

Women's Economic Empowerment



Why do we do what we do?

According to all labour market indicators, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina are in a less favourable position compared to men - 26.7% of women are employed as opposed to 44.6% of men. One of the root causes of low activity and employment rates for women is the disproportional burden of unpaid care work. Employed women spend more than twice as much time on care activities as employed men. In rural areas, women represent a critical but untapped economic resource, making up 49.8% of the total rural population and only 20.5% of the female workforce engaged in agriculture. Although it is one of the fastest growing and most important sectors in the country, only 23% of women are active in the IT industry. Women business owners face serious financial obstacles, including lack of initial capital, lack of resources for financing start-ups and business development, poor supply of entrepreneurial capital, and banks' unfavorable attitude.

Highlighted fact: Women in BiH spend about **6 hours and 32 minutes** on unpaid care activities. Men spend **3 hours and 31 minutes**.



How we work?

Within the Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) portfolio, UN Women works on improving policies, programmes, and funds relevant for women's economic empowerment. Through cooperation with government, CSOs, policy makers and businesses, UN Women advocates secure income, decent work and economic autonomy for the key categories of women that need economic empowerment. We have been creating and upgrading programmes and initiatives that support:

- resilience of women-owned businesses and women entrepreneurs;
- improvement of the socio-economic position of rural women;
- recognition and revaluation of care economy.

UN Women seeks to ensure that ICT/STEM* education and job opportunities are available and accessible to girls and women, by promoting the network of women in ICT, mentorship programmes and using **Women's Empowerment Principles** and other tools to improve gender equality in male-dominated industries.

* Information and Communication Technologies/Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

UN Women supports Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve gender equality, and works with governments and civil society organizations to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement international gender equality commitments.



2020 - 2023:

appx. 1,800,000 USD



Key partners

- ▶ **Foundation 787**
- ▶ **Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of Federation BiH**
- ▶ **Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Canton Sarajevo**
- ▶ **Government of Canton Sarajevo**
- ▶ **Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Republika Srpska and Federation BiH**
- ▶ **Gender Centers of Republika Srpska and Federation BiH**
- ▶ **Agency for Gender Equality of BiH**
- ▶ **Chambers of Commerce of Federation BiH and Republika Srpska**



Donors:



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Our results

From 2020 to 2023 UN Women has been working on and supporting various initiatives under the WEE portfolio:

- Conducted **comprehensive studies** on economic opportunities for women, including the first baseline study on care economy ever conducted in BiH.
- Supported small art businesses and pursued **innovative initiatives** combining tech-driven approaches to assist women artists in creating and selling their art.
- Supported relevant government institutions and CSOs to enhance their capacities to implement and advocate for **gender-responsive legislation**.
- Lead the piloting of **care economy models** on a local level to accelerate the achievement of SDGs in BiH by supporting governance systems and private sector engagement towards **green and inclusive growth**.
- Continued to implement the **IT Girls* Mentorship Programme** to increase confidence and capability of girls to pursue employment and self-employment, particularly in high-income tech-driven industries.
- Supported improvement of the socio-economic position of **rural women** and their cooperatives.

* A joint initiative of UNDP, UNICEF, and UN Women that addresses the obstacles faced by girls and women in the ICT sector.

And many more...



Next steps

UN Women will continue to work on improvement of policy framework for job creation, including perspectives of care economy and women entrepreneurship. Our focus will be on advancing the economic position of women in agriculture and rural areas through improved access to business management and sustainable/climate-smart agriculture, assets, tools and techniques. UN Women will also continue to support overall women's entrepreneurship and capacity development in tech-driven industries.



Achievements in numbers

- ▶ Produced **4** studies that offer numerous recommendations for improvement of economic opportunities for women.
- ▶ **200** women artists introduced to NFT (non-fungible tokens) technology and its potential.
- ▶ **10** cantonal Ministries of Interior, **2** Gender Centres and **12** CSOs improved their skills in the field of gender-responsive legislation.
- ▶ **1** care economy model piloted in **1** local community.
- ▶ More than **2,000** girls participated in IT Girls programmes and activities.
- ▶ Over **66%** of women entrepreneurs who attended business resilience development training programme increased sales and **53%** increased their revenue.
- ▶ **44** women business owners/entrepreneurs attended trainings on crowdfunding as one of the alternatives for financing businesses.
- ▶ **41** women entrepreneurs from rural areas attended training on access to finance and digital skills.

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