



FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT SUPPORT TO PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN SERBIA (2018-2020)

EVALUATION REPORT



Support to Priority Actions for
Gender Equality in Serbia



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Evaluation Report



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January 2021

This publication was produced in the framework of the project “Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia” implemented by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) with funding from the European Union. The views and analysis contained in the publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations.



**Support to Priority Actions for
Gender Equality in Serbia**



Project Details:

Project title: Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia (GEF)
Implementing organisation: UN Women Programme Office in Serbia
Country: Republic of Serbia
Contract No.: 2017/391-238
Project duration: 36 months, as of March 1st, 2018
Funding: 2.000.000; European Union

Project Evaluation:
Commissioned by: UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
Evaluators: Aleksandar Zivanovic, Marija Babovic
Evaluation period: October 1st – January 31st, 2021

The Evaluation Team – comprised of Aleksandar Zivanovic and Marija Babovic expresses their appreciation to the management and GEF Project Team at UN Women Programme Office in Serbia for their time, expertise and support to logistical organisation of the evaluation. The team is appreciative of the thoughtful contributions and guidance of the UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Evaluation Specialist, Isabel Suarez Garcia, and the members of the Evaluation Reference Group, GEF project partners, Delegation of the European Union to Serbia, final beneficiaries and experts for being responsive to evaluation requests. The views expressed in this report are those of the Evaluators. They do not represent those of UN Women or any of the individuals and organizations referred to in the report.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AP	Autonomous Province
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CBGE	Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
EC	European Commission
ECA RO	UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
EMG	Evaluation Management Group
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
GEF	Project “Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia”
GFP	Gender Focal Points in line ministries and national institutions
GEM	Gender Equality Mechanism
GEEW	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
GERAAS	UN Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
IPA	European Union Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
NAP	Republic of Serbia Plan of Action for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Improving and Promoting Gender Equality 2016-2020
OSCE	The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SIPRU	Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit
SORS	Statistical Office of Republic of Serbia
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNW PO	UN Women Programme Office
WEE	Women’s Economic Empowerment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the main findings, lessons learnt, conclusions and recommendations of the final evaluation of the Project “Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia” implemented in the period from March 2018 – February 2021 by UN Women Programme Office in Serbia.

Context: Over the last decade the Republic of Serbia progressed in gender equality in terms of establishment of normative and institutional framework for gender equality, reporting on international commitments and women’s participation in Government and National Assembly. Still, institutions mandated for gender equality are in most cases under capacitated and lack adequate financing, gender equality has not yet been firmly established on the political agenda, and inequalities in society are persistent and underpinned by deeply rooted patriarchal social norms and beliefs.

Serbia has European Union (EU) candidate status since 2013 and since 2014, negotiations on EU accession chapters have been opened¹. Gender equality should be mainstreamed in all reforms aiming at adjusting domestic laws and policies with EU acquis, including in the related EU assistance programming. EU 2020 Report on Serbia² calls for efficient institutional set-up of gender mechanisms with adequate resources, adoption of the delayed new Law on Gender Equality and clarification of the roles and relations between the key gender equality mechanisms. Among EC’s recommendations important place have measures for reducing gender gap in employment and increasing women’s economic participation.

Project Background: Taking such context into account, in the period 2018 – 2020, UN Women Programme Office in Serbia, in close cooperation with the National Coordination Body for Gender Equality (CBGE) and the

Ministry of European Integration (MEI) has implemented the project ‘Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia’ (Gender Equality Facility / GEF), funded by the EU within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II. It aimed to support further advancement of gender equality through support to the main national GEM in implementation of national gender equality policy, through support to the gender mainstreaming of EU accession process and IPA fund programming and through support to the civil society organizations to take active role in the implementation of National Strategy for Gender Equality. Total project budget is EUR 2,000,000.

The project’s intervention logic entails three result areas, covering: 1) capacity strengthening of CBGE to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes; 2) strengthening capacities of MEI and IPA units to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes and 3) supporting women’s civil society organisations (CSOs) to implement measures of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality in the area of women’s economic empowerment and rural women in particular.

Approach and Methodology: The evaluation was conducted by two Independent evaluators and was completed between mid-October 2020 and end of January 2021. Evaluation purpose was to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the intervention from the point of view of relevance, effectiveness, impact, organizational efficiency and sustainability. The findings of the evaluation should contribute to organizational learning, future decision-making and effective programming and accountability. The findings of the evaluation will moreover be used by UN Women and its partners in CBGE to engage policy makers and other stakeholders at national and local levels in evidence-based dialogues and to advocate for gender-responsive strategies to promote inclusive local and national economic development with a particular focus on rural women.

1 Since negotiations started in January 2014, 18 out of 35 chapters have been opened, two of which provisionally closed.

2 European Commission, *Serbia 2020 Report*, accessed on 24.10.2020. at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/serbia_report_2020.pdf

The evaluation used theory based and contribution analysis approach, aiming to describe how the project worked and created a desired change, explaining the causalities between resources, activities, short and long-term outcomes. OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability)³ were used to summarise information on relevance and capture results achieved at outcome and output levels, lessons learnt and sustainability perspectives. From a forward-looking perspective, the evaluation aimed to provide action-oriented recommendations to UN Women PO in Serbia with regards to its work on engendering EU integration process and potential internal coordination in UN Women portfolio and external synergies with other development stakeholders.

The methodology employed mixed methods including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods (documentation review and semi-structured interviews) and analytical approaches to understand complexity of the processes and structures and gender relations in them. Gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW) and human rights were integrated in the approach, including evaluation criteria and questions, and in generation of findings, conclusions and recommendations. 40 key informants (38 women and 2 men) were interviewed and more than 70 key documents, including project documentation, research, analyses and legal and policy documents were reviewed.

The evaluation adhered to UN Women and UN Evaluation Group standards and policies. Conclusions and recommendations are based on gender related data and gender analysis. Evaluation took into account UN commitment on disability inclusion and covered disability through evaluation questions.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic and meeting restrictions, the evaluation was organised virtually. This has not affected data collection from the institutions and civil society organisations and experts, while the absence of site visits to the grantees project sites limited access to end beneficiaries. This limitation was compensated through triangulation of data collected in

key informant interviews and those from publications and news stories.

Evaluation findings:

Relevance: Evaluation found GEF project has been highly relevant to the context, national priorities and international commitments of the Republic of Serbia, including both EU accession framework and global standards, such as CEDAW, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Sustainable Development Goals. The GEF project design and implementation integrate human rights and GEEW and considers needs of diverse groups of marginalized women: rural, older, with disabilities, Roma, minorities. Thanks to its design and slight adjustments, GEF continues to be relevant in significantly changed context after covid-19 pandemic outbreak.

Coherence: GEF project corresponds mainly with normative UN women mandate in the areas of strengthening the institutional gender equality mechanisms, but also with operational mandate in the area of economic empowerment of women as a part of policy implementation. The interventions implemented through GEF project are complementary with other UN Women interventions, particularly gender responsive budgeting, as well as with some interventions implemented by other UN agencies, particularly UNOPS and its support to local economic development. GEF project is also complementary to national government initiatives in the area of horizontal and vertical coordination of gender equality mechanisms and interventions of CSOs in gender equality and local development. Criticism exist among part of CSOs that sees competition in UN Women and would prefer to have direct access to EU funds. Still, interviewees recognize a series of comparative advantages of UN Women: expertise, ability to identify key priorities for intervention, developing horizontal, partnering relationship even with small grassroots organizations, providing support and building up capacities of partners beyond the mere contractual donor-beneficiary relation, authority and credibility, commitment and motivation of staff and consistency.

3 OECD/DAC *Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance*: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

Effectiveness: UN Women and its partners achieved considerable results, reaching closely or surpassing most of the targets set at the outcome and output levels. At the outcome level the project supported national stakeholders in managing several strategic processes related to GEEW and engendering EU assistance programming. Normative and capacity building efforts supporting CBGE, gender focal points and local GEMs were rather effective, although not resulting in adoption of new Gender Equality Law and drafted NAP for GE due to external factors. As still much of the contribution to results rely on UN Women, there is still space for UN Women to support the CBGE in strengthening its institutional status and financing and MEI in institutionalization of established practices of gender mainstreaming of EU accession and programming processes. Normative and capacity building efforts supporting MEI resulted in increase of knowledge on gender mainstreaming in MEI and IPA units, sectoral analyses and engendering of IPA action documents. Further support in gender analysis and mainstreaming is still expected. Activities aiming at economic empowerment of women at the local level and in rural areas, capacity building and supporting women's businesses led to increased self-esteem and confidence, networking and advocacy actions and in many cases to self-employment and employment. GEF project led to unexpected results related to increasing interest and putting engendering of environment and climate change sectors on the agenda, capacity building of EU Delegations staff in the Western Balkans, contacts and initiatives with new government institutions.

Efficiency: Resources were strategically allocated to achieve the expected results and to support gender equality and human rights and reach those most vulnerable. As many areas of intervention are long-term investments it is still too early to assess cost-effectiveness of the programme. Therefore there is a need to continue following-up on the results and continued support to promising result areas. There has been effective leadership and management of the GEF project by UN Women Programme Office in Serbia, even taking the account of the status of the office and its dependence on services of the Regional Office. Monitoring of the indicators set is continuous and serves the project management. Still some further follow-up on selected initiatives would be welcome in future.

Impact: It is difficult to assess the impact on system/institutions due to the changes in the government and need to observe the implementation of programmes engendered through GEF project as well as future policy and programming processes in order to measure how project results impacted those institutional settings, procedures as well as institutions and population expected to benefit from them. With regards to economic empowerment of women, at this stage evidence indicates impact at individual level (project beneficiaries) who gained new skills, equipment, self-confidence, but also new social capital through networking, so they could engage in new economic activities, or to improve their economic participation due to the new technologies or new forms of organizations and access to markets. Local organizations increased capacities in project application, management, monitoring and reporting. Part of the evidence also points to the wider benefits for local communities, reflected in increased economic activity and new socio-cultural dynamics. Evaluation evidenced impact among those most vulnerable – rural women whose economic participation was very weak before project. Not only they increased their economic participation due to the project, but also economic benefits and in some cases that impacted their better position in the family and the community.

Sustainability: Institutional capacities are under risk and can undermine sustainability due to the frequent changes of institutional arrangements, changes in prioritization and high fluctuation of public administration personnel. Individual capacities of women beneficiaries are sustainable but their functionality in terms of application in new economic initiatives depend still on further support as they belong to the fragile category of nascent businesses which require support during first 42 months as evidence by the entrepreneurship studies and programmes. National ownership is evidenced to limited extent and evaluation indicates need for further support to the national institutions for integrating gender in key policy processes, and the sustainability of GEF achievement and possible further advances will strongly depend on the role of EU Delegation.

Conclusions:

Conclusion 1 (Strength): The GEF project is highly relevant to the national priorities for GEEW and international commitments of Serbia (particularly Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, SDGs and EU integration).

Conclusion 2 (Strength): The GEF project is designed and implemented with high human right standards, it promotes women's human rights and brings benefits to women from diverse marginalized groups - rural, older, with disabilities, Roma, minorities - in line with principle Leave No One Behind. 1st phase of GEF Project generated extensive learnings from the work with rural women and women belonging to vulnerable groups that can support even sharper analysis and approach to these groups by national and local institutions and organisations in the next stage.

Conclusion 3 (Opportunity, Risk): Results achieved in the 1st phase are still fragile and continued support of all key stakeholders including UN Women, CBGE and MEI and the Delegation of the EU is necessary to strengthen their sustainability perspectives.

Conclusion 4 (Opportunity): UN Women wisely and responsibly manages the GEF project resources investing the most into those areas that are likely to provide long term results and using any savings to expand opportunities for deepening its effects through new co-operations or to address emerging unexpected challenges (e.g. effects of COVID-19 pandemics).

Conclusion 5 (Opportunity): UN Women Programme Presence in Serbia appears to be a regional leader in GEF, with opportunity to share the best practices and lessons learnt to the countries in the region of Western Balkans and Turkey as well with the EU Delegations in these countries.

BOX

Lessons Learnt:

- In a context where gender equality is not at the top of political agenda or is even marginalized, continuous support to institutional gender mechanisms may be beneficial to preserve their coordination role and keep gender mainstreaming in public discourse. This can be further supported by simultaneous mobilization of other institutions for gender equality and spreading a network of supporters.
 - GEF project invested significant financial and human resources in production of quality gender analyses. Recommendations from the analysis could be used in future programming by both the Government and by UN Women, or they can become priorities of the public calls for UN Women's grants to institutions and CSOs, so their implementation is taken forward.
 - Programmes of economic empowerment of women in rural areas and vulnerable women are not purely entrepreneurship programmes, but programmes of empowerment, improvement of self-esteem, soft-skills, participation and contribution to the community. They are programmes of quality-of-life improvement, that also bring financial income to women and their families.
- This is how they should be promoted and communicated so their nature is better understood and they are not judged before they have even started.
- There are positive examples of synergies between local gender equality mechanisms and CSOs in supporting reach out to women in rural areas and other vulnerable groups or design of gender responsive grant or incentive schemes for economic empowerment. This cooperation could be used as one of the criteria for future support to projects at local level.
 - There is a solid level of interest of women in academia, experts from different sectors including local development, energy and environment to engage on GEEW that can contribute with evidence-based data and scientific approach to advocacy for gender equality. If there is political readiness, dialogue platforms can be used to bring them together with women's CSOs and human rights organisations as traditional advocates for GEEW and engage a wider community of scientists and practitioners in quality dialogue over policy reforms.

Conclusion 6 (Strength, Risk): UN Women is effective in raising interest in new institutions, mobilising and bringing new experts to area of gender mainstreaming of public policies and opening new areas of engagement. While generally positive, diversification of partnerships can also bear risk of overstressing the capacities of UN Women in case new institutions and organisations are slow in taking ownership and responsibility for action.

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Dialogue with the Government on strengthening the role of the CBGE, its institutionalisation and resourcing should be renewed, as well as on strengthening its horizontal and vertical coordination of gender mainstreaming. Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue should be also involved in order to define and delineate responsibilities between these two entities.

Recommendation 2: UN Women should engage in dialogue with MEI and EU Delegation to discuss how to safeguard the gender measures and indicators introduced at programming stage, up to the stage of implementation that usually comes several years later.

Recommendation 3: Gender mainstreaming capacity building of GEMs at all levels, MEI and other institutions should be continued and involve learnings from GEF phase 1, particularly in terms of addressing women's human rights in general and rights of women belonging to vulnerable groups. This should be coordinated with and the trainings should be accredited by the Academy for Public Administration.

Recommendation 4: Trainings for empowerment of women should be further supported. Learnings from the first cycle of economic empowerment support should be used to further sharpen the approach. Mentoring as a capacity building method should be introduced particularly in running and developing newly established economic activities.

Recommendation 5: UN Women should support initiatives related to the strengthening legal framework for gender equality and anti-discrimination, particularly drafting and adoption of the new Law on Gender Equality and new Strategy for Gender Equality. Strengthening of institutional and financial position of GEMs and should be taken into account.

Recommendation 6: UN Women Programme Office in Serbia and UN Women ECA RO should support more dynamic exchange and discussion on possible ways to achieve more regional coherence and synergy in future GEF activities, or through other opportunities as well as exchange through EU Delegations in the Western Balkans and UN Women in order to consistently support advancement of GEEW in EU accession process.

Recommendation 7: Findings and recommendations from analyses conducted in the GEF 1, particularly those related to development grants and grants for CSOs should be used in future design of activities.

Recommendation 8: In order to increase sustainability of new economic initiatives of women, established through GEF, new GEF project could dedicate a part of the project budget for support to beneficiaries of the previous project cycle. This could be done with small grants, precisely targeting key needs that can secure these economic initiatives, their maturation and sustainability.

Recommendation 9: Dialogue platforms of women in academia and women in CSOs and local GEMs should be further supported.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Over the last decade the Republic of Serbia progressed in gender equality in terms of establishment of normative and institutional framework for gender equality, reporting on international commitments and women's participation in Government and National Assembly. Still, institutions mandated for gender equality are in most cases under capacitated and lack adequate financing, gender equality has not yet been firmly established on the political agenda, and inequalities in society are persistent and underpinned by deeply rooted patriarchal social norms and beliefs.

National framework for gender equality and empowerment of women (GEEW) in Serbia is guided by the international commitments, including inter alia the *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)* (1979) and *Optional Protocol to the CEDAW* (2000), *Convention on the Political Rights of Women* (1953), *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women* (1993), *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (1995), *UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security* (2000), *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (2011). The Government of Serbia has been active in the reporting to the international mechanisms, as well as were the CSOs in preparation of the shadow reports⁴.

Gender equality is encoded in the *Constitution* (Article 15) and is further stipulated by the *Law on equality of sexes* (2009) and *Law prohibiting discrimination* (2009) as well as by the sectoral laws on employment,

work, social protection, education, health care, access to justice, and other areas. Of particular importance for the prevention and elimination of violence against women is the *Law on prevention of Domestic violence* (2017). National gender equality policies are guided by the overarching *National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020*⁵ and its *Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2016-2018*. The *Action Plan for 2019-2020* was drafted, but never adopted by the Government.

Gender equality coordination mechanisms are established at the central level through *Coordination Body for Gender Equality (CBGE)*, under the authority of Deputy Prime Minister, and at provincial and local levels. At the central level, main mechanism for gender equality was within the *Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (Sector for antidiscrimination and gender equality)*. There are two independent oversight institutions for the protection and promotion of gender equality: The *Commissioner for the protection of equality*, and the *Protector of citizens*, with one deputy protector responsible for gender equality. At the level of *Autonomous Province (AP) of Vojvodina*, gender equality is under responsibility of *Secretariat for the social policy, demography and gender equality*. Although almost all local self-governments have established *GEMs* in some form, many are not active or lack financial support from the budget to effectively perform their mandates. Within the last reconstruction of the Government in 2020, a new *Ministry of Human, Minority Rights and Social Dialogue* was introduced which is from now on is also to be considered a part of the mechanisms structure.

The *Budget System Law* mandates the implementation of *gender-responsive budgeting (GRB)*, which entails gender mainstreaming of the budget process, including a gender analysis of the financial plans and restructuring of income and expenditures to advance gender equality. The law also mandates that

4 The *Fourth periodic report to CEDAW Committee* was submitted in 2017, followed by dynamic shadow reporting of CSOs (over 10 reports). The *First state report to the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)* was submitted in 2018, while alternative reports were submitted by *Protector of Citizens of the Republic of Serbia* and a number of women's organizations. Serbia has also participated in the *Beijing +25* process.

5 <https://www.rodnaravnopravnost.gov.rs/sr/dokumenti/strategije/nacionalna-strategija-za-rodnu-ravnopravnost-za-period-od-2016-do-2020-godine>

the budget system efficiently allocate resources for advancing gender equality. While GRB at the national level has largely taken place, there are challenges in its implementation at local level.⁶

Serbia has European Union (EU) candidate status since 2013. Since 2014, negotiations on EU accession chapters have been opened⁷. Gender equality should be mainstreamed in all reforms aiming at adjusting domestic laws and policies with EU acquis. In the EU 2020 Report on Serbia⁸, European Commission (EC) notes that adoption of a new law on gender equality has been ‘seriously delayed’, that division of responsibilities between the sector for anti-discrimination policy and improvement of gender equality within the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs and the CBGE needs to be clarified; that efficient institutional set-up with adequate resources needs to be ensured. The EC emphasizes the need for adoption of the strategy and action plan on combating violence against women. Among EC’s recommendations important place have measures for reducing gender gap in employment and increasing women’s economic participation.

Gender Equality Index shows inequalities are still prominent⁹. Between 2014 and 2016, Serbia has made progress of 3.4 points, mostly attributed to indicators in domain of power. Compared to EU 28, Serbia was ranked on 22nd position with the biggest gap between Serbia and EU-28 in the domain of money and time.

Progress in political participation continued after last year elections, in the proportion of women among members of National Assembly (39.2%), largely

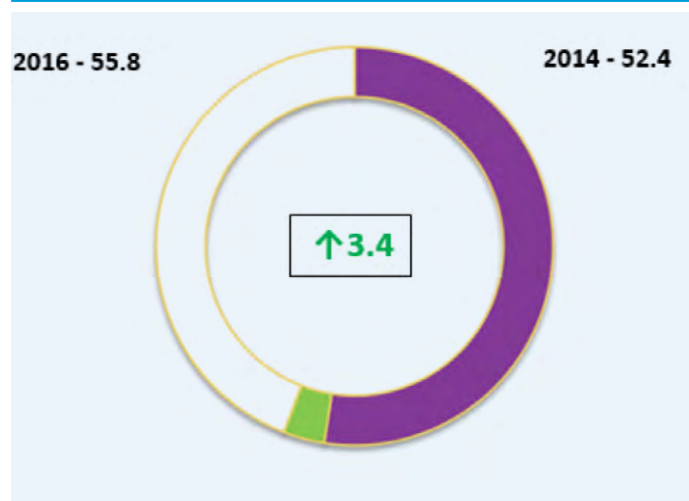
6 The Evaluation of Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Gender Equality Strategy of Serbia 2016–2020, UN Women, 2018.

7 Since negotiations started in January 2014, 18 out of 35 chapters have been opened, two of which provisionally closed.

8 European Commission, Serbia 2020 Report, accessed on 24.10.2020. at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/serbia_report_2020.pdf

9 The EIGE’s Gender Equality Index provides a comprehensive measure of gender equality which captures gender gaps, while also taking into account the levels of achievement in each country for six domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power, health, and two satellite domains: violence against women and intersecting inequalities.

FIGURE 1:
Gender Equality Index, Republic of Serbia, 2014-2016



Source: SIPRU, *Gender Equality Index Serbia 2018*

supported by quotas in the elections law¹⁰ and the Government, where currently the prime minister and 10 of 23 minister positions are held by women.

Gender inequality remains high in access to employment and resources, including property, land, financial markets, transport, jobs, and others. Women have constantly and consistently lower activity and employment rates than men and higher inactivity rates.

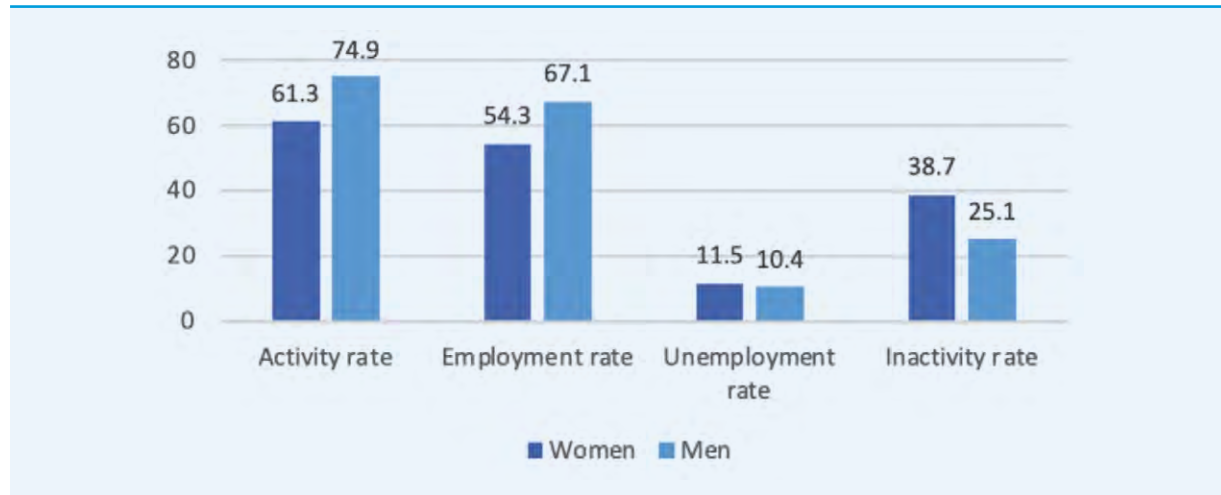
Gender inequalities manifest also through unbalanced distribution of responsibilities for family and household maintenance. Time Use Survey in 2015 revealed that women spend less time daily on paid work than men (on average 42 minutes less), but much more time on unpaid work (on average 2 hours and 18 minutes more). Their total work hours are longer and the time dedicated to leisure activities shorter. In rural areas, women spend even more time on unpaid household work.¹¹

With respect to intrahousehold spending, studies indicate that decision-making is centralized under

10 National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Gender Structure, <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/narodna-skupstina-/narodna-skupstina-u-brojkama/polna-struktura.1739.html>

11 SORS. Time Use Survey in the Republic of Serbia 2010 and 2015, 2017.

FIGURE 2:
Basic labour market indicators for women and men old 15-64 years, 2019



Source: SORS, Labour Force Survey 2019: 14-15

the authority of one, usually male, family member. While women have responsibility for decision-making on everyday expenditures related to household consumption, men have primary responsibility for strategic decision-making on household budgets.¹² Some groups face obstacles in accessing household funds, such as rural women who participate in unpaid work on family farms.¹³

According to the Institute for Sociological Research surveys in 2012 and 2018, patriarchal attitudes are still widespread as 61 percent of men and 57 percent of women in Serbia agreed with the statement, “If only one in the couple is employed, it is natural that this should be a man.”¹⁴ Additionally, 55 percent of men and women agreed with the statement, “Domestic household tasks are by nature more appropriate for

women.” Furthermore, 41 percent of men, and 40 percent of women agreed that public activities are more suitable for men.

Asymmetric gender regimes, patriarchal culture, history of recent conflicts in the region and economic hardships contributed to the relatively high prevalence of various forms of gender-based violence in Serbia. According to data from OSCE survey on wellbeing and safety of women conducted in summer 2018, just over one fifth of women older than 15 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by either their partner or other person. Partner relationships carry the greater danger of these forms of violence than any other, as indicated by double the higher rate of physical and/or sexual violence committed against women by their current or former partners compared to other persons (17% vs. 8%). In partner violence, psychological violence is most commonly experienced, with 44% of women reported they experienced this form of partner violence.

12 Babovi , M. Work Strategies and Intrahousehold Relations: Serbia 2003-2007, in Milic, A, Tomanovic, S. (eds.) Contemporary Families in Serbia in Comparative Perspective, ISIFF, Belgrade, 135–150, 2009.

