



GUIDE

**FOR GENDER
MAINSTREAMING IN
THE STRATEGIC PLANS
OF LINE MINISTRIES
AND OTHER STATE
ADMINISTRATION BODIES**

GUIDE



FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN

THE STRATEGIC PLANS OF LINE MINISTRIES

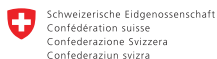
AND OTHER STATE ADMINISTRATION BODIES

May 2021

Author: Branka Mincheva Kocevska

Contribution from: Neda Maleska Sachmaroska, Jovana Trenchevska
and the GRB team in North Macedonia (Ivona Paunovich Bishevac,
Ivan Vchkov and Kristina Plecic Bekjarova)

Design: Nita Hadjihamza Gashi



Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

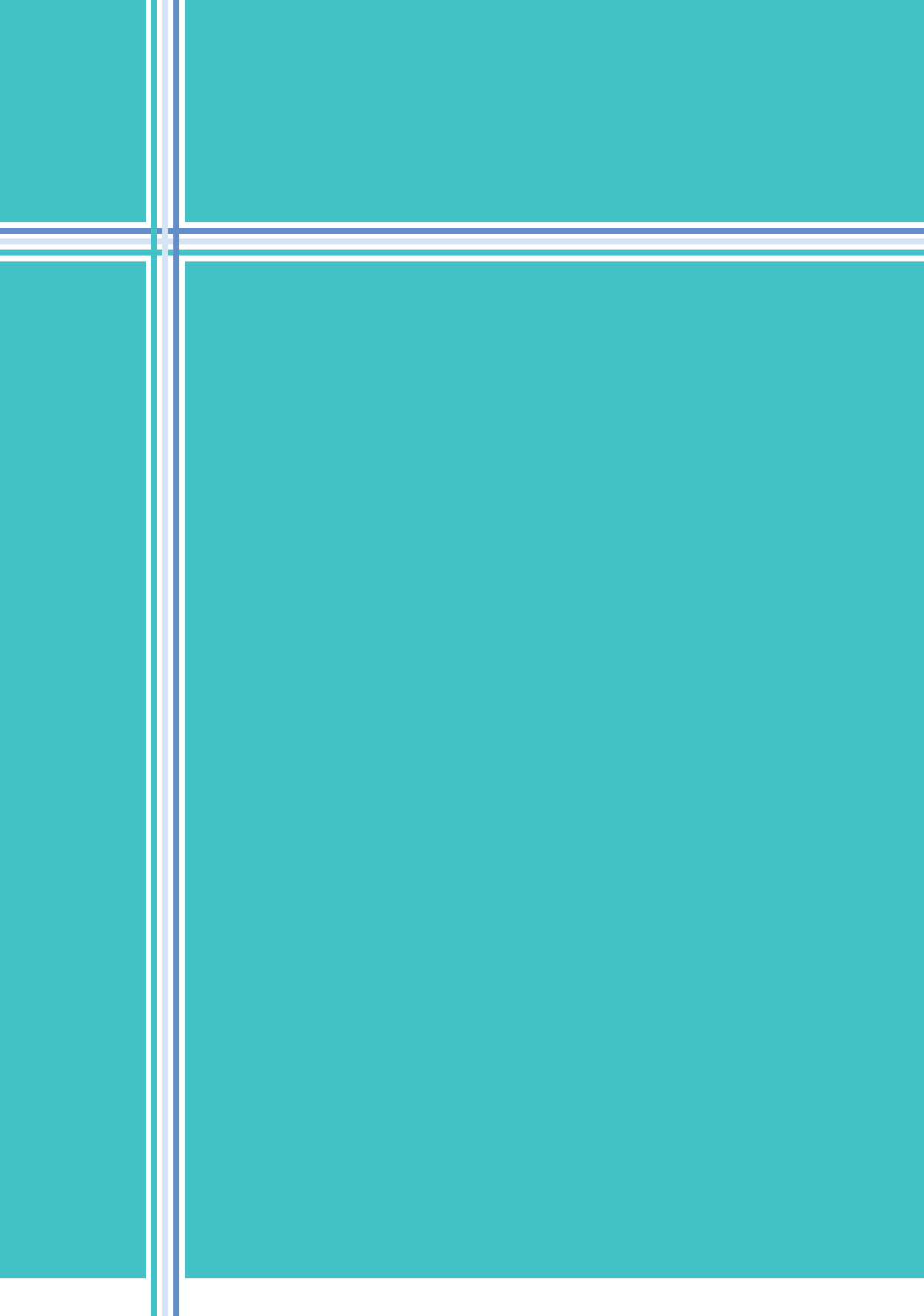


This guide is supported in the framework of the UN Women project “Promoting Gender Responsive Policies and Budgets: Towards Transparent, Inclusive and Accountable Governance in the Republic of North Macedonia”, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – Sida.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Why is gender mainstreaming so important?	6
What is the legal background for mainstreaming gender into strategic documents?	9
How to mainstream gender in strategic planning process?	11
How do we make gender-sensitive policies?	14
Step 1: Analysis of the current situation from a gender perspective	15
Categories of gender policies	15
Internal analysis	17
External analysis	17
Analysis of relevant stakeholders	18
Step 2: Setting the goals	21
Defining the mission and the vision of an institution by including the gender perspective	21
Defining priorities and goals of an institution from a gender perspective	22
Step 3: Creating a gender-sensitive strategy	23
Development of gender-responsive strategic plans	25
Determining goals and gender-sensitive indicators	26
Implementation plan	28
Gender-responsive budgeting	29
Expected results according to the principle of equal opportunities	31
Risk assessment	32
Step 4: Development of a gender-responsive annual work plan	33
Programmes and sub-programmes	33
Initiatives for the government's annual work programme	35
Measures and activities arising from the institutional mandate	36
Step 5: Monitoring, evaluation and reporting	37
Data collection	37
Assessing success from a gender perspective	38
Reporting	38
How to ensure sustainability of mainstreaming gender in strategic planning?	40



INTRODUCTION

This Guide has been developed to assist administrative servants working in the ministries and other state administration bodies in preparing gender-responsive policies, quality strategic plans and annual work plans of the institutions. It provides step by step guidance on mainstreaming gender into the strategic planning and policy-making processes at central level. In addition, the guide aims to raise awareness and understanding on the importance of creating gender-responsive policies for advancement of equal opportunities of women and men, in line with national commitments to gender equality.

This Guide provides an overview of the key steps in the strategic planning process: analysis of the situation in the planned policy area, mapping the possible entry points for mainstreaming gender, creating gender-responsive programmes and sub-programmes, defining gender-sensitive indicators for measuring the progress of specific policy and monitoring and evaluating results from implementation of gender-responsive activities and measures. The Guide also outlines the elements of the Annual Work Plan of the ministries and state administration bodies, as developing gender-responsive annual work plans is an integral part of the strategic planning process.

WHY IS GENDER MAINSTREAMING SO IMPORTANT?

Is it difficult to include the gender perspective in the policy-making processes? - It's not.

