



COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Synthesis Report



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This evaluation was conducted by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) by an independent evaluation team comprised of Isabel Suarez, UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist for Europe and Central Asia (ECA RES) and team lead for this evaluation; Meredith Brown, International Evaluation Consultant; and Aleksandar Zivanovic, National Evaluation Consultant. The core evaluation team was supported by Genevieve Quinn, who acted as Research Assistant for the evaluation process.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
1. COUNTRY CONTEXT	11
1.1 About Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	12
1.2 Gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) in BiH	14
1.3 UN Women in BiH	14
2. EVALUATION APPROACH	17
3. FINDINGS	21
3.1 Relevance	22
3.2 Coherence	25
3.3 Effectiveness	28
3.4 Efficiency	34
3.5 Sustainability, gender equality and human rights	36
4. LESSONS LEARNED	39
5. CONCLUSIONS	41
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	43
ANNEXES	<i>Separate Volume</i>

ACRONYMS

AWP	Annual Work Plan
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CO	Country Office
CPE	Country Portfolio Evaluation
CRSV	Conflict Related Sexual Violence
CSAG	Civil Society Advisory Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DB	District of Brčko of Bosnia and Herzegovina
DRF	Development Results Framework
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
ECARO	Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
EU	European Union
EVAW	Ending Violence Against Women
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEEW	Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GEF	Gender Equality Facility
GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
GTG	Gender Theme Group
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IES	Independent Evaluation Service
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MTR	Mid-term Review
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
RMS	Results Management System
RS	Republika Srpska
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SN	Strategic Note

SP	Strategic Plan
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Fund for Children
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WIE	Women in Elections
WPS	Women, Peace and Security



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Photo ©UN Women Bosnia Herzegovina Country Office

This report presents the main findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations of the Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) of the UN Women Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Office Strategic Note 2015–2020, conducted between March and November 2020. This CPE is a systematic assessment of the contributions made by UN Women to development results relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the country level and aims to contribute to the country office’s strategic learning, improved decision-making and to support enhanced accountability.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the poorest countries in South-East Europe with a consumption-based economy and one of the lowest GDP/capita rates in the region. Poverty is high among the rural population, children and the elderly. Emigration from Bosnia and Herzegovina actively contributes to an ongoing decrease in the country’s population, social capital and population ageing. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been in a stabilization and accession agreement with the European Union (EU) since 2008. However, unlike other countries in the Western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina has not moved past the status of potential candidate.

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s complex internal administrative and political structure has created a decentralized and collaboration-based decision-making process that, when combined with other legacies of the 1992–1995 conflict, often results in political and societal tensions and limited legislative progress.

During and after the 1992–1995 war, Bosnia and Herzegovina underwent a retrenching of human rights, particularly as applied to women. However, since that time, the country has been on a slow but steady course to align its normative frameworks with international standards, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1980) and its Optional Protocol, which was later reinforced by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the first countries in Europe (2013) to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). To support these commitments, Bosnia and Herzegovina has enacted the Gender Action Plan (GAP) of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022; the third Action Plan for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UN-SCR) 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” 2018–2022; and the 2015 Framework Strategy for implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

3.3M

Population of 3.3 million, continuously decreasing due to outmigration and natural population decline.

51%

51 per cent of the population are **women** and 49 per cent men.

16.9%

BiH has a **poverty rate of 16.9** per cent, higher in rural areas and among children and the elderly.



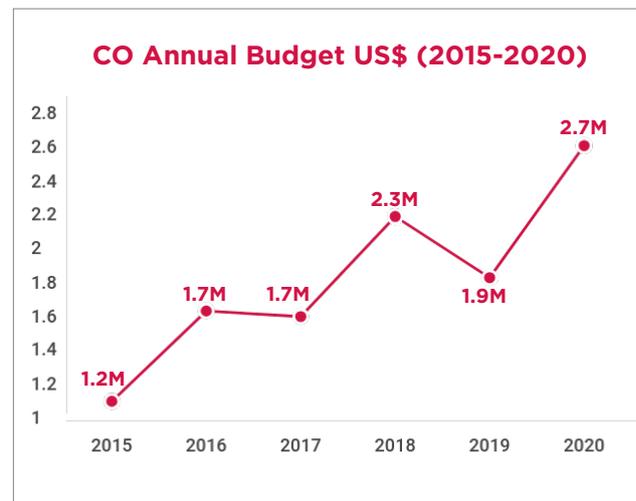
Ranked 75 of 189 countries in the Human Development Index 2019, BiH is one of the least developed countries in Europe.



Country susceptible to **natural disasters** and affected by migration crisis.

Despite ongoing improvement, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to struggle with traditional and patriarchal views of the role of women. There are high levels of gender-based violence (GBV), limited economic opportunity and low levels of political participation. The employment rate for women is significantly lower than that of men. Women in vulnerable groups, including Roma women and rural women, are particularly disadvantaged, struggling to achieve educational parity.

The UN Women Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Office (CO) was established in September 2014. The Strategic Note (SN) 2015–2020, subject of this evaluation, reflects implementation of UN Women’s corporate, integrated threefold mandate comprising normative work, UN coordination on gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) and programmatic work. The CO’s programmatic portfolio has a primary focus on ending violence against women (EVAW), with two major programmes, including a regional programme also implemented in other Western Balkan countries and Turkey. The other key thematic area of focus was governance and leadership, with participation in the regional gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) programme; a joint programme on women in elections; and the scoping of a future gender equality facility programme. The other thematic areas envisioned in the SN – Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) – were less impactful.



The total budget for the SN period was US\$ 11.32 million, of which the CO delivered US\$ 9.21 million, with a delivery rate of 81 per cent.¹ The CO’s total annual budget grew from US\$ 1.16 million in 2015 to US\$ 2.67 million in 2020; and from 10 personnel in 2015 to the current complement of 18 personnel, with an additional four vacancies to be filled in 2020.

The last year of the current SN (2020) and the CPE occurred during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on women in Bosnia and Herzegovina is already estimated as severe, with significant impact on female-owned companies and female-employing industries. A rise in domestic violence has been accompanied by difficulties in accessing health and shelter services.

EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This CPE was commissioned and conducted by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) in close collaboration with the CO as a primarily formative (forward-looking) evaluation to support the CO and national stakeholders’ strategic learning and decision-making for the next SN, set to start in January 2021. The evaluation has a secondary summative (retrospective) perspective, to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience.

The scope of this CPE includes all activities undertaken by the CO under its current SN 2015–2020, including operational work; general support to normative policy; and UN coordination on GEEW from the period January 2015 to mid-2020. UN Women’s contribution to the COVID-19 response in Bosnia and Herzegovina was also taken into account. The geographical scope of the evaluation spanned the entire country, given the CO’s work at the national, entity² and local level.

The evaluation objectives were developed in consultation with the CO at the outset of the evaluation process to:

- Assess the relevance of UN Women’s contribution to interventions at the national level and alignment with international agreements and conventions on GEEW.
- Assess the effectiveness and organizational efficiency in progressing towards the achievement of GEEW results as defined in the SN.
- Support the CO to improve its strategic positioning to better support the achievement of sustained GEEW.
- Analyse how a human rights approach and gender equality principles are integrated into the design and implementation of the SN.
- Identify and validate lessons learned, good practices and examples of innovation that support gender equality and human rights.
- Provide insights into the extent to which the CO has realized synergies between UN Women’s three mandates (normative, coordination and operations).
- Provide actionable recommendations for the development of the next CO SN.

¹ It is important to note that at the time this report was finalized, the CO had still not completed the 2020 financial year and therefore this figure on the delivery rate is not final.

² The state of Bosnia and Herzegovina is made up of two entities, i.e. two administrative units, Republika Srpska and Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The primary audience for this evaluation includes CO management and personnel; key government partners; Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and women's movement; beneficiary communities and groups; the UN system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including sister entities involved as partners in joint programmes; donor partners and the UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.

The evaluation applied a theory-based contribution analysis and cluster design methodology. Given the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, a participatory approach was undertaken, influenced by outcomes mapping and harvesting. In taking such an approach, the evaluation aimed to provide opportunities for learning, while still ensuring accountability for outcomes and identifying options for future decision-making.

The evaluation methodology applied the OECD-DAC criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, and was guided by the principles of gender-responsive evaluations. The evaluation used 'a utilization focused lens' to generate forward-looking and actionable recommendations to ensure that the information needs of the CO and stakeholders were met. A mixed-methods approach utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data was used to triangulate and verify data, increasing the internal reliability and consistency of findings. Six country, regional and corporate level evaluations were reviewed and drawn upon as secondary material.

Data collection included extensive document review; primary interviews with 52 key informants; a focus group session with CO personnel; four in-depth case studies; two surveys; and an analysis of financial and key indicator reporting.

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSION 1

Despite a complex and challenging environment, the CO could better identify and capitalize on opportunities to highlight its technical expertise; reframe its strategic approach; and foster a more cohesive environment for GEEW in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Based on findings

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10

- Within Bosnia and Herzegovina there is a complex political structure; fluctuating political and donor interest in sole-focused GEEW programming; and a wide array of national and international actors competing for resources and attention, including other UN agencies in the country.
- Leveraging key UN partnerships is essential to support implementation of the normative frameworks more effectively. UN Women needs to better communicate the implications of its GEEW coordination mandate; foster a cohesive role for GEEW across UN agencies; and provide GEEW thematic expertise in key sectoral areas. The new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) will support the CO's efforts in this regard.
- More inclusive work across the UN system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is required to ensure a targeted approach to success on the gender-relevant Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators.
- The CO could better identify opportunities to enhance its positioning and attract donor attention. Increased thought leadership; reframing its proposals to align with donor mandates; timely provision of strategic technical information; engaged coordination with civil society; and creative joint programming would permit the CO to push past perceived barriers to funding. Recent activities related to COVID-19 have positively positioned the CO in this regard.

CONCLUSION 2

CO programming has had some notable and impactful successes, including in the EAW and governance portfolios. Capitalizing on these gains will require strategic vision, programmatic innovation and creative approaches to communication.

Based on findings

6, 7, 8, 10

- The CO can demonstrate value and success across its three fold mandate over the SN period. Normative and operational activities in EAW and GRB have had the most widespread impact. Recent gains in other governance areas and in coordination efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic are also notable.
- The CO has been less successful in meeting expectations around UNSCR 1325 implementation. It was unable to raise meaningful funds for WPS or compete with other key actors in this area.
- Strategic vision, programmatic innovation and creative approaches to communication will be required to persuade stakeholders of the importance of these areas. Recent efforts by the CO, through communication, coordination and the COVID-19 response are reigniting stakeholder interest.

CONCLUSION 3

The CO is staffed with expert and dedicated individuals but has not optimized its potential to work strategically and synergistically, with meaningful and countable measures. Despite UN Women's internal and resource mobilization limitations, the CO met its financial commitments.

Based on findings

11, 12, 13

- Internally, the CO has not yet optimized its potential to build a synergistic approach across UN Women's thematic areas; support innovative and strategic personnel engagement; and meaningfully tell the story of its contributions to the outcomes established in the SN.
- Unearmarked SIDA funding for implementation of the SN supported implementation of UN Women's core mandate and mission and allowed the CO to hire a dedicated Coordination Associate, who provided significant support to the achievement of the coordination component of the mandate and cohesive functioning of the office.
- The CO's overall reporting process requires a strategic shift in approach, including the development of meaningful and countable measures, disaggregated data collection and the use of language that clearly identifies the contribution and actions of the CO in achieving results.

CONCLUSION 4

Sustainability of the gains made by the CO and its partners, and enhanced impact for women in marginalized communities, will require a strategic and coordinated shift from localized programme-based activities to a long-term vision and plan.

Based on findings

14, 15, 16

- The sustainability of the gains made by the CO and its partners remains uncertain. With some positive exceptions in GRB and EAW, project activities have had largely localized or targeted impact without being scaled up. Monitoring and evaluation by both the CO and its partners does not include sufficient follow-up or long-term planning. However, capacity-building activities have generated increased institutional ownership for GEEW across different political levels.
- The CO would benefit from an overarching strategic approach to ensuring that the leave no one behind (LNOB) principle impacts the lives of women in marginalized communities and those with intersectional challenges, such as rural women, Roma women, women with disabilities and the LGBTQI communities. The current project-based approach does include these communities but with limited or localized impact and without alignment to UN Women's key campaigns such as LNOB and the SDGs.

