights (particularly land) with their husbands” (Avdibegovic *et al.*, 2015, p. 11). According to the population census of 2013, when rural households include forest or wooded land, the average size of male-headed households is marginally larger than for female-headed households (0.95 hectares for men and 0.86 hectares for women).³³

In 2012, 8 678 people were formally employed in the forestry sector of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which refers to public forest management companies and public forest administration. Because forest enterprises are the main employers in certain rural areas, it is understood that a greater number of people were employed in the wood-processing industry or in the “grey economy” related to forestry (FAO, 2015b, p. 45). No current and sex-disaggregated data are available to provide information about women and men employed in the forestry sub-sector (statistics are aggregated for agriculture, forestry and fisheries).

Data from the 2012–2013 academic year show that women formed the minority of students enrolled in forestry and wood-processing secondary schools in Republika Srpska (of 1 304 students, 252 were female or 19.3 percent). In that year, the proportion of women enrolled in forestry and wood-processing secondary schools in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was larger, but nevertheless still a minority of the students overall (of 1 712 enrolled students, 577 were female, or 33.7 percent; FAO, 2015b, p. 121). While the data suggest that women are most likely not represented in large numbers among forestry sector workers, these particular secondary schools prepare students to be forestry technicians and wood-processing technicians, and so they do not represent the full scope of forestry-related work.

Perhaps more significant than employment in the forestry sector is the important role that forests play in supporting the livelihoods of rural populations. Forests

are a critical source of fuelwood for household heating, and non-timber forest products that are used both for household consumption and for sale. Thus, the forest sector represents “a social safety net for vulnerable populations including the elderly, unemployed, war veterans and survivors of recent conflicts” (Program on Forests (PROFOR), 2019, no page number). In addition to its importance as a source of income for rural communities, the development of non-timber forest products (forest fruits and berries, mushrooms, and wild medicinal, edible and aromatic plants) is a potential growth area for Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are only a few small enterprises in non-timber forest products, although this has been an area of support under donor-led projects (IFAD, 2010).³⁴

There has been very limited research on how women and men use forest products. But, typically, women take the role of collecting wood when it is used for cooking or heating water in rural households. Women tend to be more engaged in collecting non-timber forest products, such as wild plants or berries, but are less likely to be represented in the processing of these forest products or as owners of small businesses in this area.

As described in section 4.1 of this report, women are engaged in the cultivation of medicinal plants and herbs, but a distinction should be made between women’s small farms or business ventures and poor women who rely on forest plants as a means of survival. The collection of wild medicinal and aromatic plants is seasonal, mainly undertaken by the “very poor and vulnerable and... mostly women” (FAO, 2012, p. 70). Plant collection is often the only source of income for the household. Women who collect medicinal plants usually only do the initial processing, such as drying and cleaning, before sale. They “do not carry out any further processing and do not add any value” (*ibid.*). Women are much less likely to be represented at the most profitable stages along this value chain, among intermediaries, in processing companies, or at the level of wholesale and export.

It does not appear that gender analysis of the forestry sector has been conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In fact, a brief review of core policy documents found that most are gender blind. For instance, neither the Forestry Programme of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina of 2014 nor the Strategy of the Development of the Timber Industry in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2016–2025 mention any gender equality-related goals and objectives

³³ Data provided by BHAS for the purposes of this assessment.

³⁴ Most significantly, Fostering Agricultural Markets Activity (FARMA), an agri-business development programme funded by USAID and Sida.

or highlight opportunities for women. The Forestry Development Strategy of Republika Srpska for 2011–2021 makes specific mention of women only in the context of the work of advisory services. Specifically, the strategy foresees the implementation of lifelong learning programmes for forestry employees, with special attention to “the population of socially excluded persons, such as women, older workers and workers with disabilities” (Government of Republika Srpska, 2012, p. 55).

Women’s engagement in forest-based livelihoods, representation in forestry value chains and opportunities for women to engage in agro-forestry, or even the tourism sector in forest regions, should all be the subject of dedicated research. Additionally, any challenges that women face in taking part in the community management of forests and ways they can be empowered should be analysed.

4.5. Agricultural extension and rural advisory services

The system for providing agricultural extension and rural advisory services in Bosnia and Herzegovina is fragmented. Such services are provided by several public organizations and are structured differently in each entity. In Republika Srpska, agricultural extension services are provided by the Agricultural Advisory Service, a department within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska. The Agricultural Advisory Service operates from the central office in Banja Luka and six regional offices. As of April 2020, the service had 38 staff including 32 agricultural advisors, 13 of whom were women and 19 men.³⁵ In 2015, the advisors provided services for 221 000 rural households in Republika Srpska (Jankovic *et al.*, 2015, p. 135).

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the system of agricultural extension services is decentralized. It is organized at the cantonal level, and field advisors are part of cantonal agricultural ministries, within municipal administrations. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina maintains a registry of advisory service providers for the entity, but it does not regulate or coordinate their work. As of April 2020, there were a total of 78 agricultural advisors enrolled in the Registry of Agricultural Advisors, comprised of 46 men and 32 women.³⁶ In the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Office of Extension Services is located within the government’s Department of

Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management.

A number of other institutions provide advisory and extension services, as well as training related to agriculture and agri-business, from academia, the private sector and civil society. Public advisory services are provided free of charge, as are non-governmental organization (NGO) provided services (many of which are part of larger donor-led projects to enhance the agriculture sector).

The European Commission has pointed out significant problems with farm advisory services in Bosnia and Herzegovina, characterizing the overall system as weak, insufficiently and unevenly developed across different levels of government and also not regulated by a single harmonized framework for the country as a whole (European Commission, 2019). A number of studies have drawn attention to similar shortcomings in the provision of advisory and extension services, namely that the services are poorly equipped, understaffed and underfunded, which means that they are not able to provide “a full range and quality of services needed to help producers increase competitiveness and productivity, or to respond to new circumstances such as changing market requirements, or food safety” (Ardeni, 2015, p. 47). Public advisory and extension services in both Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina mainly provide support related to the management of government programmes on incentives, with advice on primary agricultural production techniques and technology (and more specifically on the fruit and vegetables, and livestock production sub-sectors), and they are not market driven (IMPAQ International, LLC, 2018).

In terms of their impact, very few rural households have any interaction with agricultural extension or more general rural advisory services. As few as ten percent of rural survey respondents (mainly from wealthier households) attend any training activities (16 percent of respondents in Republika Srpska but only seven percent of respondents in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina). Only ten percent of respondents reported having any contact with agricultural advisors, again from the wealthiest households (15 percent of respondents in Republika Srpska and eight percent of respondents in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; UNDP, 2013).

Unfortunately, it does not appear that sex-disaggregated data on women’s and men’s access to advisory services are collected by the relevant public institutions. Furthermore, there has been no gender analysis of levels of satisfaction with existing agricultural extension services. However, several

³⁵ Data provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska.

³⁶ Data provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

assumptions can be made. First, given that women are seldom recognized as heads of rural households or farm owners, despite their engagement in agricultural production, it is unlikely that they would participate in training or meet with extension agents in place of male household members. Two of the main reasons for not attending agricultural training noted by rural residents were the distance from the training venue (44 percent of survey respondents) and time constraints (38 percent of respondents; UNDP, 2013). Because women in rural areas have more limited mobility (due to factors such as reliance on public transport) and greater childcare and domestic responsibilities that further constrain their free time, their access to relevant training and agricultural advice is therefore further restricted.

It is very significant that the lack of advisory services and mentorship has been identified as one of the greatest obstacles that women in rural areas encounter in terms of their development and empowerment. Not only do they face the kinds of constraints mentioned above very acutely, but they are also confronted with gender-specific difficulties. For instance, women in rural areas “have very few (if any) opportunities for social interaction in non-work or outside-of-the-home environments” (MEASURE-BiH, 2016, p. 11) and so, while men may gain information and advice through informal networks of farmers, this is most likely seldom the case for women farmers. Gender stereotypes about women’s role in decision-making mean that even women owners or co-owners of larger agricultural production firms may still need to involve a male relative in discussions and advice related to the business.