The impression that gender mainstreaming is an extremely difficult and extensive task implemented concurrently with the strategic planning process is completely wrong. Gender mainstreaming, as an integral part of the policy-making process, is merely a broader and more comprehensive tool in policy development. This approach ensures that nobody and nothing is forgotten or neglected in the process of creating policies. It ensures that the right questions are being asked and resources are being used in the right way – bearing in mind the needs of all members of the society and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Introducing gender into the processes of creating policies, strategies, programmes and projects contributes to solving many developmental problems and brings benefits to the governments, to individuals - women and men, and to society. There are many arguments why policies, programmes and projects should be gender-responsive. Some of them are:

- **Ensuring justice and equality** - This argument emphasizes the value of democratic principles and fundamental human rights, including gender equality, equal representation and participation of women and men in a different context. It is supported by the commitments made by countries in a number of normative documents (eg. Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women¹, as well as conference papers from Copenhagen² and Beijing³). These commitments are additionally reflected in the constitutions of the countries.
- **Credibility and accountability of policies** - Women and men are equally represented in overall population, so each and every government data, policy or recommendation that fails to recognize that gender differences

¹ UN Women, 2007, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Available at:

<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

² UN Women, 1980, World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. Available at:

<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/copenhagen.html>

³ UN Women, 1995, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Available at:

https://www.un.org/en/events/pastevents/pdfs/Beijing_Declaration_and_Platform_for_Action.pdf

exist and address equally the needs of women and men is unreliable at its core, since the effects of policies do not have the same impact on improving the quality of life of women and men. On the other hand, it is the responsibility of every government to ensure social justice and sustainable development. Governments are accountable to their citizens and must meet the needs of all members of the society – both women and men. Gender-responsive policies demand accountability from governments for the use of public funds, as well as for fulfilling their political commitments.

- **Efficiency and sustainability of policies** - The inclusion of women and men in all aspects of policy development is a benefit for the whole community. Countries cannot afford to neglect or ignore the contribution, as well as the economic and social capacities of women and men in all areas of life. This argument refers to the “macro” aspects of human development that contribute towards better quality of life both mid and long term - well-being and prosperity of the society. Then again, closely related to efficiency are the arguments confirming that inclusion of the gender perspective is sustainable. The gender perspective is, in essence, a “human development perspective” aiming at creating a socially just and sustainable society that embraces a holistic approach to policy-making processes. Such a holistic approach ensures that the policy-making process is accompanied with strong coordination and cooperation at all levels (both horizontally and vertically), hence making it inclusive for both women and men, and contributing towards sustainable policies.
- **Quality of life argument** - Focus on gender equality improves the lives of women and men. Namely, emphasizing the importance of stable social relations and independence of all social actors, as well as empowering women, has proven to increase the quality of life not only of women, but also of men, families and society. These aspects address the “micro” level of human development. They express the impact of gender at individual level.
- **Building alliances** - This argument emphasizes gender equality as a prerequisite for building formal alliances between nations and stable international cooperation. In the context of Central and Eastern Europe, it is the commitment of European Union candidate countries to implement certain standards and instruments for promoting gender equality as a precondition for EU membership. This is stated in the EU Charter 23- Judiciary

and Fundamental Rights⁴, especially in the part that refers to fundamental rights: “Member States must ensure respect for fundamental rights and EU citizens’ rights, as guaranteed by the *acquis* and by the Fundamental Rights Charter”. Furthermore, not only as a candidate country, but as an United Nations family member as well, the county is fully committed to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is demonstrated in the government’s reform agenda that focuses on key development objectives⁵. Still, these arguments are not sustainable unless accompanied by arguments in favor of policy efficiency and better quality of life.

- **Chain reaction** - Gender equality can produce a chain reaction of benefits simply by transmitting the effects from the individual to the community. “Investment” in gender equality will bring not only short-term benefits to individuals, but also indirect, medium-term and long-term social benefits that will strengthen the country. In addition, a chain reaction can occur even when policies do not anticipate adverse effects on gender equality, thus contributing towards maintenance of gender inequalities and reinforcement of existing gender stereotypes. That’s why it is necessary to constantly create complex strategies in which gender initiatives are intertwined, and complement and support each other through an integrated and holistic approach.⁶

⁴ European Commission, Conditions for membership: Chapters of the *acquis*, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis_en

⁵ United Nations, Voluntary National Review 2020, Republic of North Macedonia. Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/macedonia>

⁶ Astrida Neimanis, 2001, Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Handbook, Available at: <http://ibdigital.uib.es/greenstone/sites/localsite/collect/cd2/index/assoc/onu0016.dir/onu0016.pdf>

What is the legal background for mainstreaming gender into strategic documents?

The basis for gender mainstreaming in the strategic documents and creation of gender-responsive policies is found in the principles of the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia. Equality of citizens in their freedoms and rights is guaranteed in Article 9 of the Constitution⁷. Moreover, the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men⁸ from 2006, including its amendments in 2012 and 2014, clearly establishes the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of life. Article 4 defines the principle of gender mainstreaming in every stage of the policy-making process: “creating, adopting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies – while taking into account the promotion of equality between women and men”. Articles 5, 6 and 7, also provide specific obligations (basic and specific measures) of both public and private sector entities to systematically incorporate gender perspectives into their work in order to promote equality between women and men: *“...measures set out in policies and programmes aiming to achieve full equality between women and men, as well as systematic promotion of the principle of equal opportunities of women and men”* and *“measures aimed toward achieving systematic inclusion of equality for women and men in the process of creating, implementing and monitoring of policies and budgets in different social areas”*.

Article 11, paragraph 3 of the Law stipulates: “State administration bodies are obliged to incorporate in their strategic plans and budgets the principle of equal opportunities for women and men; to monitor the effects and impact of their programmes on women and men and to report thereof in their annual reports.” The process of strategic planning in line ministries and other state administration bodies in the Republic of North Macedonia was introduced more than 15 years ago. The process started in 2005, when the ministries and other state administration bodies prepared their first strategic plans for the period 2006–2008. Since then, strategic planning has been an integral

⁷ Assembly of Republic of North Macedonia, 1991, Constitution of Republic of North Macedonia. Available at: <https://www.sobranie.mk/ustav-na-rm.nspix>

⁸ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2012/2014, Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Available at: http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/2017/precisten%20tekst%202015%20na%20ZEM_nov.pdf

part of the work of institutions and a process that determines their medium-term work and objectives. In 2018, the Government of Republic of North Macedonia made a decision to amend the Methodology for strategic planning and preparation of the Annual Work Programme of the Government (“Official Gazette of RM” no. 58/2018)⁹, which improves the process of strategic planning, harmonizes it with the institution’s draft-budget and introduces the obligation for the institution to prepare an Annual Work Plan that translates into action the measures and activities described in the programmes and sub-programmes and the further monitoring, evaluation and reporting thereof at appropriate level.

Pursuant to these amendments, Guidelines for Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Development of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans (“Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia” No. 131 / 2018) and Guidelines for Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on the Implementation of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans of Line Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” No. 131/2018)¹⁰ were adopted in July 2018. These guidelines define the approach and tools for creation of policies and programmes for line ministries and other state administration bodies in the medium run (3 years). All line ministries and state administration bodies are obliged to integrate the gender perspective in their policies and programmes in order to reduce the gender gap and improve the position of women in the society.

⁹ General Secretariat of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia, 2018, Amendments to the Methodology for Strategic Planning and Preparation of the Annual Work Programme of the Government. Available at:

<http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/bfd0f85ea0104ea3849ba482f294421d.pdf>

¹⁰ General Secretariat of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia, 2018, Guidelines for Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Development of Strategic Plans and the Annual Work Plans, and Guidelines for Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on the Implementation of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans of Line Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies. Available at:

<http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/e1f989ba6ac8480cb722a7d480a620e8.pdf>

HOW TO MAINSTREAM GENDER IN STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

“Policy-making is a process of translating government’s political vision into programmes and actions to deliver ‘outcomes’ - desired change in the real world”¹¹. The direction set out in the policy might be elaborated in a strategy, describing how resources are marshalled to achieve the government’s objectives. Policy-making is deciding on a definite ‘path’ to be pursued, the strategy is the ‘road map’ for getting there¹².