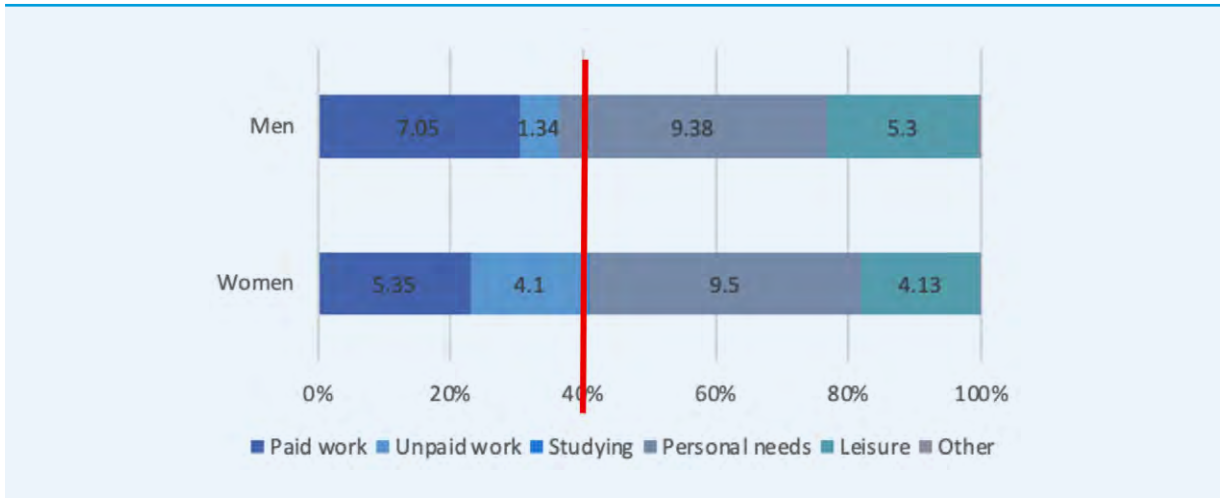
13 Babovi , M, Vukovi , O. Rural Women in the Status of Family Helpers: Position, Roles and Welfare Rights, UNDP Belgrade, 2009

14 Data are calculated from a database produced by the survey implemented by Institute for Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade through project “Challenges of New Social Integration in Serbia: Concepts and Actors,” Financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (reg. no. 179035).

1.2. Project Description

Within the described context, in the period 2018–2020, UN Women has implemented the project ‘Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia’ (Gender Equality Facility / GEF), funded by the European Union

FIGURE 3:
Average number of hours spent in daily activities, employed persons old 15+ by gender, Serbia 2015



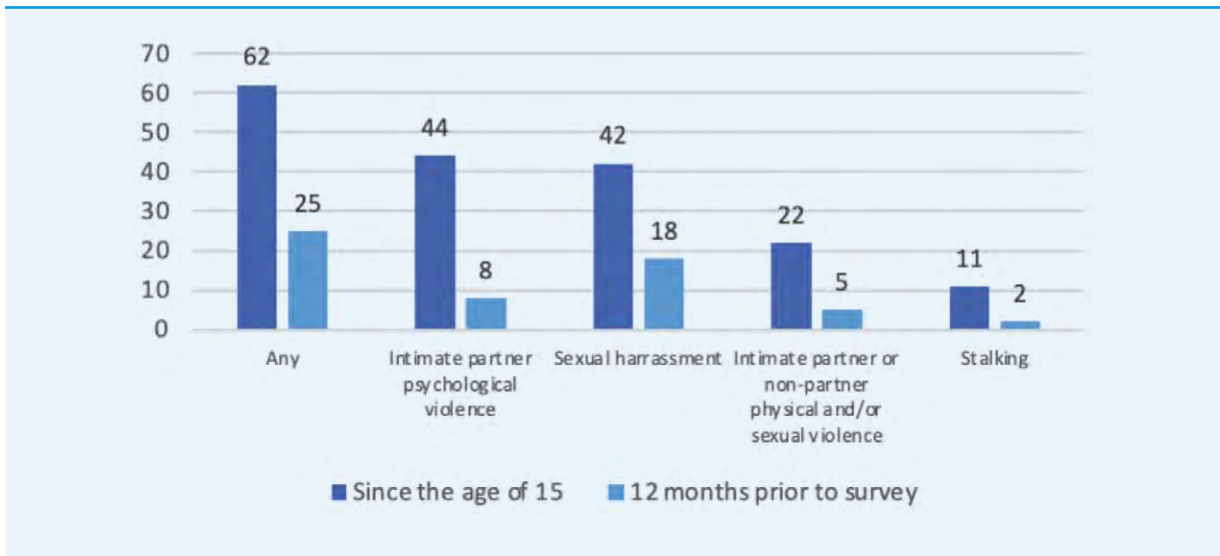
Source: SORS, Time Use Survey in the Republic of Serbia 2010 and 2015

within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II. It aimed to support further advancement of gender equality through support to the main national GEM in implementation of national gender equality policy, through support to the gender mainstreaming of EU accession process and IPA fund programming and through support to the civil society organizations to take active role in the implementation of National

Strategy for Gender Equality. Total project budget is EUR 2,000,000.

UN Women has implemented the project in close cooperation with the CBGE, the Ministry of European Integration (MEI), the EU Delegation in Serbia and other partner institutions and women's organisations.

FIGURE 4:
Prevalence of different forms of violence against women



Source: OSCE Survey on wellbeing and safety of Women, quoted from SIPRU (2018) Gender Equality Index Serbia 2018.

UN Women has the overall responsibility for managing the implementation. The UN Women’s GEF Team members include: Project Manager, three Project Officers (each responsible for one result area), Finance Officer, Project Assistant and Communication Officer. Project is further supported by external experts – consultants.

Specific objective is to enable CBGE, the MEI and the key institutions mandated for gender equality to progress in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and in the oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis.

The project’s intervention logic entails three result areas:

Result 1: The CBGE has the administrative capacities to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes -

Result 2: The MEI and IPA units have the knowledge and skills to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes.

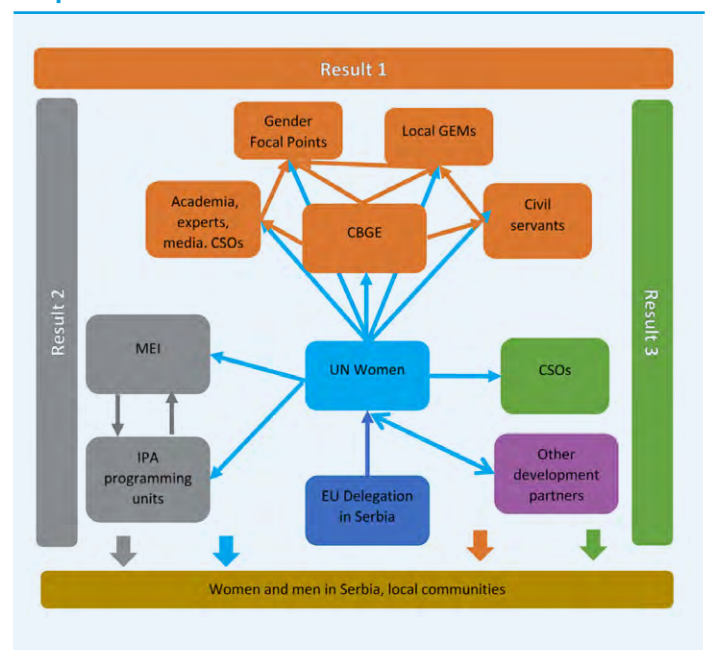
Result 3: Women CSOs are supported to implement measures and share experiences and good practices in the implementation of measures of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality in the area of women’s economic empowerment and the empowerment of rural women.

Under the Result 1, the CBGE was supported by strengthening its administrative structures and capacities in order to contribute to implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality. Capacity building was provided to other GEMs (gender focal points in the institutions and local GEMs) and civil servants in line ministries and institutions involved in gender mainstreaming actions. Institutional horizontal and vertical coordination, implementation of GEEW commitments at the local level as well as participatory dialogue on GEEW with external stakeholders were integrated. CBGE was also supported in leading several strategic processes and key communication and visibility campaigns around International Women’s Day, 16 Days of Activism, HeForShe, Beijing +25 etc. This pillar of the project included a number of

other stakeholders, such as members of Parliament, representatives of academia, gender experts, media and development partners, which engaged in the dialogue with the CBGE, contributing to the more effective monitoring and implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and other initiatives focused on the advancement of gender equality and undertaken by the CBGE.

Under the Result 2, the MEI, being responsible for organizing and coordinating processes on IPA planning, programming monitoring and reporting, was supported in gender mainstreaming of the key national development documents and funds, including The National Priorities for International Assistance in the Republic of Serbia, 2021-2025 (NAD). IPA programming units participating in the processes across sectors through the mechanisms of Sector Working Groups and Sectoral Monitoring Committees were also supported. This component entailed capacity building for gender mainstreaming of IPA and sectoral gender analyses and gender mainstreaming of sector action documents (environment, disaster and risk reduction, human resource and social development, rule of law and home affairs, and competitiveness etc.) and development or engendering relevant process guidelines.

FIGURE 5:
Map of stakeholders



Source: SIPRU, *Gender Equality Index Serbia 2018*

Under the Result 3, women in local communities, including rural areas were provided with resources and capacity building to support their economic empowerment, improve their access to the labour market and encourage entrepreneurship. This was done through grants to women's CSOs that implement the initiatives around gender equality and women empowerment with the focus on economic empowerment of women and empowerment of rural women. Women in local communities were also supported in building initiatives and organisation of local events to influence existing organisations and initiate establishment of new associations of rural women and women with disabilities to participate stronger in local decision-making, developing initiatives and advocating for improvement of their position. Knowledge and lessons learnt exchange among grant beneficiaries was also facilitated.

Indirect beneficiaries included women benefiting from the actions of the women's civil society organizations on the economic empowerment; women and men reached with campaigns on gender equality and women's rights, as well as communities which benefited because of the gender-responsive planning, service delivery and budget allocations.

Relevant stakeholders are also **other development partners**, such as other UN agencies active in Serbia, as well as UN Women offices in other countries in the region implementing GEF projects, as coordination

with these stakeholders is envisaged under the terms of GEF framework.

1.3. Intervention Logic and Theory of Change

The Project document and ToC as outlined in the project (below), together with the logical framework matrix and learnings from the inception meeting provided a solid foundation to reconstruct a more comprehensive ToC (Figure 6).

Lower part of reconstructed ToC demonstrates UN Women's triple mandate and a principle of coordination with institutions, UN and other development agencies as well as mutual learning and exchange with other GEF projects in the region that should be integrated throughout implementation.

The line above presents the key strategies UNW PO deploys in GEF project, such as capacity building, financial support and expertise, convening and facilitation of dialogue, across all three result areas. Under assumption there is apolitical commitment and interest of the stakeholders, at the output level - partners, target groups and end beneficiaries will improve their capacities for successful implementation of GEEW commitments, engendering EU integration processes and to pursue women's economic empowerment (WEE) actions at the local level.

BOX

Theory of change as defined by the project:

IF the Coordination Body for Gender Equality has the administrative capacities to implement the National strategy for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes;

IF The Ministry of European Integration and IPA units have the knowledge and skills to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes; **IF** Women CSOs are supported to implement measures and share experiences and good practices in the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality in the area of women's economic empowerment and the empowerment of rural women;

THEN The Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of European Integration, and the key institutions mandated for gender equality, progress in the implementation of the National strategy for Gender Equality and in the oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis;

BECAUSE The Government of Serbia consistently will comply with national and international gender equality commitments and EU Gender Equality Acquis.

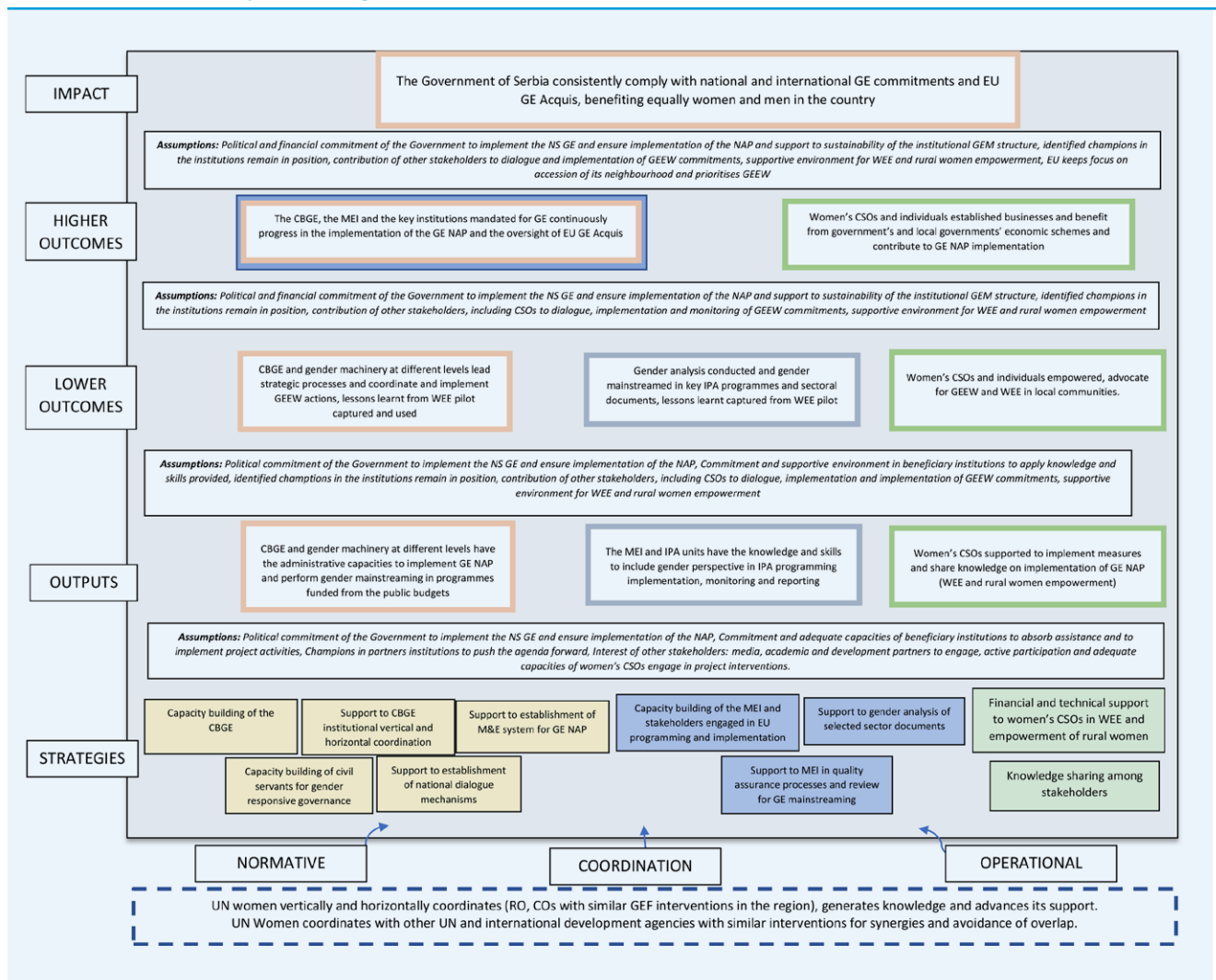
Political commitment, stability of partner institutions and engagement of champions committed to GEEW, strong involvement of CSOs, together with overall supportive environment remain key external preconditions for success throughout the ToC.

Thanks to UNW PO strategies, and if these preconditions are fulfilled, at the level of lower outcomes it is expected the institutions will lead key strategic processes on GEEW, mainstream gender in EU funding

programming and implementation and improve GEEW and WEE policies at the local level.

If adequate financial allocations from the public budgets are added to all previous preconditions, higher level outcomes are reflected in continuous progress in implementation of NAP and adoption and implementation of EU Gender Equality Acquis. At the local level, women's businesses and new jobs are created supporting overall implementation of the gender equality agenda.

FIGURE 6:
Reconstructed Theory of Change



2. EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation was conducted by two Independent evaluators and was completed between mid-October 2020 and end of January 2021.

2.1. Evaluation purpose and objectives

The **purpose** of the final evaluation of GEF Project was to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the intervention from the point of view of relevance, effectiveness, impact, organizational efficiency and sustainability. The findings of the evaluation should contribute to organizational learning, future decision-making and effective programming and accountability. The findings of the evaluation will moreover be used by UN Women and its partners in CBGE to engage policy makers and other stakeholders at national and local levels in evidence-based dialogues and to advocate for gender-responsive strategies to promote inclusive local and national economic development with a particular focus on rural women.

The **specific evaluation objectives** were to:

- Analyse relevance of the project objectives, strategy and approach at the local and national levels for the Government to comply with national and international gender equality commitments and EU Gender Equality Acquis;
- Assess effectiveness and a potential measurable impact of the project intervention on the target group across all three results;
- Assess organizational efficiency and coordination mechanisms in progressing towards the achievement of the project results, including the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the intervention;
- Assess the intervention in advancing gender equality and sustainability of results;

- Analyse how human rights-based approach and gender equality principles are integrated in the project implementation;
- Assess how the intervention and its results relate and contribute to the Agenda 2030 and SDGs;
- Identify and document lessons learned, good practices and innovations, success stories and challenges within the project, to inform future work of participating UN agencies in the frameworks of gender mainstreaming and good governance;
- Provide specific recommendations on priority areas to be considered in future projects of UN Women Serbia Office, including interventions that require continued support, interventions to be expanded and recommendations on prioritizing interventions to maximize impact;
- Identify strategies for replication and up-scaling of the project's best practices;
- Define recommendations to improve project management structure.

2.2. Evaluation scope

Time scope: The final evaluation of the GEF Project is conducted at the end of project implementation and covered its entire duration of the project (since March 2018).

Priority areas: The evaluation covered all three result areas of the project, project management structures, coordination structures and mechanisms (horizontal at national and vertical to the local level), actions conducted at the local governments level and with local CSO. Evaluation took into account GEEW and human rights approach and how disability was addressed in design and implementation.

Geographic scope: The evaluation covered all the locations in Serbia in which the project has been implemented. Interviews were conducted with stakeholders from Belgrade and from 9 other local self-governments in Serbia. Coordination and exchange with other GEF projects in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia) was addressed too.

2.3. Evaluation Design

The evaluation used theory based and contribution analysis approach, aiming to describe how the project worked and created a desired change, explaining the causalities between resources, activities, short and long-term outcomes. The ToC took into account the context in which the GEF project took place, interactions of specific groups of stakeholders, explaining how causal links worked and identifying what else has to happen for the causal linkages to be realized. The evaluation was designed based on the terms of reference (TOR), reviewed project documentation and consultations with UN Women / GEF employees.

This was a final project evaluation and had both, summative and formative character. OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability)¹⁵ were used to summarise information on relevance and capture results achieved at outcome and output levels, lessons learnt and sustainability perspectives. From a forward-looking perspective, the evaluation aimed to provide action-oriented recommendations to UN Women PO in Serbia with regards to its work on engendering EU integration process and potential internal coordination in UN Women portfolio and external synergies with other development stakeholders.

The evaluation was implemented in four phases: Inception (initial consultations with UN Women team and documentation review, development of evaluation methodology and inception report); Data collection (documentation review and semi-structured interviews); Data analysis (data analysis,

presentation of preliminary findings) and Reporting (preparation and presentation of the final report).

The methodology employed mixed methods including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analytical approaches to understand complexity of the processes and structures and gender relations in them. In terms of lessons learned and good practice models, the evaluation team utilized appreciative inquiry and positive deviances approaches that focused on existing strengths but also identified main areas of possible improvement and challenges to the implementation.

The evaluation adhered to UN Women Evaluation Policy¹⁶, UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation¹⁷, Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct¹⁸, UNEG guidance on integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations with gender responsive and human rights approaches¹⁹ integrated into the scope and conduct of the evaluation. GEEW and human rights were integrated in the approach, including evaluation criteria and questions, and in generation of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Conclusions and recommendations are based on gender related data and gender analysis. Evaluation took into account UN commitment on disability inclusion²⁰ and covered disability through evaluation questions.

2.4. Limitations

Due to COVID-19 pandemic and meeting restrictions, the evaluation was organised virtually. This has not

15 OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

16 <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2012/10/evaluation-policy-of-the-united-nations-entity-for-gender-equality-and-the-empowerment-of-women>

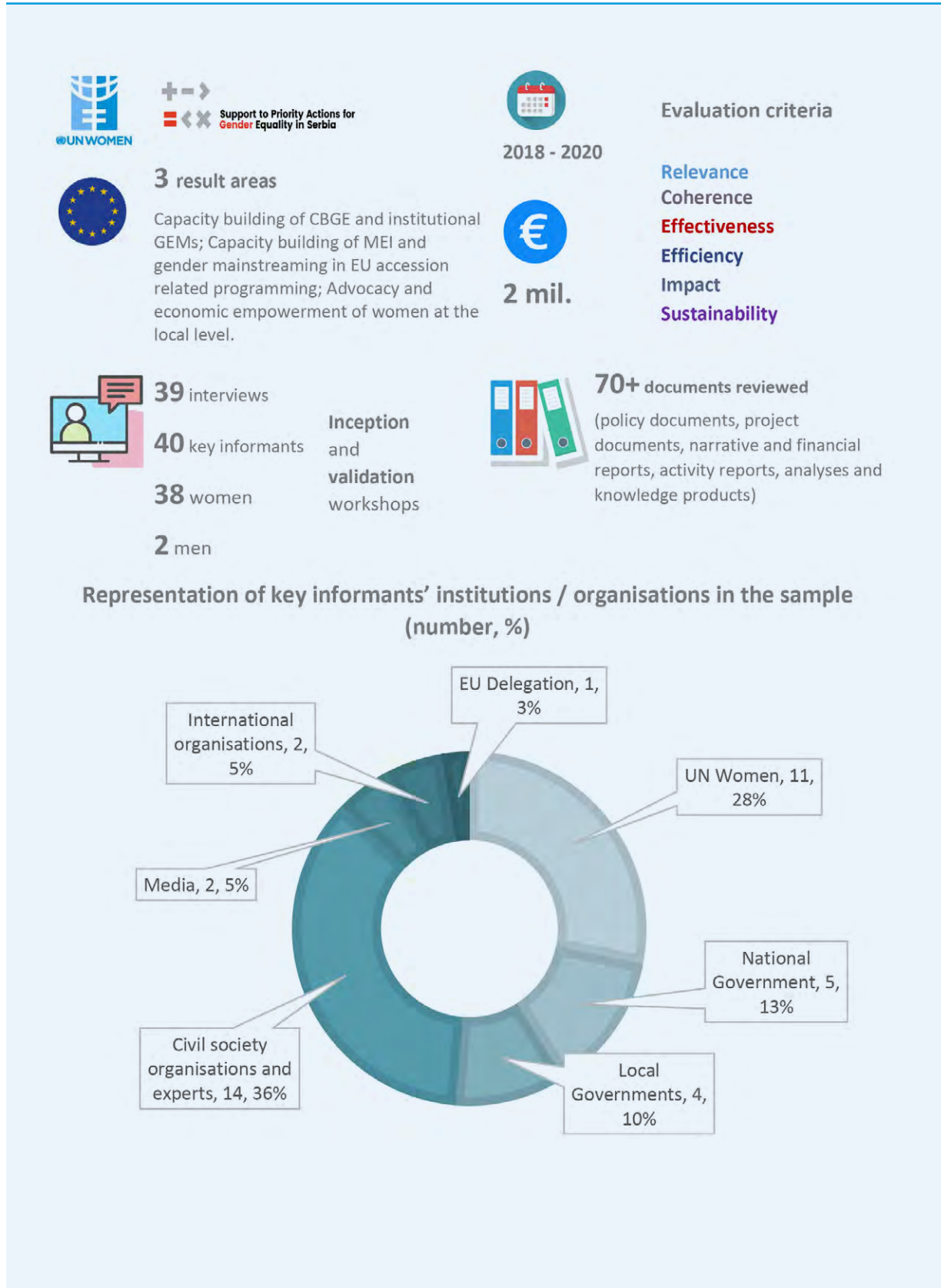
17 <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>; t

18 <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>

19 Including: Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation Towards UNEG Guidance; UNEG Handbook for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality Perspectives in Evaluations in the UN System

20 UN Disability Inclusion Strategy for further reference: https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/03/UNDIS_20-March-2019_for-HLCM.P.pdf

FIGURE 7:
Evaluation overview



affected data collection from the institutions and civil society organisations and experts, while the absence of site visits to the grantees project sites limited access to end beneficiaries. Still, several selected women supported through employment programmes were involved in the sample. This limitation was compensated through triangulation of data collected in key informant interviews and those from publications and news stories. In some cases end beneficiaries organised virtual calls in their manufactures or presented photographs and documentation and the evaluation team was able to get more complete perception of the results.

Due to the nature of activities and duration of the project, data for proper assessment of systemic and transformational impact were limited. Still, some evidence on impact at individual level of project beneficiaries was collected and analysed and areas of potential future impact are presented.

2.5. Ethics

Evaluation was conducted with integrity and respect for the beliefs, manners and customs of the social and cultural environment; for human rights and gender equality; and for the ‘do no harm’ principle. Interviews will be led with a tone of respect, openness and rapport. Evaluators respected the rights of institutions, organisations and individuals to provide information in confidence. Before interviews, an explanation of the purpose and the intention of the evaluation was given either in Serbian or English (depending on the language of the interview) and explicit oral consent was sought. Presentation of findings in the report supported anonymity of the key informants.

2.6. Evaluation Questions

Relevance: To what extent the project objectives, design and strategies respond to national partners’ and end beneficiaries’ needs, international commitments and national policy framework in the country. Relevance in the time of the project design and “real time” relevance were observed to ensure that it is sustained over time.

Sub criterion: Alignment	
1	What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia? How does GEF Project respond to them?
2	To what extent is the Project aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions on GEEW and to the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis? To what extent it is aligned with nationalized SDGs?
3	To what extent is the Project aligned with UN Development Partnership Framework in Serbia?
4	To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?
5	To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?
Sub criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality	
6	To what extent has gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation?

Coherence: Compatibility of the project with other relevant interventions. The evaluation observed internal coherence with other UNW PO projects, coherence and coordination with GEF projects in the region and external coherence – with UN agencies, other development partners and with actions of the national stakeholders.

