

"PROMOTING GENDER RESPONSIVE POLICIES AND BUDGETS: TOWARDS TRANSPARENT, INCLUSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA"

GRB at a glance

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is a strategy used to reduce gender inequalities and close gender gaps by improving governments' processes of policy and budget making and by strengthening accountability and transparency. GRB is used for assessing and restructuring revenues with gender lenses and targeting the expenditures towards the needs of women and men. It is not about a separate budget for women, it is about taking into account the practical needs of women and men by identifying and addressing the challenges that women and men face across all spheres of life. It recognises the contribution that women make to the economy through their unpaid work. It directly supports the increase of women's participation in the decision making processes and provides an opportunity for the voices of the most vulnerable to be heard by leaving no one behind. It promotes efficiency, transparency and equity of governments' budgets and builds more inclusive and citizen-centered governance.

Project title:

"Promoting Gender Responsive Policies and Budgets: Towards Transparent, Inclusive and Accountable Governance in the Republic of North Macedonia"

Duration: 2018 - 2022

Project Partners:

Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Finance, Parliament, ZELS, NALAS, Local Self-Government Units, CSOs, think-thanks, academic institutions

Sources of funding:

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency - SIDA, UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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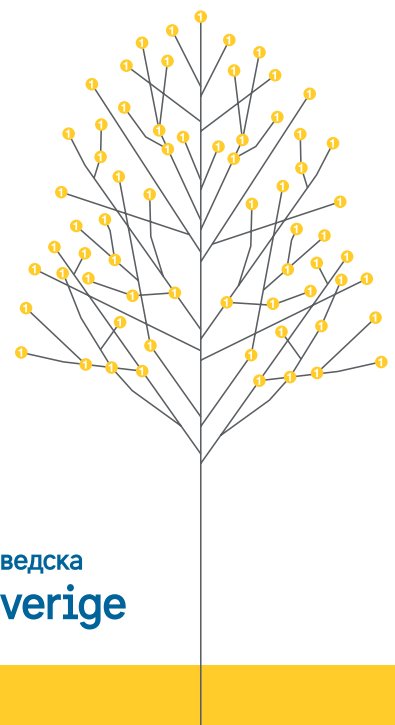
About the project

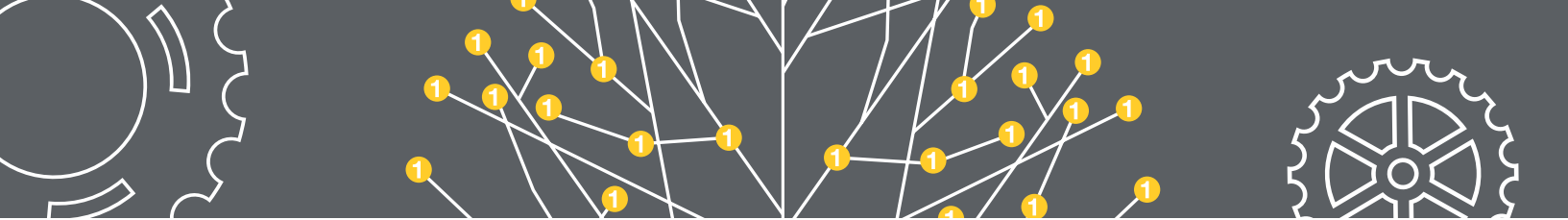
The overall objective of the project is to improve women's lives, including the most vulnerable groups through systematic and sustainable integration of gender perspective at all stages of policy and budgetary processes. The project will support the advancement of implementation of national and international commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in line with national SDG priority targets and the EU accession process.

At central level, the project will apply strategies focused on engendering the Public Finance Management reforms, to promote more inclusive and transparent governance, accountable to the needs and interests of women and men. The project will support the longstanding vision of strong national gender machinery, which uses its full potential and has taken the lead in ensuring policies and laws fully embed gender equality principles.

At local level, the project interventions will focus on policies and budgets to improve the life of **women and men from the most vulnerable groups**, particularly by upscaling proven approaches and good practices identified in previous GRB interventions. Furthermore, the project will promote the use of GRB as a tool to enable local governments to recognize the value and potential for local development and inclusive growth by investing in gender-responsive social services, specifically social protection and care services at local level. **The project applies a human-centered approach by finding solutions based on the needs identified by beneficiaries themselves, who act as agents of change.**

CSO networking and advocacy efforts will be supported to enable structured and continued oversight and analysis of budgetary allocation and spending from a gender perspective, and to generate missing watch dog evidence and expert policy recommendations. The interventions will be backed-up with capacity building efforts for providers and users of gender data, statistics and its usage for evidence-based policy analyses and interventions.





The Government's public finance management and the strategic planning processes respond to the different needs of women and men through effective application of gender responsive budgeting:

HOW:

- Support gender mainstreaming in fiscal policies and budgetary processes, in line with public financial management reform
- Strengthen capacities of line ministries and state institutions on gender responsive policy-making and budgeting
- Advance the application of GRB tools in municipalities' planning, programming and budgetary decisions
- Support central and local governments to design human centered policies that respond to the needs of women and men, ensuring no one is left behind
- Work with Members of Parliament to demand accountability to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Women's participation influenced local decision-making on public services and sustainable infrastructure

"I believe that the best way to address rural women's needs is to make them visible to local authorities," says Irina Pockova, President of the Civil Initiative of Women, a local organization that trains women to become economically independent and to participate in public matters.

In 2018, she invited the Mayor of Sveti Nikole to rural areas to meet with local women. "At the beginning, the women were a little hesitant talking to the Mayor about their problems," says Pockova. But slowly, they started voicing their priorities, such as the lack of public transportation and childcare.

In December 2018, the Civil Initiative of Women mobilized 20 rural women to attend a public hearing on the municipal budget. They demanded new kindergartens, which were eventually approved for 2019. With support from UN Women, local NGOs also organized a petition to demand free public transportation from rural areas to Sveti Nikole, where they had to go for work and to access bigger markets and health services daily. Women used to spend 10 euros taking taxis into town. As of 2019, they will have safe and licensed public transport provided by the municipality.

Civil society organizations, women, including the most vulnerable, actively participate in planning and decision-making mechanisms, and benefit from public policies and budgets:

HOW:

- Empower women to voice their needs and act as agents of change in planning and budgeting processes
- Strengthen capacities of Civil Society Organizations to formulate evidence-based policy analyses and effectively advocate for gender responsive planning and budgeting
- Promote transparency and accountability through engendered participatory processes.



Irina Pockova, President of the Civil Initiative of Women of Sveti Nikole
Photo credits: UN Women/Elif Gulec



Local outreach action in Sveti Nikole:
Women petitioning for affordable public local transportation
Photo credits: UN Women/Mirjana Nedeva