The following diagram shows how the policy-creation process works in Republic of North Macedonia and how government priorities and goals are implemented in the line ministries and other state administration bodies:



¹¹ Northern Ireland Executive, 2016, A Practical Guide to Policy Making. Available at: https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/ofmdfm_dev/practical-guide-policy-making-amend-nov-16.PDF

¹² European Commission, ed.by Florian Hauser, 2017, Quality of Public Administration - A Toolbox for Practitioners. Available at: <https://www.oecd-opsi.org/toolkits/quality-of-public-administration-a-toolbox-for-practitioners/#:~:text=This%20EU%20Quality%20of%20Public,prosperous%2C%20fair%20and%20resilient%20societies>

The key priorities and development goals of the country are created on the basis of its long-term aspirations, as well as on the basis of European perspectives and policies and international documents that determine the development goals. The EU accession process largely determines key priorities and goals for Macedonia's development in terms of a candidate country and affects policy planning, but also harmonization of national legislation defined in the National Programme for Adoption of EU Legislation (NPAA)¹³. The four-year **Work Programme of the Government** is based on the Programmes of the political party that won the majority in free and direct elections and reflects the political priorities set by the Government. **The Government's strategic priorities** are determined annually and, via the priority objectives, are closely related to the process of strategic planning of the institutions and the planning and adoption of the budget. Based on the strategic priorities for each year and based on the specific policies and initiatives of the institutions, the **Annual Work Programme** of the Government is created, which is then operationalized in sectoral and institutional policies and implemented through the institutions. **Sectoral policies** cover a broader area of action in which a particular development policy or strategy is implemented and are often horizontal and involve multiple institutions at different levels in the process of implementation and monitoring of the effects of policies. **The Strategic plans** of the institutions, as well as the **Annual Work Plans** through its programmes and sub-programmes lead to achievement of government's priorities.

This document focuses on the specific phase of preparation in the strategic planning of the institutions. The programmes and sub-programmes defined in the Strategic Plan are the key entry points for gender mainstreaming as an integral part of the policy-making process. The strategic plan is a triennial document and the main tool for institutions' working agendas, so gender can be easily mainstreamed through different areas of the institution's mandate. The strategic plan is implemented through the Annual Working Plan of the institution via which the programmes and sub-programmes are operationalized in the form of specific activities and measures to be undertaken, specifically calculated budgets for their implementation, and assessment of necessary organizational capacities and human resources. Institutions are required to monitor the implementation process and evaluate the effects of policies,

¹³ Secretariat for European Affairs, 2009-2017, National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire (NPAA). Available at:
<https://www.sep.gov.mk/en/post/?id=13#:YGsyuegzY2w>

programmes and projects by way of precisely defined performance indicators and to report progress according to the indicators. The process of strategic planning in line ministries and other state administration bodies is based on three documents: the Guidelines for Line Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Development of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans” (Official Gazette No.131/2018)¹⁴, the Guidelines for Line Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on the Implementation of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans (Official Gazette No.131/2018) and the Strategic Planning Manual¹⁵. This guide follows the elements of above mentioned relevant documents in order to describe the steps of the strategic planning cycle and provide simple examples on how to mainstream gender into the strategic planning process.

¹⁴ General Secretariat of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia, 2018, Guidelines for Line Ministries and Other State Administrative Bodies for Development of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans. Available at:

<http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/issues/e1f989ba6ac8480cb722a7d480a620e8.pdf>

¹⁵ General Secretariat of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia, Strategic Planning Manual. Available at: <http://www.tinyurl.com/pjhr6ns>

How do we make gender-sensitive policies?

The Guidelines for Line Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Development of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans present the framework in which a ministry or a state administration body plans, implements, monitors, evaluates, reports and, when necessary, redefines its work. At the same time, the strategic plan and the annual work plan integrate the overall activities related to creation of the policy into the institution’s powers.

In order to make policies and programmes gender-sensitive, we need to follow the steps of the strategic planning process and see the entire process, i.e., all steps through the “gender lens”. Strategic planning cycle steps are shown in the following diagram:



Step 1: Analysis of the current situation from a gender perspective

A strategic plan of the ministry or state administration body is a document that refers to a planning period of three or more years and covers all aspects of work organization, including the following components: mission, vision, goals, strategies, methods and implementation plan. The strategic plan is based on a realistic and objective assessment of the political, economic, social and technological situation; on the policies that define the status of women and men in society and contribute to gender equality; and on the established normative frameworks and available human resources. The assessment of the current situation is a result of the previously conducted analyzes (functional, SWOT, PEST analysis, etc.). In order for policy-makers to be able to create gender-responsive policies they should also undertake analyses from a gender perspective.

Categories of gender policies

Classification of policies according to Naila Kabeer¹⁶

GENDER BLIND	GENDER NEUTRAL	GENDER-SENSITIVE	GENDER-POSITIVE
Gender-blind policies consider men and women not to be equals. They use gender norms, roles and stereotypes that reinforce gender inequalities.	Gender-neutral policies work within the existing gender division of resources and responsibilities, and do not challenge them. They presume men and women not as equals but as being the same. In this approach gender norms, roles and relations are not affected or iterated.	Presumes men and women as equals; addresses gender norms, roles and access to resources to reach policy goals.	Presumes men and women as equals; changing gender norms, roles and access to resources is a key component of policy outcomes
<p>*This framework can be used as practical instrument to identify the type of the existing policies and to understand whether gender is systematically integrated into different aspects of the planning process. It can also serve as a guide in envisaging the change that the policy or programme should bring.</p>		GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE	
		Addresses strategic gender-needs; transforms unequal gender relations to promote shared power control over resources, decision-making and support for women's empowerment. ¹⁷	

¹⁶ Naila Kabeer, 1994, Verso, London, Reversed realities – Gender hierarchies in development thought.

¹⁷ Adopted according to: ILO, 2010, Gender mainstreaming in Local Economic Development Strategies – A Guide. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent/@led/documents/publication/wcms_141223.pdf and Goulding, K., 2013, Gender dimension of national employment policies. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-gender/documents/publication/wcms_232758.pdf

Although some areas seem gender-neutral and we may have the impression that all citizens will benefit equally from the policy/programme or intervention, in fact, they can directly or indirectly impact the quality of life of women and men. “Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between women and men and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by interventions, and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted”¹⁸.

Gender mainstreaming in the strategic planning process involves recognizing and identifying gender gaps and structural gender inequalities that need to be addressed in a given context (strategy or programme scope). Only by including these elements in the process it will be possible to create objective gender-responsive goals and create appropriate approaches and interventions in order to achieve the projected goals.

According to the Guidelines for Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Development of Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans: “The baseline analysis presents an overview of the key findings of the analysis conducted in the area or areas for which assessment is made, including economic aspects, social aspect (demographic movements, human resources, culture, tradition, gender stereotypes, public opinion, etc.), technological aspect, as well as assessment of the legal framework in the relevant areas. The baseline analysis should be based on the data collected in the respective areas, which also contain gender-disaggregated data in order to obtain clear picture of the status of women and men in a variety of circumstances, including ethnicity, age, place of residence, level of education etc.”¹⁹.