At the same time, women in rural areas, depending on their level of education, “may need a different type of training, especially in the initial stages, as well as different methods of delivery (considering the levels of difficulty, electronic or paper-based)” (MEASURE-BiH, 2016, p. 63). Stakeholders interviewed for this Country Gender Assessment noted that there is diversity among women from rural areas, and consequently they would benefit from tailored agricultural training and advisory services. For example, one NGO reported that it works with Roma women, a large proportion of whom are semi-literate, to develop their ideas for agriculture-based businesses, and has adapted to the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries. At the same time, there are also rural women in Bosnia and Herzegovina who have benefitted from projects that focused on start-ups and basic training who now need more advanced support in areas such as market research, meeting export standards and cultivating higher value non-traditional crops. In the opinion of the interviewees, the existing agricultural advisory services are not addressing this diversity of need for women engaged in agriculture.

The Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska to 2015 included a component on developing gender-responsible policy in the planning of advisory programmes, as well as improving record-keeping about female and male beneficiaries. It was also recommended that after the expiry of the 2015 action plan, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska takes further action to introduce a “gender dimension in the work of advisory services” (for example, by defining a protocol on the appropriate attitude towards women working on family farms and their integration in the entire process; Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska, 2016a, pp. 17–18). Additional long-term recommendations concerned planning, designing and implementing advisory services that are more responsive to the needs of the beneficiaries and are better coordinated with farmers’ associations, women’s associations, associations of business women, and so forth.

4.6. Access to agricultural inputs

No sex-disaggregated data about the ownership of important agricultural resources, such as farm equipment, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and veterinary services for farming enterprises in Bosnia and Herzegovina were found for this assessment. These categories correspond to the FAO suggested gender indicators in agriculture (See Annex 1, indicators 13 to 15).

Bosnia and Herzegovina is rich in natural water resources, but the irrigation infrastructure is limited and only 6.5 percent of all arable land is irrigated. Lack of irrigation is more problematic for farms in certain areas of the country, based on rainfall, type of soil and cropping patterns (UNDP, 2013). Climate change is making irrigation necessary for a larger number of farms and regions. The pilot agricultural census indicated that 30.2 percent of surveyed farms were irrigated, and the largest proportion of farms using irrigation was located in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The majority of farmers in Bosnia and Herzegovina use both fertilizers and plant protection. The fragmented nature of the many small-scale farmers, who are also not organized, does mean, however, that farmers are generally not able to “negotiate with suppliers on favourable purchase terms and conditions of larger quantities of inputs such as seeds, mineral fertilizers, protection agents, etc.” (Council of Ministers, 2018, p. 22). It can only be assumed that women farmers, who are a small minority and who may have even fewer opportunities to link with other farm holders, are more disadvantaged in terms of accessing such agricultural inputs.

Most agricultural holdings have basic agricultural machinery, although it “tends to be mostly old and often outdated. There are a small number of attachments per tractor, hence producers are frequently forced to outsource services or improvise” (Council of Ministers, 2018, p. 15). Investment in replacing or upgrading to new and specialized agricultural machinery is a priority for the state, and the Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2021 envisions cost-effective investments, such as giving “preference to larger farms or some models of joint use of machinery by a number of users” (ibid.). There has been no gender analysis conducted of whether women and men have equal access to farming machinery. However, in most farming households, women are more likely to undertake manual labour. It is unclear whether women farmers would benefit from machinery-sharing projects, or whether they will be given preference for investment since they do not represent large farm owners. Women farmers have limited capacity to purchase or lease farm equipment due to their general lower economic status.

4.7. Entrepreneurship

Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a unified policy approach towards the development and support of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), but rather each entity establishes its own laws and regulations. The Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2021 does highlight the importance of supporting farmers to diversify into non-agricultural activities and to aid in the establishment of non-agricultural SMEs in rural areas. Significantly, this measure could be very important to developing women’s entrepreneurship in rural areas.

The private sector is dominated by small businesses; of all enterprises operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina, between 87 and 97 percent of enterprises have fewer than 50 employees (depending on the sector of the economy; BHAS, 2019d). In fact, it is more accurate to speak about enterprises at the micro level. Out of all micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), the majority have fewer than nine employees (World Bank, 2018a).

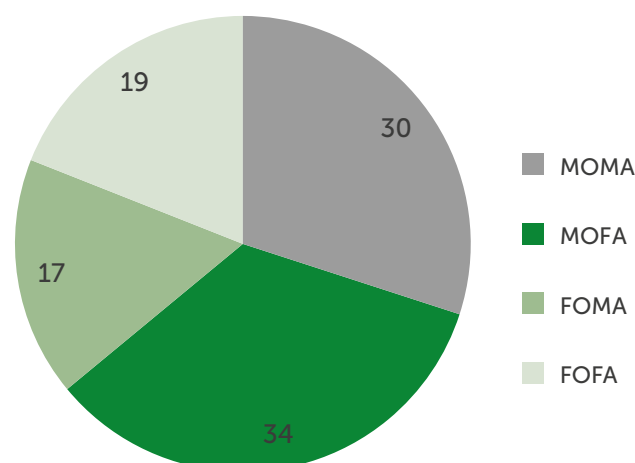
Business ventures in agriculture are uncommon, especially compared with agricultural production. While there are more than 350 000 agricultural holdings in the country, there are only around 400 legally registered agri-food enterprises active in crop and/or livestock production (Council of Ministers, 2018).

Understanding how women are represented among entrepreneurs, as business owners and managers, is hindered by the fact that there are no official sex-

disaggregated data about owners and managers of businesses. Furthermore, business ownership in Bosnia and Herzegovina is often shared or, even when a family business is registered in the name of a woman, in practice husbands and wives (as well as other family members) operate businesses together. While business decisions are usually made jointly, it can also be the case that male family members take on a larger decision-making role. Thus, it can be an artificial exercise to determine what precisely constitutes a “woman’s business” or a “man’s business”. Still, gender analysis points out several important differences between female and male entrepreneurs that should be given consideration in any projects that promote and support the business ventures of women living in rural areas.

The World Bank has assessed the various models of women’s and men’s entrepreneurship by looking at four categories of micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) ownership and management: (i) male-led firms (MOMA) – that are majority male-owned and male-managed; (ii) mixed firms with male ownership (MOFA) – that are majority male-owned and female-managed or with female-influenced management; (iii) mixed firms with female ownership (FOMA) – that are majority female-owned and male-managed or with male-influenced management; and (iv) female-led firms (FOFA) – that are majority female-owned and female-managed. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, women are underrepresented as business owners and managers. Firms that have majority female ownership and management (FOFA) represented only 19 percent of all firms in a recent MSME survey (World Bank, 2018a). Figure 16 illustrates that MSMEs with majority male ownership are the most common form of enterprise in Bosnia and Herzegovina, accounting for almost two-thirds of the total number.

Figure 16: Estimated breakdown of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by sex of majority owners and managers (in percentage)



Source: World Bank, 2018a, p. 5.

Women-led enterprises (FOFA) operate in less diverse sectors of the economy and are smaller. While the majority of all MSMEs operate in the services sector, female-led enterprises are almost wholly engaged in services, with hardly any firms in manufacturing, construction or trade, and they are virtually absent from agriculture. Most women-led enterprises (86.3 percent) are micro in size, while men-led enterprises are more evenly distributed between micro and small-sized firms. Still, close to 90 percent of MOMA and FOFA are sole proprietorships. Enterprises with female majority ownership tend to be younger than those with male majority ownership: almost half (40 percent) of FOFA are less than six years old (World Bank, 2018a).