RECOMMENDATION 1

The CO to underpin the next SN with a clear theory of change (ToC) that leads to a set of cross-thematic advocacy strategies and an agenda for leveraging its programme and policy knowledge base and convening role.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The CO to develop an engagement strategy for its stakeholders that transcends individual programmes or thematic areas to highlight its strengths and increase its credibility as a thought leader and influencer in the country, including:

- Capitalizing on UN Women's convening role to bring together key stakeholders from civil society; national, entity and local governments; academia; international organizations; and the UN system to foster joint advocacy efforts.
- Showcasing UN Women's comparative advantage to the international donor community through the development of timely knowledge products and engagement on priority topics.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The CO to develop an inclusive, consultative and transparent approach to strengthening its relationships with civil society organizations (CSOs), to support their efforts to advance normative and policy transformation by ensuring civil society participation in programming in all thematic areas; re-establishing the coordination of civil society through the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) or an alternative structure; and supporting the advocacy agenda of civil society networks in advancing the principles of the Istanbul Convention, CEDAW and other international commitments and best practices.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Through its coordination mandate, the CO, in conjunction with the Resident Coordinator's Office and key UN partners in the country, to identify targeted means of optimizing its comparative advantage and complementing the expertise of other UN agencies to strengthen the overall implementation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina normative framework related to GEEW by:

- Ensuring there is clarity about the scope and intent of UN Women's mandate on coordination.
- Identifying opportunities for collective advocacy to advance the normative framework.
- Targeting initiatives that support EU accession and implementing international commitments including the SDGs.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The CO to build on the momentum created by its leadership and creativity in the COVID-19 response to showcase its technical expertise in gender mainstreaming, data analysis and advocacy to donors and stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The CO to explore and prioritize opportunities to reinvigorate stakeholder interest in GEEW through innovative approaches and refocus attention on critical thematic areas including WPS and WEE.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The CO to maximize the value of its workforce and enhance the knowledge management, monitoring and reporting capacity of its personnel and partners.

RECOMMENDATION 8

The CO to ensure that a gender-transformative lens is applied to the SN, including the incorporation of human rights; fundamental UN principles related to GEEW; and a cross-portfolio strategy targeting women and girls experiencing social disadvantage.



Photo © UN Women/BIH

Orange Buses drive through the central city square in Sarajevo to raise awareness during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

1

COUNTRY CONTEXT

1.1 About Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is located in the Western Balkans, with a population of 3.3 million.¹ It is one of the poorest countries in South-East Europe, with a consumption-based economy and one of the lowest GDP/capita rates in the region, at US\$ 6,000.² Poverty is highest among the rural population, children and the elderly. Emigration from Bosnia and Herzegovina is rampant and contributes to an ongoing decrease in the country's population, social capital and population ageing.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been in a stabilization and accession agreement with the EU since 2008. However, unlike other countries in the Western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina has not moved past the status of potential candidate, with no tangible improvement anticipated. In December 2019, the Council of the European Union determined that the country does not fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria for membership, outlining 14 priority areas related to democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.³ The country's ranking on the corruption perception index has decreased, placing it 101 of 180 countries.⁴

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a complex internal administrative structure established by the Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in 1995. The state has a mandate in very few central functions and most development areas fall to the two entities – Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH); plus the District of Brčko (DB). The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is further subdivided into 10 cantons with significant power. The Constitution requires coordination, rather than subordination, in decision-making between the different administrative levels and integrates veto options to protect the positions of different ethnic groups which, when combined with other legacies of the conflict, often results in political and societal tensions and limited legislative progress.

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has further aggravated economic and social realities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to increased economic instability and resulting social tensions, migrants who normally pass through Bosnia and Herzegovina on route to Western Europe have been stranded in the country with no shelter or in over-crowded migrant camps, which affects overall security in the recipient local communities.

Covid-19 impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina



GDP

GDP in 2020 is projected to decline by 7.5%.



>24K job losses

The governments estimated there were 24000+ job losses by the end of April 2020.



– Agriculture

Agriculture less affected.



Women's participation

Women's participation and gender perspective in decision-making on COVID-19 response limited.



Industries employing women

Female owned companies and female employing industries are heavily affected.



Women's access to services

Challenges in access to **health services**, particularly for vulnerable groups. Challenges in the work of shelters for women and children survivors of violence in the early days of the pandemic as they were not ready for this type of crisis and were not recognized as essential services by the authorities.



Negative impacts on SDGs

Strong negative effects on **SDG 3** – Good health and wellbeing, **SDG 8** – Decent work and economic growth. Further, negative impact will be reflected on **SDG 1** – No poverty, **SDG 5** – Gender equality and **SDG 10** – Reduced inequalities, but to some extent all other goals due to their interconnectedness.

Sources: United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Offer, United Nations, July 2020. | Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNDP May 2020. | Rapid assessment of the status of specialized services provided by eight shelters in the country conducted by UN Women in the context of the UN Women's regional programme "Implementing Norms, Changing Minds" UN Women, May 2020. | Rapid Gender Assessment of COVID-19 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Wave 2 Findings. UN Women, September 2020.

1 World Bank estimate, 2018; <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/themes/people.html>

2 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=BA>

3 Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union Council conclusions, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41692/Bosnia_and_Herzegovina-st14954-em19.pdf

4 <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/bosnia-and-herzegovina>

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (BiH) COUNTRY CONTEXT



10

10 cantons, all with high level of autonomy. Complex, multi-layered administrative structure set up by the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995.

3.3M

Population of 3.3 million, continuously decreasing due to outmigration and natural population decline.

51%

51 per cent of the population are **women** and 49 per cent men.

16.9%

BiH has a **poverty rate of 16.9** per cent, higher in rural areas and among children and the elderly.



Ranked 75 of 189 countries in the Human Development Index 2019, BiH is one of the least developed countries in Europe.



In stabilization and **accession agreement with the European Union (EU)** since 2008, still as a potential candidate country with no tangible progress perspective.



Country susceptible to **natural disasters** and affected by migration crisis.

Gender responsive governance and political participation



Women hold 21.4 per cent of parliamentary seats at state level



28 per cent of ministers at the state and entity level are women



Of 152 ministerial positions at all levels, only 23 are held by women



Of 183 registered political parties, not one is headed by a woman



VULNERABLE GROUPS

- Roma
- Rural women
- Children
- Returnees and displaced persons
- Victims of the war
- Persons with disabilities
- LGBTQI



PRIORITY ISSUES IN GEEW

- Gender responsive governance and political participation
- Women's economic empowerment
- Ending violence against women

Women's economic empowerment



Women make only 30 per cent of total workforce in ICT



20.3 per cent of women are unemployed (17.3 per cent of men)

Ending violence against women



48 per cent of women have experienced some form of abuse, including violence, stalking and sexual harassment



14 per cent of women have experienced physical or sexual violence since the age of 15

POSITIVE TRENDS IN SDGS SCORES

Positive trends in SDGs scores on the following SDGs with only SDG 1 with a promising path to be reached by 2030 (pre COVID-19).



Source: Project Women in Elections, implemented by UNDP and UN Women; ICT girls project implemented by UNICEF and UN Women in BiH; Well-being and Safety of Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina – OSCE-led Survey on Violence Against Women, OSCE (2019)

1.2 Gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) in Bosnia and Herzegovina

During and after the 1992–1995 war, Bosnia and Herzegovina underwent a retrenching of human rights, particularly as applied to women. Society reverted to traditional roles and norms and the legislative and policy framework that developed in the post-conflict era reflects that. However, since then, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been on a slow but steady course to align the country's normative frameworks with international standards, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1980) and its Optional Protocol, later reinforced by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), committing participating states to take steps towards achieving gender equality. The CEDAW commitments and recommendations of the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, as well as other UN recommendations on women's human rights and gender equality are included in the priorities of the third Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018–2022 and the third Action Plan for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" 2018–2022.⁵ Bosnia and Herzegovina

was among the first countries in Europe (2013) to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). In working towards implementation of the Istanbul Convention, the country enacted the 2015 Framework Strategy for implementation of the Istanbul Convention for the period 2015–2018.⁶ The government created national and entity-level gender mechanisms and the country has a strong civil society focused on GEEW and human rights.

However, despite ongoing improvement, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to struggle with traditional and patriarchal views of the role of women. There are high levels of gender-based violence (GBV), limited economic opportunity and low levels of political participation. The employment rate for women is significantly lower than that of men. Women in vulnerable groups, including Roma women and rural women, are particularly disadvantaged, struggling to achieve educational parity.

1.3 UN Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Background

The UN Women Bosnia and Herzegovina country office (CO) has had full delegation of authority since September 2014. This builds on the previous presence of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) that had been present in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2008⁷ and the UN Women Project Presence Office from 2010 to 2014. In 2014, the CO provided oversight to UN Women Programme Presence Offices (PPOs) in North Macedonia and Kosovo; however, this oversight was discontinued later that same year. At the time the CO developed its first SN, the regional architecture of UN Women in the Europe and

Central Asia (ECA) region had not been fully completed and a regional office in ECA had not been fully established.

The CO uses the SN, aligned with the country's United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF),⁸ as the primary planning tool for UN Women's operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This CPE was initially developed to cover the period 2015–2019, but after the UNDAF's one-year extension in the country, the CO's SN was also extended to maintain alignment. In 2020, a new UNSDCF for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2021–2025)⁹ was prepared with implementation to start in 2021. The CO is in the process of

5 Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vol. 1/19; <https://arsBosniaandHerzegovina.gov.ba/akcioni-plan-za-implementaciju-unscr-1325-u-bosni-i-hercegovini-za-period-2014-2017-godine/>

6 Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vol. 75/15, <https://arsBosniaandHerzegovina.gov.ba/okvirna-strategija-za-implementaciju-istanbulske-konvencije-u-BosniaandHerzegovina-za-period-2015-2018/>

7 The creation of UN Women came about as part of the UN reform agenda. It merges and builds on work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system, which focused exclusively GEEW, including: the Division for the Advancement of Women (SAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAG) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

8 UNDAF Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015–2020: <https://bosniaherzegovina.un.org/en/22660-one-united-nations-programme-and-common-budgetary-framework-BosniaandHerzegovina-2015-2020-united-nations>

9 Draft UNSDCF for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021–2025: <https://bosniaherzegovina.un.org/en/48381-draft-2021-2025-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-bosnia-and>

developing its new SN to cover the same period to maintain alignment.

The current SN 2015–2020, subject of this evaluation, contains a Development Results Framework (DRF), aligned to UN Women's Global Strategic Plan 2014–2017¹⁰ and to Bosnia and Herzegovina's UNDAF. The DRF was revisited as part of the Mid-term Review (MTR) of the SN and adjusted to align with UN Women's new Global Strategic Plan for 2018–2021.¹¹

The total budget of the SN period was US\$ 11.32 million, of which the CO delivered US\$ 9.21 million, with a delivery rate of 81 per cent.¹² The CO's total annual budget grew from US\$ 1.16 million in 2015 to US\$ 2.67 million in 2020; and from 10 personnel in 2015 to the current complement of 18 personnel with an additional four vacancies to be filled in 2020.

Resource mobilization

The CO's primary non-core donor is the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), which funded the EVAW in-country project; Women in Elections through UNDP; IT Girls Joint Programmes through UNICEF; provided initial support to the Gender Equality Facility (GEF) programme; as well as overall funding for implementation of the SN. Resource mobilization has fluctuated over the SN period, owing significantly to the large number of international actors (including other UN agencies) conducting GEEW interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina

and to the limited alignment between some thematic areas, such as WEE, and donor priorities.

Result areas

UN Women's work in Bosnia and Herzegovina focused on four key result areas: (i) EVAW; (ii) governance and leadership; (iii) WPS; and (iv) WEE. EVAW has been the dominant thematic and financial focus of the CO during the SN period, with two major programmes – one in-country and one regional – impacting across UN Women's normative and operational mandate. Governance and leadership, specifically GRB, was the CO's other major focus. In addition to the GRB regional programme, the CO conducted projects related to women's political participation and has begun the GEF programme to support engendering the EU accession process. The GEF programme will represent a significant resource increase for the CO in the next SN. WPS and WEE did not achieve the anticipated results, largely due to limited resource mobilization and shifting donor interests, such as in response to the 2014 floods. These areas comprised five in-country projects and two regional programmes during the SN period. Two of these projects have been completed (Women in Elections and Conflict Related Sexual Violence [CRSV]) and the other projects and programmes are either under way or are in the process of commencing a next phase.

A listing of the CO's major activities can be found in Annex 6.