¹⁸ UNICEF, 2017, Gender equality: GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Gender%20glossary%20of%20terms%20and%20concepts%20.pdf>

¹⁹ General Secretariat of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia, 2018, Guidelines for Line Ministries and Other State Administration Bodies for Developing Strategic Plans and Annual Work Plans. Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/e1f989ba6ac8480cb722a7d480a620e8.pdf>

Internal analysis

This type of analysis, as an integral part of the strategic planning process, seeks to determine the capacity, advantages, disadvantages, challenges and opportunities of the institution to conduct a strategic planning process. From a gender perspective, this analysis helps us to determine the capacity of the institution to create gender-responsive policies, to identify possible weaknesses and to anticipate measures and activities to strengthen the capacity of the public administration. The analysis can also help us to collect sufficient data in order to build strong institutional teams that will work on gender-responsiveness of the policies and programmes that are responsibilities of the institution, including the horizontal programmes which are implemented in coordination between several governmental institutions.

External analysis

In addition to the internal analysis and analysis of the capacity of the institution to create gender-responsive policies, it is extremely important to analyze the current conditions in the area under the mandate of the institution, in which a particular policy seeks to make influence, improve the situation, and/or to solve a particular problem. In order to conduct such an analysis, it is necessary to consider the following aspects: Do we have insight in the current situation of women and men related to the planned intervention? What are the specific problems in the area and do they differ by gender? Are gender gaps gender-based structural discrimination or inequalities identified? Is there gender-disaggregated data? Asking these questions means we seek to find out whether women and men have equal starting point so that they can equally use the benefits of the planned intervention. In order to ensure adequate information is provided in the process of analyzing the aspects mentioned above we must use gender-disaggregated data. According to Article 18 of the Law on Equal Opportunities²⁰, institutions are obliged to “to collect, record and process statistical data disaggregated by gender”. This gender-disaggregated data has crucial role in creating gender-responsive policies and programmes.

²⁰ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2012/2014, Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Available at:
<https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/ZEM%205%2009%202011%20L.pdf>

THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA

Gender statistics adequately reflects the differences and inequalities between men and women²¹. In order to be able to identify gender inequality, it is necessary to have reliable and gender-divided statistics on various social issues (age, region, education, ethnicity, economic and social status, etc.). According to the Gender Equality Strategy 2013-2020²² and the subsequent Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026²³, institutions are obliged to collect, record and process statistical data disaggregated by gender.

In case the institution does not possess gender disaggregated data on the state of affairs in the area or the intervention is novel and occupies an area that wasn't point of interest by now, the institution can provide data through other instruments, for example: request data from the State Statistical Office for the wider area of action, extract data from National Plans and Programmes, from academic research, from studies made by international institutions or NGO's, etc. Also, such data can be combined with data collected through field researches, surveys, interviews, workshops, focus groups, etc.

Analysis of relevant stakeholders

Stakeholder consultation is obligatory for the policy-makers in the process of planning, programming and implementing the strategic plans. Based on the characteristics of the given programme, consultation and collaboration entities are different. They can be colleagues from other departments and units within the ministry or state administration body; other ministries or state administration bodies, especially in the process of establishing horizontal programmes; and different external stakeholders, social partners, NGOs, which are also relevant to the planning process and programming.

The analysis of relevant stakeholders seeks to identify internal and external stakeholders and service users in order to determine their specific needs. In that sense, the internal stakeholders are other institutions and organizations with whom the specific policy is implemented. External stakeholders are citizens, women and men - users of services or policy/programme results, certain target groups, other

²¹ UNSD, 2005, The World's Women 2005: Progress in Statistics. Available at: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/ww2005_pub/English/WW2005_text_complete_BW.pdf

²² Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2013, Gender Equality Strategy 2013-2020. Available at: <https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti.nspix>

²³ The National Gender Equality Strategy (2021-2026) is expected to be adopted in 2021.

institutions or organizations that will be directly or indirectly affected. In order to clearly define the stakeholders, it is important to ask the following questions: What are the needs and priorities of women and men in the field? Do they have equal opportunities and access to resources? Do existing resources and their distribution meet the needs and interests of both women and men?

When the stakeholders are clearly and precisely defined, the impact of the policies and programmes on all stakeholders, including women and men, can be anticipated. Therefore, in this analysis it is essential to ask the following questions: Will the influence of politics affect the condition and quality of life of women and men in the same manner? Does the programme/sub-programme eventually maintain or perhaps intensify existing stereotypes, prejudices and inequalities between women and men in the field? Identifying different needs, priorities and interests of women and men will contribute to more objective and more efficient dimensioning of the measures and activities of the intervention in order to overcome the existing inequalities.

EXAMPLE: Let's take for example one aspect of an ICT Development Programme²⁴. This Programme may have several sub-programmes under which institutions can intervene in order to achieve the government's – Educational reform and investment in innovation and information technology. The programme is horizontal and its implementation includes several institutions, such as: Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Employment Service Agency, Fund for Innovation and Technological Development etc.

In order to be able to create an effective programme that will be gender-responsive, and design quality measures and activities that will lead us to the desired results and reduce the disparities in society, it is necessary to make a broader analysis of the situation in the area. Data that would be useful for us to create an argumentative, objective and effective programme include:

1. Teaching and Education

- Data about number of high schools, universities and education centres which offer ICT education, divided by region
- Data about number of enrolled students disaggregated by region, ethnicity and sex

²⁴ The Programme illustrated here aims at showing how gender is mainstreamed in the strategic planning process. The main idea is to show how gender is mainstreamed in the core elements of the process through using current templates for strategic planning from the beginning until the end of the strategic planning cycle.

- Data about number of graduated students disaggregated by region, ethnicity and sex

2. Digital literacy

- Internet coverage of country
- Data about PC's by household, ethnicity and region
- E-service usage by gender, region, age and ethnicity
- Affinity and interest in the ICT field by gender, regions and ethnicity (focus groups and field research)

3. Labour market

- Demand for ICT workers by regions
- Data on number of employees with ICT qualification by gender, age, region and ethnicity
- Data on number of unemployed persons with ICT qualification by gender, age, region and ethnicity
- Data on salary ranges in the ICT sector by gender, age, region, etc.

With a high quality analysis, we will be able to detect the existence of certain inequalities in the opportunities, needs, interests, affinities of women and men, and will be able to design a truly gender-responsible programme that will strive to overcome the gender gap and create equal opportunities to exploit the potential of women and men in the field.

Step 2: Setting the goals

Defining the mission and the vision of an institution by including the gender perspective

The mission is a brief description of why the ministry or state administration body exists or what purpose it serves. The mission is directly linked to the statutory regulations and key programmes and activities of the ministry/ administration body. Priorities and goals of an institution should always derive from the defined mission. The vision, on the other hand, is a statement of the global, sustained and continuous goal which will be sought by the ministry or state administration body in the long run.

Although the mission and the vision of an institution are relatively stable categories that do not change annually, but rather express the long-term commitments and goals of the institution within its competencies, it is extremely important to clearly express commitment for gender equality in the projection of the desired situation.

The principle of gender equality should be an integral element of the principles and values of the institution and be a reflection of the commitments of the institution, becoming thus an integral element of the institution's vision and mission. They should express the determination of the institution to provide equal access and opportunities to its services for both women and men, taking into account their different interests and needs.