Women's business ventures located in rural areas are less diverse and even smaller in size. A study of female entrepreneurs, around half of whom were located in rural areas, found that most were engaged in handicrafts (jewellery making, decoupage) and agriculture; the average business size was 3.5 people, and for half of the enterprises, monthly income was less than BAM 500 (Nuhanovic *et al.*, 2016).

Constraints to doing business

The constraints that entrepreneurs face to doing business in Bosnia and Herzegovina impact on women to a greater degree due to underlying gender inequalities. For instance, while one percent of male-led MSMEs do not have bank accounts, the figure for female-led enterprises is nine percent. The reasons for not having a bank account illustrate the marked difference in access to finance between male-led and female-led MSMEs. Male-led and managed businesses without bank accounts do not see a need for them, while female-led and managed businesses cite high fees and complex application procedures as the foremost reasons for not opening a bank account (78 percent of FOFA; World Bank, 2018a). There is also a gender gap in the use of electronic financial services, with twice as many male-led enterprises making use of internet banking and e-money accounts as female-led enterprises (*ibid.*). The ability to make online financial transactions can be especially useful for rural entrepreneurs, and so it is important to further assess the reasons why businesswomen are not making use of these services to the same extent as businessmen (especially considering that the majority of rural households are covered by mobile networks and/or have broadband internet coverage).

Only a quarter of female-led MSMEs take bank loans, compared with 41 percent of male-led enterprises. Note that access to finance is discussed in the next section of this report.

Other constraints in Bosnia and Herzegovina, related to the cost and bureaucratic process of registering a business, managing permits and licences, tax issues and dealing with exports will be felt by both businessmen and businesswomen, but more so for rural entrepreneurs. As outlined in section 3.2.1 of this report, such "gender neutral" difficulties also impact female entrepreneurs much more severely due to structural inequalities (such as limitations on women relating to financial resources, education levels, mobility, time available to devote to these processes, and the fact that their businesses are very small in size and have limited human resources).

Gender-specific obstacles for women entrepreneurs

There are also gender-specific difficulties that constrain women in business. These are related to gender roles, stereotypes and discrimination in society at large. On the one hand, starting a business is a socially acceptable occupation for women in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In one study, 86 percent of female entrepreneurs agreed with this statement (Nuhanovic *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, entrepreneurship itself is still very much viewed as a "male profession," and this explains why women often cite a lack of support from a spouse or their family as a key factor that prevents them from starting a business. The prevailing view that a woman's entrepreneurship activities are additional to her domestic responsibilities accounts for the fact that women dedicate far less time to running and growing a business. Whereas the average male business owner spends 46.9 hours per week on the business, the average female business owner can dedicate only 29.2 hours (MI-BOSPO and IFC, 2008).

Cultural barriers can have an impact. Women face discriminatory attitudes such as distrust and scepticism from investors and male entrepreneurs. They also have fewer options for networking due to the fact that relevant "[p]rofessional organizations tend to be male-dominated, with limited participation from women" (MI-BOSPO and IFC, 2008, p. 6). A notable exception to this is the Association of Businesswomen in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Udruženje poslovnih žena u BiH – UPZ)³⁷ which is a platform for networking, training and mentorship.

Women's own attitudes and feelings towards entrepreneurship, especially their worries about taking on risk, also play a significant role. In one small-scale survey, 83 percent of women in business considered the fear of failure to be one of several major factors that limited start-ups (Nuhanovic *et al.*, 2016). Women often

37 Their website is available at <https://upzbih.ba>.

lack the self-confidence to start a business because they are unsure about whether they have the proper skills and knowledge and do not have information about the steps to take. Some of these fears are well-grounded, considering women's more limited access to financial resources and specialized training opportunities. But the fact that women's businesses are small in number and in profile also means that their successes are not visible to the general public, and this can contribute to an overall sense that "women's businesses" are supplementary endeavours that women must balance with other obligations.

Perhaps one of the most positive factors revealed in the aforementioned research that compared entrepreneurs by settlement type was that the proportion of women who started their own businesses was slightly higher among women from rural areas compared with those in urban areas. This finding suggests that rural women have strong motivations to become entrepreneurs. Women-owned businesses are a means of improving the economic status of rural women since, typically, enterprises led by women also employ more women. The Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska to 2015 addressed the potential to develop entrepreneurship among women in rural areas, both agri-businesses and also enterprises related to different forms of village-based tourism, and anticipated a number of measures ranging from training and mentoring, to subsidized grants and funds for start-ups, and specialized credit lines/microloans for women-owned agricultural businesses. Some of these measures appear to still be on the agenda as long-term recommendations. For example, the Strategy for the Development of Women's Entrepreneurship of Republika Srpska for 2019–2023 mentions the need for legal and regulatory changes that could facilitate the process for women to start businesses in rural areas..

However, as noted above, the constraints that women face in initiating start-ups and in expanding their businesses are multi-dimensional, and this is even more so the case for rural women who also have to contend with mobility and infrastructure limitations, and greater demands on their time. There is still a need for further efforts to holistically address these constraints and also to better identify key sectors of the economy where women may even have competitive advantages.

Agricultural cooperatives

In addition to farms, women are also engaged in agriculture through cooperatives. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of

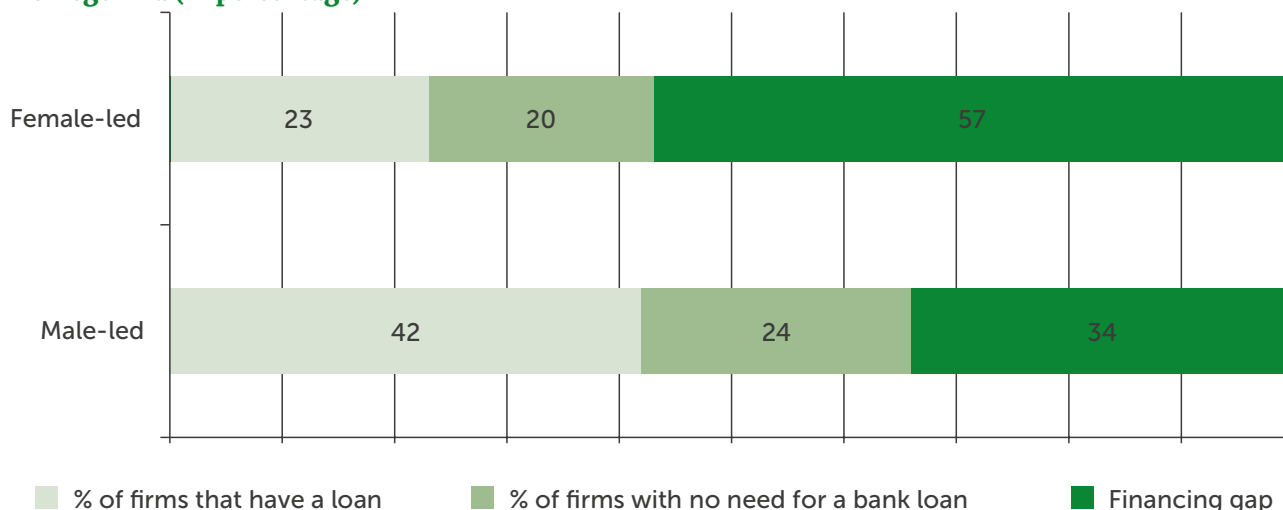
Republika Srpska provides financial incentives for the business activities of agricultural cooperatives/ clusters and associations of women in rural areas. According to official sources, there are 382 agricultural cooperatives registered in Republika Srpska (just under half of which are not performing any business activities).³⁸ There are no figures for cooperatives managed by women. However, in a recent report to the CEDAW Committee, it was stated that as the result of special programmes and investments implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska (2011–2015), a total of 19 associations received incentives of EUR 75 000, of which four were "women's associations" (receiving EUR 8 000). In addition, 22 cooperatives were supported with EUR 150 000, three of which were newly-founded women's cooperatives. The number of cooperatives has also been increasing in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; there are 270 registered cooperatives, all but 40 of which are agricultural cooperatives (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019b).