¹⁰ UN Women SP 2014–17: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/docs/2013/7/un-women-strategic-plan-2014-2017>

¹¹ UN Women SP 2018–2021: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/8/un-women-strategic-plan-2018-2021>

¹² It is important to note that at the time this report was finalized the CO had not completed the 2020 financial year and therefore this figure on delivery rate is not final.



UN WOMEN IN BiH

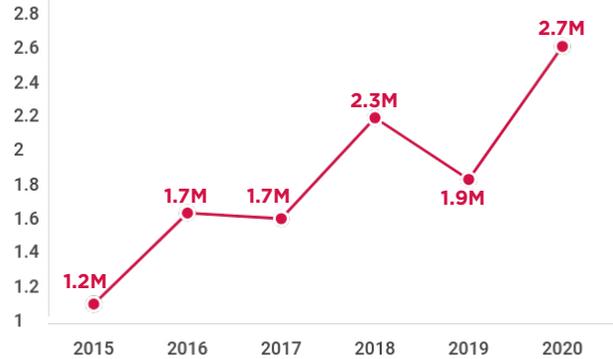
11M

US\$ 11.3 M Total CO Budget for 2015-2020 (core and non-core)

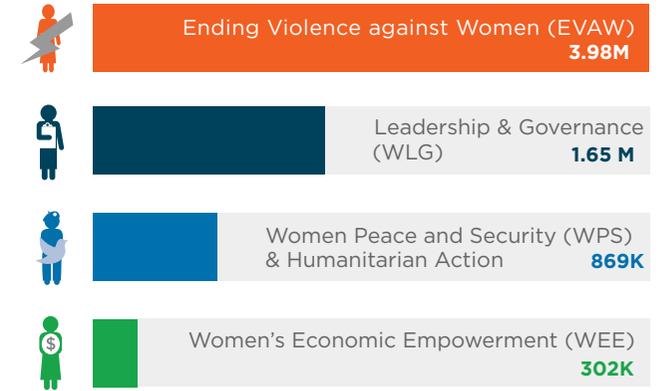
18

Total CO workforce including staff and non-staff categories

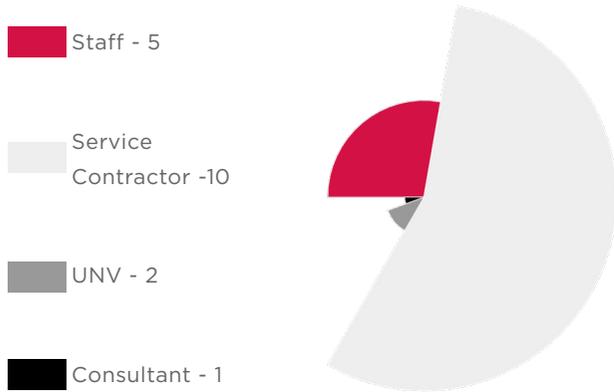
CO Annual Budget US\$ (2015-2020)



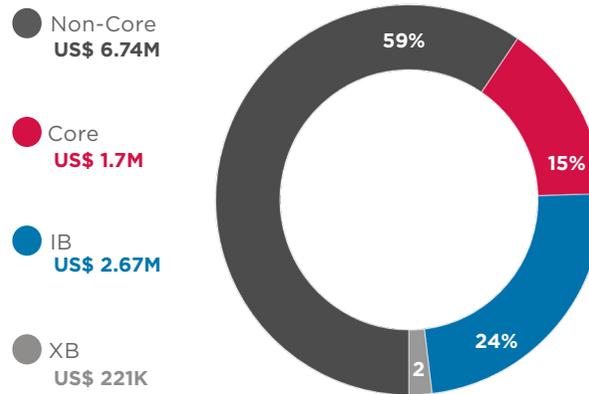
Top BiH Thematic Areas* (US\$)



CO Human Resources



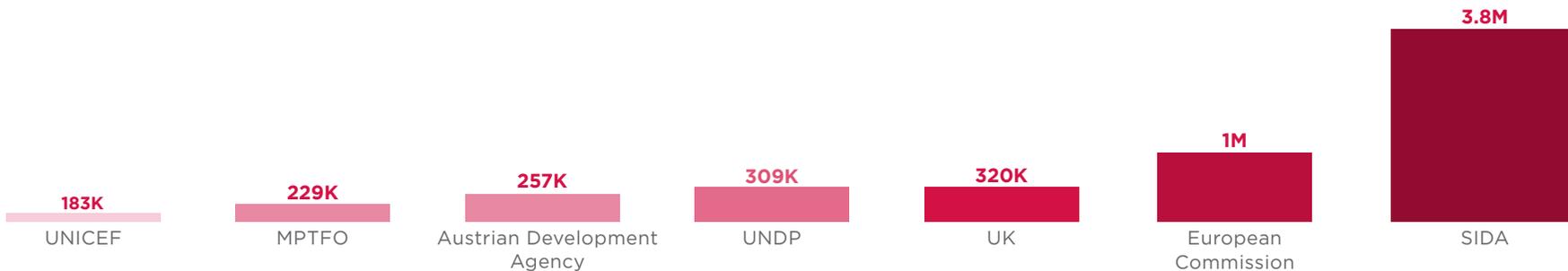
Type of funding (2015-2020)



Thematic Trends US\$ M (2014-2019)



Top donors to BiH CO US\$ (2015-2020)



Sources:

UN Women Executive Dashboard/Project Delivery

Results Monitoring' function in Dashboard

CO AWP's 2015-2020



Photo: UN Women

2

EVALUATION APPROACH

2.1 Purpose, objectives and scope

Evaluation purpose

This CPE was conducted by UN Women IES, in close collaboration with the CO, as a primarily formative (forward-looking) evaluation to support the CO and national stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for the next SN, set to start in January 2021. The evaluation had a secondary summative (retrospective) perspective, to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience.

Evaluation objectives

The evaluation objectives were developed in consultation with the CO at the outset of the evaluation process to:

1. Assess the relevance of UN Women's contribution to interventions at national level and alignment with international agreements and conventions on GEEW.
2. Assess the effectiveness and organizational efficiency in progressing towards the achievement of GEEW results as defined in the SN.
3. Support the CO to improve its strategic positioning to better support the achievement of sustained GEEW.
4. Analyse how a human rights approach and gender equality principles are integrated into the design and implementation of the SN.
5. Identify and validate lessons learned, good practices and examples of innovation that support gender equality and human rights.
6. Provide insights into the extent to which the CO has realized synergies between UN Women's three mandates (normative, coordination and operations).
7. Provide actionable recommendations for the development of the next CO SN.

Evaluation scope

The scope of this CPE includes all activities undertaken by the CO under its current SN 2015–2020, including operational work; general support to normative policy; UN coordination; and, to some extent, operational efficiency, from the period January 2015 to mid-2020. UN Women's contribution to the COVID-19 pandemic response in the

country was also taken into account. Six country, regional and corporate-level evaluations were reviewed and drawn upon as secondary material. The geographical scope of the evaluation spanned the entire country, given the CO's work at the national, entity and local level. A systematic assessment of the long-term impact of the interventions on beneficiaries and their contexts is not part of the evaluation scope as this type of analysis requires resources and methods beyond the design of this evaluation. At the outset of the evaluation process, it was also considered too premature to assess the long-term impact of interventions in the country.

Evaluation design

The evaluation applied a theory-based contribution analysis and cluster design approach and included outcomes mapping and harvesting. Given the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, a participatory approach was undertaken. In taking such an approach, the evaluation aimed to provide opportunities for learning while still ensuring accountability for outcomes and identifying options for future decision-making.

A theory-based design assesses the performance of the SN based upon its stated assumptions about how change happens. These assumptions can be challenged, validated or expanded upon by the evaluation. A cluster evaluation approach assesses a number of interventions by 'grouping' similar interventions together into 'clusters' and evaluating a representative sample of these in depth.

The evaluation was framed under the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The evaluation was guided by the principles of gender-responsive evaluations, and used '*a utilization focused lens*' to generate forward-looking and actionable recommendations to ensure the information needs of the CO and stakeholders were met. A mixed-methods approach utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data was used to triangulate and verify data, increasing the internal reliability and consistency of findings.

The inception phase included an evaluability assessment; a participatory workshop with CO personnel to provide an overview of the work and to discuss the elements of a Theory of Change (ToC); and a stakeholder mapping exercise.

The results of these exercises were used to design evaluation questions and support analysis.

Limitations and risk mitigation strategies

Planning for the CPE was significantly delayed, first by discussions at the CO level and then quite significantly by the advent of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The evaluation team, in consultation with the CO, adapted the plan and approach to ensure that the evaluation remained comprehensive, gender-sensitive and methodologically rigorous, while taking into account the changed global realities including limitations on travel and in-person data collection. Similar constraints relating to a lack of counterfactual analysis and measurement, and sampling limitations were identified and mitigated where possible.

Data collection and analysis

Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through a review of more than 280 documents; interviews with 52 key informants (44 women and 8 men); six past corporate, regional and country-level evaluations; two online surveys with CO personnel and United Nations Country Team (UNCT) partners; one all-personnel workshop; and four case studies¹³ (see Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4). The ethical approach was aligned to United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidance and World Health Organization (WHO) Guidelines for researching violence against women as set out in the Inception Report.

Multiple methods of data collection and analysis were carried out using both primary and secondary data to tri-

angulate evidence, including desk review, quantitative and qualitative analysis (contribution analysis, change analysis, responsibility mapping/system analysis), and cross-referencing to past evaluations. The evidence in response to the evaluation questions is summarized in the Evidence Table (see Annex 7).

Evaluation governance and quality assurance

The evaluation team comprised the ECA Regional Evaluation Specialist (RES) who is a member of the Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS), an International Independent Evaluator and a National Independent Evaluator.

The Evaluation Management Group (EMG) comprised the Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Representative, the CO Evaluation Focal Point and the ECA RES, and was responsible for administrative and logistical support, contract management and accountability.

The CO established an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) that validated the evaluation report and is expected to facilitate evaluation use. The group comprised government partners, civil society representatives, development partners and donors, and members of UN sister agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, all deliverables were shared with the CO team for internal feedback.

IEAS provided quality assurance support to the process. The IEAS Director and IES Chief provided oversight and methodological guidance, and an additional member of IES provided peer support.

CPE METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

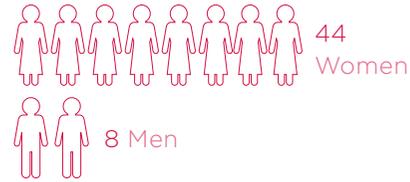
BiH CPE

The Bosnia and Herzegovina CPE is a systematic assessment of the contributions made by UN Women to development results with respect to gender equality at the country level to contribute to the CO's strategic learning, improved decision-making and to support enhanced accountability.

Evaluation Process

- 1 Design
- 2 Inception: portfolio analysis
- 3 Data collection
- 4 Data analysis and reporting
- 5 Follow up and use

52 Stakeholders interviewed



Inception and validation workshop



+280 documents reviewed

Annual Work Plans, evaluations, project documents, reports, financial documentation, meeting minutes, key national strategic documents, knowledge products etc.



2 Online Surveys

UN Women CO personnel survey 82% response rate

UN partners survey 21% response rate



4 Case Studies

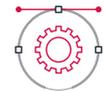
Coordination, Normative, Ending Violence against Women (EVAW), Governance and Leadership

Methodology



- Gender-responsive evaluation
- Used mixed-methods to triangulate evidence

- Theory-based, contribution analysis and cluster design
- Outcomes mapping and utilization-focused



Scope of the evaluation



UN Women BiH CO Development Results Framework



4 key result areas
EVAW, governance and leadership, WPS and WEE



The organization's Effectiveness and Efficiency Framework



SN 2015-2020
Evaluation was conducted between April and October 2020



US\$ 11.32M
including Core and Non-core resources



Photo: UN Women/ Elmina Karic

3

FINDINGS

3.1 Relevance

FINDING 1:

The CO's operational activities are aligned to GEEW priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, although there are certain challenges related to partners' perception of relevance in some thematic areas. It is difficult to assess the relevance of the portfolio due to the lack of a fully explicit and overarching Theory of Change (ToC) for the CO's interventions.