Sub criterion: Internal Coherence

- | | |
|---|---|
| 7 | To what extent does the project fit within UN Women’s Strategic Plan and its threefold mandate? Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women? |
| 8 | To what extent UN Women in Serbia has capitalized from GEF implementation in other countries and how UN Women has established synergies in terms of GEF implementation in the region? |

Sub criterion: External Coherence

- | | |
|----|--|
| 9 | To what extent is the project complementary and coordinated with the interventions of the Government and other actors in the same context? |
| 10 | What is UN Women’s comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project? |

Effectiveness: To what extent the intervention is achieving its objectives. The evaluation looked into qualitative changes for the target groups and beneficiaries, progress against results set, contribution of UNW PO and contribution of other stakeholders, interaction of the intervention with external enabler and barriers.

Sub criterion: Overall Achievements

- | | |
|----|--|
| 11 | To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels? Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? |
| 12 | How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced? |
| 13 | What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)? How did covid-19 pandemic affect the project and how the challenges been mitigated? |
| 14 | What has been the contribution of UN Women to the progress of the achievement of outcomes? |

Sub criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality

- | | |
|----|--|
| 16 | What evidence does exist to support claims that the project is contributing to gender equality and supporting the advancement of women’s rights and rights of those most vulnerable? |
|----|--|

Efficiency: How well are resources used and to what extent the project delivers results in economic and timely way. The evaluation also looked leadership and management functioning, factors that contributed or hindered timely delivery etc.

Sub criterion: Organisational Efficiency

- | | |
|----|---|
| 17 | Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes? |
| 18 | Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results? |

19	To what extent are the project monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets?
20	Were there any constraints in the implementation and how were these mitigated? Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?
21	To what degree does UN Women team have access to the necessary skills, knowledge and capacities needed to deliver?
Sub criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality	
22	To what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?
Impact: Looks to the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects. The evaluation looked for the evidence of change at individual, collective, institutional/organisational level of those involved as well as at the societal level.	
Sub criterion: Areas of Impact	
23	What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)? What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?
Sub criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality	
24	How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?
Sustainability: Looks at the conditions established for the results to continue after the intervention completes and likelihood that they will be sustained. The evaluation will examine normative, financial, institutional, social aspects of sustainability and also analyse of resilience and potential risks.	
Sub criterion: Ownership	
25	To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?
26	To what extent has the project identified opportunities and been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?
Sub criterion: Capacity Development	
27	To what extent has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved and what is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out?
28	To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?
Sub criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality	
29	What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained after the phase out?

2.7. Evaluation Management

The management structure for this evaluation included:

Evaluation Management Group (EMG) composed of UN Women project team members, UN Women Serbia Head of Office, and UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECA RO) Evaluation Specialist and was responsible for: the overall management of the evaluation; overseeing progress of the evaluation, keeping communication with the Evaluation Team; provision of comments to inception and final evaluation reports.

Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) composed of key national institutions involved in the project, EU Delegation and women CSOs representatives tasked to ensure that the evaluation findings and recommendations meet the purpose and are relevant to stakeholders.

UN Women Serbia designated a task manager to support day-to-day management of the evaluation and coordination of the key informant interviews and meetings of EMG and ERG.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Relevance

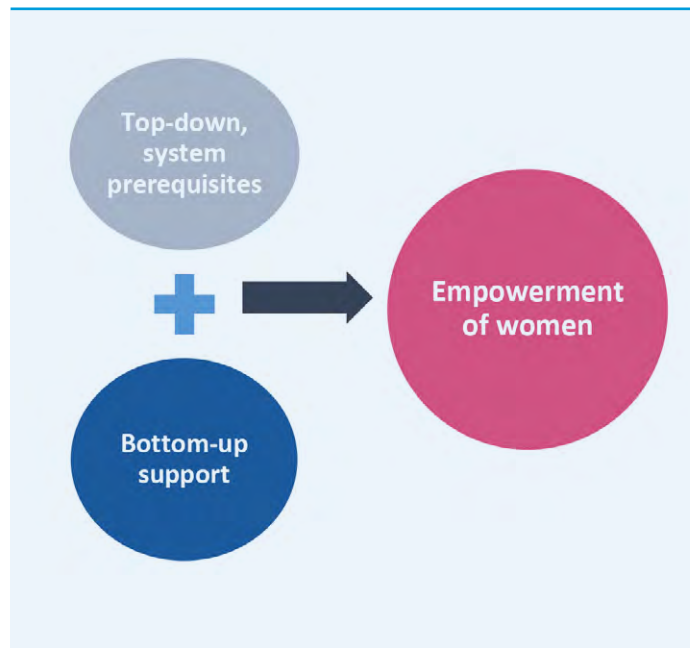
Relevance to the needs of beneficiaries and other stakeholders

Finding 1: The GEF has been designed in line with needs and priorities of women in Serbia, through two-directional approach: top-down, enhancing gender equality mechanisms and mainstreaming gender in EU accession and IPA programming, while at the same time directly empowering women through grass roots actions.

The idea behind the project was to intervene simultaneously in three directions: to support institutional mechanisms for gender equality at national level, to gender mainstream EU accession processes and IPA programming and to directly support and empower women in their economic but also social participation. In all three areas needs for interventions were recognized during previous intense engagement in national institutional and policy processes related to the promotion of gender equality, expertise and cooperation with civil society which provided the insights in the situation of women in regard to their economic participation and social position.

The overarching idea of the project design came after years of experience of UN Women team in the country and dynamic consultations within the team, with regional UN Women office, EU delegation and national partners, particularly CBGE and MEI. The project design was driven by the intention to expand gender equality agenda and promote gender mainstreaming in the areas that were left out of previous initiatives. For years focus of gender equality initiatives and reform processes was narrowly focused on few areas, mainly on violence against women, while some other areas and big investments remained gender blind. Therefore, the intention was to gender mainstream key reform processes in the country in light of EU integration and

FIGURE 8:
Project approach to three lines of intervention

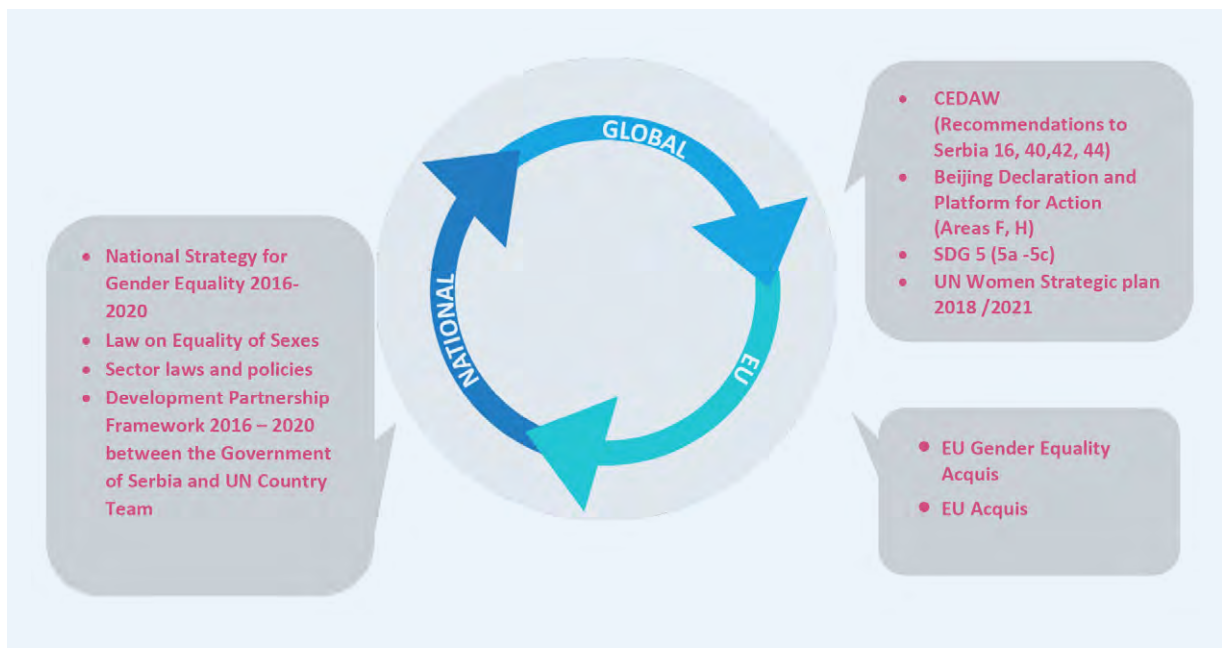


by making EU accession and IPA funding more gender responsible.

“All three lines of intervention lead to the one thing through different means – to the empowerment of women”, a key informant to the evaluation

In the area of supporting national mechanisms for gender equality, the intervention was designed in cooperation with CBGE, responding to its need to enhance its weak human capacities, horizontal (gender equality focal points in line ministries) and vertical (local gender equality mechanisms) coordination mechanisms, and implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020.

FIGURE 9:
Alignment to international and national policy frameworks



In regard to gender mainstreaming in EU accession process and IPA programming, the situation requiring the intervention was perceived as very complex by diverse informants. On the one hand, according to some of the informants, ‘the EU became a moving target and standards became more complex’ and on the other, due to the various reasons, fluctuation of public administration staff working in the MEI, other ministries and institutions engaged in the EU accession processes, leads to the weakening capacities for performing their tasks. Gender equality in such settings was not a priority and skills to incorporate it in the policy making processes, and programming were insufficiently developed, so both needed to be addressed.

Third line of intervention was focused on economic empowerment of women, in line with the goals of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and demonstrates how normative interventions in the first two components can materialise in practice. Government of Serbia has proclaimed two priorities in the area of gender equality: combating violence against women and economic empowerment of women. Since focus and resources have been in the area of VAW for years, while area of economic empowerment remained marginal, UN Women decided to focus the project in that area. This was also in line with the demands of the

civil society organizations. This line of intervention was implemented in partnership with women’s organizations, and mainly targeted women in rural areas.

Alignment with International and national Policy and Legal Framework

Finding 2: The GEF project is fully consistent with international legal normative standards and contributes to the implementation of CEDAW recommendations, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and achievement of SDGs.

The GEF project corresponds directly with four recommendations of CEDAW Committee²¹:

- Recommendation 16 – that urges State Party Serbia to strengthen gender machinery: including to strengthen the mandate and independence of the gender equality bodies by providing them with adequate human and financial resources and by clearly defining their responsibilities; to finalize the establishment of GEMs at the local level and equip them with

²¹ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/SRB/CO/4&La

adequate human, financial and technical resources and ensure coordination between mechanisms at all levels; to allocate substantial human and financial resources for the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality, to enhance cooperation with civil society and women's organizations.

- Recommendation 40 – that calls for economic empowerment of women: particularly part of the recommendations that calls for targeted and time-bound measures to empower women in agriculture, including by strengthening their participation in management and decision-making and by enhancing entrepreneurship opportunities;
- Recommendation 42 – calling for empowerment of rural women: particularly in regard to the rural women employed in the informal sector which should have the access to education, training opportunities, participation in decision-making, and better access to land and ownership;
- Recommendation 44 – calling for empowerment of disadvantaged groups of women: it is recommended to eliminate multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination of women such as Roma women, older women, poor women, women with disabilities.

The GEF project corresponded with CEDAW recommendation 16 through result area 1, while with three remaining recommendations corresponded with result area 3.

The GEF project is aligned with objectives set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and particularly with two strategic areas: F – women and economy and H – Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.²² In the strategic area focused on women and economy, the GEF project contributes to the following strategic objectives:

- F.1 – Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources;
- F.2 – Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade;
- F.3 – Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women;

²² https://beijing20.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf

- F.4 – Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.

Contribution to these objectives is present through: raising skills for economic activity and business, supporting independent economic activity, information and skills to access funds, markets, to improve product lines, to get business advice, awarding the production technology to the beneficiary women who are often low-income women, and strengthening their commercial but also social networks.

In the strategic area focused on institutional mechanisms, the GEF project contributes mainly to the following strategic objectives:

- H.1 – Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies;
- H.2 – Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects.

The contribution of GEF project to first objective is visible in a set of activities and results: support to organizational development and human resources of the CBGE, capacity building activities and provision of technical assistance, supporting horizontal coordination of gender focal points in the government, as well as supporting vertical coordination with provincial and local gender equality mechanisms, capacity development of civil servants for gender responsive governance. The contribution to the second objective is visible through result area 2 – introduction of EU legislation, directives and best practice for gender equality in selected sectors, systematic capacity development for structures involved in management of EU and bilateral funds, provision of technical guidance and support in gender analysis of selected sector documents and translation of identified gender equality priorities into actions in the relevant multiannual and annual programming documents (Sector planning documents and Action Documents), support in establishment and functioning of the quality assurance and internal review process for gender mainstreaming in programming of EU funds.

Finally, the GEF project is aligned and contributes to the SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, particularly target 5.a which calls for reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services,

inheritance and natural resources in accordance with national laws. Due to the focus on increasing digital literacy of some projects implemented in the area of result 3, the GEF project contributes also to the target 5.b which calls for enhancement of the use of enabling technology, in particular ICT to promote the empowerment of women. Through result areas 1 and 2, project contributes to the target 5.c which sets as objective adoption and strengthening of sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

Finding 3: The GEF is aligned with the national gender equality priorities as defined in the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020, and EU accession agenda.

With interventions focused on enhancing capacities of national gender equality mechanism and ME (the result area 1 and 2), GEF project contributes to the general strategic objective 3 of the National Strategy for Gender Equality: Systemic introduction of gender perspective in the adoption, implementation and monitoring of public policies. The project particularly contributes to the specific objective related to the establishment of the functional gender equality mechanisms at all levels (specific objective 3.1), gender mainstreaming of all strategic documents (specific objective 3.2) and gender analysis of policies, programs and measures (specific objective 3.3).

With the interventions related to the economic empowerment of women (result area 3), GEF project contributes to the National Strategy for Gender Equality in the area of increased equality of women and men through the implementation of the equal opportunity policies (strategic objective 2). Within this heterogeneous strategic area, GEF contribution is traceable to the improved economic position of women and status on the labour market (specific objective 2.3), and, as well as to the objective that envisages that women and men in rural areas actively and equally contribute to the development and have equal access to the results of development (specific objective 2.5).

Alignment with human right standards and Leave no One Behind principle

Finding 4: The GEF project design and implementation integrate human rights and GEEW and take into account the needs of diverse groups of marginalized women: rural, older, with disabilities, Roma, minorities.

By its core design the GEF project contributes to the implementation of the highest human right standards, namely women's human right standards in the important national policy processes, institutional mechanisms and distribution of funds. This was done primarily through increasing skills and improving procedures or providing tools for gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies and IPA programming. The 'gender test tool' that was introduced in the procedures of the Republic Public Policy Secretariat, was also the example of such contribution, as it will enable systematic check-up of newly designed policies from the perspective of gender equality prior to their adoption.

The GEF component of economic empowerment of women more directly contributes to the promotion of the women's economic rights, which is perceived as UN Women team as core set of rights that impacts on overall social position of women.

In terms of the 'Leave no one behind' principle, the project was not designed to benefit specifically pre-selected groups of marginalized women. However, the CSOs implementing the economic empowerment projects were mainly focused on rural women, as one of the most vulnerable groups of women in Serbia. As reported by implementing organizations, among beneficiaries were also women from different vulnerable groups, such as older women, women from minorities, women with experiences of poverty not necessarily intentionally involved. Few projects were more specifically focused on women with disabilities and Roma women (see under 3.3 *Effectiveness*).

Relevance continued

Finding 5: The action implemented through GEF remains highly relevant throughout its implementation due to the fragile state of gender equality mechanisms, still not institutionalized gender mainstreaming procedures

in EU accession and IPA programming processes and need to further empower women as their deprived position is evidenced by many indicators, and particularly women from marginalized groups. The relevance remains in COVID-19 changed context.

Project remains to be relevant in all its components. In regard to the national gender equality mechanisms, the need for support is still strong. After the elections and establishment of new government, Coordination Body for Gender Equality remained under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister, but new Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue was established which in its mandate has also promotion of gender equality. The gender equality mechanisms still need support in human, financial resources and technical expertise, particularly having in mind that some of the key reforms are still pending, such as adoption of the new Law on Gender Equality, amended Antidiscrimination law, consolidation of procedures for gender mainstreaming in adoption of national legislation and policies, increasing capacities of national and local public administration and policy makers for gender equality policies, further improvements of horizontal and vertical coordination of gender equality mechanisms, full implementation of gender responsive budgeting at all levels.

Regarding the EU accession and gender responsive programming, there is need for further support, particularly since new IPA 3 framework will be put in place. This new framework will require further adjustment and capacity enhancement of stakeholders engaged in the sector working groups, as well as staff performing duties related to the strategic work and programming within the Ministry of European Integration.

The economic empowerment of women remains generally very relevant issue as economic position of women, and particularly those from marginalized groups needs to be further addressed. However, the continued relevance is important to see also in the light of initiatives supported through the first phase of GEF project. These new women's economic initiatives are still very fragile. As it is known from the research on entrepreneurship, nascent businesses are under high risk to be ceased and require further support up to 42 months when they can become mature businesses. This is even more relevant for economic initiatives supported through GEF project, as they are not women's

entrepreneurship in classical terms, but some hybrid forms between social entrepreneurship, farm related work and small businesses. Therefore, they are even more fragile than traditional women's businesses and they would need further support until they became more consolidated and mature.

UN Women were prompt in adjusting the project to COVID 19 crisis, in agreement with the EU and their national counterparts, repurposing funding for immediate humanitarian assistance, live meetings were moved to on-line space to the extent possible, while key messages, knowledge products and other relevant content were e-mailed, and initiatives to grant beneficiaries were also adjusted. Gender analysis of the effect of COVID 19 on women in Serbia in the areas: women in the labour market, women entrepreneurs, rural women and economy of care was conducted (more under chapter 3.3 Effectiveness).

3.2. Coherence

Coherence with UN Women mandate and Strategy

Finding 6: GEF project corresponds mainly with normative UN women mandate in the area of result 1 and 2, but also with operational mandate in the area of result 3, and it is aligned with UN women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

Through GEF project UN Women in Serbia exercises its integrated mandate, particularly normative and operational. The GEF support to the capacities of national GEMs, and MEI demonstrates UN Women's normative mandate aiming at advancement of GEEW in the national policy, legal and institutional framework. The GEF support to economic empowerment of women is aligned with its operational mandate²³ Supporting women's empowerment and participation at local level, implementation of projects of CSOs and local GEMs and data and knowledge generation for monitoring,

23 UN General Assembly, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 July 2010, 64/289. System-wide coherence, <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/ga-res-64-289-en-adopted%20by%20the%20general%20assembly%20on%202%20july%202010%20pdf.pdf?la=en>

evaluation and learning purposes. Coordination mandate is exercised mostly in relation to national stakeholders.

The GEF project is also aligned with the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021²⁴, contributing to three outcomes:

- Outcome 1: A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is strengthened and implemented.
- Outcome 2: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems.
- Outcome 3: Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy.

Coherence with other UN agencies

Finding 7: The interventions implemented through GEF project are complementary with other UN women interventions as well as with some interventions implemented by other UN agencies (particularly UNOPS).

From the perspective of coherence and synergy GEF project creates with other UN Women initiative, it could be concluded that the most coherence and synergy is achieved with UN Women interventions focused on gender responsive budgeting at national and local levels. Both interventions include enhancing capacities of public administration staff, particularly gender focal points within the line ministries in conducting gender analysis and based on that designing gender responsive budgeting and parallel to that gender responsive programming of IPA funds and other bilateral funds.

In regard to the coherence within the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Serbia, the project is aligned to UN Development Partnership Framework with the Government of Serbia 2016 – 2020²⁵ (Pillar 1. Governance and Rule of Law, all outcomes, related to human rights, gender equality and governments' accountability and Pillar 3. Economic Development, Growth and Employment and its outcome 7. enabling

environment that promotes sustainable livelihoods, economic development, focused on an inclusive labour market and decent job creation). UN Women has led the Gender Thematic Group within the UNCT in Serbia, still coordination relevant for GEF project is rather ensured in direct contacts with UN agencies. The most synergetic work and effect was found in the cooperation with UNOPS around local development in targeted local communities in Serbia. The cooperation evolved particularly during the EU Progress project, focused on local development in a number of municipalities. UN Women provided technical support to gender aspects of local governance mechanisms and local policies. Currently, UNOPS implements the "Swiss PRO" project, financed by the Government of Switzerland, and focused on development of municipalities through good governance and social inclusion. This is a follow up of the EU Progress project, which entails strong gender equality component and it has been implemented in 99 towns and municipalities. Through the project it delivers packages of support to municipalities, including strengthening their capacities to design and implement local policies that promote gender equality. Although the cooperation with UN Women is not formalised, the project is informed by knowledge and experience of UN Women and there is regular communication.

As GEF expands its areas of interest to different aspects of EU integration agenda (transport, energy, environment, etc.), need for cooperation with other UN agencies might become relevant as well. Different stakeholders from national and local level indicated during the evaluation, there is not enough cooperation and information exchange among UN agencies in general. Some stakeholders indicated that some UN agencies are not informed about ongoing or implemented activities of other agencies, this sometimes leads to overlapping activities.

regional coherence in the Western Balkans

Finding 8: There is exchange between UN Women teams in the region in regard to GEF, which currently flows more in the direction from UN Women Serbia towards other countries' team, as lessons learned in Serbia are being used for project designs in other countries. There is high awareness on regional value of GEF and need to enhance more in the future regional components and processes.

²⁴ <http://undocs.org/en/UNW/2017/6/Rev.1>

²⁵ <https://serbia.un.org/en/12850-development-partnership-framework-2016-2020-government-republic-serbia-and-united-nations>

UN Women team in Albania was the first one to implement GEF project and this has opened room for other UN Women offices in the region to start negotiations with their national EU Delegations to implement their own GEF projects. These initial steps of the Albanian team were much appreciated by the UN Women team in Serbia, as it provided important experience and advice in initiating dialogue with EU Delegation in Serbia and discussing the GEF design. Currently, GEF Serbia is the biggest project in terms of funds, but also in terms of maturity of implementation. Therefore, UN Women teams in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia gather information and advice from Serbia, in preparation of their national GEF proposals (Albania, 2nd cycle).

As perceived by the UN Women representatives from different countries in the region, there are many common issues that are or can be targeted through GEF, so in the future more regional coordination could be beneficial. At the same time there should be room for national specific focus and project components. More advanced regional coordination could bring more synergetic effect in the key areas covered by GEF, such as: enhancing national and sub-national gender equality mechanisms, strengthening regional cooperation of gender equality mechanisms, advancing gender mainstreaming in EU accession process and access to IPA funding, but also in the area of empowerment of women, as there are similar challenges in the countries (weak economic participation, social exclusion of rural women, unfavourable position of women from different marginalized groups, etc.).

The regional cooperation is also established by Sub-regional consultations for WB and Turkey. The consultations were organized in close cooperation with the Regional Office. Three CSO driven consultations were held in September 2020 (involving in total 143 participants (142 women and 1 man) from 22 countries - 9 from the Western Balkans and Turkey sub-region and 13 from other countries), one general consultation and two thematic, on Climate Justice and Innovation and Technology. During the consultations, the idea of building two sub-regional platforms/ coalitions was presented and opened for future discussion.

All respondents indicated the importance of UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia in

advancing these forms of regional cooperation, which corresponds with the perception of the representatives of the regional office that gender equality in the region could benefit from more coherent and coordinated actions of UN Women teams.

“I think we need to invest more in sharing among countries in the Western Balkans region. Subregional strategy for the Western Balkan is the idea we are exploring for the future.” UN Women representative

Coherence with other Development Initiatives

Finding 9: The GEF is aligned and directly strengthens the government initiatives, particularly in the area of horizontal and vertical coordination of gender equality mechanisms. It boosts civil society engagement, being complementary with similar interventions of other organizations (i.e. Divac Foundation, USAID), but at the same time is target of criticism of part of the civil society that would prefer to have direct access to EU funds. There is also perception of insufficient donor coordination and desire to rebuild them as they were very effective and active in the past, such as Gender Synergy Group.

GEF project has supported coordination role of main national gender equality mechanism – CBGE. This included horizontal coordination between line ministries’ gender focal points and vertical coordination between CBGE and local gender equality mechanisms. Representatives of some local GEMs indicated during the evaluation that GEF project had important role in creating stronger links with CBGE. They also perceive UN Women as ‘bridging’ actor which links local stakeholders to national mechanisms. Some of them perceived value in that not only in regard to the better coordination of gender equality policies nation-wide, but also as the value that adds to the local mechanisms vis-à-vis local authorities. If their importance is recognized by governmental body, then they gain more recognition in the local governance structures.

There is complementarity in support to grass roots women’s organizations with some of the national

foundations, such as “Divac” or “Trag” Foundation. The difference is that foundations provide usually small institutional grants, but UN Women supports CSOs through projects. The support to women’s CSOs was also coordinated with Australian Embassy in order to avoid overlapping. During presentation of GEF grants to women’s CSOs, Ministry of Economy and Chamber of Commerce were invited to present their own support schemes.

However, several informants indicated that donor’s coordination is not satisfactory. They pointed to good practices that were present years ago, as weekly informal meetings between international partners engaged in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women where information was shared and plans exchanged in order to better design interventions in order to avoid overlapping and provide more synergy. This was gender synergy group, composed of representatives of international partners, with UN Women as one of the main stakeholders while governmental stakeholders and women’s organizations representatives would be invited to the meetings.

Evaluation found opinions on coherence of UN Women’s activities with civil society differ among different stakeholder groups. There is evidence that part of the civil society perceives UN Women as competition, mostly regarding to access to EU funds. On the other hand, representatives of small, grassroots organizations, from outside of Belgrade or from underdeveloped rural areas, appreciate assistance of UN Women very much as they would not be able to access the EU funds directly alone. According to UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, this problem is largely present in the region and requires further considerations. The UN Women team in Serbia, as well as EU Delegation in Serbia are aware of this issue. The current approach resulted in emergence of some new, authentic, grassroots organizations that were not part of existing influential women’s organizations networks and have not previously visible to UN Women. From the perspective of EU Delegation, this was one of the reasons to opt for the funding through UN Women. Another reason was the technical competence to manage large funds according to EU standards which is not present among many CSOs, particularly small and grassroots.

UN Women comparative advantage

Finding 10: Stakeholders recognize a series of comparative advantages of UN Women: expertise, ability to identify key priorities for intervention, developing horizontal, partnering relationship even with small grassroots organizations, providing support and building up capacities of partners beyond the mere contractual donor-beneficiary relation, authority and credibility, commitment and motivation of staff, consistency.