EXAMPLE:

Mission - Investing in the ICT sector development by providing equal opportunities for use by and development of women and men in the sector

Vision - Developed ICT sector in which women and men fully utilize their potential and contribute to the progress of the society

Defining priorities and goals of an institution from a gender perspective

Priorities and goals of the institution should be set on the basis of previously conducted gender analysis in the area that identifies inequalities between women and men in terms of their needs, opportunities and access to resources. These policy priorities and goals set by the institution should include a gender-sensitive approach in addressing the detected problems in the field and defining a strategy for overcoming inequalities. Priorities and goals reflect the overall results that need to be achieved in the medium and the long run. They should be defined in a way that clearly expresses the commitment to a change that needs to take place in the society so as to remove disparities and provide equal opportunities. As mentioned earlier, these policies can be gender-specific or gender-redistributive.

Step 3: Creating a gender-sensitive strategy

The strategic planning process is a reflection of the key priorities and goals of the country, which are formulated through strategies, programmes and projects and appropriate allocation of resources for their implementation in line with the powers of the ministry or other state administration body. The programmes, projects and activities in the strategic plan serve to achieve government's priorities and the institution's mission. In addition, strategic plans serve to achieve the desired objectives and results.

Preconditions for creating a strategy include: situation analysis of the institution, including assessment of external factors such as changes in the political, economic, social and technological sphere; evaluation of the expected results achieved with the implementation of the programmes and sub-programmes that are an integral part of the strategic plan; analysis of the policies and sectoral strategies; conducting a functional analysis, determining the existing and future functions and reviewing materials in order to collect the necessary information for the development of the institution. Based on the data and information obtained and their relation to government priorities and priority goals, we can formulate a justified, objective and realistic strategy that is gender-sensitive and seeks to change the state of affairs in the field of action. In the process of creating a strategy we should also have in mind obligations arising from the National Programme for Adoption of the Legislation of the European Union²⁵. As a candidate country, we have undertaken certain activities and measures in order to fulfill the EU accession criteria, especially criteria under Chapter 23 on the fundamental rights and Chapter 19 on equality and anti-discrimination²⁶. These should be taken into consideration when a strategy is created.

²⁵ Secretariat for European Affairs, National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire i.e., NPAA is a national framework or plan for meeting the conditions, that is the criteria for membership (Copenhagen Criteria) of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union. More information on the NPAA. Available at: <https://www.sep.gov.mk/post/?id=9#.YP5zHugzaUI>

²⁶ European Commission, Condition for EU membership, Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership_en

EXAMPLE:

In line with the previously analyzed situation and the defined mission and vision of the institution including the gender perspective, when creating a strategic plan with its programmes and sub-programmes, we can take into consideration the following priorities and priority objectives defined in the Decree on the Strategic Priorities of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2020:

Strategic priority:

- Educational reform and investment in innovation and ICT

Priority objectives:

- reforms in education by providing inclusive and quality education for all and building a concept of lifelong learning;
- opening new jobs with active employment measures and increasing the salary range in the economy;
- reducing the differences in development between the regions and increasing its competitiveness;
- promoting gender equality in all areas of social life, including gender perspectives in policy making and budgeting;

In the process of developing the strategy, we need to make sure that the strategy is gender-sensitive. Namely, the projections of the desired situation in the future must account for the fact that if the strategy fails to take into account the different interests and needs of women and men, it could lead to maintaining or intensifying existing inequalities and stereotypes. A gender-sensitive strategy includes:

- Activities and measures for realization of priorities, goals, programmes, sub-programmes and projects that will contribute to overcoming detected inequalities, meeting the needs of women and men and providing equal access to resources;
- Assessment of the expected costs and benefits, as well as impact of the implementation of measures and activities on women and men;
- Correlation and complementarity of the envisaged measures and activities with other measures and activities of the institution that can facilitate/hinder the realization of the programme/sub-programme;
- Assessment of risks or possible obstacles that may affect the implementation of the strategic plan.

When creating a gender-sensitive strategy, the changes we desire, we want to bring to the society by implementing programmes and sub-programmes should be anticipated. When we talk about changes, we should consider the time and budget that will be needed to implement them, as well as the capacity of the institution.

Development of gender-responsive strategic plans

A strategy aiming at achieving priorities and goals in a certain area is realized through the implementation of specific policies, programmes and projects, that contribute toward the realization of the government programme and the established strategic priorities and priority objectives. In this respect, programmes are developed pursuant to the decisions on strategic priorities in a particular area.

A programme is a set of activities that are implemented over a certain period of time, aiming at achieving certain priorities and objectives through allocation of specific financial resources. Ministry or state administration body programmes can be institutional (vertical), where the holder is one ministry or state administration body, or inter-institutional (horizontal) the implementation of which, according to law, requires participation of several institutions. When contributing in the implementation of a horizontal programme, each institution should incorporate a gender perspective in their respective strategic plans.

Depending on its complexity and scope, a programme can be fragmented into several sub-programmes and projects that have their own goals and results, and the implementation of which contributes to the realization of the programme as a whole, and hence to government and institutional priorities and objectives. When developing programmes, it is extremely important to ask the following questions:

- Have women and men been consulted about their specific needs?
- Will the envisaged implementation results equally reflect the needs of both women and men?
- Does the programme envisage specific measures that contribute toward reducing gender inequality?

During the development of the strategic plan, results achieved in the previous year's planning are evaluated based on the implementation report for the previous year's annual work plan and the results achieved in the first half of the current year. Each annual review of the strategic plan, as well the evaluation of the effects from the implementation of particular programme/sub-programme measures and activities, should assess whether they are sufficiently effective for both women and men, whether they contribute toward achieving the strategic priority or priority objectives. If we find that they are ineffective and do not contribute to achieving the priorities and objectives, we should consider cancelling/modifying them and redirecting the financial resources to other or new measures and activities.

Determining goals and gender-sensitive indicators

Each programme, sub-programme or project should have clearly defined goals for which we need to have performance indicators, so that we can monitor and evaluate their effectiveness.

Institutions define goals for each programme and sub-programme. The goals should be specific, achievable, realistic and measurable and be assigned a time-frame in which they should be achieved. Each programme and sub-programme includes an implementation plan which sets out specific measures and activities, consulted parties, implementation deadlines, required financial and material resources, human resources and performance indicators.

By achieving the programme goals, the government strategic priorities (defined in the Decree on Strategic Priorities) and the mission of the ministry or state administration body are achieved as well. *The goals should reflect the desired results and the change we want to achieve, and not the activities we implement in order to meet such goals and desired targets.*

In order for the program to be properly monitored and its effect and impact be evaluated, it is necessary to define specific goals that will be achieved by implementing the proposed activities and measures. Performance indicators are data with the help of which we can monitor how successful the implementation of the programme is, as well as measure the achievement of the strategic plan goals. Monitoring and evaluation of achievement happens at certain pre-determined intervals so as to note progress in achieving the goals.

Achievement of goals is monitored by way of properly defined indicators. Such indicators may include:

- **Input indicators** - measuring necessary funds for policy implementation;
- **Output indicators** - measuring progress or changes caused by policy implementation;
- **Quantitative** (surveys with closed-ended questions, observing and recording well-defined events, structured interview etc. Analysis results are expressed in quantity or numbers);
- **Qualitative** (in-depth interviews: consultations, focus groups, public hearings, various observation methods, document review and research etc. Analysis results are expressed in descriptive data providing information useful to understand the processes behind observed results and assess changes in people's perceptions of their well-being.);
- **Impact indicators** - measuring effectiveness/impact in achieving goals.