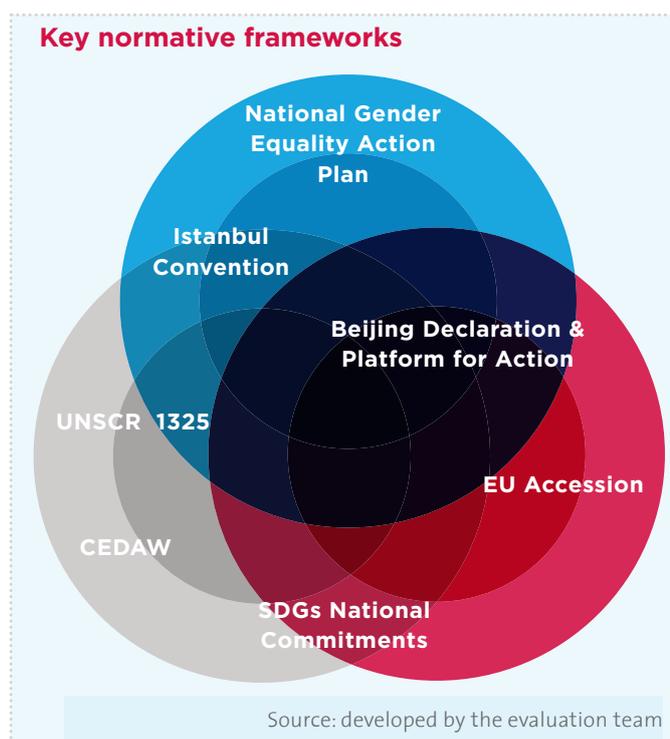
The CO's portfolio is largely aligned under two thematic areas, EAW and governance, and tracks directly to national and international GEEW priorities and commitments. UN Women is seen by stakeholders as relevant and an expert in these areas. However, limiting alignment primarily to these two areas has impacted UN Women's ability to be fully aligned with the country's priorities, including EU accession.

This limited alignment is partly due to the timing of the development of the SN in 2014 at a moment of change in the structure of UN Women offices in the region. This resulted in an SN that continued previous activities, rather than an SN that was based on the conduct of a richer process, centred around a ToC. The lack of an explicit ToC remained an issue throughout the SN period which, as a result, is largely project-based. The reconstruction of the ToC by the evaluation team revealed areas of opportunity

and synergy that had not been fully realized during the SN period.

The limited alignment is also partly because national stakeholders and, to some extent, international donors did not consistently place as high a priority on the other thematic areas of WEE and WPS. UN Women was unable to secure funding for the WEE initiatives envisioned in the SN and only had a limited impact in the area of WPS, through participation in the CRSV joint programme.

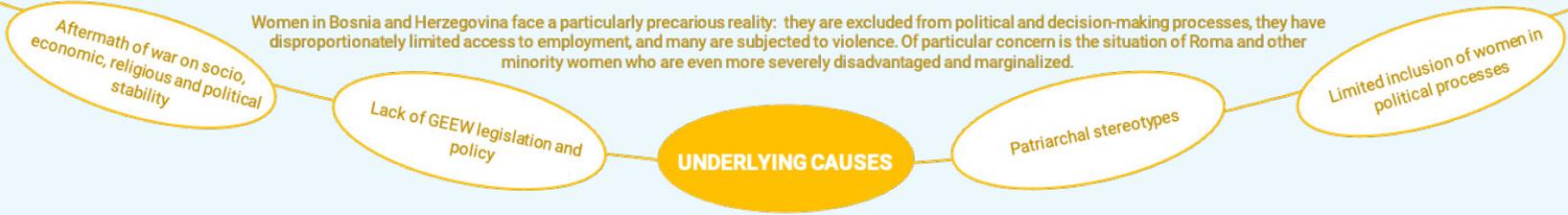
Recently, the CO has begun to capitalize on the foundation laid by work on EAW and governance to reassert itself into areas such as WEE by finding synergies between programmes and opportunities to expand dialogue with stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic. This work would be strengthened by the creation and communication of a country-specific ToC.



Reconstructed Theory of Change (produced by the evaluation team in the context of this Country Portfolio Evaluation)



THE ISSUE



FINDING 2:

Insufficient resources and factors beyond the direct control of the CO have made supporting implementation of the country's normative commitments challenging. This is further hindered by limited integration of the CO's normative development and programmatic activities.

Implementation of the country's norms and standards is a long-term effort that necessarily goes beyond project-specific funding or individualized approaches. In a complex political and administrative environment such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, this effort is challenged by multiple implementing bodies; politically turbulent election periods; and competing priorities for limited resources.

Funding for implementation of UN Women's normative component of the Entity's threefold integrated mandate at the country level is expected to come largely through programmatic initiatives. Generally, responsibility for normative work falls to CO leadership. In this model, there is limited financial support for a depth of resourcing or cross-thematic synergy that supports the long-term requirements of implementation.

UN Women's contribution is significant in key areas but there is room for a more cohesive approach to normative support in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the stronger thematic areas, such as EVAW, normative change on domestic violence was advanced through a legislative and policy framework in Republika Srpska and was supported through implementation techniques such as capacity building, protocol development and multisectoral case management training. There is more work to do to scale these normative changes across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even in the GRB regional programme, with a strong focus on capacity building and support for implementation, the political preconditions were insufficient to support implementation of a changed budgetary process. UN Women did not contribute to major normative change in the areas of WEE or WPS during the SN period. Support for EU accession has not been as prominent as it could have been through more active communication and showcasing of the CO's alignment with EU priorities. Implementation of normative standards, including EU standards, was noted as a priority area of focus during the SN's MTR.¹⁴ It is noted that there have been delays in the overall EU integration process.

UN WOMEN COUNTRY OFFICE CONTRIBUTION TO NORMATIVE ADVANCES:

- Alignment with international commitments and frameworks (CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action)
- Support to implementation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Gender Action Plans (GAP) 2013–2017 and 2018–2022
- Support for harmonization of the laws on violence against women, domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence with the principles of the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW, including amendment of The Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in Republika Srpska and a proposal for a new piece of legislation on domestic violence to align to Istanbul Convention expectations in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Support to The Safe Network to create a policy proposal based on its analysis of existing gaps in legislation and bylaws on specialist support services
- Alignment of local services with the Istanbul Convention including: creation of coordination bodies, guidelines for services and multisectoral work at the local level in both entities, and capacity building of local service providers
- Support for implementation of the UNSCR 1325 Action Plan by conducting research on CRSV survivors to match rights and needs to the normative framework, supporting the integration of CSO perspectives in the Action Plan; and supporting the Steering Board and civil society in annual coordination and reporting on 1325
- Produced gender-responsive analysis of COVID-19 budget rebalance at three administrative levels and advocated for transparency and introduction of a gender lens in crisis response.

¹⁴ UN Women Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Office Report on the Midterm Review of the Strategic Note for 2015–2019, Strategic positioning measure 3.3.1: Normative engagement continues to form the backbone of UN Women engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, p7

A more coordinated and strategic integration of the normative agenda across the thematic areas would greatly enhance the impact of the CO's normative work. For example, GRB principles are a tool for making change across all

sectors of government budgeting. The principles adopted at the municipal level could be leveraged to embed normative changes in service delivery mandates and budgets for shelters and other ERAW services.

3.2 Coherence

FINDING 3:

The SN aligns with UN Women's global and regional priorities and expectations, including the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018–21 and the Entity's threefold mandate.

The SN has direct alignment to UN Women Strategic Plan (SP) 2018–21, with specific linkages to SP Outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 5.¹⁵ The activities and interventions that can be linked to the SP are also identified under each component of the threefold mandate and the CO clearly targets interventions and impacts in each of the operational, normative and coordination components. The CO underwent an MTR in 2017, during which the current SN was reviewed and realigned in light of the SP 2018–21.

Responsibility for the development of the SN rests primarily with the CO. However, CO personnel indicated that development of the SN was strongly influenced by decision-making at the regional office and headquarters level, including the restructuring and relocation of the regional office; the change in responsibilities for the CO (moving

from oversight of three countries to one); and the CO's acquisition of Delegation of Authority. As a result of these changes, the development of the SN was largely focused on continuation and maintenance of the existing programmes and projects being implemented at the time.

Collaboration with headquarters and the Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO) has continued throughout the life of the SN, with regular and positive engagement at both levels and alignment with global and regional campaigns and priorities. A significant percentage of the CO's portfolio is comprised of regional programmes (EVAW and GRB) and programmes that stretch beyond Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as IT Girls and GEF. The activities in these programmes have benefitted from the internal synergy in the region.

FINDING 4:

The CO's partnership approach has a number of key strengths, including its positive relationship with the country's gender mechanisms and targeted approach to key institutions, but would benefit from a more inclusive engagement with civil society to strike a greater strategic balance between government and civil society.

The CO has formal strategic partnerships with the institutional gender mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the national Agency for Gender Equality and the Gender Centres of Republika Srpska and Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These relationships provide UN Women with ongoing engagement and insight into the government's gender approach and provide partners with ongoing funding, capacity building and access to technical expertise. These partnerships are largely positive, although they can be subject to shifting mandates and internal relationships with partners. While the partners reported overall satisfac-

tion with their relationship with the CO, they focused largely on the financial contribution the CO provides.

The CO's strategic partnership with the government's gender mechanisms has positive implications, e.g. in the support of the capacity building and positioning of these organizations and as a means of focusing government attention on gender issues. However, the close relationship has had the unintended consequence of linking the CO to the government such that other stakeholders indicated in interviews that they periodically perceive UN Women as insufficiently distant from the government to be able to

¹⁵ Outcome 2: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Outcome 3: Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy; Outcome 4: All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Outcome 5: Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and from humanitarian action.

effectively advocate for improved human rights at a systemic level.

The CO has also engaged strategically with targeted line ministries and government agencies under its different programmes, increasing knowledge and dialogue on gender mainstreaming across a wide array of sectors including agriculture, sports, elections and the military. The government representatives of Republika Srpska in particular noted an improvement in engagement over recent years.

The CO has a mixed relationship with civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is rich and diverse. While UN Women is valued for its political gravitas and ability to provide funding, it is not perceived as adequately valuing the role of civil society in advocating for larger systemic change. Civil society organizations (CSOs) cite a project-focused, siloed and administrative approach to engagement by UN Women, along with a lack of meaningful strategic consultation. The CO's primary means of engagement with civil society at a strategic level was through the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG). However, both civil society and UN Women reported that the CSAG, when meetings were held, was ineffective and unproductive (CSAG has not met since 2018).

The CO has supplemented its engagement with civil society through individual meetings, project-focused dialogue and visits by the CO leadership to specific CSOs. There are strong relationships between individual CO personnel and CSOs. However, both civil society and the CO acknowledge that the gap in formal and strategic engagement between UN Women and civil society has led to a deterioration in the relationship and missed opportunities to capitalize on and strengthen impact for women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are several CSO networks in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with strength in those advocating on EAW. Networks are organized thematically and there is no overall body that represents civil society which could facilitate coordination. Consequently, the revival of CSAG has been continuously considered by the CO. Coordination with CSOs is mostly concentrated in EAW and WPS, with very limited involvement in the governance portfolio. This would be an important consideration if CSAG were to be re-established.

The CO indicated that it was planning a meeting of CSAG for late autumn 2020, to conclude the CSAG and begin a consultation and planning process for a new civil society coordination mechanism.



FINDING 5:

Through its coordination role, the CO has been a valuable contributor to gender mainstreaming across the UN system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the CO's limited resourcing hinders its ability to consistently assert its comparative advantage.

The coordination component of UN Women's integrated mandate is unique in the UN system. The mandate requires that UN Women offices work simultaneously to unite UN agencies to ensure gender mainstreaming is consistent across the system, and programmatically in UN agency joint programmes. This is often against a backdrop of competition among UN agencies for donor resources.

Globally, UN Women's coordination mandate on GEEW in the UN system is not well understood or comprehensively implemented. Challenges related to implementation have been documented in both the Corporate and ECA Regional Evaluations of UN Women's Contribution to UN Coordination on GEEW, both conducted in 2016.¹⁶ The main responsibility for implementation of the coordination mandate within UN Women primarily falls to CO leadership, often without dedicated or additional personnel support or financial resources.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the CO has experienced both successes and challenges in its efforts to implement the Entity's coordination mandate. UN coordination on GEEW in Bosnia and Herzegovina is fostered through the participation of UN Women in the UNCT and its subgroups, including the UNDAF Results Group on Empowerment of Women (RGEW), Gender Theme Group (GTG) and UN Communication Group (UNCG), all three of which are chaired or co-chaired by UN Women. In addition to regular planning and reporting, the CO has been an active contributor to the development of the new UNSDCF for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The CO took the lead in ensuring the gender mainstreaming of the COVID-19 response and in preparation of the Joint UN Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Offer for Bosnia and Herzegovina,¹⁷ along with the development of the Country Gender Equality Profile. UN Women is a partner in three of five UN concept notes re-

lated to COVID-19 recovery efforts. The GTG conducted the Gender Scorecard in 2016 and 2020 and, through the GTG, the CO conducted capacity building activities for UN personnel in gender equality and led implementation of the gender mainstreaming action plan in the UN in Bosnia and Herzegovina (GMAP).