As one of the key comparative advantages indicated by UN Women team and other stakeholders is that gender equality is their core mandate. Various informants pointed to the gender equality expertise that is high and quite unique among international partners. UN Women engagement is perceived as holistic gender approach, not as additional or cross-cutting component of intervention. When gender equality is primary perspective, then it enables stronger linkages between different policy areas at local or national levels, connecting, for example economic and social policies, economic and environmental policies, providing quite different insights. Local stakeholders evaluated this holistic and integrative approach as very valuable for local development policies.

Support to women’s organization and outreach to small, grassroots, self-help organizations and women from remote areas, underdeveloped communities and/or from marginalized groups via these organizations. This comparative advantage was self-perceived by UN Women team, as well as by the EU Delegation, national and local stakeholders. From the perspective of women’s organizations, UN Women is perceived not as ‘usual’ donor, but as feminist organization and more a partner than a donor. The representative of one grantee organization described the relationship with UN Women as ‘feminist relation’, meaning open, horizontal, cooperative, instead of vertical and bureaucratic.

Some civil society informants pointed to particular advantage of UN Women in the situation when there is a gap between state and civil society and dialogue and cooperation are absent. UN Women has authority and credibility to work with state which is hostile towards women’s civil society. It also has the flexibility and good understanding of the context and momentum, realizing that sometimes it is not time for some more

profound changes, and using that time to work on what is possible. According to these opinions, in such times, their intervention at least prevents from more profound loss of gender equality achievements and to the advancements in the areas where is possible to intervene.

However, there were some critical observations by civil society respondents who expect that UN Women could better use its authority to push for some changes that civil society sees as needed, or to react when representatives of political elite act contrary to gender equality principles. Last years are marked by the

backlash, narrowing the space for gender equality, and it is expected that UN Women uses its authority and credibility to act against such trends more decisively.

In the narratives of stakeholders representing other international organizations also there is perception of UN Women as one of the leading stakeholders in the area of gender equality and therefore, they expect more information sharing and more initiative in the coordination of gender equality initiatives planned and implemented by international partners and domestic stakeholders.

3.3. Effectiveness

Progress Against Targets

Finding 11: UN Women and its partners achieved considerable results, reaching closely or surpassing most of the targets set at the outcome and output levels. At the outcome level, the project supported national stakeholders in managing several strategic processes related to GEEW and engendering EU assistance programming.

Evaluation identified progress against targets at specific objective / outcome level as follows:

<p>Outcome: <i>The CBGE, the MEI and the key institutions mandated for gender equality, progress in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and in the oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis.</i></p>	<p>Status: There is sufficient evidence to confirm continuous progress of CBGE and MEI in implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis. This still strongly relies on UN Women’s support and requires further institutionalisation and ownership by national institutions.</p>
<p>Outcome Indicator 1: <i>Number of the Sector Planning Documents that are gender mainstreamed and/or have gender specific sections.</i> <i>Target: Five Sector Planning Documents are gender mainstreamed and/or have gender specific actions by 2020.</i></p>	<p><i>8 sector annual IPA planning documents gender mainstreamed; Additionally, MEI supported in assessing the needs of women and men and in defining the priorities for funding under IPA 2021-2022 (Action fiches in the human resource and social development sector); Recommendations and Action Plan for Inclusion of Gender perspective in public procurement policies and procedures developed.</i></p>
<p>Outcome Indicator 2: <i>The existence of the internal review and quality assurance process in the MEI for gender mainstreaming of IPA programmes.</i> <i>Target: The internal review and quality assurance process in the MEI for gender mainstreaming of IPA programmes exists by the end of 2020.</i></p>	<p>MEI started to put in place an internal mechanism for gender mainstreaming of EU assistance through sectoral working groups and gender subgroups for key programming documents and annual review of IPA programming documents. <i>UN Women developed the Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming of EU and other development assistance.</i></p>

<p>Outcome Indicator 3: <i>Number of measures from the National Action Plan for Gender Equality implemented by women CSOs through project support.</i></p> <p><i>Baseline: zero at the beginning of project support</i></p> <p><i>Target: 25 increase of the number of activities from the National Action Plan for Gender Equality implemented by women CSOs by 2020.</i></p>	<p><i>The Report on the implementation of NAP for GE for 2018 states 25 of measures was implemented by women CSOs in 2018. The project supported development of NAP for GE for the period 2019-2020, however it had not been adopted. The project continued to support implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality in its specific objectives related to functional gender equality mechanisms and gender mainstreamed public policies (3.1, 3.2, 3.3) and improvement of women's economic position and position of women and men in rural areas (2.3 and 2.5). Research in the last year of the project²⁶ was not able to quantify exact of increase through CSOs support, however confirmed relevant contribution to implementation of measures.</i></p>
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Overall, there is sufficient evidence to confirm continuous progress of CBGE and MEI in implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis. CBGE's participation and contribution in EU accession processes and IPA programming increased, as well as their connection with practitioners in sectoral line-ministries. There is increasing individual commitment of public officials engaged in these institutions, increased understanding of gender concepts and gender mainstreaming at the operational level in comparison to three years ago, confirmed by all government representatives, civil society organisations involved, UN Women and the documentation reviewed.

UN Women's expertise and technical assistance and engagement with CBGE, MEI and IPA units, resulted in gender mainstreamed NAD 2021-2025 (document not adopted yet); IPA Annual Action Document 2018 – Social Housing and Active Inclusion; IPA Annual Action Document 2018 – EU Support for Development of Statistics; IPA Annual Action Document 2019 – Rule of Law; IPA Annual Action Document 2019 – Disaster and Risk Reduction; IPA Annual Action Document 2019 – Competitiveness and Innovation; IPA Annual Action Document 2019 – Environment; IPA Annual Action Document 2019 – Human Resource and Social Development. Interventions in all the documents were fed by the sector gender analyses, supported by the project as well. MEI was also supported in assessing the needs of women and men and in defining the priorities for funding under IPA 2021-2022 (Action fiches in the human resource and social development sector (employment, education, gender, Roma inclusion etc.).

As years pass in between the adoption of the action document and implementation of programmes, all stakeholders emphasise further attention is needed by all the MEI, respective institutions, organisations involved in implementation and the EU Delegation that these gender indicators remain integral part of all future steps and materialise in implementation. Consultations around engendering new IPA III programming are under way.

CBGE coordination function still largely relies on UN Women resources. CBGE is a coordination body with no employees or budget, it contributed and operated with strong political support of the Deputy Prime Minister and engagement of her advisor in the implementation. Such unstable institutional power of the CBGE, lack of human and financial resources, unclear delineation of mandates and tensions with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, overall side-lining of GEEW in the recent years in the political agenda, frequent turnover of government employees, elections, institutional reorganisation in the Government and finally COVID-pandemic, caused that this progress largely relied on UN Women's human and financial resources.

Thanks to the GEF project support and particularly through embedded personnel and consultants, CBGE managed to lead several strategic processes, such as evaluation of NAP on Gender Equality 2017-2018, draft a new NAP 2019-2020, coordinate hundreds of stakeholders in preparation of the state Report on the Implementation of Istanbul Convention and state Report on Implementation of Beijing Declaration and

²⁶ Copic, Sanja, Report on Women's CSOs Contribution in Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020, UN Women, Belgrade, 2020

Platform for Action - National Review of Beijing +25 - that served as inputs to the Voluntary National Review on the SDG implementation; horizontally coordinate with gender focal points in line ministries and vertically in local self-governments' units and coordinate countrywide marking of international days (International Women's Day, International Rural Women's Day, 16 days of activism against GBV etc.). GEF project supported CBGE with 10 experts (2 embedded full time employed and 8 external). The challenge of long-term capacitating of CBGE has not been resolved yet and it remains with no fixed term employees.

rather effective, although not resulting in adoption of new Gender Equality Law and drafted NAP for GE due to external factors. There is still space for UN Women to support the CBGE in strengthening its institutional status and financing and MEI in institutionalization of established practices of gender mainstreaming of EU accession and programming processes.

Under the Result 1, the project supported CBGE in efforts to strengthen its administrative structures and capacities and the GEM structure in the country in order to contribute to implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality.

Finding 12: Normative and capacity building efforts supporting CBGE, gender focal points and local GEMs were

Result 1:	
R1: The CBGE has the administrative capacities to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes.	Status: While capacities of individual public officials were strengthened, institutional administrative capacities at CBGE are still underdeveloped, insufficiently supported by national financial resources and strongly rely on UN Women's continuous support.
O 1.1: The existence of Gender Equality Service	The adoption of Draft Gender Equality Law that stipulates the establishment of the Gender Equality Service is delayed. UN Women has supported CBGE administrative structures with 2 full time employees and 8 external experts, yet solutions for sustainable employment in CBGE have not been found yet.
O1.2: % of change in the knowledge and skills of gender focal points. Baseline: 15%; Target: 35 % increase in the knowledge and skills by 2020	The level of knowledge increased by 31%, based on standardized pre- and post- assessment of participants' knowledge. This corresponds with perception of key informants in the evaluation. Additionally, in order to ensure the systematic introduction of gender perspective in drafting new regulations, one day online tailor-made training for the staff of the Republic Secretariat for Public Policies (including the GFP from the Secretariat). The test showed increase of knowledge of 68%.
O1.3: The existence of the National monitoring and reporting system. Baseline: No, 2017; Target: Yes by 2020	Monitoring and reporting system is in place and functional, database of GEMs is developed and regularly updated. The annual reporting of CBGE established and report developed. Cooperation with Statistical Office and Republic Secretariate for Public Policies has strengthened and can serve this purpose.
O1.4: Number of the mechanisms of dialogue led by the CBGE Baseline: One working group in 2017. Target: Three Working groups led by CBGE	CBGE leads the dialogue and consultations with key stakeholders including GFPs, academia and women's organisations as well as supports dialogue among these groups

Over the entire implementation period, the CBGE was strongly supported by the project. This was necessary in order to ensure continued GEEW coordination function in Serbia. Without external assistance, there would be insufficient human and institutional capacities to perform it (indicated by majority of key informants as well as by the Evaluation of NAP for Gender Equality 2017-2018). In 2018, the CBGE was supported through recruitment of seven technical experts: a gender equality expert; a capacity assessment expert; two capacity development experts; an expert for local Gender Equality Mechanisms; a monitoring and evaluation Expert; and a Communication Expert. In 2019, support continued through engagement of five experts, of which two gender equality experts; two experts for local GEMs and an expert for strengthening the institutional capacities for GE.

Institutionalisation and funding for the CBGE was supposed to be resolved by the new Gender Equality Law that stipulates the establishment of the Gender Equality Service, but its adoption has been delayed.

UN Women's support enabled CBGE to lead on strategic processes as elaborated under outcome level results. It also supported capacity assessment and tailored capacity building for 152 civil servants in state institutions in gender mainstreaming in public policies, exchange of knowledge and experiences horizontally among gender focal points in the line ministries (34 in total) and vertically with and among GEMs in local self-government units (144 in total) and networking and engagement of gender focal points in gender mainstreaming of annual IPA programming documents. According to pre- and post- training assessment, participants advanced by 31%.

National Monitoring and Reporting System on the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 became functional in 2018 and supported data gathering and evidence-based planning by state level institutions. Cooperation with statistical office and Republic Secretariate for Public Policies strengthened.

20 local GEMs were supported with grants in implementing measures from their local gender equality plans, that according to monitoring data base of the

CBGE²⁷, reached directly close to 1900 people, mostly women and more than 8,000 persons indirectly. Types of action supported were assessment of women's needs in rural areas, promotion of entrepreneurship and agricultural programmes in rural areas, support to women from rural areas to register business or agricultural production, courses of computer and foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, sewing skills etc.

Not all GEMs followed up their beneficiaries after the projects were closed nor were able to provide systemic information on the effects of these actions. But anecdotal information collected through this evaluation shows dozens of women continued to co-operate with the municipality to register their business or they benefited from municipal business development grants after these projects were closed or they got involved in other local development programmes such as Swiss PRO. Interviews with local governments representatives, civil society organisations and UN Women suggest that the effects were higher (gender responsive policies, increased budgets for women's entrepreneurship and women in rural areas) in the municipalities where strong or enthusiastic GEM members were supported by strong CSO that either gathers or supports women in rural areas. Local GEM representatives also claim these projects will help them in better design of future development schemes for women in their local communities.

Through Platforms for Dialogue UN Women and the CBGE expanded their efforts to engage wider community of professionals and practitioners (civil society, academia and gender focal points) and support dialogue and evidence-based gender responsive policy development and implementation. Particularly appreciated by the key informants is initiative to establish the network of academic women "United for Knowledge", which is supported by the Rectorate of the University of Belgrade. Its primary purpose is to advance position of women in academia and science, but it also bears potential to engage scientists in evidence-based policy development and implementation connecting them with key policy development processes. Third dialogue platform was aiming at media (regular brunches with media on GEEW topics). While

27 The National Monitoring and Reporting System on the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 became functional in 2018 and supported data gathering and evidence-based planning by state level institutions.

the role of media in eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality has been discussed in dialogue events and due to COVID-19 regular meetings with journalists are yet to be materialised.

Result area 1 supported engagement of communication officer and strong communication strategy actions to promote the project's contribution to GE and women's empowerment. In total, more than 5000 people were involved in the activities over 600,000 people were reached via social media and close to 100 media outlets reported on project activities. Additional creative or appealing approaches were used in communication of the project agenda and results, of which the respondents in this evaluation emphasise, 10 human impact stories about how the project empowered women or transformed their lives, weekly reading recommendations, particularly useful during COVID-related restrictions (email summaries of key publications, stories and useful links) sent to hundreds of email addresses of partners, beneficiaries, including public officials in the institutions; virtual

reality video on gender based violence presented at the National Museum in Belgrade around 16 days of activism campaign and later used in numerous occasions for youth education, BEFEM – a feminist movie festival, to local GEMs in annual conferences as well through other development projects to police. Social networks have been used extensively and UN Women in Serbia Facebook page was listed among top 3 best-rated UN Women pages in the world when it comes to reach.

Finding 13: Normative and capacity building efforts supporting MEI resulted in increase of knowledge on gender mainstreaming in MEI and IPA units, sectoral analyses and engendering of IPA action documents. Further support in gender analysis and mainstreaming is still expected.

Under the Result 2, the project supported MEI in gender mainstreaming of the key national development documents and funds, including the NAD 2021-2025.

Result 2:	
R2: The MEI and IPA units have the knowledge and skills to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes.	Status: MEI and IPA units increased their knowledge and skills to mainstream gender into programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting on IPA programmes, demonstrate commitment to GEEW. Further support with gender analysis and mainstreaming expertise is expected.
Output 2.1: % of change in the knowledge and skills of the Ministry of European Integration and IPA units in the line ministries for gender mainstreaming in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes. Target: 30 % increase in the knowledge and skills of the Ministry of European Integration and IPA units in the line ministries for gender mainstreaming.	30% increase based on standardized pre- and post- assessment of participants' knowledge.
O2.2: Number of IPA programming documents that include: a) sex disaggregated data and indicators; and/or b) section on gender analysis; and/or c) specific activities or result(s) on gender equality and women's empowerment. Target: At least five IPA programming documents are gender sensitive.	IPA 2019/2020 five action documents (environment, disaster and risk reduction, human resource and social development, rule of law and home affairs, and competitiveness) gender mainstreamed and gender annexes developed. Assessment of needs of women and men for purpose of defining the priorities for funding under IPA 2021-2022 (Action fiches in the human resource and social development sector (employment, education, gender, Roma inclusion etc.)).
O2.3: Number of sector gender analysis performed by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and line ministries to serve as a basis for IPA planning and programming process. Target: Five sector gender analysis performed.	9 sector analyses performed including gender analysis of effects of COVID-19 on women and men.

With the support of UN Women, MEI continued to mainstream gender in the NAD, 2021-2025 as the primary national document that defines development priorities, measures and funds. For the first time, NAD included sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis of nine sectors, including environment, energy, agriculture, public administration reform, home affairs, social development, justice, competitiveness and transport. CBGE's contribution to these results were also recognized by key informants, as it was actively involved in this pillar through participation in sectoral groups, liaising with line ministries and institution..

UN Women provided expert support to the MEI and other stakeholders, defined guiding questions and instructions for the gender and human rights-based assessment of measures and objectives for international assistance, gender specific analysis and gender statistics and inputs for the monitoring framework and gender inputs for passport indicators.

IPA units' staff collaborated with UN Women representatives to identify, assess and address the needs of men and women in the development and gender mainstreaming of five sector action documents (environment, disaster and risk reduction, human resource and social development, rule of law and home affairs, and competitiveness) for the IPA 2019-2020 planning cycle. The Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming of EU and other development assistance were developed and shared them with the MEI. Recommendations and Action Plan for Inclusion of Gender perspective in public procurement policies and procedure were developed as well.

Along the project, eight additional analyses were performed (Gender analysis of construction, transport and infrastructure sectors; Gender analysis of active labour market measures; Gender analysis of local self-governments calls for proposals for CSOs; Gender analysis of the Innovation Fund of the Republic of Serbia; Gender analysis of local self-governments programmes for LSG programs for small and medium enterprises; Gender analysis of Government support to businesses and Gender analysis of the effect of COVID 19 on women in Serbia in the areas: women in the labour market, women entrepreneurs, rural women and economy of care. While interest for data

analyses has been shown by some national institutions, there is no data on follow up actions by any of the institutions analysed. Follow up on recommendations of the analyses was also hindered by COVID pandemic, as most of them were published just before the outbreak. Some opportunities for their use exist as since recently all public laws will need to pass gender test before being adopted (at the Republic Secretariat for Public Policies) and the institutions might use the available data to inform their policy making.

Evaluations findings suggest MEI and IPA units increased their knowledge and skills to mainstream gender into programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting on IPA programmes, demonstrate commitment to GEEW (interviews and UN Women's documentation). Results of pre- and post- testing in training showed capacity building activities around 120 public officials enhanced their skills and knowledge in gender mainstreaming by 35.4%. Several key informants in the interviews mentioned few years ago there had been little understanding what gender mainstreaming means in MEI, while now its staff actively participates and discuss gender mainstreaming efforts.

UN Women supported MEI in institutionalization of gender mainstreaming in EU programming and funding management processes and this area still requires attention. The MEI started a revision of the the Sector Working Groups mechanism aiming to ensure greater inclusion and involvement of stakeholders and opening the possibility of organizing subsector specific theme meetings. UN Women supported a Baseline Gender Analysis of the Programming Manual for engendering procedures for Sector Working Groups and support systematic and formal use of practical tools and checklists. Consultations with MEI are ongoing. MEI also explored possibilities to institutionalise gender mainstreaming into programming, monitoring and evaluation processes, without reaching the final solution yet. For now gender subgroups are being organized for key programming documents.

MEI Communication Department, with the support of UN Women, developed an animated video Gender and EU integration. The video was shared on social media (UN Women, EU Info Centre and MEI) reaching over 7,500 people and presented in public events.

Finding 14: Activities aiming at implementation of National Action Plan on Gender Equality through economic empowerment of women in rural areas, capacity building and supporting women's businesses led to increased self-esteem and confidence, networking and advocacy actions and in many cases to self-employment and employment.

Under the Result 3, women in local communities, including rural areas were empowered through networking and with resources and capacity building to support their economic empowerment, improve the access of women to the labour market, encourage entrepreneurship. This component demonstrated practical implementation of gender mainstreamed and women's empowerment programme.

Result 3:	
R3: Women's CSOs are supported to implement measures and share experiences and good practices in the implementation of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality on women's economic empowerment and the empowerment of women in rural areas.	Status: Women's CSOs were supported to implement measures from the National Action Plan on Gender Equality related to economic empowerment and empowerment of women in rural areas through grants. Networking and exchange among women in local communities was supported and to some extent exchange between CSOs from different municipalities.
O3.1: Number of project cooperation agreements signed with women civil society organizations in the areas of women labour rights, women's entrepreneurship and empowerment of rural women. Target: Up to twenty project cooperation agreements signed with women civil society organizations.	16 project cooperation agreements signed with women's CSOs (16 lead applicants and 12 partners) to support improvement of position of women in labour market, women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment of rural women.
O3.2: Number of women benefitting from the employment programmes, business learning and empowerment programmes, mentoring services, learning, and retaining programmes provided within the project. Target: 3.000 women benefitting from project	More than 2550 women, including around 60 women with disabilities and women from the Roma community, increased capacities for employment through training and mentorship and received equipment to start their businesses.

During the project, through open calls for proposals, and 16 cooperation agreements, UN Women supported 28 women's CSOs to implement measures contributing to women's economic empowerment, in the following three areas: advancement of position of women in the labour market; support to women's entrepreneurship; and enhancing economic empowerment opportunities and position of rural women. Focus was on rural women. Consideration of intersectionality (age, disability, minority status) was not explicit in most of the projects, however some of them involved women minorities and hardly employable age groups and some were fully focused on women with disabilities or Roma. In total more than 2550 women increased knowledge on women's rights and increased capacities for employment through training and mentorship and received equipment to start or improve their businesses.

Based on the interviews and reports of 8 grant beneficiary organisations, 66 women got self-employed or registered businesses, agricultural production or social enterprises (online jobs, kindergartens/playrooms, hairdressing, beauty salons, food production), 11 got employed by other entrepreneurs, while close to 200 improved or legalized their existing home/agricultural production or are working towards registration of their businesses. Status of majority of these businesses is still fragile, some reached only the registration stage, and this area requires further attention. In addition to economic empowerment, many of women engaged in the project state the added value of their participation is improved quality of life and self-esteem.

Representatives of grant recipient CSOs were provided training in Results Based Management to support implementation of their projects and project proposal

development seminars to support successful application of organisations to future calls of UN Women or local self-governments and other donors. UN Women also organized seminars, attended by representatives of women's CSOs, local self-governments and local GEMs as a forum for exchange of experiences between different parts of the country and starting joint initiatives.

Enablers and Challenges

Finding 15: GEF project has been implemented in a complex environment (marginalisation of gender issues at the overall political agenda, insufficient institutional and financial support to gender machinery, turnover of staff), hindering or preventing achievement of some objectives led to unexpected results. Simultaneously, UN Women's and national partners' efforts were supported, by strong commitment of the EU Delegation to systematically further support GEF agenda and individual champions in the institutions involved.

Although there is normative and quantitative progress in women's political participation (quotas, close to 50% of women ministers in the Government) and the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue has been recently established, most of the key informants assess gender issues and women's rights are marginalised on the overall political agenda. This is supported by the facts that reform of gender equality legislation has not been completed, 2nd NAP on Gender Equality has never been adopted, while there is insufficient institutional, financial and human resource support to gender machinery. Additionally, there is continuous turnover of staff in public institutions which affects any momentum and institutional memory created and continuously challenge attempts to build national ownership of the results which makes the environment in which the project is implemented even more complex.

CBGE is well placed in the institutional framework (cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister) to ensure overall coordination of gender mainstreaming actions in public policies development and implementation, and majority of respondents think coordination would be harder if it had been one of the line ministries. Yet, it does not have a status of an institution and its own

budget, which in synergy with previously mentioned factors, challenged UN Women's efforts in the Result area 1 and to some extent result 2.

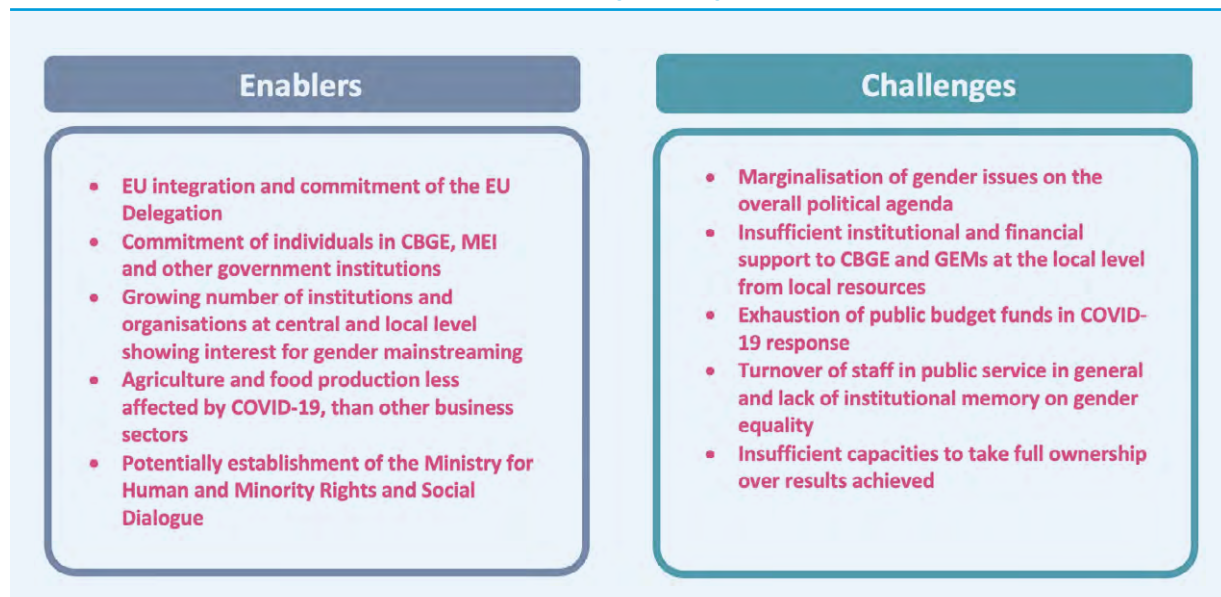
Still, changes are possible with regards specific policies and programmes, thanks to champions in the institutions and to some extent increased awareness among those public officials they closely collaborate with. There is also a growing number of officials in diverse spectrum of institutions that are getting interested in cooperation with GEF, which to some extent additionally addresses the risk of frequent institutional and personnel changes. Risk of diversification of partnerships in case the partners cannot take the ownership of the processes and results should also be taken into account as it can lead to further stretching the capacities of UN Women. Further efforts for stronger institutionalisation and staffing of CBGE are a priority.

Another supportive factor is strong EU Delegation commitment for long term support to implementation of Gender Acquis and commitment of champions within each of the institutions involved was supportive in keeping the coordination of gender mainstreaming alive and functional.