By monitoring and evaluating achievement of goals according to the set indicators, we will be able to assess the following: Did the programme contribute to reducing the gap between women and men in the field of intervention? Do women and men enjoy equal benefits from budget funds spent for implementation of the programme? Does the programme address the different needs of both women and men? Does the programme contribute towards improving the quality of life of women and men?

EXAMPLE:

A. JUSTIFICATION AND DESIGN OF THE PROGRAMME

Explanation: The program derives from:

1. Educational reform and investment in innovation and information technology
2. The National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire (NPAA):
Chapter: 3.10 Information Society and Media
Chapter 3.26 Education, Culture and Youth
3. Strategic priorities and goals of the institution:

Programme objective: Reforms in education in accordance with the requirements of the labor market

Programme Success Indicator: Increased Qualified Staff in ICT by 10% by 2023 and increased number of women employed in the ICT by 15% by 2023

Type of Programme:horizontal √vertical

Sub-programmes:

<p>Sub-programme 1: Reforms in secondary vocational education</p>	<p>Success Indicator: 15% more ICT vocational subjects introduced</p>
<p>Sub-programme 2: Providing free ICT skills training for women in the XX region</p>	<p>Success Indicator: 200 women aged 15-50 trained in the XX region</p>
<p>Sub-programme 3: ...</p>	<p>Success Indicator:</p>

Implementation Plan

Based on the previously defined factors, activities that need to be taken for the programme/sub-programme to achieve the set goal are planned and recorded in the Implementation Plan. Although the way in which activities are defined does not necessarily reflect the gender perspective, it should certainly be taken into account when determining the activities, having in mind the effects that such activities will have on the beneficiaries - women and men. In this context, where possible, both women and men should be consulted about their needs and priorities during the process of defining the activities. Thus, activities can be designed so as to meet the needs of both groups. In addition to the imple-

menting activities of the programme/sub-programme, the implementation plan also indicates the responsible party for the implementation of each activity, the consulted stakeholders, the time-frame for conducting the activity, and the human and financial resources needed for the implementation.

Gender-responsive budgeting

Strategic planning is a process that is inevitably linked to the budget planning process. Thus, in the process of developing programmes/sub-programmes we must stipulate planned and allocated funds for the realization of the programme. In this process of defining budget allocations, it is especially important to take into account the resources and needs, interests and priorities of both women and men, including the possible redistribution of resources to reduce or bypass some already detected inequality in society. In this sense, gender-responsive budgeting expresses the commitment to gender equality in policies, strategies and programmes. This commitment is no longer just declarative, but essential and realistic, due to proper allocation of budget funds to meet the priorities and needs of women and men.

Extremely important is that any policy and programme, as well as the budget needed for their implementation, can be monitored and evaluated from a gender perspective only if we collect gender disaggregated data in the analysis of performance indicators. In this way, we will be able to clearly assess the amount of budget allocations used by women, and thus assess impact of policy/programme on women, and evaluate whether the starting position has changed²⁷.

²⁷ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2013, Manuel for Gender-Responsive Budgeting. Available at: http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/priracnik_rodovo_mkd.pdf

B. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN									
Sub-programme 1: Implementation plan									
Activity	Responsible	Consulted	Time-frame		Resources needed			Human	Financial
			Start m/y	End m/y	I	II	III		
Reviewing the curricula in the secondary vocational schools and introducing more vocational subjects and practical teaching	Ministry of Education and Science, Bureau for Development of Education	ICT companies, MASIT	Jan./ 2020	Sep./ 2020	5				
Conducting a campaign in primary schools for the benefits of secondary vocational schools, especially in the ICT area ²⁷	Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Information Society and Administration, self-government entities	Parents, Citizens' Associations working in the field of education and training, girls and boys students in primary education	March/ 2020	Dec./ 2021	4	4	300.000	300.000	
Providing scholarships for girls who will enroll in secondary vocational schools ²⁸	Ministry of Education and Science, self-government entities	Ministry of Finance			3	3	3	1.000.000	1.500.000
Jobs provided by the companies participating in the dual education	Private sector	Regional Chambers of Commerce, ICT companies				2	/	/	/
Total activities for year I: 2									
Total activities for year II: 2									
Total activities for year III:									
Total for sub-programme 1: 4									

²⁸ Although this activity does not place special emphasis on women, it doesn't mean that it is not gender-sensitive. If we have precise indicators with data that is gender segregated, we will have a clear insight into the effects and the impact caused by the activity. In this case it will be the number of boys and girls who have opted for secondary vocational education. Based on such data, we will be able to assess whether the activity has contributed toward improvement of the situation, as well as to design new activities in order to achieve the desired goal

²⁹ This activity can be defined as a gender-specific measure. It represents a specific intervention that is intended to improve the situation in the area, within the available resources. Policies and programmes do not always nor should always contain specific measures. But when they do, they could be gender-sensitive. When monitoring and evaluation indicators of achieved policy results and impacts are clearly defined so as to provide gender equality relevant information, such as gender segregated data, it would be easy to monitor improvements.

Expected results according to the principle of equal opportunities

The expected results according to the principle of equal opportunities are crucial for monitoring and evaluating the impact and effects of policies, programmes and projects implementation on the quality of life of women and men. The Gender Impact Assessment tool ³⁰ can be used to define the expected impact(s) on gender equality. The tool is designed as ex-ante evaluation of regulation, policies or programmes. It allows identification and prevention of negative consequences on equality between women and men resulting from the implementation of a certain policy/programme. The basic question here is: Is this regulation, policy or programme reducing, maintaining or increasing gender inequality between women and men?

The European Commission defines impact of gender equality (GDI) on policies as follows:

*“Gender impact assessment is the process of comparing and assessing, according to gender relevant criteria, the current situation and trend with the expected development resulting from the introduction of the proposed policy”, “Gender impact assessment is the estimation of the different effects (positive, negative or neutral) of any policy or activity implemented to specific items in terms of gender equality”.*³¹

This tool is used not only to diagnose the current context, but also to anticipate the impact of policy implementation on women and men. The tool can also be used in cases where we want to make certain changes, adjustments, modifications, change or cancel a service or function, at all stages of the strategic planning process.

The ultimate goal of the tool is to improve the process of policy making and planning in order to prevent negative impact on gender equality, as well as to strengthen and promote gender equality through better, proactive transformational policies and regulations.

³⁰ European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Impact Assessment. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-impact-assessment/Guide-gender-impact-assessment>

³¹ European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Impact Assessment. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-impact-assessment/Guide-gender-impact-assessment>

EXAMPLE:

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PRINCIPLE		
Expected results for year I	Expected results for year II	Expected results for year III
Percentage of girls in the ICT education who receive a scholarship	Increased enrollment of girls in secondary vocational schools in the field of ICT by 30%	Increased percentage of women in the ICT industry by 15%

Risk assesment

The strategic plan contains risks assessment. It analyzes possible risks that may affect the achievement of priorities and goals of the programmes and sub-programmes in the strategic plan of the institution. Having in mind the gender perspective of the programmes that are part of the strategic plan, it is especially important to anticipate the possible risks and to plan measures to intercept and avoid them.