However, both inside the UN and from an external perspective, the UN system's coordinated gender approach has some flaws, as detailed below. UN agencies each have their own gender focal point and despite limited internal gender expertise on GEEW in many UN entities, UN Women is rarely engaged as a source of technical expertise. UN Women's coordination on GEEW is viewed by some agencies as a vital role but by others as an administrative requirement.

The existence of a specific gender focus area and two dedicated outcomes have generated a perception that gender has been well-articulated and covered; although important this could create insufficient planned for and implemented gender mainstreaming activities under other outcomes.

2015–2020 Bosnia and Herzegovina UNDAF Evaluation, p.36

Operationally, UN agencies externally appear to have a lack of cohesion, seeming to compete for resources and attention. In this competitive environment, UN Women does not fare as well as other agencies, such as UNDP and UNFPA, which have greater capacity and a reputation for delivery. This issue was noted in both the SN and the MTR of the SN; the need for greater collaboration across the UN system in Bosnia and Herzegovina was also highlighted in the UNDAF Evaluation in 2019.¹⁸

¹⁶ Corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to UN Coordination on GEEW and Regional Evaluation of UN Women's contribution to UN Coordination on GEEW are available at UN Women's GATE: <https://gate.unwomen.org/>

¹⁷ Joint UN in Bosnia and Herzegovina Offer for Socio-Economic Response and Recovery relating to COVID-19 impact: <https://bosniaherzegovina.un.org/en/78510-covid-19-socio-economic-response-and-recovery-offer>

¹⁸ UNDAF evaluation recommendations 4, 5 and 6 call for improvement of general coordination, coordination through results groups and Delivery As One mechanisms, and recommendation 8 calls for gender mainstreaming across all focus areas instead of having a separate result area on GEEW, p 61-62

The CO received funding from SIDA for implementation of the SN, which included the hiring of a Coordination Associate in 2019. This recruitment has improved relationships across the coordination mandate and supported CO leadership in increasing coordination activities. However, donors indicated a desire for a further coordinated and cohesive approach to GEEW across UN agencies, as well as a desire for expert resources from UN Women on key GEEW points of advocacy. These requests present an opportunity for UN Women to highlight its comparative advantage.

Still, UN agencies have shown limited commitment to joint programmes and projects, noting difficulties in conceptualization and frequent issues in implementation. At the same time, UN agencies stated that instead of following an opportunistic approach and designing ad-hoc joint programmes or projects, UNCT in Bosnia and Herzegovina needed to modify its programme paradigm.

2015–2020 Bosnia and Herzegovina UNDAF Evaluation, p.36

3.3 Effectiveness

FINDING 6:

Over the SN period, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made legislative and policy improvements in line with international conventions and obligations. The CO's advocacy and financial and technical support to both the institutional gender mechanisms and to key CSOs has played a meaningful role in this progress.

The CO's approach to its normative mandate is a blend of direct advocacy; financial support to strategic government partners; financial and technical support to civil society; capacity building for key institutional and civil society actors; project-based interventions; and communication events that bring attention to global campaigns.

Through its strategic partnerships within government and its financial and technical support to CSOs, the CO has had some success in raising awareness and supporting compliance with international conventions, including CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and the Istanbul Convention. This success includes enhanced reporting capacities at the institutional and civil society level; changes to the domestic violence law in Republika Srpska; and ongoing efforts to make legislative and policy changes nationally and in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the complex political and administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina has hindered legislative change and subsequent implementation. Despite this, important progress has been made at the local level in both the EVAW and GRB

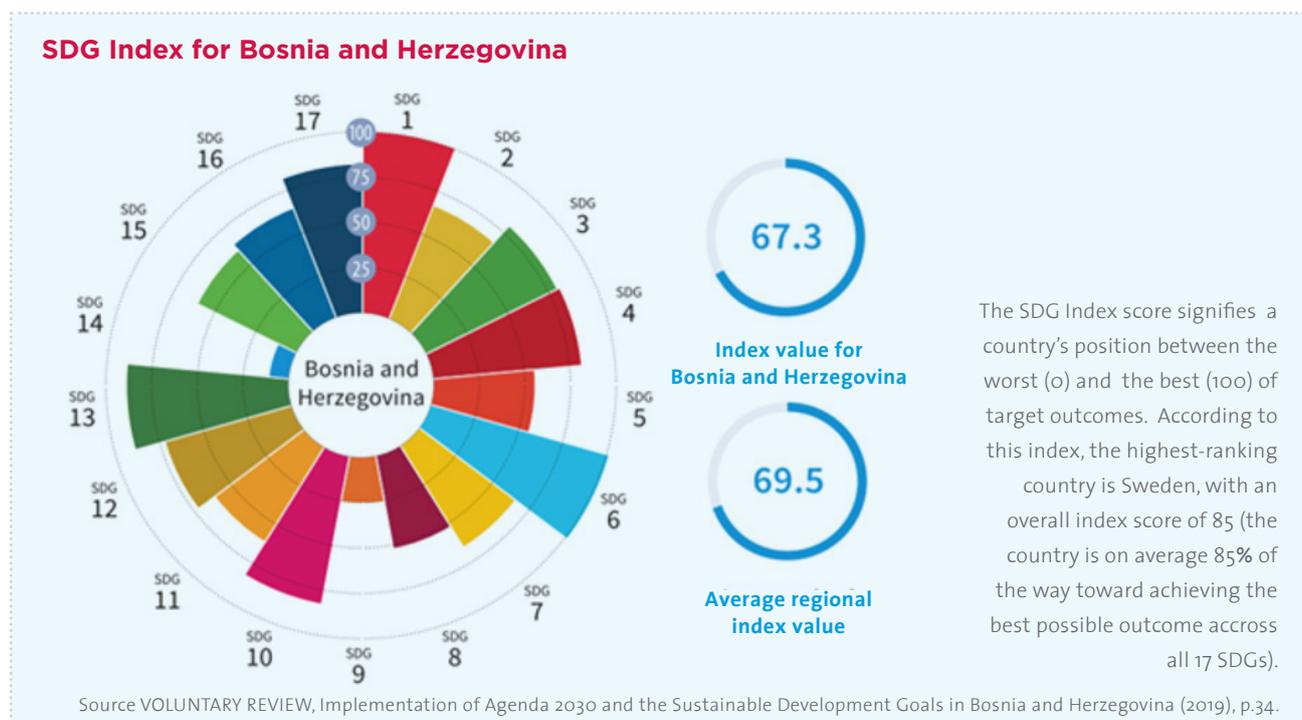
programmes, introducing protocols and best practices into local governments, institutions and service providers.

The CO has been less successful in meeting the expectations around UNSCR 1325 implementation. It was unable to raise meaningful funds for WPS or compete with other key actors in this area. While the CO did participate in a joint UN programme on CRSV with UNDP, IOM and UNFPA, the CO's portion of the programme was aimed at enhancing economic empowerment of survivors, rather than on the specific normative expectations of UNSCR 1325. Responsibility for implementation of UNSCR 1325 resides with the Agency for Gender Equality and the Agency's engagement with UN Women has been limited in this regard (for more detail on the achievements of the normative mandate, see Annex 2).

UN Women's work, as guided by the SN, is a de facto contribution to Bosnia and Herzegovina's achievement of the SDGs. The normative work of developing, implementing and reporting on the national SDG framework is managed through the Resident Coordinator's Office in UNCT. Although UN Women has consistently advocated for gender mainstreaming in reporting across all SDGs, and a particular focus on the gender-relevant SDG indicators and

SDG 5, the CO has not been granted extensive access to the reporting process. It would appear that the localized SDG reporting process was largely non-inclusive and gender-blind. In the Voluntary Review for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2019,¹⁹ it is clear that a more targeted focus is required on gender-relevant indicators in the future. These priorities

were integrated into the 2018–2022 Gender Action Plan²⁰ and highlighted in the National Progress Report on implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action within the Beijing +25 process. The image below from the 2019 Voluntary Review indicates Bosnia and Herzegovina’s progress on the SDGs, including SDG 5:



UN Women County Office contribution to gender-relevant SDG indicators²¹

Gender-relevant SDG Indicators	CO work
1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	GRB
1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	
1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	
1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims, and the poor and the vulnerable	CRSV, EVAW
1.b.1 Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups	GRB

¹⁹ Voluntary Review, Implementation of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23345VNR_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina_ENG_Final.pdf

²⁰ Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina 89/18, https://arsBosnia_and_Herzegovina.gov.ba/project/gender-action-plan-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina-2018-2022/

²¹ The list below was developed by the evaluation team and includes the CO’s contribution to SDG indicators in the context of implementation of its current SN.

2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status	GRB
4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill	IT Girls
4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment	EVAW
5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	EVAW, GRB
5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	EVAW
5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	EVAW
5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments	WIE
5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure	GRB
5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	GRB
16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months	EVAW
16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	EVAW
16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their experience to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms	EVAW

FINDING 7:**The EAW portfolio has shown the strongest gains during the SN period, with influence at the normative, services and behavioural levels.**

The thematic area of EAW is a flagship area for UN Women globally, regionally and in the Bosnia and Herzegovina CO.

UN WOMEN'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN SUPPORT OF EAW EFFORTS

The success of the EAW portfolio, in terms of actual outcomes and the CO's credibility in the field, supported the CO's production and socialization of a rapid assessment of the status of specialized services, such as shelters and the SOS line, during the COVID-19 lockdown. Following this rapid assessment, UN Women advocated with key government partners for the maintenance of shelter funding during the pandemic and repurposed programme funds to provide essential supplies directly to shelters.

From a normative perspective, the EAW programmatic portfolio has been influential through the production of baseline legislative assessments, developing draft laws and in advocating for greater adoption of international standards. The strategic partnership with the gender mechanisms in the country supports their work on the national Gender Action Plan and the entities' strategies. However, implementation of laws, policies and best practices continues to be a slow process. Support for ongoing advocacy and technical capacity for institutions and service providers will be required.

On the ground, the two EAW programmes implemented by UN Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Standards and

Engagement for Ending Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina" and the regional programme "Ending violence against women in Western Balkans and Turkey: Implementing norms, changing minds" worked with service providers at the local level across the country – both with institutions and civil society – to increase collaborative and multisectoral approaches to providing specialized survivor services. A significant number of municipalities reported the adoption of protocols and case management approaches. This work with service providers was complemented by work on social norms and attitudes across local communities. A large portion of these interventions focused on supporting women's ability to report instances of violence, resulting in an increase in reporting.

Although EAW programming had specific interventions targeting women in vulnerable or under-served communities,²² the portfolio could be strengthened by a more strategic and cross-programme approach to serving the most vulnerable.

Maintaining and enhancing this success and the sustainability of the gains made across this portfolio will be a critical element in the next SN. Innovative concepts introduced in programmes, such as work with youth and religious communities and enhanced media advocacy should be explored and expanded for greater impact (for more detail on the achievements of the EAW portfolio, see Annex 3).

FINDING 8:**The CO's governance and leadership portfolio has important and positive results through GRB programming. Although other projects, such as Women in Elections represent limited achievement, recent moves to strengthen and consolidate the portfolio by linking the gains of the GRB programme to the new GEF programme will support impact in this area.**

²² Examples of this include engagement with Roma associations on changing perceptions on EAW in Roma communities and trust building with institutions, analysis of accessibility of health, police, justice and social services to persons with disabilities, psychosocial support and economic empowerment of CRSV survivors, including those living in distant and rural communities etc.

FINDING THE SYNERGY

The governance and leadership portfolio provides tools and capacity for the advancement of GEEW across thematic areas. GRB is a budgetary policy that supports, for example, the allocation of funds for shelters and other specialized services; benefits to CRSV survivors; and WEE opportunities such as women-run small businesses. The GEF programme builds capacity in the gender mechanisms to carry out the Gender Action Plan; align with the EU; and to maintain a higher degree of focus and priority on GEEW at the institutional level.