4.8. Access to finance and incentives

The availability of finance is essential for business start-ups and also for business expansion. Difficulties accessing credit (meaning access to affordable loans) is a concern for both female and male entrepreneurs operating at the MSME level in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As noted in the preceding section, women's access to finance is especially constrained. The World Bank estimates that the financing gap is considerably larger for female-led enterprises than those led by men: 57 percent for women's businesses and 34 percent for men's (see Figure 17).

Among MSMEs that obtain bank loans, the majority of women-led enterprises use the funds for the purchase of short-term assets (inventories or goods for sale), while the pattern is the opposite for men-led enterprises. Men are much more likely to use bank loans to purchase long-term assets, such as buildings and equipment. These patterns may well reflect the relative size of firms led by women and men. The World Bank also notes that the pattern reflects differences in the average maturity period of loans (male-owned enterprises obtained credit with an average maturity period of 57 months, whereas this period for female-owned firms was only 44 months; Qasim, 2018, p. 13).

³⁸ These data were provided during the CGA validation process.

Figure 17: Access to finance and the financing gap for female-led and male-led MSMEs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (in percentage)

Source: Adapted from Qasim, 2018, p. 12.

Female entrepreneurs seek financing from more diverse sources than men including commercial banks, government agencies and leasing companies (with a small proportion accessing venture capital funds). For women in rural areas, the picture appears to be equally diverse but also less reliant on formal financial institutions. Women in rural areas obtain start-up capital from their own savings (personal capital), loans from a friend or family member, through illegal lenders ("loan sharks") or in the form of assistance granted by local or international NGOs (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of the Republic of Srpska, 2009). Women from rural areas also access credit through mutual guarantee societies (created by women's NGOs); these tend to provide women with start-up capital for very small and unregistered business ventures (such as agricultural or handicraft production that they can carry out at home).

Microcredit organizations are also an important source of financing both for rural businesses and for rural low-income clients. Several microcredit institutions operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina have a particular focus on women clients. For instance, the MI-BOSPO Microcredit Foundation was established to provide agricultural loans, business loans, multipurpose loans and housing loans to women, but later adopted a 25 percent quota for male clients. It is not known how many women are represented among the clients of other microcredit organizations but in some projects, they appear to be just under a third of clients.

There are no legal barriers that would prevent women from applying for credit in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but practice shows that women face considerable obstacles to accessing finance that are mainly connected to their

lack of financial liquidity. As described in section 3.2 of this report, women tend to have very limited ownership rights over land and other assets (such as machinery) that are used as collateral to secure loans. When MSME owners are rejected for financing, lack of collateral is the overwhelming reason for women-led enterprises, whereas for men-led enterprises, it is almost always due to problematic credit histories (World Bank, 2018a). Among MSMEs that have acquired bank loans, those that are led by men relied primarily on land, followed by machinery and equipment, and personal assets (a house) as collateral. Women-led enterprises used similar forms of collateral, but were much more likely to rely on the machinery and equipment in the business and third-party guarantees (ibid.). Other factors that particularly constrain women from obtaining business loans are the complex application procedures (therefore they often submit incomplete applications) and insufficient profitability of the enterprise.

These findings suggest that women, especially women in rural areas who are operating at the micro level, must be supported with specialized training and credit lines that reflect their needs and the characteristics of their businesses. It should also be kept in mind, that the fact that a woman is the named borrower does not necessarily reflect her control over deciding how the funds will be used. Especially in the case of family businesses, in contrast to sole entrepreneurs, the male head of the household may, in fact, make most of the decisions concerning the management of the loan.

The relevant ministries for agriculture in both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina distribute incentive funds to farmers to invest in agricultural production and rural development. These subsidies are neither loans nor credit but are either direct payments to farmers

or incentives for capital investment. There are various incentive schemes, paid to farmers on family farms, legal entities, craftspeople and individual entrepreneurs. Sex-disaggregated data are available for some categories of beneficiaries, linked to how the data are collected in the farm registries. Tables 10 and 11 refer to individual beneficiaries – the person who is the legally recognized farm holder.

In most agricultural households, it is the male family member who has formal ownership of the farm, and this generally means that female members would not be able to make a direct application for incentives. Although women who head family farms should have the same access to incentives as men, the data presented below suggest that this is not the case. Women represent considerably less than half of those who apply for and receive funds. In terms of the amount of funding, men receive the lion's share – up to almost 90 percent of the total approved funds in some categories.

It is unclear whether women are less aware of the availability of incentives or the application

process is inaccessible or burdensome for some reason.

Another way to view the data is to compare it with the proportion of women who are recognized as the heads of family farms in farm registries (around 18 percent in both the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, as described in section 3.2.1. above). Given that the share of women requesting and receiving incentives is larger than their general representation among family farmers (only marginally in the case of Republika Srpska but considerably for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), this finding could suggest that special measures that give priority to women are beginning to have a positive impact on increasing their access to financial resources. In order to clarify the picture of how women engaged in agriculture or rural development are able to benefit from financial incentives, tracking and analysis is needed of how funds were used and the impact of the incentives. Attention should be paid to who is primarily making decisions about the use of financial incentives within household farms.

Table 10: Beneficiaries of financial support for agriculture and rural development in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, by sex (2019)

	Number of requests (individuals)	% requesting incentives	Amount of approved support (in BAM)	% share of total incentives
Legal entities and craftspeople				
Women	847	14.1	3 898 071.71	9.9
Men	5 169	85.9	35 644 090.33	90.1
Family farms				
Women	5 559	27.8	5 482 422.99	25.6
Men	14 409	72.2	15 964 664.00	74.4

Note: The data represent the total combined incentives for structural measures and production support.

Source: Data provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, April 2020.

Table 11: Beneficiaries of financial support through the Agrarian Payments Agency in Republika Srpska, by sex (2019)

	Number of recipients (individuals)	% receiving incentives	Amount of incentive (in BAM)	% share of total incentives
Family farms				
Women	2 894	17.9	4 533 718.00	10.2
Men	13 285	82.1	40 056 519.11	89.8

Note: Data for legal entities and individual entrepreneurs are excluded because they are not sex-disaggregated.

Source: Data provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska, April 2020.

5. Rural infrastructure and its impact on women in rural areas

As described earlier in this report (section 1.4.1), making a bright-line distinction between some areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina as “rural” and others as “urban” does not always capture the fact that locations that are considered urban may have the same development issues as rural communities, while some rural areas may be located a short distance from a town and are not particularly isolated. Furthermore, given that a large proportion of the population is considered to live in rural areas (up to 60 percent), in contrast to some neighbouring European countries, it is not particularly useful to compare living conditions for rural residents to those of urban areas. Rather, it is more effective to consider what is typical for rural households and where there may be particular gender impacts of any inadequacies.

5.1. Household goods

A large share of the country lives in single family homes (71 percent), and village dwellings are separated from each other by plots of land used for growing vegetables, fruit trees and raising animals for the household.

The majority of rural households are equipped with standard items, such as refrigerators and washing machines, but on average rural households have fewer goods that could be considered labour-saving for women because they are primarily used for domestic chores (such as dishwashers, hot water heaters, cleaning equipment and sewing machines). The lack of hot water heaters, in particular, impacts on women because they tend to have the primary responsibility for cleaning, laundering and bathing children.

Table 12: Households with selected durable goods, by settlement (2015)

Percentage of households with:	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Electric or gas stove	90.1	98.0
Wood stove or coal	94.0	60.7
Refrigerator, freezer	98.8	98.4
Dishwasher	14.4	23.5
Washing machine	90.6	96.1
Cleaning equipment	85.9	93.7
Heater, boiler	87.4	91.4
Air conditioner	6.5	16.4
Sewing/knitting machine	7.6	9.5

Source: BHAS, 2018a, p. 36.

5.2. Energy sources

Access to electricity is nearly universal in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in 2010, it was estimated that 2 600 households were not yet connected to the electrical grid. These very isolated households instead rely on generators (UNDP, 2013).