According to the key informants, COVID-19 didn't affect agriculture significantly, but it affected value chains and distribution at initial stage. In some cases, this was mitigated through UN Women's and partners support to online mechanisms of promotion and sale of agricultural products. In future, effects of COVID-19 pandemics will inevitably influence national and local budgets and there is a risk of decrease of allocations to business development and agriculture, which speaks in favour of continued support to women's businesses which are still fragile.

As the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue has been recently established (after 2020 elections) the evaluation was not able to assess the potential of future cooperation with this Ministry, but there is a consent of key respondents it is an opportunity that should be explored in future.

FIGURE 10:
Enablers and barriers to achievement of GEF Projects objectives



Unexpected Results

Finding 16: GEF project led to unexpected results related to increasing interest and putting engendering of environment and climate change sectors on the agenda, capacity building of EU Delegations staff in the Western Balkans, contacts and initiatives with new government institutions.

Under **Result 1 related to Strengthening capacities of CBGE and other gender equality mechanisms**, contacts and actions with institutions that have not been originally planned has opened. This was allowed thanks to cross-sectoral approach of the project and UN Women’s team recognising the opportunities for further collaboration. Republic Secretariate for Public Policies has been supported by UN Women to put into function gender test, which has been earlier developed in cooperation with GIZ and which is now required for all laws. Training on gender mainstreaming was organised for civil servants from the Republic Secretariat for Public Policies, with advancement in knowledge of 68%, as per pre- and post- knowledge testing. Contacts with numerous other line-ministries and public officials were enhanced, beyond gender focal points, which strengthened foundation for gender mainstreaming in public policies. Establishment of the Board for Gender Equality at Conference of the Universities of Serbia has been initiated and supported

by Rector of Belgrade University. All necessary operational materials were prepared and communicated with Rectorate staff. UN Women plans to follow up on this in future.

Under **Result 2 related to strengthening capacities of MEI and IPA units**, in addition to supporting national institutions, in partnership with the DEU and MEI, UN Women has organized regional meetings and trainings for EU gender focal points from the Western Balkan region and Turkey. These events supported knowledge and best practices transfer and networking. Another training for EU gender focal point is planned on gender and environment and EU Green Deal with active participation of UN Women and gender experts from Serbia. As a result, this rounds up the capacity building of all structures involved in managing EU assistance and UN Women PO in Serbia supports similar developments in the Western Balkans region.

Additional benefits of the **result area 3 related to economic empowerment of women** are individual empowerment and networking of women and establishment of 14 new associations or unions of associations from rural areas (including 1 organisation of women with disabilities). These associations provided space for socializing and improvement of quality of life to their members and in some cases

joint advocacy towards local self-governments (grant schemes for women entrepreneurs and women in rural areas) or national level government (prevention of reduction of milk prices) was initiated. Through networking activities women who otherwise didn't know each other joined their businesses in value chains (production of organic seedlings with those producing organic vegetables).

Covid-19 Effects and Mitigation Strategies

Finding 17: UN Women and its partners were prompt in adjusting the project to COVID 19 crisis, in agreement with the EU. This was done through repurposing funding for immediate humanitarian assistance, gender analysis of COVID-19 effects, moving live meetings to on-line space to the extent possible, while key messages, knowledge products and other relevant content were e-mailed. Projects in local communities were also adjusted focusing more on online possibilities for promotion and sale of products.

UN Women and its partners were prompt in adjusting the project to COVID 19 crisis, in agreement with the EU. A total budget of USD 120,000 was repurposed for immediate humanitarian aid to around 10,000 people from socially vulnerable groups (poor, families living in distant areas, self-sustaining parents, Roma, persons with disabilities) in 50 cities and municipalities in cooperation with Serbian Red Cross. Live meetings were moved to on-line space to the extent possible, while key messages, knowledge products and other relevant content was e-mailed to local partners and other stakeholders via weekly "Reading recommendations".

Grant beneficiaries supporting economic empowerment of women, were approved additional funds to respond to emerging needs of the project caused by COVID-19. Many of them, upon approval of UN Women adjusted their actions to promote and sale women's agricultural and manufacturing products online. This was done through an online market (Kolubara County) and social networks and viber communication (several other local communities).

Gender analysis of Government support to businesses and Gender analysis of the effect of COVID 19 on women in Serbia in the areas: women in the labour

market, women entrepreneurs, rural women and economy of care.

Still, COVID-19 negatively affected some actions such as planned platform for dialogue with journalists, annual gatherings of local GEMs and project beneficiaries, as well as more intensive follow up on recommendations of the numerous analyses that were produced in the project.

Effectiveness of UN Women's Strategies

Finding 18: Provision of financial and human resources to partners, diversification of partnerships, matching local expertise both from and beyond women's CSOs (academia, development CSOs), innovative communication strategies and reaching out further than major city centres with economic empowerment assistance turned to be most effective strategies in terms of achievement of results and targets set. Sectoral analyses that were not directly linked to IPA programming have not reached yet their full potential.

Provision of financial and human resources and expertise to partners, particularly CBGE and MEI and CSOs, but also other institutions and organisations occasionally supported, has been recognized as the most effective strategy used. In a situation where institutions lack human or financial resources or in case of CBGE both, it was assessed as the only possible way to provide embedded personnel and/or external expertise in order to enable functional coordination on gender equality.

“Without UN Women's support, CBGE would not be able to implement this, they might even close. UN Women paid their staff which was important as the environment for gender equality was volatile and a lot has been done to marginalize it. It might not be a sustainable solution, but at this stage what would be the alternative to keep this level of coordination in the Government?”, Civil society organization member

Involvement of UN Women and CBGE in wider policy reforms, IPA programming and sectoral analyses enabled diversification of partnerships and connection with more practitioners from line ministries and institutions, than gender focal points. In the times of frequent turnover and institutional reorganization of the Government this enabled continued work on the activities and continuous presence of some of a point of contact in the institutions and will be potentially helpful in cooperation with the newly reorganized Government after 2020 elections.

Key informants positively assessed engagement of expertise from women's CSOs but also beyond them, particularly from economic development-oriented organisations and academia, in terms of bringing additional allies on board GEEW programmes and they expressed commitment to share models and knowledge generated from this project through their other development initiatives.

Provision of capacity building and economic empowerment grants and support to women in rural areas showed as another effective strategy, from the perspective of empowerment of women, raising their self-confidence at individual level, which was then put into service of creation of new associations, designing and implementation of joint advocacy actions or starting new or improvement of existing business. In many cases profit was not the main motivation, but rather empowerment in the local community and improvement of quality of life through business or advocacy activities.

“We produced before this, but this project helped us recognize our strengths, we learnt some new things such as how to brand our work and finally we got equipment. Nobody could believe we can get the most needed equipment for production”, End beneficiary of economic empowerment of women support

3.4. Efficiency

Strategic Allocation of Resources

Finding 19: Resources were strategically allocated to achieve the expected results and to support gender equality and human rights and reach those most vulnerable. As many areas of intervention are long-term investments it is still too early to assess cost-effectiveness of the programme. Therefore, there is a need to continue following-up on the results and continued support to promising result areas.

Resources of EUR 2 mil. worth GEF project were strategically allocated in a way that most significant allocations support the actions expected to deliver most relevant results (grants for women's economic empowerment – economic empowerment of women in rural areas, experts and consulting companies to support CBGE and MEI in strategic processes, sector gender analyses and engendering of EU assistance programming). Women with disabilities and Roma women were supported through two grants to CSOs who ranked among the best in the competitive call for proposals. Many of results are still fragile, which is in line with the project duration and expectations at this stage.

For example businesses are at early stage of their development, gender annexes and indicators in IPA programming need to be guarded in order not to disappear over the years until the implementation comes, investment in staff of CBGE provided significant effects but at the end did not manage to keep them at that body. All these results will require follow up and consolidation and only at that stage it would be possible to tell to what extent this investment was cost effective. Most of the key informants agree that further allocation of resources to most promising areas of the project is necessary.

From the insight into financial documentation and interviews with UN Women employees, it appears that funds were used wisely towards the planned activities and even savings were possible and investment in multiplication of some activities (such as trainings) or repurposing for urgent needs were possible. All

reallocations were done in a transparent manner and in agreement with the EU delegation.

Finding 20: There has been effective leadership and management of the GEF project by UN Women Programme Office in Serbia, even taking the account of the status of the office and its dependence on services of the Regional Office. Monitoring of the indicators set is continuous and serves the project management. Still some further follow-up on selected initiatives would be welcome in future.

From a human resource perspective the UN Women's GEF Team was well capacitated. Team members include: Project Manager, three Project Officers (each responsible for one result area), Finance Officer, Project Assistant and Communication Officer. Head of UN Women PO in Serbia is actively involved in strategic management of the project. The Team has functioned well and communicated and exchanged between result areas on a daily basis.

There were no major delays in project implementation caused by internal factors to UN Women PO in Serbia. The team takes into account the Programme Presence status of the office and that many issues need to be operationally processed at the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia and plans far ahead accordingly. Although, there are stressful moments as the dynamics of the project does not solely depends on the Office in Serbia.

Key informants from all sectors, including consultants, confirmed the management of the project has been efficient and the team was at disposal at any time to their partners and end beneficiaries for consultations, support or clarifications. Trainings and advisory support was organized continuously for grant recipients in order to match the requirements of results-based management and quality reporting.

Even in emergency situations such as after COVID-19 outbreak UN Women and Programme Presence managed to resolve repurposing of funds and organization of humanitarian assistance in relatively short period of around one month, which would otherwise take three months' time.

Monitoring of indicators is well established, including monitoring of communication activities, and the team can provide relevant information in reasonable time. Monitoring data are continuously used for results-based management and the project get adjusted accordingly.

Finding 21: GEF project staff is well capacitated and where needed manages to outsource and deploy adequate expertise. There is a continuous commitment for exploration of new areas and UN Women in Serbia are often observed as champions in new areas of engagement and a resource Office for best practices. According to UN Women's employees, further capacity building in results-based management and media communication would be beneficial.

According to all key informants, UN Women staff is well capacitated to manage the project such as GEF. Project team has earlier experience in public service and consulting over gender issues and development, which is demonstrated in the project implementation. The team is also ready to open new areas of research and advocacy (waste management, climate changes etc.), engage external expertise and learn by doing. Knowledge of the team and generated from GEF project has been recognized and used by UN Women Regional Office and Headquarters.

GEF team suggests there is a need for their further capacity development in results-based management and media communication, particularly communication of the results.

3.5. Impact

Impact at individual level

Finding 22: Although it is still early to assess full impact, the evidence indicates that impact is visible on individual women project beneficiaries who gained new skills, equipment, self-confidence, but also new social capital through networking, so they could engage in new economic activities, or to improve their economic participation due to the new technologies or new forms of organizations and access to markets. Organizations

increased capacities in project application, management, monitoring and reporting.

The most visible impact is on individual women beneficiaries of economic empowerment projects. Some of them gained digital skills, which opened whole new world of information and contacts. It also enabled them to support their children in digital education during pandemic and to feel more self-confident in use of ICT.

A number of women beneficiaries got employment or started their own business, alone or in cooperation with other women, while another group of women improved their previous businesses in market outreach, quality of products or transferred to new technology of production. In some cases women report that they feel already big difference in income. This is the case with women from Kolubara county, where internet platform for linking producers with market was established during the pandemic emergency state and was maintained as new way of selling products up to now. In other cases, beneficiaries reported that there is still no big difference in income, but they think that setting production in new forms, obtaining technology needed for production and cooperation already have changed their economic participation and as well their way of life.

Impact on collectives and communities

Finding 23: Part of the evidence points to the benefits for local communities, such as renovation and active use of abandoned local administrative premises (mesne zajednice), increased economic activity in villages, new social and cultural dynamics in local communities, increased motivation of local authorities to focus more on this kind of local policies.

Another impact on women beneficiaries is visible in regard to their social networking and social capital of women who benefited the GEF project. Women beneficiaries pointed to the significant contribution of the project to this aspect of their participation. Some of them registered their own associations, opened offices, learned how to manage organizations. Others established federation of associations, linking small women's associations from neighbouring areas and equipping them with more strength and influence.

In third cases, women beneficiaries appreciated informal networking with women from other towns or villages, and establishment of new forms of cooperation. In some cases, the relations with local authorities have been established, which provided better status of local women's organizations in their communities.

Capacities of women's organizations were strengthened through the project. At first, as reported by interviewed representatives of grantees, procedures for monitoring and reporting seemed very complicated, but with UN Women assistance, procedures became clear and skills were developed to conduct monitoring and reporting in line with propositions. As reported by some of the beneficiary organizations, through GEF grants they managed to develop skills for development of project proposals, project management, for negotiation with authorities and advocacy. This enabled some of the organizations to apply for new funds and some have been successful in new applications.

Evaluation evidence also points to the newly acquired skills and power to advocate for their interests. One of the examples is the initiative of women who produce milk and dairy products who were impacted by the pandemic emergency state with decreased price of milk paid by milk producers. Supported by the implementing organization, women managed to raise attention of the government and managed to provoke the reaction of the government to control the companies buying milk, recovering prices to the previous levels.

There is also evidence that targeted local communities felt benefits from the GEF project. Although the impact in this aspect was labelled as 'modest', 'not transformational', by beneficiaries, they noted the important changes due to the project. In some cases, women revitalized abandoned offices of the lowest administrative units (Mesna zajednica), bringing more activity in the passivized rural settlements. In other cases, economic activity of women in small villages brings new economic dynamics if not yet visible benefits. The activity of women's organizations and groups brought new social and cultural dynamics into the targeted local communities.

‘There was visible impact, big change among women, we could see that. They found the premises for office alone; they called us to show us, they invited us to their meetings in MZ, they asked us to support them. They were empowered to ask local authorities for premises of MZ and Association of Hunters, they managed to get these premises, to renovate them, this was property that was falling apart. They got incentives; this was big change. Particularly in these patriarchal areas where people think that women should just make donuts and that’s it!’, Representative of women’s organization implementing project on economic empowerment of rural women

In some of the targeted local communities, relations between local self-governments, particularly local gender equality mechanisms and women’s organizations have significantly improved. The project induced a ‘chain reaction’ so local self-government impressed by the positive outcomes of GEF projects have applied and won bigger projects in order to continue and expand the initiatives started through GEF project. The effect was also visible on women from same local communities who did not participate in GEF related initiatives. They became motivated to gain skills, to participate in the trainings and become economically active. Importantly, particularly young women started to be more active as they found new ways of engagement aside the ‘traditional craft’ associations. One of the northern local community used same project format and due to the new funds expanded from rural to town MZ units. This bears potential of multiplying effects initiated through GEF project.

In multicultural areas, project had also social inclusion effects in regard to the improved communication between women with different ethnic background, particularly through language courses, as there was language gap in some of the targeted communities which prevented women, isolated in the farming households to communicate and connect.

Impact on system/institutional level

Finding 24: The impact on system/institutions is difficult to estimate due to the changes in the government and need to observe the implementation of programmes engendered through GEF project as well as future policy and programming processes. This would allow measuring how project results impacted those institutional settings processes as well as institutions and population expected to benefit from them.

The evaluation could not provide evidence for institutional impact. While effectiveness indicators show significant achievements, it is too early to estimate what will be their impact on the institutional capacities, and their practices related to the coordination and implementation of gender equality policies, and gender mainstreaming of EU accession related reforms and IPA programming. There are several reasons due to which impact assessment needs more information during following 6-12 months at least.

First reason is the change of the gender equality machinery after last elections in June 2020 and establishment of new government. While the Coordination Body for Gender Equality remains as main coordination body, and assigned to the Deputy Prime Minister, there is also new Ministry with mandate in gender equality issues – the Ministry of Human, Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. How the responsibilities in future reforms and gender equality agenda will be divided between two governmental bodies, still remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the CBGE is still equipped with very low human and financial resources which indicates that latest political changes undermined the impact of GEF in that respect.

In regard to the Ministry of European Integration and IPA units, the impact cannot be yet assessed. As in previous case, effective achievements by GEF project have to be applied in the next programming cycles in order to provide information how much gender mainstreaming procedures were applied. Another limiting factor in this area is the new IPA 3 framework which is not yet set and which will require new procedures.

Probably the positive institutional impact will be on the Republic Public Policy Secretariat, which developed tools with support of UN Women to check all new policy proposals from the perspective of their

gender equality sensitivity and impact. Yet, this is also something that requires time and sample of policies in order to provide evidence if tool and procedure are implemented.

Impact on most vulnerable

Finding 25: Evaluation evidence actually points to the most visible impact among the most vulnerable – rural women whose economic participation was very weak before project. Not only they increased their economic participation due to the project, but also economic benefits and in some cases that impacted their better position in the family and the community.

Various evaluation evidence points to the significant impact of the project on the most vulnerable women. Many of them were rural women, working on family farms without any personal income, or living in villages being economically inactive, performing only unpaid domestic work in their households. Other vulnerable women were excluded or limited in economic participation due to the disability, and in some cases, beneficiaries were in very fragile economic position as victims of trafficking or women with experience of violence. According to different testimonies, project had significant impact on their economic activity, social situation and self-esteem.

One of the most striking examples are women agricultural producers who were supported through project and gathered around new web platform as tool to reach the market during the emergency state due to the pandemic. With selling products through the platform they managed to earn significantly higher incomes, but also to increase their social capital, to gain self-confidence and to improve their position in the family and the household, where they were previously only unpaid helping members in family business.

‘...Women take over administration of the platform. Each Wednesday and Saturday they would earn around 150 EUR. Three among them stopped to sell on the market. They found that they could earn more if they sell through the platform. Some of them did not sell their products before at all. We monitored the changes in their lives. They did not have any support at the beginning. Their products were disrespected. And later on, husband started to do delivery, son makes the labels for products. So the position of women in the family started to change...’

Representative of women’s organizations implementing project on women’s empowerment

The impact on women victims of trafficking was also broader than economic empowerment through social entrepreneurship. Having in mind the specific characteristics and needs of this group of women, being often without qualifications and reluctant to look for the job on the ‘open’ labour market due to the previous experiences, social entrepreneurship provides very good, sheltered employment. However, with enhancing their labour skills and through economic empowerment, they learned not only labour skills but also important life skills that enable them to integrate not only in work environment but also in social environment. This is crucial need of this group of women.

3.6. Sustainability

Increased individual and institutional capacities to ensure sustainability

Finding 26: Project enhanced individual capacities of duty-bearers in the gender equality mechanisms and Ministry of European Integration and IPA units, but institutional capacities are under risk and can undermine sustainability due to the frequent changes of institutional arrangements, changes in prioritization and high fluctuation of public administration personnel.

Individual capacities of governmental stakeholders working in the gender equality mechanisms, gender focal points in the line ministries, employees in the Ministry of European Integration, members of sectoral working group, staff of IPA programming units, were developed through various capacity building activities, equipping them with knowledge on gender mainstreaming in different topic areas and policy processes, skills to conduct and use gender analyses for the purposes of policy planning and programming, or to mainstream gender equality in local policies.

However, frequent institutional changes (i.e. from Directorate for Gender Equality to CBGE and now with new Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue), unclear and overlapping mandates, competition between different governmental bodies, as well as high fluctuation of the personnel in the public administration are major risk factors for sustainability of results 1 and 2 and to certain extent even result 3 (due to the instability of support measures important for economic empowerment of women – they can be offered one year and then cancelled next year).

These risks were addressed by the UN Women team of the GEF project by different strategies which increase the likelihood of sustainability of results after the project implementation:

1. Instead of focusing solely on capacity building of employees and other stakeholders in targeted governmental bodies, different manuals, tools, such as gender sensitivity tests, templates for calls for proposals for projects on gender equality that local self-government can use, which ensure that knowledge becomes institutional not only individual capacity.
2. Diversification of partnerships increased the probability that results will sustain over time. Developing cooperation with all relevant stakeholders and with different governmental bodies and mechanisms responsible for gender equality, the GEF provided better chances that in the case of deactivation or ceasing of one body, another can take over. Or in the case of coexistence of different bodies, to include all, stimulating cooperation instead of competition and preventing or dampening consequences of institutional overlaps and conflicts.

Finding 27: Individual capacities of women beneficiaries are sustainable but their functionality in terms of application in new economic initiatives depend still on further support as they belong to the fragile category of nascent businesses which require support during first 42 months as evidence by the entrepreneurship studies and programmes.

Individual skills that were developed or enhanced through the project are sustainable. This relates to the digital skills, professional skills obtained through training in different crafts, skills to implement new production or agricultural practices or produce new or improved products, etc. For many women communication skills are also increased. However, these skills do not necessary lead to the sustainability of new economic initiatives started or improved through the project. Evaluation evidence indicates that sustainability of these economic initiatives will depend mainly on further support.

These economic initiatives are in most of the cases very fragile. From entrepreneurship study it is known that during the first years of business (so called nascent stage) there are high risks of failure. This is even more true for economic initiatives of women with vulnerable economic and social status, whether they are in form of self-employment, social entrepreneurship, commercial activities of associations, farming or 'classical' entrepreneurship.

Therefore, the key for their sustainability and achieving 'business maturity' would be further support. However, only in few cases, local self-governments recognized the value of such initiatives and importance to provide further support. This might put in danger new economic initiatives, particularly in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and post-COVID recovery. Organizations who provided support to women beneficiaries emphasized that they would remain in their disposal for further assistance, but in order to make these initiatives sustainable this cannot rely on ad hoc support by on systematic support which requires funds.

Replication and upscaling

Finding 28: GEF project has replicated some previously established practices, such as gender analysis of the specific priority areas, introduced with gender responsive budgeting. At the same time, the GEF project has introduced some innovative practices, such as gender equality tests in policymaking, that are in the process of piloting and upscaling.

Gender equality analyses for specific policy sectors are practices envisaged during the introduction and implementation of gender responsive budgeting. Such practices are introduced through the GEF project in the Sector Planning Documents, which was new practice in the context of programming.

On the other hand, GEF project introduced new practices that could be replicated or upscaled in various ways. Gender mainstreaming of the planning of the assistance and in IPA programming is a practice that is recognized as very important and transferable to other countries on the road to EU accession in the region. For that purpose, manual that was produced for gender mainstreaming in programming could be adjusted and implemented in other countries.

Another new practice is related to the new regulation issued by the Republic Public Policy Secretariat, which stipulates obligatory gender assessment of new regulations and policies. In order to make this procedure easier, RSPP in partnership with GIZ has developed the gender equality test. UN Women joined this initiative with supporting pilot testing of four laws in order to check the validity of test and propose further refinement. Based on these pilot analyses, test will be revised and upscaled to be applicable for all policy areas.

As for the women's economic empowerment initiatives, there is a lot of room for replicating results. The platform for connecting women agricultural producers with consumers, which is in line with shortening value chains that proved as beneficial for both producers and consumers could be replicated in other women's networks, engaged in agriculture or in other industries, in other regions. Models of activation of women's organizations and use of abandoned local administrative offices, which brings new proactive

dynamics in villages could be also replicated in other local communities where there are women's associations, or where women need a little of support to formalize their informal networks. Representatives of women's organizations implementing projects indicated the importance of replication of some components of the projects, such as combination of trainings for digital skills and entrepreneurship for new groups of women, or in new municipalities, and similar. The replication is important not only for larger impact but also for the sustainability of existing initiatives as it will enable inclusion of new members, new women with new ideas and skills and increase the overall potential for economic empowerment of women.

National ownership

Finding 29: National ownership is evidenced to limited extent and evaluation indicates need for further support to the national institutions for integrating gender in key policy processes, and the sustainability of GEF achievement and possible further advances will strongly depend on the role of EU Delegation.

Various informants, mainly experts and civil society representatives, indicated that political environment is not favourable for gender equality, which can undermine the sustainability of GEF results. They indicated that the sustainability of results related to the institutional changes instigated by the GEF project will depend significantly on the role and engagement of EU delegation. The reforms complying with EU requirements are more prioritized by policy makers and importance is attributed to the alignment with EU standards in programming. Therefore, if required by EU Delegation, gender mainstreaming will be implemented and possibly further advanced. Requirements to access funds based on the strategic plan for gender equality or specific programs related to gender equality would provide incentive for the government to develop and adopt such plans or programmes. The tools provided through GEF project, provide solid ground for such policy planning and programming, and EU Delegation requirements could ensure their implementation. The risk factors are related to the fluctuation of personnel in respective government units, as change in staff could require

additional training for the implementation of gender mainstreaming tools and procedures.

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia is one of the examples of sustainable impact of UN Women support. The support provided by UN Women has been incorporated in the regular work of the SORS, though sometimes additional support for publication of specific reports is still required due to the limited budget of the institution. This is example of the publication Women and Men in Serbia and Gender Equality Index. However, the gender sensitisation of national statistics is now key basis for other policy processes, including gender responsive budgeting, programming, so this could be considered as one of the most sustainable achievements.

Exit strategies

Finding 30: Evidence points to the careful planning of exit strategy by UN Women team in regard to the results 1 and 2 which reflects good estimation of unstable institutional and policy context, and somewhat less elaborated exit strategies in relation to the economic empowerment of women.

Project design and the way some components were implemented, indicate careful planning of exit strategy in the institutionally and politically volatile context. Informants with different background indicated many challenges that such context poses: frequent changes of the institutional arrangements for gender equality, decreased prioritization of gender equality on government policy agenda, weak coordination mechanisms, frequent changes of persons responsible for gender equality and appointment of new persons which are not familiar with gender equality, etc. Some of respondents indicated the problem related to the lack of initiatives of employees in the centralized political context, in which they lack incentives unless they are instructed from the superordinated positions.

Based on good knowledge of country context and anticipation of possible developments UN Women planned carefully exit strategies in regard to the capacity building of national gender equality mechanisms and MEI. This included already mentioned diversification of governmental partners, building capacities of public officials to be able to continue with gender mainstreaming and coordination of gender

equality policies. However, anticipating possible staff fluctuation GEF provided more permanent tools and guidelines that can be institutionalized and reduce the impact of staff fluctuation. Similarly, NALED prepared template for local self-governments to standardize procedures for awarding grants to CSOs in the area of gender equality.

Exit strategy in regard to the sustainability of results related to the economic empowerment of women is mainly focused on increasing capacities of CSOs beneficiaries to be able to fundraise for further support after the project period. Evidence points to the high fragility of newly established economic empowerment initiatives and would indicate the need to provide additional support during 'transitional' period, for the organizations who did not succeed to ensure support neither from local budgets nor from other donor sources.

However, the application of UN Women for second GEF project cycle indicates the awareness that support is still very much needed in all three project areas, and this represent a kind of postponed exit strategy.