The CO's governance and leadership portfolio has made substantial gains through the CO's participation in a multi-phase regional programme on GRB. GRB programming was able to influence budgetary practices across the country: its greatest success was at the local level with a number of municipalities institutionalizing the practice. Targeted advances at the national level in the Ministry of Agriculture in Republika Srpska and the Ministry of Sports and Culture

in Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with large-scale training of civil servants, will support the next phase as it pushes towards overall adoption of budgetary policy that includes GRB. In contrast, the portfolio had limited success in other areas. For example, the Women in Elections project did not deliver as expected due to implementation delays and internal UN challenges.

The CO is preparing for the large-scale GEF initiative aimed at enhancing the performance of the gender mechanisms and aligning gender equality and EU integration. The CO has also initiated a major scoping exercise, producing three sectoral analyses that formed the basis of the overall proposal to the EU for the GEF programme, which started in September 2020.

Staffing levels in the CO for this portfolio are low, although personnel in this area are highly skilled and strategic in terms of the opportunities within the portfolio. Four recruitments were planned that will augment the portfolio's delivery capability.

FINDING 9:

Programming in WEE was minimal during the SN period as resources were not mobilized as had been expected. In the WPS thematic area, UN Women's participation in a larger joint programme on CRSV was somewhat limited. There is limited evidence that the CO was able to substantially contribute to these outcomes.

At the outset of the SN, the CO prioritized WEE as a critical area to impact GEEW in Bosnia and Herzegovina. WEE priority remained at the point of the MTR²³ and CO leadership continued to identify it as a priority. Unfortunately, despite the efforts made, the CO was unable to raise donor interest in funding WEE initiatives. This misalignment of donor interest with the need for WEE in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued throughout the SN period and was confirmed in donor interviews. However, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative impact it has had on women's economic opportunities has the potential to increase donor interest and is an area of future opportunity for the CO. One exception to the lack of WEE programming was IT Girls, a joint initiative with UNICEF. Preliminary activities in this initiative have shown promise in bringing STEM education to girls, and partners are exploring opportunities to convert the initiative into a joint programme.

WPS was also a limited success for the CO. While Bosnia and Herzegovina is a feature country for implementation of UNSCR 1325, the CO was not able to find donor investment for its planned activities in this thematic area. It is noteworthy that responsibility for implementation of UNSCR 1325 rests with the Agency for Gender Equality which is working on the country's response without seeking input from UN Women. The CO did participate in a joint programme with IOM and UNFPA addressing the needs of CRSV survivors, which is aligned with the UNSCR 1325 Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The overall programme had a number of successes but UN Women's portion of the project was limited to piloting economic empowerment interventions, such as providing sewing and weaving equipment to local CRSV associations and working with survivors on advocacy to obtain access to grants and benefits (typically allotted to people with disabilities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska benefit programmes).

²³ UN Women Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Office Report on the Midterm Review of the Strategic Note for 2015-2019, Strategic positioning measures 3.3.4 on programmatic priorities and 3.3.8 on resource mobilization, p 8-10.

This component of the joint programme did not show significant results – although there were a small number of applicants for the benefits, the CO did not follow up to determine whether the benefits had been granted and, in

the case of the weaving and sewing machines, insufficient assessment of the needs and ability of the community had been carried out and the equipment went unused.

FINDING 10:

The CO's activities related to coordinating and administering funding to partners; providing capacity building and technical support to Implementing Partners; creating knowledge products; and introducing regional and international approaches are proven strengths. The CO's contribution would be enhanced by increased thought leadership, on-the-ground engagement and conceptual and programmatic innovation.

UN Women is valued for its positive reputation and relationship with government institutions as well as the global knowledge and experience it brings to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of GEEW. Personnel are viewed as knowledgeable and technically expert, with stakeholders appreciating the knowledge products and technical information provided and, in many cases, requesting more.

The creation of knowledge products such as EAW studies, sectoral assessments in preparation for GEF and rapid assessments on COVID-19 impacts have enhanced the CO's credibility with stakeholders and provided evidence for project proposals. The support for regional and in-country networking was cited by stakeholders as critically helpful to their efforts.

However, the evaluation team heard frequently from stakeholders that the CO's primary contribution to interventions was through financial support. Stakeholders described the CO as a 'pass through' organization for funds or compared the CO to a donor. While financial support to institutional and civil society stakeholders is a critical component of the CO's work and was valued by the stakeholders, this perception neither represents the efforts made by personnel nor the comparative advantage that the CO brings to the GEEW environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

THE CO'S INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING

- Inclusion of youth across programmes
- Extracurricular classes in schools on GEEW and violence against women prevention
- Support to the youth "Be a Man" clubs
- IT Girls clubs in schools
- Engagement of religious communities on EAW

Increased attention to thought leadership, on-the-ground technical support and the timely production and promotion of knowledge products supporting stakeholders and donors would be useful to combat this perception. A greater boost could come from innovative approaches to interventions and through harnessing the ideas and experiences of the CO personnel using tools such as participatory planning, monitoring and learning sessions. At the time of the evaluation, programming and other types of interventions had been relatively static over the SN period. New and innovative opportunities, that flow from a central strategy and take advantage of the groundwork already laid by the CO, could reinvigorate the CO's reputation.

3.4 Efficiency

FINDING 11:

The CO has largely met key financial performance indicators and delivers in line with its budget. Resource mobilization has been uneven across thematic areas and is dependent on one central donor but planning is under way to diversify the donor base.

As noted above, some thematic areas (WEE and WPS) were not aligned with donor priorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and, consequently, the CO was unable to mobilize adequate resources in these areas. In advance of the next SN, the CO has developed a resource mobilization plan that acknowledges the need to diversify its donor base and focus and acknowledges the predominant reliance on SIDA over the past five years. Ongoing dialogue with the EU, along with the EU-funded GEF project, represent key opportunities to diversify. Discussions on longer-term efforts with representatives from the UK and the US, among others, are also taking place.

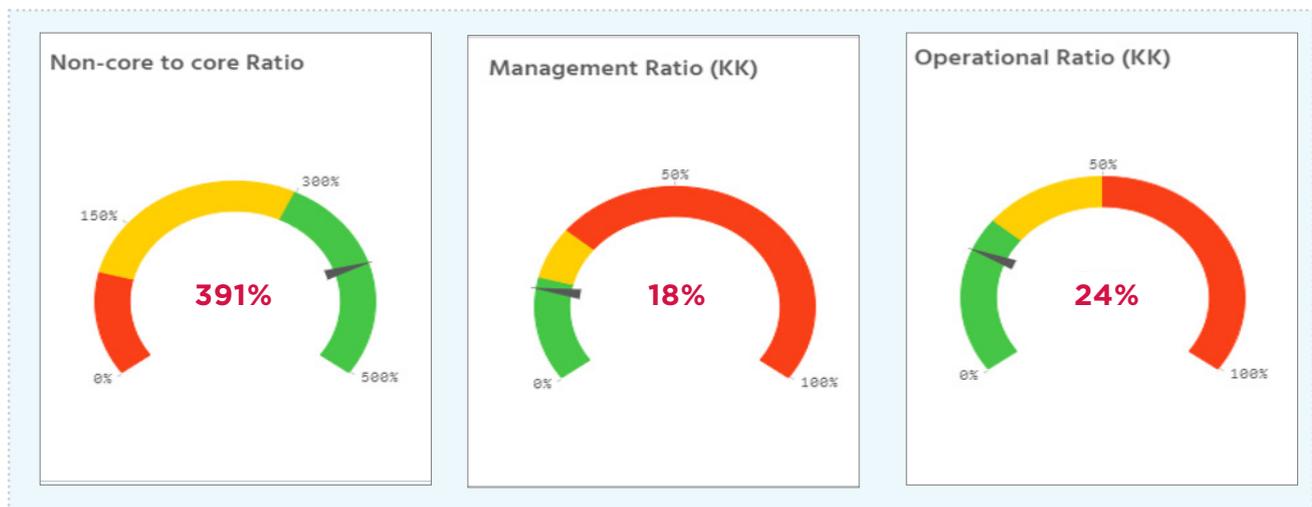
The CO has kept pace with budget and delivery during the SN period (at the time of writing this report, 2020 was not

yet complete and therefore the full 2020 financial figures have not been included).

In 2015, the CO had 10 personnel; by September 2020 this had increased to 18 personnel with an additional four vacancies to be filled in 2020. Approximately half the personnel in the office have been with the CO for less than two years.

According to management information, the CO was in the 'green zone' for the SN period with respect to three key performance indicators corporately measured: non-core to core ratio, management ratio and operational ratio.

Bosnia and Herzegovina CO Key Performance Indicators (2016–2020)²⁴



²⁴ **Non-core versus core:** This indicator measures the funding the CO is mobilizing versus the core funding being provided to support the CO. Non-core to core ratio = Revenue under contract for the year/ core budget

Management ratio: The management ratio is calculated using the below formula: Management Ratio = Institutional Budget / (Institutional Budget + Core Programmable + total Non-Core resources, available and TBM [hard pipeline only]). Field offices should have a management ratio below 20 per cent.

Operational ratio: Operational ratio (KK) = (Institutional Budget Personnel Expenses + Core Personnel Expenses) / Total KK Expenses.

FINDING 12:**CO personnel are expert, dedicated and diligent. Significant personnel turnover during the SN period, combined with certain management approaches, impacted the full realization of personnel contributions, a cohesive team mentality and the optimization of strategic linkages between portfolios.**

The CO is staffed with competent and creative gender experts. Stakeholders reported a high degree of respect for project personnel in the office, citing both positive relationships and valuable technical contributions. Recent personnel additions in the horizontal functions of coordination and communication strengthen overall office relationships and delivery capacity, as do long-serving CO administration personnel.

However, some areas require attention to enable a more effective functioning of the CO. A strong focus on funding/reporting and a limited integrated vision between portfolios has left CO personnel with limited opportunities to collaborate; engage in higher-level strategic thinking; or cultivate innovative ideas. Turnover of personnel was high during implementation of the current SN cycle. Stakeholders reported a focus on administrative requirements and

limited personnel engagement in the provision of expert technical support and the appearance of a limited cohesive team mentality.

There is significant opportunity for improvement. As noted above, CO personnel are expert and dedicated. Both personnel and stakeholders recognize the opportunity for synergies inside and across thematic areas, sharing knowledge and experience. While a large portion of CO personnel are relatively new, a blend of experienced and new personnel is an opportunity to advance existing mindsets and explore innovative ways to meet the CO's mandate.

This should be a top priority for CO leadership – providing the motivation, guidance and positive work environment to create a workplace of choice and to reinvigorate an innovative and engaged workforce.

FINDING 13:**The current reporting approach does not support effective measurement or storytelling with respect to the CO's actual contribution to GEEW results in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

This finding encompasses a number of areas of challenge for the CO. While there is explicit emphasis inside the office on meeting reporting obligations, both to donors and in UN Women's internal reporting systems, there is room to improve the effectiveness of reporting so that it better supports a meaningful assessment of the actual work carried out by the CO.

Some of these challenges can be attributed to UN Women globally. The nature of the reporting system, the Results Management System (RMS), separates out reporting on indicators, finance and activities. This fragmented approach to reporting does not lend itself well to storytelling, i.e. to allowing a CO to frame its actions in a way that clearly

identifies the basis for the choice of intervention, the work carried out by the CO and the impact of that intervention.

However, it is incumbent on individual field presences to make the best use of RMS and various other reporting obligations, such as donor reports, to tell those stories. In terms of the use of RMS reporting on indicators, the CO does not consistently choose meaningful and measurable indicators of success at the outcome or output level. A clear ToC would support the CO in its reporting strategy.

Choosing indicators that are meaningful (related directly to the outcome that is sought and to the ability to influence that outcome) and measurable (a baseline and impact can both be established and quantified) should be a priority task for the CO in the development of the next SN.

Reporting on indicators also requires the collection of usable data. Generally, and specifically in Bosnia and Herzegovina, UN Women is dependent on state data collection, such as census-taking, and the data generated as part of specific project interventions. The current data does not support either an assessment of the baseline situation of women and girls, especially for women in the most vulnerable groups such as Roma women, or meaningful reporting on the impact of programme activities. Prioritizing better data collection, including disaggregating data by gender, geography, age, income level, etc. should be part of the CO's work over the next SN cycle.