Despite the availability of electricity, rural households rarely use it for either heating or cooking when compared with the practice in urban households. Rural households mainly use solid fuels (wood or coal)

for heating and cooking, but when they use gas or electricity, it is most often used for cooking (UNDP, 2013). When last assessed for the country as a whole, 82.6 percent of rural households were using wood as cooking fuel. The reliance on solid fuel was more common in Republika Srpska but, in general, declined as the income level of the household increased (UNICEF Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014).

Reliance on wood for cooking reflects poverty levels in rural areas, as well as the availability of fuelwood from household plots and forests. Presumably, cleaner sources of energy, such as liquefied petroleum gas, are more costly or difficult to purchase.

Heating homes and water, as well as preparing meals using unclean solid fuels, increases indoor pollution that can have a harmful impact on women's health because it is mainly women who engage in cooking, as well as that of young children and elderly people who spend more time inside the home. Typically, women collect wood when it is used for household cooking. It was not possible to verify more precisely how reliance on fuelwood impacts on women in rural parts of the country. The Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2021 aims to support programmes on and investment in alternative and renewable energy (for example, solar, geothermal energy and biomass) on agricultural holdings. The expansion of renewable energy to rural areas could have very positive benefits for poor households and for women within households.

Table 13: Energy supply used for cooking in rural and urban households (2011–2012)

Percentage of households using:	Percentage of households equipped with:	
	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Electricity	11.5	40.4
Liquefied petroleum gas	5.2	11.8
Natural gas	0.1	4.4
Charcoal	0.3	1.1
Wood	82.6	42.0
Coal	0.2	0.1
Agricultural crop residue	0.1	0.0

Source: UNICEF Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014, p. 44.

5.3. Safe drinking water and sanitation

Virtually all households use improved sources of drinking water, most often piped into the home. This pattern differs very little between rural and urban areas, but a few rural households use water piped into their yard, water from wells or springs, or water piped to a public tap (see Table 14). The majority of rural households (93.7 percent) do not use any water treatment methods, but a small proportion boil or add chlorine/bleach to the water (UNICEF Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014). Because water is widely available on the premises of rural households, family members spend a negligible amount of time obtaining water. However, in cases where the source of drinking water is not on the premises, it is most often the job of adult men to collect water (in 62 percent of cases), followed by adult women a third of the time (ibid.).

Almost all rural households use private improved sanitation facilities (92 percent of rural households). The most common arrangement is a flush toilet connected to a septic tank, with around a third of rural households connected to the public sewerage system. Very few rural households use outside latrines in any form.

Table 14: Main sources of drinking water in rural and urban households (2011–2012)

Percentage of households equipped with:	Percentage of households equipped with:	
	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Piped water		
Into the dwelling	81.4	90.6
Into the yard/plot	2.1	0.0
Public tap/standpipe	2.2	2.3
Tube well/borehole	2.4	0.2
Protected well	5.4	0.6
Protected spring	3.3	2.7
Rainwater collection	0.8	0.0
Bottled water	1.5	3.0
Unimproved sources combined	0.5	0.3

Source: UNICEF Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014, p. 48.

Table 15: Types of sanitation facilities for rural and urban households (2011–2012)

	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Improved sources:	92.6	99.3
Connection to sewer system	29.9	83.3
Piped to septic tank	58.0	15.3
Pit latrine with/without slab	4.1	0.3
Other forms of latrine	0.5	0.3
Unimproved sources combined	7.4	0.8

Source: UNICEF Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014, p. 54.

5.4. Roads and rural transport

Some rural roads are in poor condition, but the situation also varies by entity. An earlier Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Republika Srpska noted that rural roads had been severely damaged in the war; over 30 percent of village roads were without asphalt and the majority of rural residents were dissatisfied with the state of the roads (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of the Republic of Srpska, 2009). The issue of road infrastructure is not highlighted in either the Rural Development Programme of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021 or the state Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021.

A study conducted among rural households found that more than half of residents live at least three kilometres from the nearest clinic, hospital, bank or post office (where rural residents pay bills, and send and receive money), but are closer to local primary schools and shops (UNDP, 2013).

Half of households in Bosnia and Herzegovina own a car (50.9 percent), but this figure is lower for elderly couples without children, single parents and single person households (BHAS, 2018a). Data about car ownership in rural areas is not available, but improving public transport in rural areas is a priority under the Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Assessing gender differences requires consideration not only of the state of road infrastructure and distance to important services, but also the transport modes that

are accessible to women and men, patterns of transport use and other restrictions to mobility. There has been no country-wide gender study of these topics, but a gender analysis of the needs of women living in rural areas concerning transport and road infrastructure conducted in Republika Srpska in 2011 sheds light on some key gender differences (Ministry of Transport and Communication of Republika Srpska, 2011). Men form the majority of drivers and car owners in the country, while women are more often passengers in private cars or depend on public transport. In the aforementioned analysis, 64 percent of female respondents said that their household had a car, but only 17 percent were the owners of cars. Just over half travelled mainly by car and more than a third relied on public buses (ibid.).

While rural residents generally consider access to public transport to be satisfactory, a significant number of women in rural areas do highlight issues such as irregular bus services and timetables that do not match their needs (Ministry of Transport and Communication of Republika Srpska, 2011). Considering their domestic responsibilities, women tend to make more frequent but shorter and varied trips on public transport during the day (for example, taking children to and from school, caring for older family members, and travelling to work and for shopping), and so this can be a reason that women are dissatisfied with transport routes that are limited or with infrequent services that mean longer waiting times. Additional information would be useful, such as the average distance of rural bus stops and shelters from residents' homes, safety issues at bus stops and on public transport, and whether the cost of public transport is affordable for most rural women.

5.5. Information and communication technologies

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are increasingly vital to agriculture and for rural development. There is a great potential for ICTs to transform the ways in which farmers and entrepreneurs operate in rural areas, through improved access to innovations and knowledge as well as to financial services and markets, by increasing the reach of networking and advisory services, and also for monitoring and tracking (for example, in the context of disaster risk management, food safety and traceability standards, and pest/disease surveillance).

Rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina are well connected to the mobile phone network (67 percent of rural households are located in areas with at least 3G coverage); 44 percent of rural households report that they have an internet connection, 39 percent have a broadband connection, and half own personal

computers (UNDP, 2013). Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the first countries in the region to develop a comprehensive state strategy and action plan on information development in 2004. The current Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina recognizes the need to apply new technologies in the agriculture sector and also to improve rural access to ICTs generally.

What is missing, however, is a comprehensive assessment of gender differences in access to and use of ICTs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In developing countries, farmers often face a “triple divide,” a digital, rural and gender divide that places rural women in “the most marginalized position when it comes to access to, and use of ICTs” (FAO, 2018a, p. 6). The triple divide can also be exacerbated by age, with older generations less likely to use ICTs. In addition to the need for specific gender analysis on ICT use among women and men in rural areas, the development of an e-agriculture strategy and/or action plan that mainstreams gender would strengthen the measures that are already outlined in the state strategy for rural development.

5.6. Social infrastructure and protection

Much of the rural population depends on the social safety net. One survey of rural households that are not involved in agriculture (or which only have small gardens) found that 40 percent depend on social benefits, with the remaining 50 to 60 percent generating income from employment (UNDP, 2013). A breakdown of the beneficiaries of social protection programmes for the country as a whole, or for rural areas separately, was not found in the research for this assessment. However, in 2017, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina established a single registry of beneficiaries of cash benefits that includes sex-disaggregated data (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019a).

