

UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls, the empowerment of women, the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security.

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



Standards and Engagement for Ending Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. Overview

“Standards and Engagement for Ending Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, is a **three-year programme developed by the UN Women Country Office** in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and **financially supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)**. The programme aims to **strengthen the institutional and social response mechanisms to violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence** in BiH by contributing to the **implementation of the Istanbul Convention**. Furthermore, the proposed activities of the programme build upon the initiatives identified in the entity strategies on combating violence against women and domestic violence. The programme presents a comprehensive, transformative approach towards gender equality and women’s empowerment.

2. Background

Violence against women and girls continues to be a widespread social problem in BiH, and a serious violation of fundamental human rights. This type of violence is **still tolerated and considered socially acceptable behaviour, and is justified by traditional and patriarchal conceptions of the role and status of women in BiH society**.

The entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (**Istanbul Convention**) in August 2014 has marked an **important milestone in the BiH efforts to curb violence against women and girls**, in addition to new legislation on protection from family violence that was adopted in 2012 in both of BiH’s entities. However, there is still a need to harmonize these laws at all levels and implement their necessary provisions to ensure legal protection, equal treatment and respecting the rights of women and children, who are recognized as the most frequent victims of gender-based violence.

3. Programme Description

The programme builds on the previous work of UN Women and other UN agencies in BiH at the policy level as well as the support provided to improve services for survivors and to prevent violence against women and girls since 2008.

The programme has two main components that are focusing on **protection of survivors and prevention** of violence against women and domestic violence.

Project Title

Programme for Standards and Engagement for Ending Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Budget

Total: 1,509,373 USD

Donor

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

Duration

3 years (2016 – 2019)

Executing Agency

UN Women

Partners

- Gender Equality Agency
- Republika Srpska and Federation of BiH Gender Centers
- Relevant Ministries
- Women and youth civil society organisations
- Media
- Other UN Agencies

Beneficiaries of the programme

Primary beneficiaries:

- women victims of violence, including women from marginalized groups.
- young women and men will also be a big target audience since it is crucial to involve them in innovative prevention programs.

Secondary beneficiaries:

- centres for social work
- law enforcement bodies
- legal aid organisations
- health institutions
- safe houses
- CSOs and
- educational institutions.

Component 1. Improvement of the availability, accessibility and quality of services to survivors of violence against women and domestic violence.

Under this component, UN Women will work for:

- a) Entity institutions to have the capacity to develop and implement policies for the provision of services, based on international standards and obligations; and
- b) Communities involved in the programme to be able to provide quality, coordinated services to survivors and perpetrators in line with international standards.

The work under this component aims to enhance availability, access and quality of services utilizing a multi-sectorial approach to address violence against women and domestic violence in BiH. This will be realised by support to state based and non-governmental institutional service provision in line with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention, as well as by deploying direct support to capacity development of relevant service providers in selected communities.

The work under this component will be implemented in close collaboration with the USAID Project on ending violence against women that is managed by the Agency of Gender Equality in BiH.

Component 2. Promotion of favourable social attitudes and behaviours towards ending violence against women and domestic violence among men, women and young people.

Under this component, UN Women will work for:

- a) Engaging men, women and young people in promoting gender equality, eliminating gender stereotypes, facilitating community-based discussion, and supporting action groups to end violence against women. This will include enlisting men's active participation in preventing violence and promoting positive role models (with a special focus on high-school and university students, young fathers, and men in media, not excluding other target groups); and
- b) Engaging media, encouraging the responsible reporting of such violence and raising awareness of the criminal nature and extent of gender-based violence, including the criminality of such violence, and promoting the responsiveness and use of services.

Under this component UN Women will have a strong focus on working with men and boys to address and understand gender roles through awareness campaigning and educational activities. In addition, key media actors and outlets will be engaged in advocacy, research and capacity building towards improving gender sensitive reporting and preventing violence against women and girls.

The project was launched in April 2016 and after a few months inception phase activities will scale up during summer 2016.

Istanbul Convention

The Convention require Member States to prevent, protect, persecute and monitor the occurrence of VAWG. The Convention is unique in setting standards for the protection of survivors and definitions of which services must be available. It is also unique in pointing out that VAWG and domestic violence cannot be addressed without looking at gender equality issues.

Facts on the situation of VAW in BiH:

*The findings of the First National Study on Prevalence and Characteristics of Violence against Women in BiH, published in 2013, show that **women in BiH are exposed to a high risk of violence, first in her immediate, intimate environment of relationship with her partner and family, and then in the broader community.***

*Findings indicate that almost **half of the women in BiH (older than 15) have been subjected at least once in their lifetime to some of four kinds of violence (physical, psychological, sexual and economic).***

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