EXAMPLE:

RISK ASSESSMENT CHART - PROGRAMME LEVEL			
Risk	Probability of occurring	Risk impact on realization of goals	Risk management measures
Mislead assessment of the current situation due to lack of gender-disaggregated statistics	Medium	High	Data gathering through field research, focus groups and interviews with relevant stakeholders
Low response from women and girls to the call for free ICT trainings	High	High	Creating a door-to-door campaign strategy to effectively convey information to stakeholders

Step 4: Development of a gender-responsive annual work plan

The main goal of this phase of the strategic planning is to ensure that what is planned and committed becomes reality. It also strives to make citizens able to clearly see and feel the benefits from implementation of policies in their lives and/or work. However, uninterrupted implementation of the programmes, projects and activities from the strategic plan won't happen by only putting them on paper. It is necessary to define clear, precise and concise measures and activities in order to reach set goals and achieve results. Implementation Plans for the programmes and sub-programmes, as an integral part of the Strategic Plan, are the basis for the development of the Annual Work Plan of the institution. The measures and activities in the annual work plan represent operationalization of the programmes and sub-programmes of the strategic plan. Based on the annual work plan, we can regularly monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the SP programmes, sub-programmes, measures and activities, on the obligations defined in the government's annual work program, and on the planned activities of the ministry or the state administration body.

The plan needs to be realistic, achievable and transparent, and to take into account the needs of women and men.

In line with the programme/sub-programme's complexity, specific results are defined. They arise from each measure and/or activity by which the programme/sub-programme is being implemented. Results from the implementation of measures and activities contribute towards achievement of the set goals and priorities of the programme in general. Identifying clear and accurate results from the measures, activities and projects is a condition for achieving the goals and priorities at the programme/sub-programme level. The goals and results are an expression of well-designed measures and activities that contribute to the realization of the planned solutions and achieving the desired change in the society - overcoming inequality and closing the gender gap.

Programmes and sub-programmes

In this part of the strategic plan, in addition to the basic data and data on the title and purpose of the programme /subprogramme, the success indicator of the programme, presented also are the baseline, the planned result at annual level, the measures and activities, the time-frame for implementation,

the financial resources and the organizational unit/person responsible for implementation and monitoring. Extremely important for the process of gender mainstreaming in the strategic planning is the definition of measurement indicators - performance indicators at the level of results, that can and should be monitored and evaluated from a gender perspective. The results will measure the degree of reduction in inequality, compared to the baseline. The development of the annual work plan undergoes a coordinated process of cooperation among the organizational units in charge of the strategic planning process, financial issues, human resource management, internal audit, and the equal opportunities for women and men coordinator and the relevant stakeholders.

EXAMPLE:

SUB-PROGRAMME 1 – SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION REFORM

Programme objective: Increasing interest for secondary vocational education and increased number of girls enrolled in secondary vocational education in the ICT area

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success indicator: • New curricula adopted; • Increased interest in enrolling students in secondary vocational education; • Opening of new ICT vocational branches in schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline: • 25% of students enroll in secondary vocational education • 15% girls enroll in secondary vocational education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned results annually: • Increasing the number of enrolled students in secondary vocational education by 15% • Increasing enrollment of girls in secondary vocational education by 10%
--	--	--

Measures:	Activities:	Time-frame:				Allocated funds	Reporting
		1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q		
Introduction of new modern ICT subjects in secondary vocational education	Forming a multidisciplinary working group for revision of secondary vocational education curriculum	√	√			300,000, MES budget	Secondary Education Department
	Field research about labor market needs		√				
	Preparation of new teaching curricula in cooperation with Bureau for Development of Education			√	√	/	Secondary Education Department, Bureau for Development of Education

In the process of developing the programmes and sub-programmes that will be included in the triennial strategic plan, institutions are also obliged to choose a programme or sub-programme that will be subject to a Gender-Responsive Budget Statement.

The GRB Statement is focused on a programme, sub-programme or project under the institution's strategic plan and represents an integral part of the strategic planning and budgeting process of ministries and state administration bodies. According to the Methodology on gender-responsive budgeting³², the selection of the programme starts with the strategic priorities of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and the priorities of the institution itself, in compliance with the realistically available financial resources, human resources and other institutional capacities. At this stage of the process, it is assessed whether there is available gender-disaggregated statistics followed by qualitative analysis of the situation of men and women in a particular sector, which is a starting point (benchmark) for the changes expected within a period of three years, according to the scope. The approved GRB statement by the head of the institution is submitted, together with the strategic plan, to the Ministry of Finance and to the General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, and is published at the institution's website.

Initiatives for the government's annual work programme

Initiatives proposed for the Government's Annual Work Programme present an excellent opportunity to solve a detected gender inequality or disparity. Namely, with the analysis of the situation in a certain area, but also during the evaluation of the programmes, sub-programmes and projects of the institution, we can get clear insight of certain inequality in the possibilities, access to resources and needs of women and men. This can be caused by already established socio-economic relations and gender roles that women and men have in the society. In addition, when monitoring and evaluating the implementation of a certain programme/sub-programme, we can acknowledge that the planned intervention does not reduce, or it further increases the gender gap, deepens inequalities and strengthens stereotypes. Hence, we can initiate a change in some elements of the intervention, or we can propose a new initiative that will contribute toward overcoming inequalities and reducing the gender gap.

³² Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2014, Methodology for Gender-Responsive Budgeting for State Administration Bodies at Central Level. Available at: <https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti.nsp>

EXAMPLE:

DEVELOPMENT TIME-FRAME:						
Initiative	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	Allocated funds	Reporting
Establishing a joint committee between the Government and MASIT for development and promotion of ICT	√	√			/	Secondary Education Department
Encouraging interest in secondary vocational education by modernizing schools with ICT tools			√	√	IPA funds	Secondary Education Department/ International Cooperation Department

Measures and activities arising from the institutional mandate

Measures and activities arising from the mandate of the institution should also include the gender perspective, especially from the aspect of decision-making. Although we have the impression that we have full insight in the key competence of the institution, we are still not able to fully understand all possible aspects and consequences that may arise. We also can't anticipate all new instruments and measures that can be introduced in order to improve the state of affairs. Therefore, it is extremely important to constantly analyze and to anticipate the possible consequences and problems that may arise from the work of the institution. It's also important to maintain continuous consultations with stakeholders in order to monitor changes in their needs and interests and thus adequately design the activities of the institution.

Step 5: Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Institutions have the obligation to monitor, evaluate and report on progress in the achievement of the goals and on the results of the programmes and sub-programmes. Basic steps in the process of monitoring, evaluation and reporting are the development of indicators, setting criteria related to the time-frame, setting up a system for collecting data related to the indicators, data analysis, data usage and data evaluation. The purpose of this phase is to ensure that there is progress in the implementation of the Work Plan that guides us towards the projected priorities, goals and results. In addition, the implementation of an effective monitoring and evaluation policy allows us to learn lessons and build best practices, and thus make better policies and decisions in the future.

Data collection

In order to be able to conduct an effective monitoring and evaluation process, it is necessary to ask the following questions: What data should be collected? How often should we collect data? How should we organize the data collection process?

It is recommended to collect quantitative data for 1-3 indicators. Gathering too much data can be counterproductive. Data should be clear, concise and easy to collect and interpret. The most important thing is that the data we collect is segregated by gender. Thus, we would be able to monitor and assess whether the specific policy/programme has contributed to a positive change towards gender equality. Here are some data collection tools:

- Document analysis (work plans, financial plans, budgets, reports on budget implementation ...) and reports (progress reports, final reports etc.). Such data may tell us whether there was a fair distribution of resources according to the needs of women and men;
- Collecting data from official government sites such as those of the State Statistical Office, international organizations or by the institution itself;
- Monitoring activities through field visits in order to determine whether women and men are equally targeted;
- Collecting data from users and stakeholders by way of surveys, interviews, focus groups, workshops, meetings etc.