Sustainability for most vulnerable

Finding 31: While impact of the GEF project was most visible on individual women benefiting from the economic empowerment projects, and particularly those in very vulnerable situation, the sustainability of these changes is at the same time the most fragile and will depend on prolonged support.

As already indicated, the sustainability of results achieved among most vulnerable women is questionable, particularly in the context with economic impact of pandemics that undermines even more developed businesses.

Women beneficiaries pointed to the need of further support. What was achieved through the GEF support is only the initial stage and during these initial steps they discovered what is further needed to evolve the economic activity – designer, platforms for reaching market, additional skills and tools, etc. This kind of renewed support is of particular importance for women from the most vulnerable groups, such as Roma women, women with disabilities, women from remote and underdeveloped rural areas, etc.

3.7. Summary of Findings

Findings presented and elaborated in the previous chapters are listed here for easier reference:

Criterion		Finding
RELEVANCE	1	GEF project has been designed in line with needs and priorities of women in Serbia, through two-directional approach: top-down, enhancing gender equality mechanisms and mainstreaming gender in EU accession and IPA programming, while at the same time directly empowering women through grass roots actions.
	2	GEF project is fully consistent with international legal normative standards and contributes to the implementation of CEDAW recommendations, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and achievement of SDGs.
	3	GEF project is aligned with the national gender equality priorities as defined in the in the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020, and EU accession agenda.
	4	The GEF project design and implementation integrate human rights and GEEW and take into account needs of diverse groups of marginalized women: rural, older, with disabilities, Roma, minorities.
	5	GEF remains highly relevant throughout its implementation due to the fragile state of gender equality mechanisms, still not institutionalized gender mainstreaming procedures in EU accession and IPA programming processes and need to further empower women as their deprived position is evidenced by many indicators, and particularly women from marginalized groups. The relevance remains in COVID-19 changed context.
COHERENCE	6	GEF project corresponds mainly with normative UN women mandate in the area of result 1 and 2, but also with operational mandate in the area of result 3, and it is aligned with UN women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.
	7	The interventions implemented through GEF project are complementary with other UN Women interventions as well as with some interventions implemented by other UN agencies, particularly UNOPS.
	8	There is exchange between UN Women teams in the region in regard to GEF, which currently flows more in the direction from UN Women Serbia towards other countries' team, as lessons learned in Serbia are being used for project designs in other countries. There is high awareness on regional value of GEF and need to enhance more in the future regional components and processes.
	9	GEF project is aligned and directly strengthens the government initiatives, particularly in the area of horizontal and vertical coordination of gender equality mechanisms. It boosts civil society engagement, being complementary with similar interventions of other organizations (i.e. Divac Foundation, USAID), but at the same time is target of criticism of part of the civil society that would prefer to have direct access to EU funds. There is also perception of insufficient donor coordination and desire to rebuild them as they were very effective and active in the past, such as Gender Synergy Group.
	10	Stakeholders recognize a series of comparative advantages of UN Women: expertise, ability to identify key priorities for intervention, developing horizontal, partnering relationship even with small grassroots organizations, providing support and building up capacities of partners beyond the mere contractual donor-beneficiary relation, authority and credibility, commitment and motivation of staff, consistency.

EFFECTIVENESS	11	UN Women and its partners achieved considerable results, reaching closely or surpassing most of the targets set at the outcome and output levels. At the outcome level the project supported national stakeholders in managing several strategic processes related to GEEW and engendering EU assistance programming.
	12	Normative and capacity building efforts supporting CBGE, gender focal points and local GEMs were rather effective, although not resulting in adoption of new Gender Equality Law and drafted NAP for GE due to external factors. There is still space for UN Women to support the CBGE in strengthening its institutional status and financing and MEI in institutionalization of established practices of gender mainstreaming of EU accession and programming processes.
	13	Normative and capacity building efforts supporting MEI resulted in increase of knowledge on gender mainstreaming in MEI and IPA units, sectoral analyses and engendering of IPA action documents. Further support in gender analysis and mainstreaming is still expected.
	14	Activities aiming at implementation of National Action Plan on Gender Equality through economic empowerment of women in rural areas, capacity building and supporting women's businesses led to increased self-esteem and confidence, networking and advocacy actions and in many cases to self-employment and employment.
	15	GEF project has been implemented in a complex environment (marginalisation of gender issues at the overall political agenda, insufficient institutional and financial support to gender machinery, turnover of staff), hindering or preventing achievement of some objectives led to unexpected results. Simultaneously, UN Women's and national partners' efforts were supported, by strong commitment of the EU Delegation to systematically further support GEF agenda and individual champions in the institutions involved.
	16	GEF project led to unexpected results related to increasing interest and putting engendering of environment and climate change sectors on the agenda, capacity building of EU Delegations staff in the Western Balkans, contacts and initiatives with new government institutions.
	17	UN Women and its partners were prompt in adjusting the project to COVID 19 crisis, in agreement with the EU. This was done through repurposing funding for immediate humanitarian assistance, gender analysis of COVID-19 effects, moving live meetings to on-line space to the extent possible, while key messages, knowledge products and other relevant content were e-mailed. Projects in local communities were also adjusted focusing more on online possibilities for promotion and sale of products.
	18	Provision of financial and human resources to partners, diversification of partnerships, matching local expertise both from and beyond women's CSOs (academia, development CSOs), innovative communication strategies, and reaching out further than major city centres with economic empowerment assistance turned to be most effective strategies in terms of achievement of results and targets set. Sectoral analyses that were not directly linked to IPA programming have not reached yet their full potential.
EFFICIENCY	19	Resources were strategically allocated to achieve the expected results and to support gender equality and human rights and reach those most vulnerable. As many areas of intervention are long-term investments it is still too early to assess cost-effectiveness of the programme. Therefore there is a need to continue following-up on the results and continued support to promising result areas.
	20	There has been effective leadership and management of the GEF project by UN Women Programme Office in Serbia, even taking the account of the status of the office and its dependence on services of the Regional Office. Monitoring of the indicators set is continuous and serves the project management. Still some further follow-up on selected initiatives would be welcome in future.

	21	GEF project staff is well capacitated and where needed manages to outsource and deploy adequate expertise. There is a continuous commitment for exploration of new areas and UN Women in Serbia are often observed as champions in new areas of engagement and a resource Office for best practices. According to UN Women's employees, further capacity building in results-based management and media communication would be beneficial.
IMPACT	22	Although it is still early to assess full impact, the evidence indicates that impact is visible on individual women (project beneficiaries) who gained new skills, equipment, self-confidence, but also new social capital through networking, so they could engage in new economic activities, or to improve their economic participation due to the new technologies or new forms of organizations and access to markets. Organizations increased capacities in project application, management, monitoring and reporting.
	23	Part of the evidence points to the benefits for local communities, such as renovation and active use of abandoned local administrative premises, increased economic activity in villages, new social and cultural dynamics in local communities, increased motivation of local authorities to focus more on this kind of local policies.
	24	The impact on system/institutions is difficult to estimate due to the changes in the government and need to observe the implementation of programmes engendered through GEF project as well as future policy and programming processes. This would allow measuring how project results impacted those institutional settings and processes as well as institutions and population expected to benefit from them.
	25	Evaluation evidence actually points to the most visible impact among the most vulnerable – rural women whose economic participation was very weak before project. Not only they increased their economic participation due to the project, but also economic benefits and in some cases that impacted their better position in the family and the community.
SUSTAINABILITY	26	Project enhanced individual capacities of duty-bearers in the gender equality mechanisms and MEI and IPA units, but institutional capacities are under risk and can undermine sustainability due to the frequent changes of institutional arrangements, changes in prioritization and high fluctuation of public administration personnel.
	27	Individual capacities of women beneficiaries are sustainable but their functionality in terms of application in new economic initiatives depend still on further support as they belong to the fragile category of nascent businesses which require support during first 42 months as evidence by the entrepreneurship studies and programmes.
	28	GEF project has replicated some previously established practices, such as gender analysis of the specific priority areas, introduced with gender responsive budgeting. At the same time, the GEF project has introduced some innovative practices, such as gender equality tests in policymaking, that are in the process of piloting and upscaling.
	29	National ownership is evidenced to limited extent and evaluation indicates need for further support to the national institutions for integrating gender in key policy processes, and the sustainability of GEF achievement and possible further advances will strongly depend on the role of EU Delegation.
	30	Evidence points to the careful planning of exit strategy by UN Women team in regard to the results 1 and 2 which reflects good estimation of unstable institutional and policy context, and somewhat less elaborated exit strategies in relation to the economic empowerment of women.
	31	While impact of the GEF project was most visible on individual women benefiting from the economic empowerment projects, and particularly those in very vulnerable situation, the sustainability of these changes is at the same time the most fragile and will depend on prolonged support.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1 (Strength): The GEF project is highly relevant to the national priorities for GEEW and international commitments of Serbia (particularly Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, SDGs and EU integration).

Corresponds to findings 1-5

Conclusion is based on the findings that GEF project, in its design took into account national policy framework on gender equality, needs of the key institutional and civil society stakeholders as well as the EU and international human rights and development commitments of the Republic of Serbia. The project responds to the needs of institutions to be equipped with additional human, financial, technical resources in order to effectively perform coordination of gender equality policies and initiatives or to integrate gender perspective in the processes of EU accession and IPA programming. It also answers the needs of women for advancing skills and access to resources in order to improve economic participation and consequently position. GEF project continues to be relevant over time due to insufficient institutional capacities for promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in key policies; challenges in adoption of new GEEW policy and legal framework and particularly in terms of further support to economic empowerment of women belonging to socially vulnerable groups. Wise adjustments of the project to new circumstances caused by COVID-19 pandemics led by UN Women, but also initiated by its institutional and CSO partners strongly reaffirmed its relevance as well.

Conclusion 2 (Strength): The GEF project is designed and implemented with high human right standards, it promotes women's human rights and brings benefits to women from diverse marginalized groups - rural, older, with disabilities, Roma, minorities - in line with principle Leave No One Behind. 1st phase of GEF Project generated

extensive learnings from the work with rural women and women belonging to vulnerable groups that can support even sharper analysis and approach to these groups by national and local institutions and organisations in the next stage.

Corresponds to findings 1-5, 10-19, 22-31

The evaluation concluded GEEW and human rights standards were well integrated in the project design and implementation, namely: through normative and institutional support to GEMs in the country to be able to effectively perform their duties in promotion of GEEW and engendering of IPA programmes as a long term investment for gender and human rights responsible implementation of financial EU accession assistance and capacity building of the MEI and IPA units to be able to implement such measures in future on their own. Project activities focused on the local level demonstrated in practice how a gender and human rights responsible policy can be implemented in practice with regards to empowerment of women living in rural areas and socially vulnerable women. It carefully combined actions of supporting municipal institutions to research and address the needs of these groups and CSOs to support their capacity building and socio-economic empowerment, resulting in increase of self-esteem, their activity and advocacy in the community and their economic activity and income. The GEEW and human rights approach should be rounded up in future in development and application of strong sustainability strategy in terms of ensuring capacity and local ownership for consistent application of engendered programmes in practice and continued support to initial results achieved in the local communities. Learnings from the 1st phase of GEF in support to rural women and women belonging to vulnerable groups can be used for the future programming and providing sharp analysis and tailored approach to empowerment of these groups by national and local stakeholders involved.

Conclusion 3 (Opportunity, Risk): Results achieved in the 1st phase are still fragile and continued support of all key stakeholders including UN Women, CBGE and MEI and the Delegation of the EU is necessary to strengthen their sustainability perspectives.

Corresponds to findings 11-31

Results achieved across the project are in line with targets set, but very fragile. Institutional position of CBGE is still weak, taking into account under-capacitation in terms of budgetary support and fixed term employees. MEI is a strong and sustainable institution and its capacities for gender mainstreaming have increased, but support is still required to keep engendering of the IPA programmes on the agenda and ensure gender mainstreaming in entire IPA cycle including implementation, monitoring and evaluation which is to follow in the coming years. Results achieved are to large extent dependent from UN Women's contribution and resources (administrative capacities of CBGE, knowledge and skills at MEI), while national partner institutions are rather supporters or enablers of implementation of the actions. External factors, such as frequent changes in institutional architectures, particularly in regard to the key national gender equality mechanisms, high fluctuation of personnel, which causes the loss of the know-how gained through the project, need to be considered in planning of future actions. With regards to economic empowerment, there are evidences of changes in individual capacities of women beneficiaries and realisation of new economic initiatives. Still, these largely depend on continued support as if these nascent businesses and policy advocacy initiatives at the local level are not sustained, this could negatively affect all other aspects of empowerment (self-esteem, motivation, networking and activism) and return beneficiaries towards the position they had before the project implementation. All this can be sustained only with joint engagement of all UN Women, national stakeholders and EU Delegation in Serbia.

Conclusion 4 (Opportunity): UN Women wisely and responsibly manages the GEF project resources investing the most into

those areas that are likely to provide long term results and using any savings to expand opportunities for deepening its effects through new co-operations or to address emerging unexpected challenges (e.g. effects of COVID-19 pandemics).

Corresponds to findings 19-21

Taking into account the status of results at this stage, it can be concluded UN Women strategically allocated funds into actions of relevance and with high result potential (grants for women's economic empowerment – economic empowerment of women in rural areas, experts and consulting companies to support CBGE and MEI in strategic processes, sector gender analyses and engendering of EU assistance programming). It also used any savings to deepen effects of the project (for example development of cooperation with Republic Secretariate for Public Policies) and use them to address emerging crises (such as addressing COVID-19 effects in the most vulnerable populations or support adjustments of the programmes of partner CSOs) through repurposing. If UN Women and its partners continue to consolidate results, it would be even possible to assess the cost effectiveness of such an approach.

Conclusion 5 (Opportunity): UN Women Programme Presence in Serbia appears to be a regional leader in GEF, with opportunity to share the best practices and lessons learnt to the countries in the region of Western Balkans and Turkey as well with the EU Delegations in these countries.

Corresponds to findings 8 and 16

Coherence with other GEF projects in the region is present to certain extent, as all other national UN Women teams have been still exploring the ways how to design and implement project. As the biggest and effectively implemented, GEF Serbia provides valuable lessons for other countries. Based on GEF experiences, national UN Women teams, as well as Regional Office are aware of the potential that bears for synergetic intervention at the regional level and it inspires initiatives of strengthening regional

cooperation. Mechanisms and tools of engendering of IPA programming, sectoral analyses, Serbian experiences in opening new areas of gender research and analysis such as transport, environment and air pollution, climate change etc. are of regional relevance too. In addition to strengthening regional cooperation and exchange, there is a space for further exploration of joint efforts of UN Women and the EU Delegations in order to ensure safeguarding of adopted gender measures and indicators in IPA programmes up to the moment of implementation of the programmes.

Conclusion 6 (Strength, Risk): UN Women is effective in raising interest in new institutions, mobilising and bringing new experts to area of gender mainstreaming of public policies and opening new areas of engagement. While generally positive, diversification of partnerships can also bear risk of overstressing the capacities of UN Women in case new institutions and organisations are slow in taking ownership and responsibility for action.

Corresponds to findings 16 and 18

Diversification of partnerships opened space for new result areas and also for mitigation of risk of frequent

institutional and personnel changes, providing opportunity for UN Women to partner with others and address GEEW even while primary target institutions face challenges in their work. On the other hand, diversification of partnerships in case the partners cannot take the ownership of the processes and results, may pose a risk in stretching the capacities of UN Women and the need for prioritisation may arise soon. UN Women has engaged in negotiations with EU Delegation on second phase of the GEF project, which significantly increases chances for consolidation of achieved results and focus should be on those partnerships that promise transfer of ownership and sustainability of practices and results.

Similar effects can be caused by opening of new areas of engagement where UN Women Serbia, is a pioneer not only in the region of Western Balkans but even wider - engagement with women in academia, scientists and experts in different sectors beyond women's CSOs, raising the issues of gender equality in transport, waste management, climate change and environment, unpaid work etc. These areas are at the same time high at the EU and development agenda and in expanding this work there is a space for opening and strengthening coordination with other UN agencies and development partners.

5. LESSONS LEARNT

Several lessons can be learnt from practice of implementation of GEF project and findings of this evaluation:

1. In a context where gender equality is not at the top of political agenda or is even marginalized, continuous support to institutional gender mechanisms may be beneficial to preserve their coordination role and keep gender mainstreaming in public discourse. This can be further supported by simultaneous mobilization of other institutions for gender equality and spreading a network of supporters (such as MEI, Republic Secretariate for Public Policies, Statistics Agency) and design meaningful actions with them that can support overarching goals of GEEW. Thirdly, it is good to have an operational action benefiting women and the entire communities with clear and easy-to-communicate results to practically demonstrate what normative measures ultimately mean when implemented in practice. This is a synergy of approaches that GEF project successfully employed.
2. GEF project invested significant financial and human resources in production of gender analyses (for example, gender analysis of construction, transport and infrastructure sectors; Gender analysis of active labour market measures; Gender analysis of local self-governments calls for proposals for CSOs; Gender analysis of the Innovation Fund of the Republic of Serbia; Gender analysis of local self-governments programmes for LSG programs for small and medium enterprises; Gender analysis of Government support to businesses and Gender analysis of the effect of COVID 19 on women in Serbia in the areas: women in the labour market, women entrepreneurs, rural women and economy of care. Recommendations from the analysis could be used in future programming by both the Government and by UN Women, or they can become priorities of the public calls for UN Women's grants to institutions and CSOs, so their implementation is taken forward.
3. Programmes of economic empowerment of women in rural areas and vulnerable women are not purely entrepreneurship programmes, but programmes of empowerment, improvement of self-esteem, soft-skills, participation and contribution to the community. They are programmes of quality-of-life improvement, that also bring financial income to women and their families. This is how they should be promoted and communicated so their nature is better understood and they are not judged before they have even started. There is an understanding in some beneficiary organisations they will not be eligible for another round of funding from UN Women, while UN Women had not made such a decision. Economic results of these programmes turned to be fragile in the first years and there is a need to provide continued support for their sustainability.
4. There are positive examples of synergies between local GEMs and CSOs in supporting reach out to women in rural areas and other vulnerable groups or design of gender responsive grant or incentive schemes for economic empowerment. This cooperation could be used as one of the criteria for future support to projects at local level.
5. There is a solid level of interest of women in academia, experts from different sectors including local development, energy and environment to engage on GEEW that can contribute with evidence-based data and scientific approach to advocacy for gender equality. If there is political readiness, dialogue platforms can be used to bring them together with women's CSOs and human rights organisations as traditional advocates for GEEW and engage a wider community of scientists and practitioners in quality dialogue over policy reforms.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented in this chapter build on the analysis of findings, conclusions, lessons learnt and suggestions collected by key informant interviews. Recommendations were discussed and validated with the EMG at the final stage of evaluation (preliminary findings presentation and validation of the report). They are presented as operational actions, with estimated level of priority and key steps for implementation. As such, recommendations can be easily used to inform future UN Women programming or programme management.

Recommendation 1: Dialogue with the Government on strengthening the role of the CBGE, its institutionalisation and resourcing should be renewed, as well as on strengthening its horizontal and vertical coordination of gender mainstreaming. Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue should be also involved in order to define and delineate responsibilities between these two entities.

Priority: High

Possible actions:

- UN Women defines a clear proposal to the Government, in consultations with the programme partners, that includes, analysis of the recent results and challenges, and a new future co-financing modality rather than full financing.
- It should entail a clear exit strategy that would gradually leave funding of CBGE staff and focus rather on their capacity building and programme financing.
- Vertical coordination should also be discussed in order to enrich coordination activities with local GEMs beyond annual coordination meetings for reporting and exchange purposes (for example participation/consultation in policy planning, guidance in mainstreaming gender into local development plans, support to translation of national measures for GEEW to the local level etc.).
- In order to secure horizontal coordination in a situation with high fluctuation of personnel, UN

Women could advocate for introduction of systems of deputy focal points that could provide continuity at least to some degree.

- In preparation of the model academia and CSOs should be consulted.

Recommendation 2: UN Women should engage in dialogue with MEI and EU Delegation to discuss how to safeguard the gender measures and indicators introduced at programming stage, up to the stage of implementation that usually comes several years later.

Priority: High

Possible actions:

In order to ensure gender mainstreaming of EU accession process and IPA programming, along with guidelines produced during the GEF, the process should be further supported through:

- Conduct country gender analysis rising from the obligation set in the EU GAP III.
- There should be a monitoring system set to ensure if the priorities are contributing to gender equality, for example the DAC gender equality policy marker (OECD) could be used, as set in EU GAP III.
- Ensure gender-specific or sex-disaggregated indicators are part of the monitoring and evaluation system of EU-funded actions.
- Planning further steps and tactics for gender mainstreaming based on monitoring results.

Recommendation 3: Gender mainstreaming capacity building of GEMs at all levels, MEI and other institutions should be continued and involve learnings from GEF phase 1, particularly in terms of addressing women's human rights in general and rights of women belonging to vulnerable groups. This should be coordinated with and the trainings should be accredited by the Academy for Public Administration.

Priority: Medium

Possible actions:

- Training for minimum gender equality competences of the public administration at national and local levels should be accredited with Academy for public administration, and training should include specific modules for officials performing roles as focal points in line ministries and as members of local gender equality mechanisms;
- Cycles of trainings on gender equality for public administration staff, with different thematic focuses in line with EU accession agenda. Some topics identified are (but not limited to): economic empowerment of women, social protection and women wellbeing, women's labour rights, gender and intersectionality, rural development and gender equality, gender and environment, climate change, etc.
- Training for gender mainstreaming in laws and policies in line with the Law on planning system should be accredited and delivered regularly to relevant public administration staff.
- Training for GRB should be also part of the regular capacity building of relevant public administration staff at all levels.

Capacity building of institutions should include other forms in addition to capacity building, such as engagement of experts, mentoring, introduction of institutional procedures through which are introduced gender responsive practices, regular monitoring of gender mainstreaming and increased transparency in regard to gender mainstreaming. There should be emphasis on support to capacity building of local gender equality mechanisms and local self-governments, to raise awareness and knowledge on how to systematically engender local development policies in line with Law on system planning.

Recommendation 4: Trainings for empowerment of women should be further supported. Learnings from the first cycle of economic empowerment support should be used to further sharpen the approach. Mentoring as a capacity building method should be introduced particularly in running and developing newly established economic activities.

Priority: High

Possible actions:

- General and specific ICT skills important for economic activity;
- Specific trade and professional skills related to different types of economic activity;
- Skills related to the business management, accounting, etc.
- Knowledge and skills for engagement or transformation of existing economic activities in the new forms and areas of green economy, such as organic farming, organic products, renewable energies, circular economy.
- Exchange between women's organisations and local GEMs with similar areas of interest.

Recommendation 5: UN Women should support initiatives related to the strengthening legal framework for gender equality and anti-discrimination, particularly drafting and adoption of the new Law on Gender Equality and new Strategy for Gender Equality. Strengthening of institutional and financial position of GEMs and should be taken into account.

Priority: High

Possible actions:

- Supporting the selection of team of experts that will draft the new Law on Gender Equality or revise existing version of the Draft of the Law.
- Support the process of consultations with diverse stakeholders, including women's and feminist organizations on the new Law proposal.
- Support the establishment of the working group for the preparation of new Strategy for gender equality.
- Support the process of consultations with diverse stakeholders, including women's and feminist organizations in preparation of the Strategy.

Recommendation 6: UN Women Programme Office in Serbia and UN Women ECA RO should support more dynamic exchange and discussion on possible ways to achieve more regional coherence and synergy in future GEF activities, or through other opportunities as well as exchange through EU Delegations in the Western Balkans and UN Women in order to consistently support advancement of GEEW in EU accession process.

Priority: Medium

Possible actions:

- Identification of best practice examples and challenges in all GEF projects in the region.
- Regular annual exchange between the projects, preferably aligned with annual work planning processes.
- Joint trainings for UN Women offices in the region of Western Balkans and EU Delegations on priority areas.

Recommendation 7: Findings and recommendations from analyses conducted in the GEF 1, particularly those related to development grants and grants for CSOs should be used in future design of activities.

Priority: Medium

Possible actions:

- UN Women should review recommendations of the analyses and use those relevant in design of future activities or grant schemes.
- For example future grants for GEMs or local governments could provide support to local governments to implement recommendations of the analyses or provide support to CSOs to advocate for implementation of recommendations.
- Calls for proposals should also encourage coordination between CSOs and local governments or between local GEMs and other departments of the local self-government.

Recommendation 8: In order to increase sustainability of new economic initiatives of women, established through GEF, new GEF project could dedicate a part of the project budget for support to beneficiaries of the previous project cycle. This could be done with small grants, precisely targeting key needs that can secure these economic initiatives, their maturation and sustainability.

Priority: High

- The economic empowerment, coupled with strengthening women's associations and networks, should be designed to attract younger women and enable intergenerational solidarity and participation, particularly in rural areas where young women remain inactive. This means that design of activities, should take care of needs of young women and get forms that are attractive to young generation of women.
- Women supported through GEF project could be promoters of the results in other local communities, motivating women to network and initiate new economic activities or improve existing ones.

Recommendation 9: Dialogue platforms of women in academia and women in CSOs and local GEMs should be further supported.

Priority: High

Possible action:

- Support CBGE and MEI in linking with platforms and particularly women's academic network (United for Knowledge) for consultations over priority issues that are covered by the next phase of GEF project;
- Support women's academic network in organisation of thematic discussions, research and production of policy briefs over the new Gender Equality Law and Strategy for Gender Equality as well as over other burning issues for GEEW in Serbia;
- Support women's academic network in its internal strengthening, through their initiatives for improvement of women's position at the universities and assessment of the situation with the national scope, as so far there are only insights in limited number of universities or faculties.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference for the Final Evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia

Background

UN Women is the lead agency within the UN system on gender equality and women's empowerment, mandated to promote, and coordinate efforts to advance the full realization of women's rights and opportunities. UN Women brings global technical expertise in gender equality and women's empowerment, and links local and regional interventions with global best practices, including work on the Sustainable Development Goals. Placing women's rights at the centre of all its efforts, the UN Women leads and coordinates United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action globally. It provides strong and coherent leadership in support of Member States' priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors.