One of the most pressing issues related to the high rate of economic inactivity among women in rural communities, due to their role in unpaid work, is protecting their rights to receive social benefits (such as retirement pensions and maternity leave) because they lack employment histories. In both Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, steps have been taken through legislation to ensure that unemployed mothers receive a maternity allowance. However, gender inequalities in retirement pension payments remains a problem. A survey conducted only in Republika Srpska found that 20.5 percent of women aged over 65 did not receive any form of retirement pension, compared with 5.7 percent of men in the same age group. Among those with work

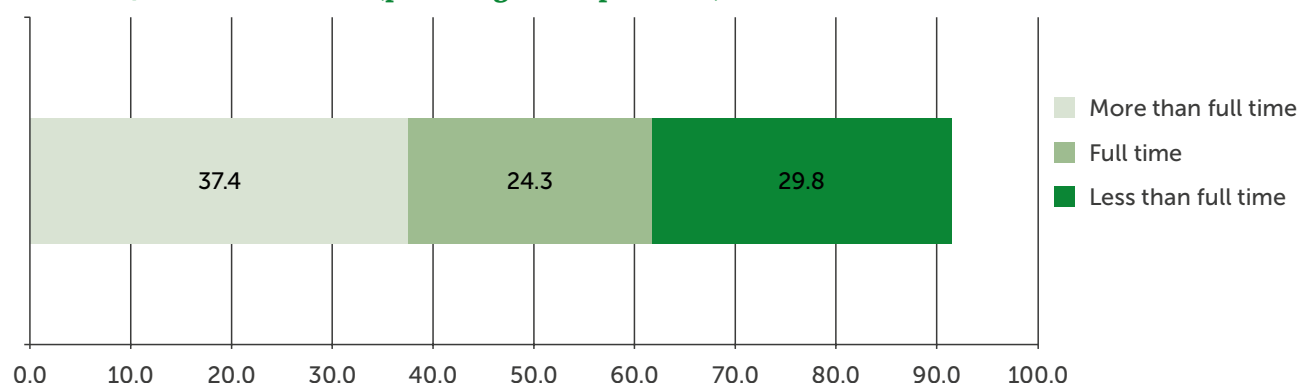
histories, 85 percent of men received a retirement pension, compared to only 33 percent of women. Women’s pensions are also smaller based on having less time in employment (due to taking time out of work to care for children or other family members) and lower wages while they were working (Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, para. 185).

The lack of preschools, or other affordable childcare arrangements, in rural areas impacts on children’s readiness for school. Limited access to affordable childcare or preschool education for rural households also restricts the opportunities that women with young children have to engage in paid employment outside the home, from undertaking entrepreneurial activities, to taking part in training or other development projects, and to participating in civic meetings and local decision-making.

Only 13 percent of children in rural areas who started the first year of education in 2011–2012 had attended a preschool, in comparison with 25.3 percent of urban children. At the time of the survey, 22.8 percent of urban children age 36 to 59 months were attending early childhood education, but this figure was only 7.9 percent for rural children (UNICEF Office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014). Official statistics on education in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not include an urban and rural division, but between the school years 2017–2018 and 2018–2019, the total number of preschool institutions increased by eight percent (totalling 359 preschools), and the number of children in early education increased by 10 percent (BHAS, 2019b).

The large gap in preschool attendance is mainly attributed to the non-availability of educational facilities in rural areas (combined with a lack of affordable childcare). However, parents in rural areas less often recognize the importance of preschool education for children’s development. A survey of opinions about the acceptability of women’s employment shows that all respondents generally agreed with each of the following two statements that appear incompatible: “a working mother can develop an equally warm and close bond with her children as a non-working mother” and “a preschool age child suffers if his or her mother works” (Gender Centre – Centre for Gender Equity and Equality of Republika Srpska, 2016b, p. 189). The inconsistency is explained by “widespread patriarchal attitudes” in Republika Srpska, where the survey was conducted, that remain influential despite, or in fact because of, the socialist history that promoted women’s labour outside the home without ever redistributing domestic work more evenly between women and men. Nevertheless, attitudes towards

Figure 18: Time that rural women spend on unpaid agricultural work in Republika Srpska, compared with the 40-hour work week (percentage of respondents)



Source: Information and data provided by the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska during the validation process for this CGA.

working mothers are changing in a positive sense, but it may be impossible to put such views into practice when rural women have few options for childcare or early education.

5.7. Time use

Time use studies, disaggregated by sex, can provide useful insights into how women and men divide their time between formal employment, household responsibilities and other activities, such as farm work. There have been no such studies conducted at the state level in Bosnia and Herzegovina, either for the urban or rural populations. However, in 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska and the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska conducted a mapping exercise that assessed the extent to which women in rural households were engaged in unpaid labour.³⁸ Notably, the male head of a rural household usually decides how work is distributed in the household, and women do not often participate in this process. Women in rural households divide

their time between several roles: caring for children and other family members, caring for the household (cooking, cleaning) and performing agricultural labour. As a result, their working day is usually longer than that of women in paid employment. Furthermore, women work more than full time in agricultural work, when compared with an average 40-hour work week, as depicted in Figure 18.

The “double” or even “triple burden” of many women living in rural areas – that includes formal employment in addition to domestic responsibilities and farm labour – leaves them “time poor” in terms of being able to take part in training or educational activities, to start or run a business, to take part in local political activities, to attend public meetings, or even to engage in leisure activities. The unpaid contributions of women in rural areas are not necessarily even conceived of as “work,” but instead are often understood as simply part of women’s responsibilities and day-to-day role.

³⁸ Information and data provided during the validation process for this CGA.

6. Vulnerabilities to climate change and adaptation

Based on the occurrence of several weather events in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the past few decades, further climate change is expected to have serious consequences. Related to changes in temperature and precipitation, issues such as soil erosion and decreasing water levels and water quality will have direct impacts on agriculture as well as on human health. There is a real risk that climate change will “reinforce gender inequalities and [it has] the potential to erode progress that has been made towards gender equity” (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 76).

In general terms, women and men experience climate change differently due to pre-existing gender inequalities (which can encompass economic disparities, differences in access to productive resources and different levels of education and mobility, for instance). These gender gaps affect the abilities of women and men to successfully adapt to climate change, to mitigate risk and to recover from natural disasters. Women are among those that have multiple vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change, as they are more likely to be economically dependent, less likely to participate in planning and decision-making, and generally also have greater responsibility in the care of children and other family members. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, women’s traditional role, which means they have a “major influence in the stewardship and supply of natural resources in households and communities,” also makes them potentially vulnerable to climate change when their access to key livelihood resources is reduced (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013, p. 76).

Women’s potential to contribute to finding long-term solutions to climate change is often unrecognized, however gender-sensitive approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction are ultimately more effective. First, although women are underrepresented as formal agricultural holders, they

are the bearers of important knowledge about natural resources management that can be applied to climate change mitigation initiatives. Empowering rural women, by building on their skills and knowledge, is also key to diversifying income sources for rural communities. Second, when women are underrepresented in formal decision-making, as they are at the local, entity and state levels of Bosnia and Herzegovina, their opportunities to engage in planning related to climate change adaptation are further reduced. However, disaster planning, the development of early warning systems, and outlining recovery efforts, for example, are more effective when women’s priorities and views are included. In parallel, strategies and policies on climate change adaptation must also be gender-sensitive.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, some key strategic documents, such as the Climate Change Adaptation and Low Emission Development Strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013), incorporate a gender perspective, and it is expected that gender considerations will also be included in the National Adaptation Plan process that is ongoing until 2021. The aforementioned strategy, however, highlights the lack of gender-specific data and indicators related to climate change and climate change adaptation strategies, as well as the limited research that has been conducted into these issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*ibid.*, p. 43). Both of these factors mean that gender mainstreaming has been inconsistent in the relevant policies and programmes. For instance, the country’s most recent national communication under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (2016) includes no gender analysis or information about the potentially differential impacts on women and men (Council of Ministers, 2017). There is a need for a more systematic approach to gender mainstreaming in policy related to climate change, and the integration of gender considerations that are themselves based on reliable evidence.