Finally, the CO does not make effective use of language in its reporting. When reporting achievements of outputs and progress towards the achievement of outcomes, the CO frequently uses the qualifier “with UN Women support” to describe the CO's contribution to the output. Even at the contribution analysis level, the use of the word ‘support’ is

vague and non-descriptive. It certainly does not support an attribution analysis, in which the specific work of the CO could be directly attributed to the success of the intervention. The use of vague words like ‘support’ or ‘contribute’ in the CO's reporting inhibits analysis of UN Women's work. It also has the detrimental effect of failing to ‘sell’ the value of UN Women to prospective donors, stakeholders and the public.

The CO does not have a consistent, office-wide approach to data collection or to meaningful reporting. Some personnel collect project-specific data; some collect data based on work tasks; and some do not collect any data. While there is pressure to meet reporting obligations, there has not yet been a focus on how to strategically use language and measures in reporting achievements. Being able to tell the story of the CO's work can have a powerful impact. This is an area that everyone in the CO should become part of, necessitating further training and strategic engagement.

3.5 Sustainability, gender equality and human rights

FINDING 14:

Much of the work during the SN period had sustainable elements, including support for the introduction of key legislative and policy changes in the areas of EAW and GRB. The CO has contributed extensively to capacity building across the portfolio, supporting the growth of programme and strategic partners. However, much of the impact from programme interventions has been localized and targeted. Limited follow-up is conducted with beneficiaries to determine whether this localized impact has been sustained.

Capacity building is a key pillar of the CO's approach to ensuring sustainability. Highlights include CSO training to support the creation of shadow reports for CEDAW and Grevio;²⁵ civil servant training on GRB; and training for service providers on EAW, including police, health and education providers. A number of interventions across various programmes focused on capacity building by CSOs in the community, such as stigma reduction, economic empowerment in rural areas and training specialized support providers. The strategic partnership with the gender mechanisms has also supported ongoing capacity development in these key institutions.

Upscaling of local successes, particularly in GRB and EAW programming, has been mixed. The major regional programmes in these areas have been continued over multiple phases, allowing interventions to begin repeating in other geographic areas. However, upscaling initiatives or sustaining activities after the end of project funding present real challenges. CSOs and local institutions do not always have the financial or human resources to continue projects independently and donor funds are not infinite and CO personnel must be moved to the next project. It will be a challenge for CO leadership in the development of the next SN to devote advanced planning and strategy to supporting partners in monitoring, measuring and sustaining project gains and, where possible, scaling up good practices.

²⁵ GREVIO is the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the Parties.

FINDING 15:

The CO's project-based approach to serving marginalized communities has resulted in localized impacts. A more direct alignment to the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle would create a more strategic and country-wide approach to generating results for the most marginalized women and girls.

The accurate determination of the value of UN Women's choices of intervention and their efficacy is dependent on a meaningful understanding of the 'who, what, where, when and why' of the most vulnerable groups and those left furthest behind. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the SN identifies the most vulnerable women as Roma women, women with disabilities, women who live in poverty, women survivors of CRSV, the LGBTQI community, and women who live in rural and remote areas. However, the SN does not directly assess and align the needs of these groups with the LNOB principle and the interventions directly impacting these groups are project-dependent, without a common strategic approach. It is difficult to assess the results generated for the most marginalized women and girls and there is room to increase disaggregation in Annual Work Plans (AWPs) with a focus on capturing LNOB dimensions. Neither specific results nor the percentage of funding spent directly on the most vulnerable population are disaggregated in the CO's internal reporting results framework and financial reporting.

Rural women have benefitted from a number of interventions in EAW and GRB programming, and to a lesser degree, Roma women, women with disabilities and women who are survivors of CRSV through the EAW programmes and the CRSV joint programme. No interventions have directly targeted the LGBTQI community. The evaluation of the national EAW programme noted that intersectionalities were not well embedded into the approach and recommended that the CO recognize and address the intersectional discrimination that some victims face in project design.²⁶

The CO would benefit from a more holistic approach to serving vulnerable groups across the entire portfolio, ensuring meaningful and measurable outcomes; a cross-thematic strategy; alignment with UN Women global priorities for LNOB; and a communicated intention to target those furthest behind.

FINDING 16:

There is no clear evidence of gender-transformative changes as a contribution of the CO's implementation of UN Women's threefold composite mandate. There is room to foster long-term strategies for changes to traditional social roles and norms and in the lives of the most vulnerable groups.

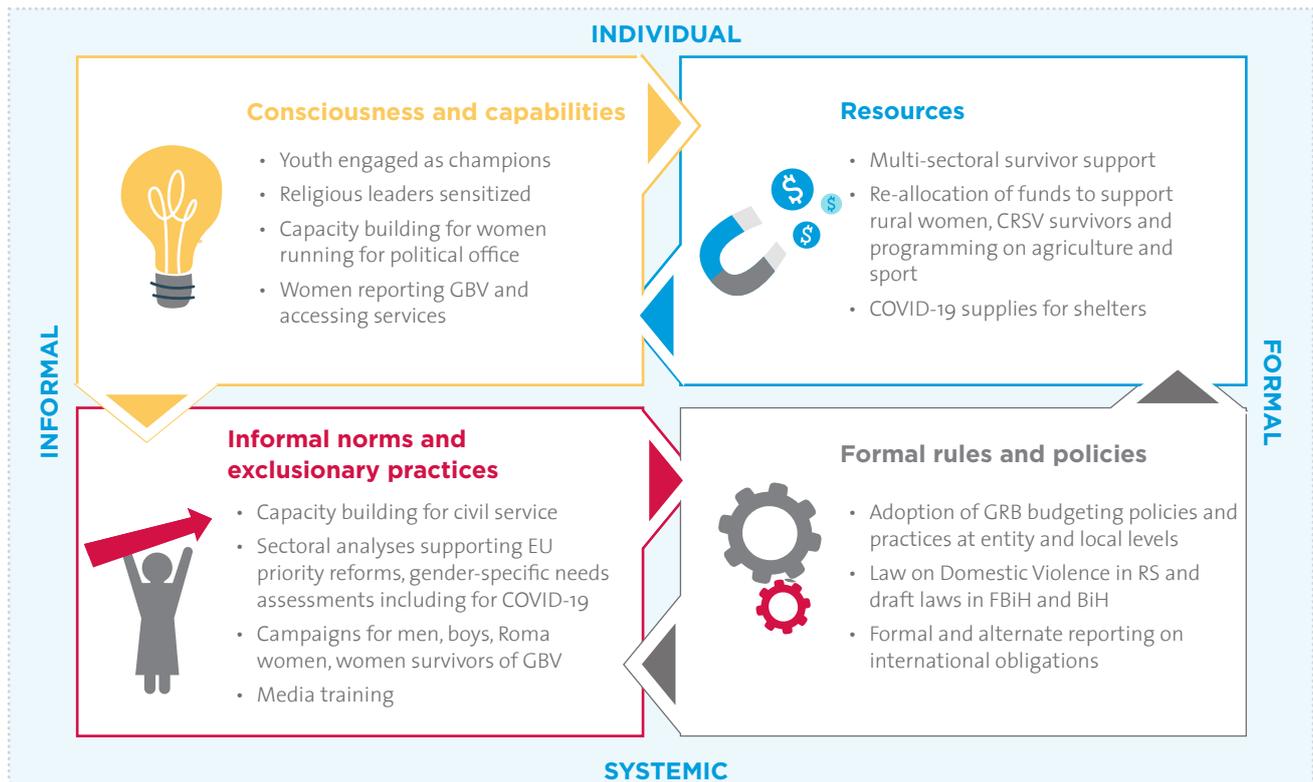
Transformative change towards GEEW addresses the root causes of inequity; contemplates its complex and intersecting effects; and requires sustained, multidimensional efforts. The lack of an articulated ToC as a foundation of the SN means that, while many elements of the CO's work over the period contribute to transformative change, the CO, its personnel and stakeholders do not have the articulated vision required to build and sustain transformation. Instead, although the interventions track to UN Women's Strategic Plan thematic areas, there is no deeper-level

strategy driving the particular choice of intervention or its conduct.

The analysis below, using the Gender at Work framework,²⁷ presents the CO's activities and planned activities against impact areas to identify where programming activities have been concentrated.

²⁶ Final Evaluation Report "Standards and Engagement for Ending Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina", Recommendation 1 on addressing intersectional discrimination in programming and involvement of vulnerable groups in programming and implementation, p47.

²⁷ Gender at Work Framework: <https://genderatwork.org/analytical-framework/>



As indicated in the chart above, the CO's work is weighted towards systemic interventions, with strategic institutional partnerships and normative and programming approaches that support government adoption of best practices. Communications strategies target community-level engagement, with social and conventional media campaigns aimed at influencing the perception of women's roles; the acceptability of talking about domestic violence; and the role of boys and men in EVAW. These interventions have resulted in a number of successful legislative, policy and local practices that improved GEEW in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Interventions that impact individuals were featured less prominently in the SN, happening as a result of in-project activities. Specific results can be attached to projects that enhance the capacity of women to act on their rights and entitlements; however, these results would benefit from a longer-term strategic vision, and a more in-depth engagement of civil society and those organizations that work directly with women and girls.

Although the complexity of the administrative and societal structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with UN Women's relatively small size, means that transformative change is challenging, use of the Gender at Work framework and other strategic approaches may support the move from impactful interventions to transformative change.



4. LESSONS LEARNED

Photo ©UN Women/BiH: Orange the World 2018



Limited resources require the CO to be strategic when conceptualizing implementation of UN Women's threefold mandate.

Meeting the demands of UN Women's threefold mandate with a limited and specifically allocated budget is a challenge for every UN Women field presence. Each office faces the reality of multiple expectations with limited resourcing, including the largely under-resourced coordination mandate. The CO in Bosnia and Herzegovina wrestles with this common challenge and, without the foundation of a ToC, has struggled to fully meet competing demands.

The use of a ToC in the next SN would help to drive strategy, keep personnel and partners focused, and make resource allocation decisions. It would also support identifi-

cation of UN Women's comparative advantage and in the development of innovative alliances with stakeholders and potential project partners.

Strengthening a learning culture in the CO which includes tighter and nimbler monitoring and evaluation frameworks to further enable the demonstration of success for potential scale up of key initiatives and to apply corrective measures when needed would support implementation of next SN and realization of its related ToC.



Civil society engagement is more effective when it is expanded beyond intervention-specific contact.

The CO has had a fluctuating relationship with civil society and has not yet established an effective engagement method. While CSOs were actively engaged in the ERAW portfolio, they were less engaged in the other thematic areas. The primary mechanism for engaging CSOs outside of programming, the CSAG, was ineffective during the current SN cycle. As a result, CSOs described limited engagement with the CO and a perception of being service providers for UN Women's activities, rather than as partners

in improving GEEW. The CO has reduced its partnership capacity with civil society (outside of ERAW) and, consequently, has a less direct relationship with the women and girls that the CSOs serve.

A creative alternative to reinvigorating the relationship is required, including a viable restructuring of the CSAG. The CO has acknowledged this challenge and is actively working on a new model.



Expert and dedicated personnel can contribute to the CO's strategic and innovative plans.

The CO has benefitted from recent personnel additions in coordination and communications functions to provide strategic support to CO leadership and its technical experts. These recruitments have demonstrated the value of a horizontal approach to meeting the CO's mandate. In order to optimize these resources and the creative exper-

tise of programme personnel, the CO should engage in inclusive planning processes that identify potential linkages across the portfolio and encourage innovation to spur a greater sense of ownership for the outcomes identified in the ToC.



Storytelling is a tool to engage stakeholders and enhance the CO's reputation.

The evaluation noted the impact that quality reporting can have. Without good data and meaningful measurement points at the beginning, middle and end of an intervention, the CO has not been able to fully describe its positive impact on the GEEW landscape. The CO has adopted a pattern of describing its activities in passive and non-descriptive language. This approach has a number of impacts on the CO's effective functioning: a) personnel do not see their hard work well described in reporting and therefore

lack a sense of their value to UN Women; b) donors do not fully appreciate the scope of activities that UN Women is performing; and c) UN Women's contribution to outcomes is not understood.

The CO would be well-served by adding training on quality reporting to its strategic planning sessions with personnel.



Creative and collaborative initiatives represent critical means to align the UN Women mandate with donor priorities.

The CO learned early in the SN period that UN Women's thematic mandate may not have aligned with the interests or priorities of donors in the country at the time. This was especially clear in the WEE thematic area. Donors indicated to the CO that they are interested in cross-sectoral initiatives that encompass GEEW, rather than GEEW-specific projects.