The Republic of Serbia is a signatory to a number of important international treaties, which guarantee the equality of men and women and prohibit gender-based discrimination, most notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Istanbul Convention. National commitments on gender equality are in place, such as the National Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Gender Equality Law. Despite the existing legal and policy framework, gender inequalities are prominent in Serbia and present in all spheres of life, in access to resources, in participation to decision-making processes and in interpersonal relations.

Through its programmes and projects, UN Women is providing technical assistance to national partners (governmental and non-governmental) in the implementation of existing international and national commitments to women's rights and gender equality, it facilitates networking and exchange of good practices and advocates for women's rights and gender equality in all areas of life.

In the period 2018-2020, UN Women Programme Office in Serbia works towards selected development results in the framework of several projects to effectively coordinate and promote accountability for the implementation of gender equality commitments and advancing gender responsive policies and budgeting in Serbia. UN Women places a special focus on the position of vulnerable groups of women and is investing efforts in advocacy for their rights. Many great results have been achieved related to gender responsive budgeting, combating violence against women and strengthening mechanisms for gender equality which need to be captured and distributed to broader audiences for their learning and use in the future.

UN Women Programme Office in Serbia is implementing a three-year Project "Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia" (short title: the Gender Equality Facility - GEF), started in March 2018, funded by the European Commission within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II. The Project supports the Government of the Republic of Serbia in effective implementation of the EU Gender Equality Acquis and the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020. UN Women Serbia is implementing the Project, in close cooperation with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of European Integration, the EU Delegation in Serbia and other partner institutions and women's organisations'. Furthermore, the project will advance the position of

women and will support local communities in fulfilling their commitments on gender equality.

2. Description of the programme/project

2.1 Project strategy and key objectives

The project rely on several proven strategies to build sustainable commitment and capacity to support gender equality, which include: facilitating partnerships to reach consensus on policy priorities; providing innovative models to support measures and actions; documenting and disseminating proven practices for enhancing performance and accountability for gender equality; and building an evidence-base that supports advocacy and action on implementing commitments to gender equality.

Overall objective of the project is to support the Government of Republic of Serbia to comply with national and international gender equality commitments and EU Gender Equality Acquis.

Specific Objective of the project is that the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of European Integration, and the key institutions mandated for gender equality, progress in the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality and in the oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis.

The project will focus on the following key results:

Result 1: The Coordination Body for Gender Equality has the administrative capacities to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes.

Result 2: The Ministry of European Integration and IPA units have the knowledge and skills to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes.

Result 3: Women CSOs are supported to implement measures and share experiences and good practices in the implementation of measures of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality in the area of women's

economic empowerment and the empowerment of rural women.

Under the Result 1, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality strengthened administrative structures and capacities to lead the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality by recruiting technical experts to the CBGE and strengthening the system of Gender Focal Points and continuously working with Gender Focal Points (GFPs) as Government Technical Working Group on gender equality. The CBGE supported vertical and horizontal cooperation and coordination between national institutions through regular GFP meetings and with local GEMs through an annual GEM conference. As a result, the CBGE led several strategic processes, including Evaluation of the NAP for Gender Equality 2016-2018, development of the new National Action Plan 2019-2020; preparation of the state Report on the Implementation Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action - National Review of Beijing +25 - that served as inputs to the Voluntary National Review on the SDG implementation. In addition, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality engaged in dialogue with key stakeholders, including academia and women's organisations, and initiated establishment of the platform for dialogue with policy-makers and decision-makers aimed to raise awareness of the general population about gender equality. In order to better implement the National Strategy for Gender Equality and strengthen capacities of civil servants, the CBGE supported development of Guidelines for usage of gender sensitive language. The manual provides recommendations and guidelines for use and promotion of gender sensitive language for civil servants and larger audience.

The strengthening of gender equality mechanisms (GEMs) at the local level accomplished by supporting twenty local gender equality mechanisms in implementing measures from their local gender equality plans. Through local GEMs support, more than 1,800 women directly benefited from this support and learning.

Under the Result 2, the Ministry of European Integration conducted gender mainstreaming of the key national document that defines Serbia's development priorities, measures and funds: The National Priorities for International Assistance in the Republic

of Serbia, 2021-2025 (NAD). For the first time, the NAD included sex-disaggregated data and analyses of nine sectors, including environment, energy, agriculture, public administration reform, home affairs, social development, justice, competitiveness and transport. This included setting up a monitoring framework of the document and gender inputs for the passport of indicators.

The capacities for gender mainstreaming of IPA improved with the support of UN Women, by joint work in identifying, assessing and addressing the needs of men and women in the development and gender mainstreaming of five sector action documents (environment, disaster and risk reduction, human resource and social development, rule of law and home affairs, and competitiveness) for the IPA 2019-2020 planning cycle.

Furthermore, several gender analyses were developed with an aim to raise the visibility of the issues and advocate for change, such as: Gender Analysis of the sectors of Transport, Infrastructure and Construction, Gender Analysis of active labour market measures, Gender Analysis of Municipal Calls for Proposals for CSOs, Gender Analysis of Economic and Financial measures in Serbia. Following the requirements related to Chapter 22 in EU Serbia negotiation process, UN Women supported MEI in the development of Guidebook for the implementation of ex-ante conditionalities/enabling conditions for Cohesion policy related to gender equality and antidiscrimination.

Under the Result 3, 16 women's CSOs got resources to support women's economic empowerment, meaning to improve the access of women to the labour market, encourage women's entrepreneurship and rural women's economic empowerment. More than 1200 women living in more than 40 municipalities across Serbia benefited from these initiatives, whether through increase of their capacities in different areas and increased knowledge on women's rights, or through direct support for development of their businesses, employment and self-employment. Additionally, supported women's CSOs influenced and initiated establishment of new associations of rural women and women with disabilities, all in local self-governments that previously did not have women's organizations, while also further strengthening and

empowering existing women's CSOs and women's social enterprises to take more active role in local communities.

To support women's CSOs in development of initiatives to improve the position of rural women and enable cooperation with LSGs, while at the same time increasing their capacities in women's economic empowerment, UN Women organized various events and training for project proposal development. These events served as forums for exchanging the experiences of women's CSOs, but also served for establishing first contacts both between women's CSOs as well as between CSOs and LSGs, that could lead to the development of joint initiatives.

2.2 Project beneficiaries and stakeholders

Direct beneficiaries include the following:

(Result 1) The Coordination Body for Gender Equality as the permanent Government body mandated to ensure the coordination of Government actions in gender equality. The Government units and gender focal points in line ministries responsible for gender mainstreaming will benefit from the activities. Furthermore, direct beneficiaries include local gender equality mechanisms and civil servants engaged on gender mainstreaming.

(Result 2) The Ministry of European Integration, being responsible for organizing and coordinating processes on IPA planning, programming monitoring and reporting, and IPA programming units, participating in the abovementioned processes across sectors through the mechanisms of Sector Working Groups and Sectoral Monitoring Committees. Direct beneficiaries include staff of the Ministry of European Integration and civil servants from IPA programming units.

(Result 3) Women's civil society organizations that implement the initiatives around gender equality and women empowerment with the focus on economic empowerment of women and empowerment of rural women.

Indirect beneficiaries include women benefiting from the actions of the women's civil society organizations

on the economic empowerment; women and men reached with campaigns on gender equality and women's rights; communities which will benefit because of the gender-responsive planning, service delivery and budget allocations.

2.3 Project budget, geographical scope and timeframe

The GEF project is three-year project implemented in the Republic of Serbia from 1 of March 2018 until 28 February 2021. Total project budget is EUR 2,000,000 contributed by the European Commission.

The implementation is in line with the EU-UN Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) of 29 April 2003 and supplemented by the 01 January 2014 Addendum which says that UN Women is the leading organisation on gender equality and women's empowerment in the UN system. UN Women passed the pillar assessment, which confirmed that all assessed pillars (internal control, accounting, external audit, grants, procurement, and sub delegation) are positive, thereby confirming that the European Commission can entrust budget implementation tasks to UN Women under direct management.

2.4 Project Management

Operational Management

UN Women implement the project in close cooperation with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of European Integration, the EU Delegation in Serbia and other partner institutions and women's organisations.

UN Women have the overall responsibility for managing the implementation of the project. The project is managed by the project GEF team and supported by the technical experts in various areas. The GEF Team members include: Project Manager, three Project Officers, Finance Officer, Project Assistant and Communication Officer.

The Project Steering Committee

The Project Steering Committee is established in line with detailed provisions of the respective procedures under project management. The Project Steering Committee is responsible for ensuring smooth implementation through regular reviews of the project progress and its chaired jointly by UN Women and the Coordination Body for Gender Equality. The Project Steering Committee monitor progress, examine, and approve annual plans and reports and the respective outputs, provide a forum for regular, transparent, and coordinated sharing of information about the project.

The Project team members provide the administrative support for organising all Project Steering Committee meetings, with UN Women acting as the Secretary to the Project Steering Committee.

3. Evaluation Purpose and Use

3.1 Evaluation scope

The final evaluation of the project will be conducted at the end of project implementation and will cover the entire duration of the project from 1 March 2018 until 28 February 2021. The evaluation is scheduled between September 2020 and January 2021.

The evaluation includes a data collection mission to Belgrade and up to three selected local self-governments in Serbia.

The evaluation shall cover all aspects of the project, and broadly allocate resources (time) in relation to the relative expenditure between the various project components.

3.2 Evaluation purpose

A final project evaluation will be conducted with a special focus on lessons learnt both from programmatic and coordination perspectives. The main purpose of this final evaluation is to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the above described

intervention from the point of view of relevance, effectiveness, impact, organizational efficiency and sustainability. The evaluation will not be able to fully assess the project performance, as some activities are still ongoing; however, it will address the following questions with the results and evidence that is available to date.

The findings of the evaluation will contribute to effective programming, organizational learning and accountability. The findings of the evaluation will moreover be used to engage policy makers and other stakeholders at national and local levels in evidence-based dialogues and to advocate for gender-responsive strategies to promote inclusive local and national economic development with a particular focus on rural women. The evaluation should also provide specific recommendations as to the priority areas that should be considered in next projects implemented by UN Women Serbia office, including interventions that require continued support, successful interventions for expansion, and recommendations on prioritizing interventions to maximize impact. It should also define recommendations to improve project management structure.

The evaluation will follow a participatory approach that will include a twofold management structure where all key partners will be represented and additional consultation with key stakeholders, governmental representatives from relevant ministries and national institutions, with civil society representatives and active women's groups as well as key donor partners.

3.3 Evaluation objectives

The specific evaluation objectives include:

Analyse the relevance of the project objectives, strategy and approach at the local and national levels for the Government support to comply with national and international gender equality commitments and EU Gender Equality Acquis.

- Assess effectiveness and a potential measurable impact of the project intervention on the target group across all three results.
- Assess organizational efficiency and coordination mechanisms in progressing towards the

achievement of the project results, including the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the intervention.

- Assess the sustainability of the results and the intervention in advancing gender equality in the target group.
- Analyse how human rights-based approach and gender equality principles are integrated in the project implementation
- Assess how the intervention and its results relate and contribute to the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals
- Identify and document lessons learned, good practices and innovations, success stories and challenges within the project, to inform future work of participating UN agencies in the frameworks of gender mainstreaming and good governance.
- Identify strategies for replication and up-scaling of the project's best practices.

4. Evaluation Management Structure

Evaluation Management Group

An Evaluation Management Group (EMG) will be formed and will be the main decision-making body for the evaluation and is composed of UN Women project team members, UN Women Serbia Head of Office, and UN Women ECA RO Evaluation Specialist. The EMG will be responsible for the overall management of the evaluation and will oversee the day to day business of the evaluation and communication with the Evaluation Team. UN Women Serbia representative will be responsible for day-to-day management of the evaluation and the coordination for the field visits, including logistical support.

Evaluation Reference Group

An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be established to ensure that the evaluation approach is relevant to stakeholders, and to make certain that factual errors or errors of omission or interpretation are identified in evaluation products. The reference group will provide input at key stages of the evaluation: inception report; draft and final reports. The ERG will be composed of Coordination Body for Gender Equality, Ministry of European Integration, Delegation

of European Union, and women CSOs representative. The ERG will be consulted on key aspects of the evaluation process. The group will be composed to ensure that all relevant stakeholders' groups and perspectives are represented, including from CSOs.

5. Evaluation Approach, Methodology Criteria and Questions

The evaluation will assess progress and challenges for each of the three results, with measurement of the specific results achievements and gaps and how and to what extent these have affected overall progress. It will consist of a desk review, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, such as the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, Ministry of European Integration and women's CSOs involved in project implementation or addressing the needs and representing the interests of specific groups of women, such as Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities etc.

The evaluation will be a transparent and participatory process involving relevant stakeholders and partners in Serbia. The evaluation will follow gender equality and human rights principles, as defined in the UN Women Evaluation Policy and adhere to the United Nations norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations system. The evaluation methodology will employ mixed methods. A more detailed evaluation methodology will be proposed and agreed with the evaluation team and will be presented in the evaluation inception report.

The evaluation is a final project evaluation and both a summative approach focusing on capturing the lessons learned during the implementation and assessing the achievement of the results at output and outcome levels, as well as a formative, forward-looking approach assessing the applicability of the results will be employed. The evaluation methodology will furthermore follow a ToC approach and employ mixed methods including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analytical approaches to account for complexity of gender relations and to ensure participatory and inclusive processes that are culturally appropriate. Methods may include but are not limited to:

Desk review of relevant documents such as project documents, progress reports, financial records, meeting minutes and monitoring reports, and secondary data or studies relating to the country context and situation analysis.

- Online consultations and discussions with the senior management and project management staff.
- Semi-structured interviews focus group discussions, surveys with direct and indirect beneficiaries, implementing partners, donor and other stakeholders.
- Field visits to and observation at selected project sites.

Data from different research sources will be triangulated to increase its validity. The proposed approach and methodology have to be considered as flexible guidelines rather than final requirements, and the evaluators will have an opportunity to make their inputs and propose changes in the evaluation design. The methodology and approach should, however, incorporate human rights and gender equality perspectives. It is expected that the Evaluation Team will further refine the approach and methodology and submit a detailed description in the inception report.

The evaluation will include Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability and Impact criteria. More specifically, the evaluation will address the following evaluation questions that will be further refined once the evaluation team is recruited:

Relevance:

- To what extent was the design of the intervention and its results relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries? Was the choice of interventions relevant to the situation of the target group?
- To what extent key national partners were involved in programme's conceptualization and design process?
- To what extent has gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation?
- To what extent is the intervention aligned with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis?

- To what extent was the design of the intervention relevant to gender equality priorities in the country?
- What are the needs and priorities of the women in Serbia?
- Is the NAP for GE implementation making sufficient progress towards planned objectives of the National Strategy for Gender Equality?
- To what extent project contributed to achieving nationalized Sustainable Development Goals?

Coherence:

Internal coherence:

- To what extent does the project fit within UN Women's Strategic Plan and interrelated threefold mandate?
- Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women?
- To what extent UN Women in Serbia has capitalized from GEF implementation in other countries and how UN Women has established synergies in terms of GEF implementation in the region?

External coherence:

- To what extent is the intervention consistent with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities and commitments on GE?
- How does project reflect and align with national strategic plans and normative frameworks and Serbia's international obligations and commitments in the field of women's rights and gender equality?
- To what extent the project is in complementarity, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of other actors' interventions in the same context?
- To what extent the implementation of the project ensures synergies and coordination with Government's and key partners relevant efforts while avoiding duplications?
- To what extent are the interventions achieving synergies with the work of the UN Country Team?
- What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?
- To what extent is project aligned with the UN Development Partnership Frameworks and nationalized SDGs?

Effectiveness:

- To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels?
- What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results? Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices and the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were they overcome?
- How effective have the selected programme strategies and approaches been in achieving programme results?
- How well did the intervention succeed in involving and building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers, as well as the project partners?
- To what extent are the programme approaches and strategies innovative for achieving gender equality in Serbia? What -if any- types of innovative good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?
- What contribution are participating UN agencies making to implementing global norms and standards for gender equality and economic empowerment of women in Serbia?
- To what extent the project improved communication, coordination and information exchange within the National Gender Machineries at all level?
- Is there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved?

Efficiency:

Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?

- Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results? Where does accountability lie?
- Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?
- To what extent are the project monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets? To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making?

- Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic) identified in the implementation of the different actions and what level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?

Sustainability:

What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out?

- To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?
- How effectively has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved, the establishment of partnerships with relevant stakeholders and the development of national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?
- What steps were taken to develop and/or reinforce the operating capacities of national partners during the implementation of the programme?
- To what extent has the project been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?
- To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?
- How effectively has project contributed to the establishment of effective partnerships and development of national capacities?
- Considering the mandates to incorporate human rights and gender equality in all UN work and the UN Women Evaluation Policy, which promotes the integration of women's rights and gender equality principles into evaluation, these dimensions will require special attention for this evaluation and will be considered under each evaluation criterion.

It is expected that the evaluation team will develop an evaluation matrix, which will relate to the above questions (and refine them as needed), the areas they refer to, the criteria for evaluating them, the indicators and the means for verification as a tool for the evaluation. Final evaluation matrix will be approved in the evaluation inception report.

Duties and Responsibilities

6. Evaluation Process, duties and responsibilities of the Evaluation Team

6.1 Evaluation process

The evaluation process is divided in five phases:

1. Preparation, mainly devoted to structuring the evaluation approach, preparing the TOR, compiling programme documentation, and hiring the evaluation company;
2. Inception, which will involve consultations between the evaluation team and the EMG, programme portfolio review, finalization of stakeholder mapping, inception meetings with the ERG, review of the result logics, analysis of information relevant to the initiative, finalization of evaluation methodology and preparation and validation of inception report;
3. Data collection and analysis, including in-depth desk research, in-depth review of the project documents and monitoring frameworks, online interviews as necessary, staff and partner survey/s, and field visits;
4. Data analysis and reporting stage, focusing on data analysed, interpretation of findings and drafting and validation of an evaluation report; and
5. Dissemination, follow-up and use, once the evaluation is completed UN Women is responsible for the development of a Management Response, publishing of the evaluation report, uploading the published report on the GATE website, and the dissemination of evaluation findings.

The outline above corresponds to the entire evaluation process from preparation, to conduct, reporting and follow up and use. The evaluation team will only be responsible for the inception, data collection and data analysis and reporting phase. Evaluation preparation and dissemination follow up and use will be responsibility of EMG.

6.2 Evaluation team requirements

Corresponding with the inception, data collection, data analysis and reporting stages of the evaluation process, the duties and responsibilities of the evaluation team will be as follows:

Leading the inception phase and developing an inception report outlining design, approach and methodology of the evaluation and an indicative workplan of the evaluation team within the framework of this ToR.

- Directing and carrying out collection, research and analysis of relevant documentation and other data, and reporting.
- Overseeing and assuring quality of data collection and leading the analysis of the evaluation evidence.
- Preparing for meetings with the evaluation management group, evaluation reference group and other stakeholders to review findings, conclusions and recommendations.
- Leading the preparation of the evaluation communication products.
- To conduct a data collection field mission with the support of the EMG which will include individual interviews with the relevant stakeholder;
- To prepare a Power Point Presentation and an outline on preliminary findings and present to EMG and to ERG;
- To produce and submit a draft and a final evaluation reports in English to be validated by EMG and ERG;
- To produce an evaluation brief in English.

7. Evaluation team composition

The evaluation team will include an international consultant as a team leader and a national consultant as team member supporting in all substantive aspects of the evaluation.

Both have some experience of each of the following: conducting evaluations, gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment. The international consultant as team leader is responsible for coordination during all phases of the evaluation process, ensuring the quality of outputs and application of methodology as well as timely delivery

of all evaluation products in close collaboration with the evaluation task manager and the evaluation management group. The national consultant will provide support to the international consultant in all the aspects of conducting the evaluation, including translation and interpretation where necessary.

Evaluation timeframe and expected outputs

Expected deliverables

The evaluation team is expected to deliver:

An inception report: The evaluation team will present a refined scope, a detailed outline of the evaluation design and methodology, evaluation questions, and criteria for the approach for in-depth desk review and field work to be conducted in the data collection phase. The report will include an evaluation matrix and detailed work plan. A first draft report will be shared with the evaluation management group and, based upon the comments received the evaluation team will revise the draft. The revised draft will be shared with the evaluation reference group for feedback. The evaluation team will maintain an audit trail of the comments received and provide a response on how the comments were addressed in the final inception report.

- Presentation of preliminary findings: A PowerPoint presentation detailing the emerging findings of the evaluation will be shared with the evaluation management group for feedback. The revised presentation will be delivered to the reference group for comment and validation. The evaluation team will incorporate the feedback received into the draft report.
- A draft evaluation report: A first draft report will be shared with the evaluation management group for initial feedback. The second draft report will incorporate evaluation management group feedback and will be shared with the evaluation reference group for identification of factual errors, errors of omission and/or misinterpretation of information. The third draft report will incorporate this feedback and then be shared with the reference group for final validation. The evaluation team will maintain

an audit trail of the comments received and provide a response on how the comments were addressed in the revised drafts.

- The final evaluation report: The final report will include a concise Executive Summary and annexes detailing the methodological approach and any analytical products developed during the course of the evaluation. The structure of the report will be defined in the inception report.
- Evaluation communication products: Online presentation of the preliminary findings (date TBD), a PowerPoint/Prezi presentation of the final key evaluation findings and recommendations, and a 2-pager/infographics on the final key findings, lessons learned and recommendations in a format preferably adjustable for individual project sites both in English and Serbian.

Payment will be issued in three instalments upon the satisfactory submission of the deliverables cleared by the evaluation task manager to certify that the services have been satisfactorily performed:

30% upon approval of evaluation inception report; 30% upon the submission of the draft report; and 40% upon the validation of the final evaluation report and communication products.

Evaluation time frame

The project evaluation will be conducted between September 2020 and January 2021. The preliminary calendar for the process is detailed in the table below.

Task	Tentative timeframe deadline	Est no days international consultant	Est no of days national consultant
Inception phase September – October 2020			
Desk review of background documentation	20 September 2020	3	2
Inception meeting with EMG	30 September 2020	1	1
Inception report (including two rounds of revision)	15 October 2020	5	5
Data collection phase October – November 2020			
Documents review, (online) interviews	30 October 2020	3	3
Visit to project sites ^[1]	30 November 2020	5	5
Analysis and reporting phase December 2020-January 2021			
Drafting and presentation of preliminary findings (including one round of revision)	30 December 2020	3	3
Preparation and submission of report (including two rounds of Revision)	15 January 2021	10	5
Review and submission of final report and communication products (PPT and a brief)	31 January 2021	5	2
Total		35	26

[1] Due to the Covid19 pandemic situation onsite data collection might need to be replaced by online data collection. This will be revisited and agreed with UN Women during the inception phase of the evaluation.

Competencies

Core Values:

Integrity - Demonstrate consistency in upholding and promoting the values of UN Women in actions and decisions, in line with the UN Code of Conduct.

Professionalism - Demonstrate professional competence and expert knowledge of the pertinent substantive areas of work.

Cultural sensitivity and respect for diversity - Demonstrate an appreciation of the multicultural nature of the organization and the diversity of its staff. Additionally, the individual should have an international outlook, appreciating difference in values and learning from cultural diversity

Competencies:

Sensitivity and adaptability to culture, gender, religion, nationality and age

- Strong analytical, writing and reporting abilities
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, ability to lead a team and negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders
- Commitment to quality products and deadlines

Required Skills and Experience

- At least a master's degree in economics, social sciences, international relations, gender studies or a related area
- At least 7 years international experience in conducting evaluations of strategies, policies and/or development programmes and projects;
- Proven experience of designing and leading or participating in gender-responsive and human rights-based evaluations utilizing participatory approaches and methodologies
- Experience and knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis;

- Excellent analytical, facilitation and communications skills and ability to negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders;
- Knowledge of human rights issues, the human rights-based approach to programming, human rights analysis and related mandates within the UN system;
- Proficiency in written and spoken English language;
- Knowledge of Serbian will be considered an asset.

Application procedure:

The following documents should be submitted as part of the application:

- Cover letter to include a brief overview in English (unedited text) about which of your previous experiences makes you the most suitable candidate for the advertised position.
- P11 with past experience in similar assignments; can be downloaded at <http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment>. A signed copy should be submitted.
- Financial Proposal Specify a total lump sum amount for the tasks specified in this Terms of Reference. Can be downloaded from the following link: <http://www.undp.org.rs/download/ic/Confirmation.docx>. The financial proposal shall include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (daily rate and number of anticipated working days, travel costs for any part of the assignment outside of Belgrade, and any other possible costs).
- In order to apply please merge your P11 and the financial proposal into a single PDF file. The system does not allow for more than one attachment to be uploaded.
- Any request for clarification must be sent by standard electronic communication to the e-mail vacancy.rs@undp.org.

Evaluation of applicants:

Consultants will be evaluated using a cumulative analysis method taking into consideration the combination of qualifications and financial proposal. Contract will be awarded to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

a) Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and b) Having received the highest score out of below defined technical and financial criteria.

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points in the technical evaluation would be considered for financial evaluation.