Assessing success from a gender perspective

As mentioned above, in order to measure and monitor the achievement of the goals and results of the programmes and sub-programmes, quantitative and/or qualitative indicators are determined. When determining the indicators, at least one gender-sensitive indicator should be identified. The monitoring and evaluation process will be effective if we have defined precise measures and activities for achieving goals and outcomes. Measures and activities outcomes should be cross-referenced with collected data in order to measure progress. Successfully defined indicators that have data divided by gender clearly show us whether and what progress has been made in relation to the baseline under the policy/programme. In order to measure and evaluate the indicators, a baseline indicator is defined, which is directly related to the goal of the program, i.e., the sub-program, and expresses a quantitative value or a qualitative situation. The baseline indicator is defined through a situation analysis in the area or areas under the competence of the state administration body. It expresses a measured value or condition of the indicator before or at the very beginning of the program implementation. Where baseline indicators cannot be defined by way of a situation analysis, the baseline will be the result obtained by the first measurement of the indicator.

Reporting

Reporting plays a key role in the process of building gender-responsive strategic plans for several reasons: it integrates the gender perspective into the policy-making and budgeting process, making it an inherent part of the work of the administration; creates a basis for improving the quality of the process of creating programmes and sub-programmes for the next period by using systematically collected data, especially gender disaggregated data, and provides an early warning system for possible difficulties in implementation. Furthermore, reporting can initiate measures for prevention and dealing with possible obstacles. Reporting also contributes to strengthening the accountability and transparency of ministries and state administration bodies, and thus works towards continuous raising of public awareness on the importance of gender issues.

Given the whole process of strategic planning and all elements of which it is consisted, it is important to stress that we should constantly look through the “gender lens”. In order to make sure that we have taken all necessary steps in the

process of creating gender-responsive policies, strategies, programmes and projects, we can use the following control table, that will allow us to reconsider the quality of the created policy/programme from a gender perspective.

CONTROL TABLE:

Background and Justification: Is the gender perspective considered when creating the planned intervention? Is the intervention justified and has convincing arguments in favor of strengthening gender equality and reducing the gender gap?

Objectives: Do objectives of planned intervention reflect the needs of both women and men? Do they aim to correct gender imbalances by addressing the specific needs of women and men? Does the intervention transform the institution in the direction of inherent embedding of the gender perspective in its functioning?

Stakeholders: Is there a gender balance in the target groups - service/policy users?

Results: Does the intervention address the needs of women and men?

Activities: Do planned activities include women and men? Are there any additional activities that can improve the initial situation?

Indicators: Are the indicators developed to measure progress of each individual outcome? Do the indicators measure the gender aspects of each result? Are the indicators gender-responsive? Did they guarantee a satisfactory level of gender balance in the activities?

Implementation: Will the gender perspective be addressed in the implementation process? Do women and men equally participate in the implementation? Do women and men benefit equally from implementation?

Monitoring and Evaluation: Does the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy include a gender perspective? Does it adequately examine both the content and administrative aspects of the intervention?

Risks: Is the broader picture of society taken into account in terms of gender roles and relationships in the policy/programme creation process? Are possible negative effects of the intervention anticipated?

Budget: Are invested funds analyzed from a gender perspective to ensure that both women and men have equal benefits from the intervention?

HOW TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY OF MAINSREAMING GENDER IN STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Although a significant step towards gender equality in the Republic of North Macedonia has been made in the last decade, there is still a long way to go. It will still take a lot of effort to build an inclusive and equal world for women and men. We will not be able to achieve that as long as gender issues are perceived only as women's issues and not as social issues affecting the whole community.

When it comes to the strategic planning process, we can focus on the following aspects in order to make the gender perspective an integral and essential part of creating policies and budgets, and thus a benefit for the whole community:

- Stay accountable and dedicated to the gender equality commitments stipulated in the national documents³³ such as: the Constitution of Republic of North Macedonia, the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and other strategic documents for advancing gender equality as well as international documents such as: the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)³⁴; the Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security³⁵; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action³⁶; the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda³⁷; etc.
- Publish GRB statements and regular progress reports on the implementation of programmes/sub-programmes, with special emphasis on the results related to the promotion of gender equality;
- Address all newly identified problems in the society from the gender aspect loudly, and manage and resolve them in cooperation with all stakeholders;
- Learn from mistakes in order to improve the approach. What has so far been proved as ineffective in practice should be discarded at the expense of new, creative solutions to overcome inequalities in society;

³³ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, National documents on gender equality. Available at: <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti.nsp>

³⁴ UN Women, 2007, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Available at: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

³⁵ UN, 2000, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/2000/10/un-security-council-resolution-1325>

³⁶ UN Women, 1995, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/01/beijing-declaration>

³⁷ UN, 2015, Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

- Hold regular consultations and involve citizens (both women and men) in the policy-making process. In this way we can ensure recognition and addressing of priorities. This is necessary in order to have relevant information in case of change of circumstances, so that we could respond appropriately and adapt the policy/programme according to the needs and priorities;
- Celebrate every, even minimal progress and success in the process of promoting gender equality and overcoming the gender gap. In this way, we will share the merits of active participation in change and encourage more women and men to engage in consultation and discussion on gender issues that affect society.

Moreover, we should not forget the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 5 - Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is catalyst for the achievement of all the other goals. According to the UN, important progress for women and girls has been made in the past decades, still, change has been uneven and incremental. The estimations are that at the current rate of change, the global gender gap will not close for another 100 years. In order to achieve the goals, the global community must act with urgency and determination to accelerate progress and achieve gender equality for all women and girls around the world by taking these actions:

- Ending discrimination in law and practice - Although it's been 40 years since the adoption of the CEDAW Convention, discrimination remains common in law and practice;
- Envisioning a sustainable economy with gender equality at its core - The economic opportunity gap is closing slowly; women are still stacked in the informal economy earning low wages and lacking social protection. Unpaid care and domestic work remain feminized, thus compromising women's ability to earn an income;
- Eradicating poverty through gender-responsive social protection and public services - Increasing women's access to education has shown to increase women's labor force participation rates. Boosting investments in gender-responsive social protection and public services, such as health and education, is critical to closing the gender gap;
- Closing the leadership gap - Power and decision-making remain overwhelmingly dominated by men, and women are still facing discrimination in opportunities for public leadership. There is an urgent need of strategies for empowerment of women and girls in public leadership and decision-making processes;

- Working jointly towards achieving gender equality - Gender equality remains unfinished business in every country of the world and there is more to be done in the upcoming period. In the UN Decade of Action to deliver the Strategic Development Goals, governments, the UN, civil society, and the private sector, working together, have the potential to transform the lives of women and girls, for the benefit of all.³⁸

Having in mind these commitments, institutions should shape the process of strategic planning of policies, programmes, projects and budgeting to be gender-responsive. By acting in this manner, ministries and other state administrative bodies will essentially contribute towards building an equal, inclusive and fair society.

³⁸ UN, 2020, Women and Girls – Closing the Gender Gap. Available at:
https://www.un.org/en/un75/women_girls_closing_gender_gap



UN Women North Macedonia

Blvd. VMRO 7/10, Skopje, North Macedonia

<http://northmacedonia.unwomen.org>

www.facebook.com/unwomenskopje