6.1. Food security and nutrition

Although national indicators for Goal 2 of the SDGs (ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture) have yet to be defined in Bosnia and Herzegovina, preliminary consultations and assessments indicate that key issues for the country concern increasing food production (and in parallel, reducing food losses by improving agricultural productivity along value chains and managing for natural disasters) and enhancing food safety.

In terms of food security, Bosnia and Herzegovina has low levels of undernourishment, and levels have decreased from 3.2 percent of the population in 2004 to less than 2.5 percent in 2018 (FAO, 2019a).

However, Bosnia and Herzegovina does exhibit some negative trends in terms of the relatively high prevalence of both stunting and overweight in children younger than five years, which are signs of the double burden of malnutrition. There is a considerable gap in the prevalence of overweight between urban and rural areas, with rural children faring better (FAO, 2019a). Overweight and obesity rates have also increased among adults over the last 15 years, with differences appearing for women and men, and children and adults.

Table 16: Nutritional status for children and adults, by sex, in percentages (2016)

	Children and adolescents (aged 5–19)	
	Girls	Boys
Overweight	17.8	25.9
Obesity	4.6	7.0
	Adults	
	Women	Men
Overweight	47.0	59.7
Obesity	18.4	17.1

Source: Development Initiatives Poverty Research Ltd., 2019, pp. 7–8.

Rates of overweight and obesity have increased for all groups, but the rates of overweight are higher for males than for females. Only adult women show a slightly higher obesity rate than adult men. The overall increasing overweight and obesity rates could be related to factors such as over consumption of calorie dense foods, lack of knowledge about nutrition, and a decline in physical activity. Higher rates among boys and men may be linked to customs that prioritize food for men and boys in the household or personal eating habits.

Women also have a particular malnutrition burden of anaemia, which indicates the existence of micronutrient deficiencies. Since 2000, levels of anaemia have decreased minimally for pregnant women but remained much the same for other women of reproductive age; overall the rate is quite high at almost a third of women of reproductive age (Development Initiatives Poverty Research Ltd., 2019). Target 2.2. for SDG 2 concerns ending all forms of malnutrition by 2025, with particular attention to the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating women.

Information about nutrition and food security for rural populations was not found for this assessment. However, poverty affects the extent to which households are able to purchase a variety of nutritious foods. On the one hand, higher poverty levels in rural areas corresponds to consumption poverty, or the inability to meet more than basic food requirements through purchases. On the other hand, the fact that more than a third of rural households in Bosnia and Herzegovina operate smallholder farms that produce a large share of their own food, may put them in a better position than urban households. For all sub-regions of Europe and Central Asia, women, more often than men, experience food insecurity at severe or moderate levels. The gender gap in food security is greater among the less-educated, poor and urban populations, and for women discrimination and marginalization also play a role (FAO, 2019a).

7. Conclusion

It was mentioned several times throughout this CGA that sex-disaggregated data are lacking for many important indicators that should be the basis for gender-sensitive policymaking. Indeed, without evidence of the most critical gender gaps, for instance related to women's representation among farmers, their access to key resources and inputs, or the unpaid contributions that women in rural areas make to their households, it is not possible to develop strategies or programmes that will adequately address their interests and protect their rights. There is a critical need to improve the knowledge base about both the vulnerabilities and potentials of women and men in rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the same time, other sources of data and even indicators that are not specific for rural areas do exist. For instance, macro-level indicators of gender equality point to two main areas of gender disparity: women's low levels of economic and political empowerment. These indicators do not do justice to the complexity of issues that women living in rural areas face, yet they do highlight two important themes. Women in rural areas have fewer opportunities for economic empowerment based on many factors, some directly related to the limited number of local jobs, lower education levels, and expectations based on gender norms that women will take on the main responsibility for unpaid care and household work that leaves them with limited time for formal employment. No less important, however, are practices that disempower women, such as inheritance patterns that do not recognize women's equal rights

to property ownership, or domestic violence and exercising control over women.

Concerning women's political empowerment, women are underrepresented in formal political office at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It should be remembered, however, that participation in government is only one facet of political empowerment. The voice of women living in rural areas is largely absent from state, entity and local policy, and this is not only a reflection of their absence from politics. It also indicates that there are insufficient efforts to engage with women in rural areas to identify their priorities for initiatives that will impact on them directly. Women who live in rural areas have great insight into the needs of their communities and, in fact, can provide deeper information than can be found in statistical collections.

This CGA for Bosnia and Herzegovina provides perspectives about the most prominent gender gaps in the agricultural sector and concerning rural livelihoods, in order to suggest areas for future work by FAO and UN Women. It is not a substitute, however, for on-the-ground consultations with women in rural areas, including both those who are empowered and are running farms or small enterprises, and those who remain marginalized and in need of further support. Both are important resources for determining the directions that inclusive and sustainable rural development in Bosnia and Herzegovina should take.

8. Recommendations

The recommendations contained in this section are generated from the findings included in the country gender assessment. The recommendations also reflect a consensus call for action, which was a key outcome of a regional conference on *Promoting socially inclusive rural development in Europe and Central Asia: Action for the 2030 Agenda*, convened by the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (FAO REU) with the support of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), in Vilnius, Lithuania in 2017 (FAO, 2018b).

Most of the recommendations are addressed to FAO and UN Women in the context of developing gender-sensitive and gender-responsive programming in agriculture and rural development. Additional recommendations are provided both to policymakers and non-governmental organizations, with a particular focus on the structures that are concerned with the agriculture and rural development sectors and are relevant to food security and nutrition, as well as improving the status of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The recommendations are divided both programmatically (for FAO and UN Women) and in terms of medium-term and long-term actions. Where not specified, the actions should be taken on a continual basis.

8.1. For FAO and UN Women

1. To increase internal capacity for gender mainstreaming:

- » FAO in Bosnia and Herzegovina should assess its capacity to undertake gender mainstreaming throughout its activities and consider the ways that it can draw on the technical expertise of UN Women.
- » In the medium term, FAO should increase coordination and cooperation with the relevant state and entity gender institutions, with assistance from UN Women as needed.

2. To improve the gender responsiveness of programming related to agriculture and rural development in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- » FAO should ensure that gender issues are meaningfully incorporated into all of its programming in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Measures such as quotas for women's participation should be continued, and gender-responsive and transformative interventions should also be added. UN Women could assist FAO to design and implement such interventions.
- » When implementing projects for women in rural areas, FAO should consider constraints to women's participation (for example, women's time burden, limited opportunities for travel and patriarchal attitudes) and take steps to address these constraints.
- » In the medium term, FAO and UN Women should conduct joint gender analysis for specific sub-sectors related to agriculture and rural development and evaluate women's place in key value chains with a focus on family/household farms. This analysis should be published in order to add to the evidence base in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- » In the long term, FAO and UN Women should increase support for women farmers and women who want to enter into entrepreneurial activity with rural-based businesses (both agricultural and non-agricultural). Support could encompass financial and legal support, which could be provided through business incubators, for example.
- » FAO and UN Women should ensure continued support for women entrepreneurs who have moved beyond the start-up phase, to assist them to expand into new products and markets, and to increase production and profitability, for example.
- » In the long term, FAO and UN Women should promote opportunities for women to engage in agricultural cooperatives as social enterprises, in order to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

3. To assist government (at all levels) and non-governmental partners to develop their capacities:

- » In the medium term, FAO and UN Women should jointly provide gender sensitization training to the relevant state and entity agencies for statistics and ministries that have mandates covering agriculture and aspects of rural development, with a focus on how to improve the production of gender statistics for agriculture and rural development.
- » In the medium term, within projects on gender-responsive budgeting and localization of gender action plans, UN Women should strengthen the capacity of municipal authorities to undertake gender analysis of the agriculture sector and to mainstream gender in local governance processes.
- » In the long term, FAO should promote the importance of conducting a gender-sensitive agricultural census and provide technical support on how to design such a census.
- » In the long term, FAO and UN Women should support the development of a gender-sensitive e-agriculture strategy and/or action plan, or provide assistance to incorporate such concepts into existing national policy on rural and agricultural development.