This reality requires the CO to make strategic alliances and to find new ways to impact GEEW. The CO's recent work

related to the COVID-19 response in the country is an excellent example of this creativity. The CO used the skills gained through its work on GRB to conduct an analysis of the gender impacts of government COVID-19 budgets. This work was well-received by donors and stakeholders. There are other potential areas for creativity that could be explored, such as climate change and its impact on gender equality.



Long-term planning supports transformative results.

Social normative change is a lengthy process which requires long-term investment to materialize transformative results; thinking; and strategic planning beyond a five-year strategic framework. This presents a challenge when funding is largely time-limited and project-based. Some of these challenges can be resolved through the use and regular updating of a ToC, but it also requires starting activities and seeding ideas that may not come to fruition for

a number of years. The CO has introduced some elements of transformation into the culture, such as working with young men in the "Be a Man" clubs; working with religious leaders; and supporting measures that transfer property to women. Added value would be achieved by developing a framework to sustain, build and track the longer-term impacts of these efforts.

5. CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSION 1

Despite a complex and challenging environment, the CO could better identify and capitalize on opportunities to highlight its technical expertise; reframe its strategic approach; and foster a more cohesive environment for GEEW in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Based on findings

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10

- Within Bosnia and Herzegovina there is a complex political structure; fluctuating political and donor interest in sole-focused GEEW programming; and a wide array of national and international actors competing for resources and attention, including other UN agencies in the country.
- Leveraging key UN partnerships is essential to support implementation of the normative frameworks more effectively. UN Women needs to better communicate the implications of its GEEW coordination mandate; foster a cohesive role for GEEW across UN agencies; and provide GEEW thematic expertise in key sectoral areas. The new UNSDCF will support the CO's efforts in this regard.
- The CO could better identify opportunities to enhance its positioning and attract donor attention. Increased thought leadership; reframing its proposals to align with donor mandates; timely provision of strategic technical information; engaged coordination with civil society; and creative joint programming would permit the CO to push past perceived barriers to funding. Recent activities related to COVID-19 have positively positioned the CO.

CONCLUSION 2

CO programming has had some notable and impactful successes, including in the EAW and governance portfolios. Capitalizing on these gains will require strategic vision, programmatic innovation and creative approaches to communication.

Based on findings

6, 7, 8, 10

- The CO can demonstrate value and success across its three fold mandate over the SN period. Normative and operational activities in EAW and GRB have had the most widespread impact. Recent gains in other governance areas and in coordination efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic are also notable.
- Strategic vision, programmatic innovation and creative approaches to communication will be required to persuade stakeholders of the importance of these areas. Recent efforts by the CO, through communication, coordination and the COVID-19 response are reigniting stakeholder interest.

CONCLUSION 3

The CO is staffed with expert and dedicated individuals but has not optimized its potential to work strategically and synergistically, with meaningful and countable measures. Despite UN Women’s internal and resource mobilization limitations, the CO met its financial commitments.

Based on findings

11, 12, 13

- Internally, the CO has not yet optimized its potential to build a synergistic approach across UN Women’s thematic areas; support innovative and strategic personnel engagement; and meaningfully tell the story of its contributions to the outcomes established in the SN.
- Unearmarked SIDA funding for the implementation of the SN supported implementation of UN Women’s core mandate and mission and allowed the CO to hire a dedicated Coordination Associate, who provided significant support to the achievement of the coordination component of the mandate and cohesive functioning of the office.
- The CO’s overall reporting process requires a strategic shift in approach, including the development of meaningful and countable measures, disaggregated data collection and the use of language that clearly identifies the contribution and actions of the CO in achieving results.

CONCLUSION 4

Sustainability of the gains made by the CO and its partners, and enhanced impact for women in marginalized communities, will require a strategic and coordinated shift from localized programme-based activities to a long-term vision and plan.

Based on findings

14, 15, 16

- The sustainability of the gains made by the CO and its partners remains uncertain. With some positive exceptions in GRB and EAW, project activities have had largely localized or targeted impact without being scaled up. Monitoring and evaluation by both the CO and its partners does not include sufficient follow-up or long-term planning. However, capacity-building activities have generated increased institutional ownership for GEEW across different political levels.
- The CO would benefit from an overarching strategic approach to ensuring that the leave no one behind (LNOB) principle impacts the lives of women in marginalized communities and those with intersectional challenges, such as rural women, Roma women, women with disabilities and the LGBTQI communities. The current project-based approach does include these communities but with limited or localized impact and without alignment to UN Women’s key campaigns such as LNOB and the SDGs.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented in this section are to be addressed by UN Women in partnership and consultation with relevant national stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Presentations of the evaluation preliminary findings; discussion on lessons and proposed recommendations; and final sessions to validate the report took place with the CO and the members of the ERG between September and October 2020 and informed the final recommendations presented below.

The below recommendations were reviewed by the EMG and ERG and subsequent modifications were integrated, as appropriate. The recommendations section also includes potential key actions for consideration by the CO, based on feasibility within its current programme of work. Some of the below suggested actions are already under way given the time lag between the issuance of the preliminary findings and the finalization of the report. The level of assessed impact, priority, difficulty and suggested timeframe for implementation are indicated below each specific recommendation.

Relevance

RECOMMENDATION 1

The CO to underpin the next SN with a clear theory of change (ToC) that leads to a set of cross-thematic advocacy strategies and an agenda for leveraging its programme and policy knowledge base and convening role.

Impact & Priority

HIGH

Timeframe

IMMEDIATE

Difficulty

LOW

Actions for consideration:

- Building on work already undertaken for the next SN, conduct inclusive consultation sessions on the proposed ToC with personnel and then with stakeholders.
- Use the SN to identify and prioritize activities that will optimize cross-thematic benefits and the CO's comparative advantage.

Coherence

RECOMMENDATION 2

The CO to develop an engagement strategy for its stakeholders that transcends individual programmes or thematic areas to highlight its strengths and increase its credibility as a thought leader and influencer in the country, including:

- Capitalizing on UN Women's **convening role to bring together key stakeholders** from civil society; national, entity and local governments; academia; international organizations; and the UN system to foster joint advocacy efforts.
- Showcasing **UN Women's comparative advantage** to the international donor community through the development of timely knowledge products and engagement on priority topics.

*Impact & Priority***HIGH***Timeframe***IMMEDIATE***Difficulty***MEDIUM**

Actions for consideration:

- Undertake an internal stakeholder mapping exercise that identifies stakeholder priorities and aligns them to the CO strategy and highlights relationship opportunities to cooperate on normative processes.
- Undertake an internal donor mapping exercise that identifies donor priorities and maps opportunities for the CO to support priorities and highlight UN Women's value-added.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The CO to develop an inclusive, consultative and transparent approach to strengthening its relationships with civil society organizations (CSOs), to support their efforts to advance normative and policy transformation by ensuring civil society participation in programming in all thematic areas; re-establishing the coordination of civil society through the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) or an alternative structure; and supporting the advocacy agenda of civil society networks in advancing the principles of the Istanbul Convention, CEDAW and other international commitments and best practices.

*Impact & Priority***HIGH***Timeframe***IMMEDIATE***Difficulty***MEDIUM**

Actions for consideration:

- Starting with an internal brainstorming session, develop a series of ideas for reinvigorating the relationship with civil society.
- Map CSOs of vulnerable groups and relevant organizations for all thematic areas, including those already involved women's organizations for cooperation.
- Undertake consultation with civil society on options for formal coordination with common and transparent goals and expectations.
- Ensure civil society is present in programming at the oversight level as well as implementing activities.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Through its coordination mandate, the CO, in conjunction with the Resident Coordinator's Office and key UN partners in the country, to identify targeted means of optimizing its comparative advantage and complementing the expertise of other UN agencies to strengthen the overall implementation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina normative framework related to GEEW by:

- **Ensuring there is clarity about the scope and intent of UN Women's mandate on coordination.**
- **Identifying opportunities for collective advocacy to advance the normative framework.**
- **Targeting initiatives that support EU accession and implementing international commitments including the SDGs.**

Impact & Priority

MEDIUM

Timeframe

MEDIUM

Difficulty

MEDIUM

Actions for consideration:

- Undertake leadership-level meetings with the Resident Coordinator's Office and other heads to share the ToC and SN and to confirm the expectations that flow from UN Women's coordination mandate.
- Affirm UN Women's coordination mandate across UN system and inter-agency groups (such as GTG, Empowerment of Women Results Group [EWRG], etc.)
- Develop a short infographic or paragraph that can be attached to internal UN communications between personnel that highlights UN Women's coordination mandate.
- Seek strategic partnerships and joint programmes with other UN agencies, as a means of presenting a cohesive One UN approach to stakeholders, ensuring effective use of resources and prioritizing GEEW across sectors.

Effectiveness**RECOMMENDATION 5**

The CO to build on the momentum created by its leadership and creativity in the COVID-19 response to showcase its technical expertise in gender mainstreaming, data analysis and advocacy to donors and stakeholders.

Impact & Priority

MEDIUM

Timeframe

IMMEDIATE

Difficulty

MEDIUM

Actions for consideration:

- Continue to produce point-in-time knowledge products supporting immediate action, such as the rapid assessment of budgets produced in the summer 2020.
- Produce communications products (including fact sheets, speaking points and social media content) that donors and international organizations can use.
- Continue to find opportunities to provide leadership in stakeholder meetings on urgent issues.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The CO to explore and prioritize opportunities to reinvigorate stakeholder interest in GEEW through innovative approaches and refocus attention on critical thematic areas including WPS and WEE.

Impact

HIGH

Priority

MEDIUM

Timeframe

MEDIUM

Difficulty

MEDIUM

Actions for consideration:

As much of the funding for the next year of the SN is secured, the CO should take advantage of 2021 to develop innovative, cross-sectoral proposals for donors, including:

- building on the innovative work undertaken as part of the COVID-19 response, targeting national and global priorities such as pandemic response, disaster risk reduction and climate change;
- supporting under-served groups such as the LGBTQI community and women with disabilities; and
- using the advantages the CO developed in areas like GRB to attract attention to priority areas such as WEE.

Efficiency

RECOMMENDATION 7

The CO to maximize the value of its workforce and enhance the knowledge management, monitoring and reporting capacity of its personnel and partners.

Impact & Priority

HIGH

Timeframe

MEDIUM

Difficulty

MEDIUM

Actions for consideration:

- Undertake team building activities that allow personnel to extend beyond their project-based focus and help personnel align to the CO's mission.
- Undertake an analysis of the HR model to address the nature of personnel funding.
- Strengthen the delegation of personnel's roles and responsibilities.
- Safeguard time on meeting agendas for discussion of innovative personnel ideas and brainstorming.
- Conduct a session with all personnel to specifically prioritize cross-thematic opportunities.
- Increase team collaboration through internal communications tools for sharing information.
- Invest in training for personnel and implementing and programme partners on programming and results-based management including on human rights-based approaches in programme design, monitoring and reporting.
- Establish a results framework that includes mutually reinforcing quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- Strengthen the CO's data collection systems including ensuring data is disaggregated by age, sex, income, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and any other relevant category whenever possible.
- Ensure there are concrete measures to address multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups across SN programming.

Sustainability, gender equality and human rights

RECOMMENDATION 8

The CO to ensure that a gender-transformative lens is applied to the SN, including the incorporation of human rights; fundamental UN principles related to GEEW; and a cross-portfolio strategy targeting women and girls experiencing social disadvantage.

Impact & Priority

HIGH

Timeframe

MEDIUM

Difficulty

MEDIUM

Actions for consideration:

- Undertake a mapping exercise to meaningfully understand the needs of women in vulnerable groups, with a focus on groups not previously addressed in the SN.
- Develop an explicit strategy for how the CO will incorporate women in marginalized groups across the portfolio, with measurable expectations.
- Ensure that the principle of LNOB and the SDGs are clearly identified and incorporated in the next SN.
- Develop a monitoring strategy for normative advances and country progress based on implementation of the SDGs.

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The UN Women Independent Evaluation Service is co-located with the Internal Audit Service under the Independent Evaluation and Audit Services. The UN Women Independent Evaluation Service's main purpose is to enhance accountability, inform decision-making and contribute to learning about the best ways to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment through the organization's mandate, including its normative, operational and coordination work. The Independent Evaluation Service also works to strengthen capacities for gender-responsive evaluation within UN entities, governments and civil society organizations.

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**UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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