4. To raise the visibility of women in rural areas and the roles they play in agriculture and local development:

- » FAO and UN Women should use opportunities to profile women's contributions to agriculture and the capabilities of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in rural development programmes and projects. FAO should avoid gender neutral language and descriptions in its materials and should highlight issues pertaining to rural women whenever possible (for example related to the International Day of Rural Women, but not limited to this event).
- » FAO should provide assistance to and collaborate with the relevant gender equality institutions to conduct mapping in the rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina to identify ways that women are engaged in farming, focusing on women farm holders and managers and including unregistered farms.
- » In the medium term, UN Women and FAO should support the monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska for 2019–2020 and dissemination of findings. UN Women and FAO should also consider developing user-friendly materials to

publicize key positive results that could be replicated.

- » In the long term, UN Women should support efforts to develop a clearing house or database of all relevant policy documents (state and entity levels) that pertain to gender equality or support for women, that could be maintained by the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within this, agriculture and rural issues should be a dedicated category.
- » FAO and UN Women should promote the findings of this Country Gender Assessment among all government institutions as a platform for action in order to improve available knowledge and data, the level of coordination between institutions/entities, the visibility of support measures that target women, and the results achieved under previous state and entity-level programmes, and to address shortcomings that are limiting the effectiveness of government and donor initiatives.

8.2. For government, non-governmental partners and other stakeholders

1. In the medium term:

- » Ensure that national targets for SDG 5 reflect issues that are impacting on rural women. Additionally, in nationalizing the SDGs, mainstream gender throughout all targets of the 2030 Agenda, especially those that relate to women and agriculture (for example, Goal 1 on ending poverty; Goal 2 on food security and nutrition; Goal 6 on access to clean water and sanitation; and Goal 15 on land and biodiversity).
- » Compile all existing sex-disaggregated data related to agriculture and rural development and publish such data with analysis, either as standalone material or a chapter within future *Women and Men* statistical compilations.
- » Increase cooperation between gender equality institutions and agricultural ministries to undertake gender analysis where data about women in agriculture are missing, for example, value chain activities, access to extension services and access to incentives.
- » Use the International Day of Rural Women (October 15) as an opportunity for collaboration between the gender equality institutions and relevant ministries to raise the visibility of women in rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- » Improve the dissemination and promotion of information regarding existing support measures, and application processes, for all levels of government and international donor support programmes, in order to overcome the problem that many potential beneficiaries, especially women farmers, are unaware of such programmes or unable to apply for them.
 - » For municipal governments that are developing local gender action plans, include indicators for monitoring the implementation of such plans that also measure improvements for rural women.
 - » In local gender budgeting activities, continue supporting the economic empowerment of rural women, and also ensure that any support programmes for entrepreneurs reach women among new start-ups as well as those with established enterprises that have the potential to grow.
 - » Take steps to ensure that government measures in response to and planning for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic do not exacerbate existing gender inequalities. Measures could include increasing the use of gender-responsive budgeting, supporting women's economic empowerment (ensuring women have access to decent work; promoting self-employment and entrepreneurship) and including women in the processes of determining the priorities and steps for recovery.
 - » Include a separate assessment of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and men in rural areas when conducting gender analysis related to the development of policy, strategies or programmes.
2. In the long term:
- » Design and conduct an agricultural census that includes a gender perspective at the preparatory, implementation and analysis stages. In addition, review existing statistical compilations/surveys to determine where they can more effectively incorporate a gender perspective.
 - » Assess the system for registering farms and enterprises for financial, procedural and other barriers that prevent women from formalizing their income-generating activities. Consider ways that support can be provided to women locally, such as "one-window" systems, or hubs for legal and accounting assistance.
 - » Increase support for women to engage in agricultural cooperatives and other forms of rural-based enterprises, through actions such as improving the existing legislative framework and establishing business and farming incubators that can reduce the risks for small enterprises. Such incubators could be located in rural development agencies, regional clusters or as part of agricultural advisory services.
 - » Ensure that climate change policy, including climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies, are gender-responsive. To support gender mainstreaming in this area, conduct mapping of the potential vulnerabilities of rural women and men to climate change, and identify positive factors and strengths such as knowledge and practices that both women and men can contribute to developing adaptation approaches.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Core set of gender indicators in agriculture (FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia)

The following chart indicates the data that are available for the FAO suggested gender indicators. Note that data for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole are from the 2013 population census. Data for 2019 are generated from farm registries for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina only, and compiled by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Gender indicator for the holding*	Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013)	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2019)
1. Distribution of holdings by sex of the holder	✓	✓
2. Average size of the holder's household by sex of the holder	✓	✓
3. Average age of the holder and his/her household members by sex of the holder	✓	✓
4. Percentage of holdings with hired labour by sex of the holder		
5. Percentage of holdings with the risk of food shortage by sex of the holder		
6. Percentage of holdings with holder's education level over a certain level by sex of the holder	✓	✓
7. Percentage of holdings receiving agricultural extension services by sources of agricultural extension services and sex of the holder		
8. Percentage of holdings participating in farmer organizations and cooperatives by sex of the holder		
9. Average area of holding by land use type and sex of the holder	✓	✓
10. Average number of livestock by species and sex of the holder	✓	✓
11. Average area of forest and other wooded land as primary land use by sex of the holder	✓	✓
12. Average area of aquaculture by sex of the holder		
13. Percentage of holdings with irrigated land by land use type and sex of the holder		
14. Percentage of holdings using chemicals by type of chemicals and sex of holder		
15. Percentage of holdings with selected machinery and equipment by sex of the holder		
16. Percentage of holdings receiving credit for agricultural purposes by sex of the holder		
17. Percentage of holdings by type of farming (crop – temporary, permanent, livestock, aquaculture and forestry) and sex of the holder		✓
18. Percentage of holdings with other gainful activity in the household by type of activity and sex of the holder		

*Or household when no data for holding are available. In that case the holder should be substituted by the household head.

Annex 2: Selected legal and policy documents relevant to gender equality, agriculture and rural development

KEY:

Legal and policy documents on gender equality/improving the status of women

Policy documents in which gender/women's issues are mainstreamed

STATE LEVEL Bosnia and Herzegovina	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2009)» Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016)» Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018–2021)	
ENTITY LEVEL	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Women’s Entrepreneurship Development Programme for 2018–2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska to 2015» Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Rural Women in Republika Srpska for 2019–2020» Strategy for the Development of Women’s Entrepreneurship of Republika Srpska for 2019–2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Rural Development Programme of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2018–2021» Rural Enterprise Subsidy Programme of the Employment Agency of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Action Plans for Employment in Republika Srpska (annual)» Strategy for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises for 2016–2020
Brčko District	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Statute of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (a general prohibition on discrimination, including on the grounds of gender)	
Canton Level Municipality and City Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Local gender action plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Local gender action plans

Other FAO Country Gender Assessments in this series:

(available at <http://www.fao.org/europe/resources/gender/en/>)

Gender, agriculture and rural development in Albania. Country gender assessment series (2016)
– also available in Albanian

Gender, agriculture and rural development in Armenia. Country gender assessment series (2017)
– also available in Armenian

Gender, agriculture and rural development in Georgia. Country gender assessment series (2018)

Gender, agriculture and rural development in Uzbekistan. Country gender assessment series (2019)

National Gender Profile of Agricultural and Rural Livelihoods: Kyrgyzstan. Country gender assessment series (2016) – also available in Russian

National Gender Profile of Agricultural and Rural Livelihoods: Republic of Tajikistan. Country gender assessment series (2016) – also available in Russian

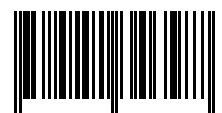
National Gender Profile of Agricultural and Rural Livelihoods: Turkey. Country gender assessment series (2016) – also available in Turkish

National Gender Profile of Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods: Ukraine. (2021) – also available in Ukrainian

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