	Evaluation Criteria	Max points
TECHNICAL EVALUATION (70%)		
Language Requirements	Fluency in written and spoken English Language	REQUIRED
Education	Master's degree in economics, social sciences, international relations, gender studies or a related area.	20 0: without relevant master's degree 20: Master's degree
Professional experience	International experience in conducting evaluations of strategies, policies and/or development programmes and projects.	20 0: without 7 years of experience 15: 7 years of experience 20: more than 7 years of experience
	Proven experience of designing and leading or participating in gender-responsive and human rights-based evaluations utilizing participatory approaches and methodologies.	10 0: without relevant experience 10: relevant experience
	Experience and knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis.	10 0: without relevant experience 10: relevant experience
	Excellent analytical, facilitation and communications skills and ability to negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders.	10 0: without relevant experience 10: relevant experience
Total technical		70

Financial Evaluation (30%) – max. 30 points:

The maximum number of points assigned to the financial proposal is allocated to the lowest price proposal. All other price proposals receive points in inverse proportion. A suggested formula is as follows:

$$p = 30 (\mu/z)$$

Using the following values:

p = points for the financial proposal being evaluated

μ = price of the lowest priced proposal

z = price of the proposal being evaluated

Evaluation TOR Annexes

- 1.UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluations
- 2.UNEG Ethical Guidelines
- 3.UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN System
- 4.UNEG Standards for Evaluation in the UN System
- 5.UNEG Guidance Integrating Human Rights and Gender in the UN System
- 6.UN Women Evaluation Handbook
- 7.UNSWAP Technical Note and Scorecard
- 8.National Strategy for Gender Equality for the period 2016-2020 with following Action Plan for the period 2016-2018

ANNEX 2: RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

<p>The Overall Objective/Impact: The Government of Serbia consistently comply with national and international gender equality commitments and EU Gender Equality Acquis.</p>	<p>Objectively verifiable indicators: Indicator 1: Positive review of annual progress on gender in Serbia in relation to the implementation of EU Gender Equality Acquis.²⁸ Baseline: No Target: Yes Means of Verification: Serbia Annual Report Data collection method: Review of the Annual EU Progress Report for Serbia</p>		
<p>Specific Objective/Outcome: The Coordination Body for Gender Equality, the Ministry of European Integration and the key institutions mandated for gender equality, progress in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and in the oversight of EU Gender Equality Acquis.</p>	<p>Objectively verifiable indicators: Outcome Indicator 1: Number of the Sector Planning Documents that are gender mainstreamed and/or have gender specific sections. Baseline: Zero Sector Planning Documents are gender mainstreamed in 2017. Target: Five Sector Planning Documents are gender mainstreamed and/or have gender specific actions by 2020. Means of Verification: Sector Planning Documents Data collection method: Review of the Sector Planning Documents</p>		
	<p>Outcome Indicator 2: The existence of the internal review and quality assurance process in the Ministry of European Integration for gender mainstreaming of IPA programmes. Baseline: No internal review and quality assurance process in the Ministry of European Integration for gender mainstreaming of IPA programmes in 2017. Target: The internal review and quality assurance process in the Ministry of European Integration for gender mainstreaming of IPA programmes exists by the end of 2020. Means of Verification: Procedures for IPA Programming and Monitoring and Reporting Data collection method: Review of the Procedures for IPA Programming and Monitoring and Reporting</p>		
	<p>Outcome Indicator 3: Number of measures from the National Action Plan for Gender Equality implemented by women CSOs through project support. Baseline: zero at the beginning of project support Target: 25% increase of the number of activities from the National Action Plan for Gender Equality implemented by women CSOs by 2020. Means of Verification: Annual report on NAP monitoring Data collection method: Review of the CSO Project Reports</p>		
<p>Results</p>	<p>Objectively verifiable indicators</p>	<p>Sources of Verification</p>	<p>Assumptions and Risks</p>

²⁸ The European Commission issues Annual Report to accession countries on the annual basis and identifies and measures progress in each negotiation chapter.

<p>Result 1/Output 1: The Coordination Body for Gender Equality has the administrative capacities to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes.</p>	<p>O1.1: The existence of Gender Equality Service with staff, computers, and office space. Baseline: Gender Equality Service does not exist in 2017. Target: Established Gender Equality Service by 2020.</p>	<p>MV1.1: Constitutional documents of the Gender Equality Service Data collection method: Review of documents</p>	<p><i>Assumptions</i> Political commitment of the Government of Serbia to implement the National Strategy for Gender Equality and ensure implementation of the NAP. Commitment and adequate capacities of beneficiary institutions to absorb assistance and to implement project activities.</p> <p><i>Risks</i> Weak interest and resistance of key stakeholders to get involved and participate in implementation of project activities. The establishment of the permanent Government structure on gender equality (Gender Equality Service) delayed</p>
	<p>O1.2: % of change in the knowledge and skills of gender focal points in line ministries to perform gender mainstreaming in their sectors. Baseline: TBD at the beginning of project based on the pre-assessment of knowledge Target: 35 % increase in the knowledge and skills of gender focal points in line ministries by the end of 2020.</p>	<p>MV1.2a: Assessment reports Data collection method: Standardized pre and post-test assessments</p>	
	<p>O1.3: The existence of the National monitoring and reporting system for the National Action Plan for Gender Equality. Baseline: No, 2017 Target: Yes by 2020</p>	<p>MV1.3: Annual reports on the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality. Data collection method: Review of Annual reports on the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality.</p>	
	<p>O1.4: Number of the mechanisms of dialogue (working group, networks, committees) with women's organizations, parliament, academia, gender experts, media and development partners led by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality Baseline: One working group with key women CSOs led by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality in 2017. Target: Three Working group with the key stakeholders (parliament, academia, gender experts, media, and development partners) led by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality.</p>	<p>MV1.4a: Meeting minutes from the working groups meetings Data collection method: Review of documents.</p>	
<p><i>Activities</i></p>			
<p><i>A1: Support the organizational development and human resources of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the Gender Equality Service.</i></p>			
<p><i>A2: Support the Coordination Body for Gender Equality to establish and formalize procedures of horizontal and vertical coordination and communication with line ministries through gender focal points, and with the provincial and local gender equality bodies.</i></p>			

A3: Support capacity development of civil servants for gender responsive governance: planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

A4: Support the establishment of the national monitoring and reporting system for the National Action Plan for Gender Equality.

A5: Facilitate establishment of the national dialogue mechanisms with women's organizations, CSOs, parliament, academia, gender experts, media, and development partners to serve as the advocacy platform and for the exchange of knowledge.

Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions and Risks
Result 2/ Output 2: The Ministry of European Integration and IPA units have the knowledge and skills to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes.	O2.1: % of change in the knowledge and skills of the Ministry of European Integration and IPA units in the line ministries for gender mainstreaming in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes. Baseline: TBD at the beginning of project based on the pre-assessment of knowledge Target: 30 % increase in the knowledge and skills of the Ministry of European Integration and IPA units in the line ministries for gender mainstreaming	MV2.1: Assessment reports Data collection: Standardized per and post test assessments	<p><i>Assumption</i> Political commitment of the Government of Serbia to implement the National Strategy for Gender Equality and ensure implementation of the NAP. Commitment and adequate capacities of beneficiary institutions to absorb assistance and to implement project activities.</p> <p><i>Risks</i> Some implementing partners experience difficulties or lack of capacities to implement some of the project activities.</p>
	O2.2: Number of IPA programming documents that include: a) sex disaggregated data and indicators; and/or b) section on gender analysis; and/or c) specific activities or result(s) on gender equality and women's empowerment. Baseline: one IPA programming document in 2016 is gender sensitive. ²⁹ Target: At least five IPA programming documents are gender sensitive.	MV2.2: IPA Action documents Data collection: Review of IPA Action documents	
	O2.3: Number of sector gender analysis performed by the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and line ministries to serve as a basis for IPA planning and programming process. Baseline: one sector gender analysis is being conducted in 2017 ³⁰ Target: Five sector gender analysis performed.	MV2.3: Sector gender analysis Data collection method: Review of sector gender analysis	
<i>Activities</i>			

29 2016 Action Document on Social Housing

30 Gender Analysis of Public Administration Reform, commissioned by the EUD in Serbia.

B1: Support capacity development of the Ministry of European Integration (NIPAC TS/BCPME) and authorized applicants involved in programming and the implementation of EU funds on EU gender equality acquis, gender analysis and gender mainstreaming.

B2: Support the gender analysis of selected sectors documents.

B3: Support the Ministry of European Integration in establishing and functioning of the quality assurance and internal review process for gender mainstreaming in programming of EU funds, throughout the preparation and implementation of programmes.

<i>Results</i>	<i>Objectively verifiable indicators</i>	<i>Sources of Verification</i>	<i>Assumptions and Risks</i>
Result 3/Output 3: Women CSOs are supported to implement measures and share experiences and good practices in the implementation of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality on women's economic empowerment and the empowerment of rural women.	O3.1: Number of project cooperation agreements signed with women civil society organizations in the areas of women labour rights, women's entrepreneurship and empowerment of rural women. Baseline: zero Target: Up to twenty project cooperation agreements signed with women civil society organizations.	MV3.1: Project reports Data collection methods: Review of grantees reports	<i>Assumptions</i> Political commitment of the Government of Serbia to implement the National Strategy for Gender Equality and ensure implementation of the NAP. Active participation and adequate capacities of women CSOs to engage in project interventions.
	O3.2: Number of women benefitting from the employment programmes, business learning and empowerment programmes, mentoring services, learning, and retaining programmes provided within the project. Baseline: zero at the beginning of project Target: 3.000 women benefitting from project	MV3.2: Project reports Data collection methods: Review of project reports	<i>Risks</i> Insufficient commitment of decision makers to gender equality and to involve women CSOs, resulting in inadequate support. Insufficient interest of stakeholders: media, academia, and development partners to get engaged in dialogue of gender equality and women's rights.

Activities

C1: Launch the Call for Proposals and select women's CSOs as the responsible parties for the implementation of projects in the area of economic empowerment of women and empowerment of rural women.

C2: Support and monitor women's CSOs selected as the responsible parties in the implementation of projects of empowering women at the labour market, in the area of women's entrepreneurship and for empowering women in rural areas.

C3: Support knowledge sharing on women economic empowerment among CSOs and other concerned stakeholders to learn more on the good practices and experiences and to map common challenges.

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation matrix presents how evaluation criteria will be applied in this specific evaluation. It outlines key evaluation questions, indicators that the Evaluation Team will be observing, data collection methods and sources of information.

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
Criterion: RELEVANCE Are we doing the right things?				
Sub Criterion: Alignment				
1	What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia? How does GEF Project respond to them?	Documental evidence on needs and priorities of women in Serbia and level of their inclusion in the intervention logic and components of the project Comparison between the needs and priorities and implementation strategies, target groups and beneficiaries Demonstrated experience and level of understanding of the needs and interests of women in Serbia by implementing organisations and institutions	Document review Semi structured interviews	UN, government's, CSOs reports on the GE status in Serbia Project documents, result framework, progress reports Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
2	To what extent is the Project aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions on GEEW in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis? To what extent is the intervention aligned with nationalized SDGs?	Documental evidence on adherence to international commitments (CEDAW, Beijing, SDGs), EU Gender Equality Acquis Perception and % of KIs reporting correlation of project intervention with overarching international commitments	Document review Semi structured interviews	UN, government's, CSOs reports on the GE status in Serbia, EU reports on Serbia Project documents, result framework, progress reports Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
3	To what extent is the Project aligned with UN Development Partnership Framework in Serbia?	Documental evidence on alignment of the Project objectives with overarching UN Development Partnership Framework	Document review Semi structured interviews	UN-Government of Serbia Development Partnership Framework 2016-2020 Project documents, result framework, progress reports Interviews with UN Women and other UN agencies working in the same area

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
4	<p>To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?</p> <p>To what extent were key national partners involved in Project conceptualization and design process?</p>	<p>Documental evidence on adherence to NS GE and GE NAP and other development policies of the Republic of Serbia</p> <p>Perception and % of KIs reporting correlation with the national policy priorities and interventions and legal framework</p> <p>Acceptance by partners, stakeholders and institutions, ownership</p> <p>Evidence on consultation process in preparation of the project</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>UN, government's, CSOs reports on the GE status in Serbia</p> <p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners</p>
5	<p>To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders?</p> <p>How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?</p> <p>What else should be done to strengthen the project relevant in the current context?</p>	<p>Evidence on adjustment / updating of approaches and strategies to changing context.</p> <p>Evidence on existing demand for the continuation of the project by national stakeholders</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation national and local government representatives, CSOs</p>
Sub Criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality				
6	<p>To what extent have gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation?</p> <p>To what extent is LNOB principle integrated in the approach?</p> <p>Is the choice of partners most relevant to the situation of women and marginalized groups and to achieve GEWE?</p> <p>Which groups is the project reaching the most, and are any underserved?</p>	<p>Evidence of project results addressing causes of inequality set out in NS GE and international frameworks</p> <p>Evidence of extent to which interventions consider / address the needs of women, including women from marginalized groups</p> <p>Alignment of partner's mandates with the areas and strategies of intervention</p> <p>Perception and evidence of influence of partners on the thematic areas of the project</p> <p>Ability of partners to reach the target groups and beneficiaries (capacity, sector wise, geographically)</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners</p>
<p>Criterion: COHERENCE</p> <p>How well the project fits in the overall UN Women SP and in the work others to advance GEEW?</p>				

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
Sub Criterion: Internal Coherence				
7	To what extent does the project fit within UN Women's Strategic Plan and its threefold mandate? Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women?	<p>Level of alignment of the project with UN Women SP</p> <p>Approaches and strategies being of normative, coordination and operational character</p> <p>Evidence on similarities among objectives with other programmes of UN Women Programme Office in Serbia and connections in implementation approaches</p> <p>Existence and coherence of synergies enabling more effective delivery, existence of potential duplication</p> <p>Existence of mechanisms of internal coordination in planning, implementation and reporting.</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021</p> <p>UN Women Strategic Note for Serbia</p> <p>Project documents</p> <p>Interview with UN Women</p>
8	To what extent UN Women in Serbia has capitalized from GEF implementation in other countries and how UN Women has established synergies in terms of GEF implementation in the region?	<p>Evidence on cooperation, exchanges, learnings, synergies from GEF implementation in the Western Balkan Regions</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women in Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and ECA RO, EU Delegation, government stakeholders and CSOs</p>
Sub Criterion: External Coherence				
9	To what extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of the Government and other actors in the same context?	<p>Evidence on similarities among objectives with programmes of the Government and other stakeholders</p> <p>Existence and coherence of synergies enabling more effective delivery, existence of potential duplication</p> <p>Existence of mechanisms of external coordination in planning, implementation and reporting</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners</p> <p>UN Women and other initiative's web sites</p>

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
10	What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?	Documental evidence and KIs perception on comparative advantages of UN Women Programme Office in the areas of interventions	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners UN Women and other initiative's web sites
EFFECTIVENESS				
Key Question: Are the things we are doing working?				
Sub Criterion: Overall Achievements				
11	To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels? Is the NAP for GE implementation progressing towards planned objectives of the National Strategy for GE? How well did the intervention succeed in building the capacities of CBGE to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes? How well the MEI and IPA manage to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes? What are the results of women CSOs advocacy activities and WEE measures to women's businesses and initiatives in rural areas? Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom?	Evidence of contributions to the different levels of the TOC Evidence of progress towards identified targets (difference between indicators of achievement and targets) Most significant changes achieved Evidence of unexpected achievements (not envisaged by the project document and intervention logic) and target groups and beneficiaries affected KIs (right-holders, duty bearers, partners) positive/negative reporting on achievements	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, knowledge products and analyses Relevant Government and local government reports and documents Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
12	<p>How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results?</p> <p>What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?</p>	<p>Level of contribution of different project strategies towards project results</p> <p>Extent to which innovative approaches are integrated in the project design and implementation and their evidence of their contribution to project results</p> <p>Perception of KIs on effectiveness of the strategies</p>		<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports, knowledge products and analyses</p> <p>Relevant Government and local government reports and documents</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners</p>
13	<p>What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?</p> <p>What were the positive factors / enablers contributing to the effective implementation?</p> <p>What are the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How covid-19 pandemic affected the project?</p> <p>How were these mitigated and overcome?</p>	<p>Number and type of internal and external enablers and barriers to successful project implementation and achievement of results</p> <p>Perception of KIs on internal and external enablers and barriers to successful implementation</p> <p>Evidence of mitigation actions initiated to overcome the challenges</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners</p>
14	<p>What has been the contribution of UN Women's to the progress of the achievement of outcomes?</p> <p>What contribution are participating UN agencies and other stakeholders making in the thematic area of the Project and implementing global norms and standards for gender equality and economic empowerment of women in Serbia?</p>	<p>Type and uniqueness of UN Women contribution to achievement of outcomes</p> <p>Type of contribution of other stakeholders to achievement of outcomes</p> <p>KI's estimate on the level of contribution of UN Women</p>	<p>Document review</p> <p>Semi structured interviews</p>	<p>Project documents, result framework, progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners</p> <p>UN Women and other initiative's web sites</p>

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
15	To what extent the project improved communication, coordination and information exchange within the National Gender Machineries at all levels?	Extent to which strategies to improve interinstitutional coordination and communication were integrated in the project approach Existence and evidence on effectiveness of mechanisms of communication and coordination in planning, implementation and reporting within the National Gender Machineries prior and after the project implementation Perception of the KI's on effectiveness of coordination and communication and level of the project contribution to that	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, knowledge products and analyses Interviews with UN Women, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners UN Women and other initiative's web sites
Sub-Criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality Focus				
16	What evidence exists to support claims that the project is contributing to gender equality and supporting the advancement of women's rights and rights of those most vulnerable? To what extent do interventions contribute to target the underlying causes of gender inequality?	Degree to which gender equality related laws, policies and programmes are developed/strengthened and implemented through the project Evidence of rights holders are demanding and being able to access rights addressed by the project Evidence that the project strategies are considering and addressing social norms, stereotypes, gender and power relations and underlying causes of gender inequality in the areas of intervention KI's perception of change in attitudes and practices of the project stakeholders	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, knowledge products and analyses Relevant government and local governments' reports and documents Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners UN Women and other initiative's web sites
EFFICIENCY Key Question: Are we doing things right?				
Sub Criteria: Organizational Efficiency				
17	Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?	Relative assessment of the investment of resources and complexity and achievements of project components	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
18	Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results? Where does accountability lie? Is there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved	Adequacy of COs organizational assets, structures and capabilities (in terms of financial and human resources) Effectiveness of COs internal coordination/communication (vertical/horizontal) mechanisms Effectiveness of external coordination/communication mechanisms with partners and beneficiaries	Document review Semi structured interviews	Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
19	To what extent are the project monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets? To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making?	Extent to which project monitoring and reporting is results-based Ability of project staff to effectively capture, measure and monitor progress (using baseline data) Evidence of learning from the collected data being used to assess progress and adjust implementation Degree of donor and partners' satisfaction with results-based reports	Document review Semi structured interviews	Interviews with UN Women and EU Delegation, national and local governments UN Women RMS reports
20	Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic, covid-19 pandemic) identified in the implementation of the different actions and how were these mitigated? Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?	Number and type of internal and external enablers and barriers to efficient project implementation Evidence of mitigation actions initiated to overcome the challenges and their results Evidence of compliance of the implementation flow with the plan Delays/shortfalls traced and link with internal external factors contributing to them	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
21	To what degree does UN Women team have access to the necessary skills, knowledge and capacities needed to deliver?	% of KIs who perceive UN Women Programme Office having and demonstrating strong expertise in GEEW Performance/qualification of contracted gender experts Access to learning programmes and knowledge products	Document review Semi structured interviews	Interviews with UN Women
Sub Criteria: Human Rights and Gender Equality				

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
22	To what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?	Evidence on criteria in project approach to address marginalised groups Evidence and % of resources allocated to address marginalised groups	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Interviews with UN Women, national and local government representatives, CSOs
IMPACT What long term benefits are likely to be achieved?				
Sub Criterion: Areas of Impact				
23	What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)? What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?	Evidence on long-term and sustainable changes or positive trends that benefit target groups and end users (at individual, collective, institutional / systemic level and at the societal level)	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
Sub Criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality				
24	How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?	Evidence on long-term and sustainable changes or positive trends on benefits to end beneficiaries	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
SUSTAINABILITY Will the changes last?				
Sub Criterion: Capacity Development				

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
25	To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?	Evidence of changes in knowledge / behaviours / skills in partners and target groups to sustain the results Evidence of knowledge/ skills being applied Evidence of rights holders articulating their priorities and needs; accessing services; and contributing to national/local planning and development Number of champions identified or created through interventions Evidence of accountability and oversight systems Sub Criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality Implementation and realization of CEDAW principles: non-discrimination, substantive equality, participation, and transformation of relations	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Relevant government and local governments' reports and documents Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
26	To what extent has the project identified opportunities and been able to promote replication and/ or up-scaling of successful practices?	Evidence of replicated and up-scaled practices Perception of stakeholders on effectiveness of these practices and contribution to sustainability		Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
Sub Criterion: Ownership				
27	To what extent has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved, the establishment of partnerships of relevant stakeholders and the development of national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits? - What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out? - What else should be done?	Evidence of adopted/ improved national or local normative, policy and programmatic frameworks for GEEW, set up / adjustment of institutional framework and accountability mechanisms Evidence of sustainable intersectoral partnerships and coordination mechanisms established Evidence of budget allocations to sustain results by the project target groups and partners	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Relevant government and local governments' reports and documents Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners

	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sampling/sources
28	To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?	Existence of exit strategy / plan for the next phase of the Project Suitability of the exit strategy in comparison to other sustainability criteria observed Likelihood of interventions continuing without UN Women Programme Office (technical and financial) support	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Relevant government and local governments' reports and documents Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners
Sub Criterion: Human Rights and Gender Equality				
29	What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained after the phase out?	Extent to which established institutional / policy / budgetary frameworks will continue to support the most vulnerable groups after the end of the project? Likelihood of benefits for the most vulnerable to be sustained after the project implementation Evidence of UN Women's exit strategy / plan for the next phase considering the perspective of the most vulnerable groups	Document review Semi structured interviews	Project documents, result framework, progress reports, budget Relevant government and local governments' reports and documents Interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local government representatives, CSOs and development partners

ANNEX 4: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

UNW PO Serbia³¹

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organization:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

Thank you for your time and readiness to contribute to this evaluation process. This interview will inform the final evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia Project (GEF) implemented in the period 2018-2020.

We are external / independent team of evaluators engaged by UN Women. (evaluators introduce themselves)

This evaluation aims to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the Project in order to assess relevance of the project to the Serbian context, effectiveness of the strategies applied, capture the results, identify key enabling and hindering factors in implementation and support organisational learning. Coordination with national counterparts and other development agencies is also observed.

Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of

documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your position in UN Women and the Project, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

Any information that you provide to us will be held confidential - including our notes of this interview. We will not attribute any specific comments or information to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your role in the organization, how long you have held the role and what is your role in the GEF project?

Relevance

2. What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia? How does GEF Project respond to them?

3. To what extent is the Project aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions in GEEW in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis?

- To what extent is the intervention aligned with nationalized SDGs?

4. To what extent is the Project aligned with UN Development Partnership Framework in Serbia?

5. To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?

- To what extent key national partners were involved in Project conceptualization and design process?-

³¹ These are general interview questions adjusted to the evaluation target groups level. In the semi-structured interviews, these will be further adjusted to each key informant.

6. To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

7. To what extent have gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation? To what extent is LNOB principle integrated in the approach?

- Is the choice of partners most relevant to the situation of women and marginalized groups and to achieve GEWE?

- Which groups is the project reaching the most, and are any underserved?

Coherence

8. To what extent does the project fit within UN Women's Strategic Plan and its threefold mandate?

- Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women?

9. To what extent UN Women in Serbia has capitalized from GEF implementation in other countries and how UN Women has established synergies in terms of GEF implementation in the region?

10. To what extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of the Government and other actors in the same context?

11. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?

Effectiveness

12. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels?

- Is the NAP for GE implementation progressing towards planned objectives of the National Strat-

egy for GE?

- How well did the intervention succeed in building the capacities of CBGE to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes?

- How well the MEI and IPA manage to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes?

- What are the results of women CSOs advocacy activities and WEE measures to women's businesses and initiatives in rural areas?

- Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom?

13. How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?

14. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?

- What were the positive factors / enablers contributing to the effective implementation?

- What are the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How covid-19 pandemic affected the project?

- How were these mitigated and overcome?

15. What has been the contribution of UN Women's to the progress of the achievement of outcomes?

16. What contribution are participating UN agencies and other stakeholders making in the thematic area of the Project and implementing global norms and standards for gender equality and economic empowerment of women in Serbia?

17. To what extent the project improved communication, coordination and information exchange within the National Gender Mechanisms at all levels?

18. What evidence exists to support claims that the project is contributing to gender equality and supporting the advancement of women's rights and rights of those most vulnerable?

- To what extent do interventions contribute to target the underlying causes of gender inequality?

Efficiency

19. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?

20. Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results?

- Where does accountability lie?
- Is there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved?

21. To what extent are the project monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets? To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making?

22. Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic, covid-19 pandemic) identified in the implementation of the different actions and how were these mitigated?

- Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?

23. To what degree does UN Women team have access to the necessary skills, knowledge and capacities needed to deliver? How are ECA RO and other GEF project in the regions contribute to mutual capacity development?

24. To what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?

Impact

25. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

- What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?

26. How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?

Sustainability

27. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?

28. To what extent has the project identified opportunities and been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?

29. To what extent has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved (normative, financial, institutional, individual), the establishment of partnerships of relevant stakeholders and the development of national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?

- What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out?

- What else should be done?

30. To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?

31. What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained after the phase out?

32. What are your recommendations for the potential next phase of GEF?

UNW GEF staff in COs in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organization:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

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Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your position in UN Women and GEF Project in your country, your perspective is extremely valuable.

UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

Any information that you provide to us will be held confidential - including our notes of this interview. We will not attribute any specific comments or information to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your role in the organization, how long you have held the role and what is your role in the GEF project in your country?
2. Have you cooperated with the GEF Project in Serbia and how?

Relevance

3. What are the key needs and priorities of women in the Western Balkans and your country? How can GEF Project in your country respond to them?
4. To what extent the GEF Project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders at this point? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?
5. What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?
6. Who are the key stakeholders that GEF Project cooperates with in your country?
7. Do you see potential that GEF can address the situation of the vulnerable groups?

Coherence

8. Do you see any synergies with GEF projects in Serbia and other GEF projects in the region (Albania/ Bosnia and Herzegovina/North Macedonia)?
9. What are the other interventions on gender and EU accession and to what extent the GEF project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with them?
10. What is UN Women's comparative advantage to

implement GEF in the Western Balkans region?

Effectiveness

11. What are the most significant results of GEF project in your country? Are you aware of GEF Project results in Serbia?

12. What were the most effective strategies?

13. What were the enablers and barriers to achievement of results?

14. What were the results for the most vulnerable groups?

Efficiency

15. To what degree does UN Women team have access to the necessary skills, knowledge and capacities needed to deliver in GEF Project?

16. Do you see any contribution to effectiveness or efficiency from regional cooperation of GEF projects? How are ECA RO and other GEF projects in the regions contribute to mutual capacity development?

Impact

17. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the GEF Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

Sustainability

18. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?

19. What are the practices of the GEF in your country you see as having potential to be replicated and/or up scaled in other countries?

20. What else should be done to support sustainability?

UNW ECA RO

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organization:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

Thank you for your time and readiness to contribute to this evaluation process. This interview will inform the final evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia Project (GEF) implemented in the period 2018-2020.

We are external / independent team of evaluators engaged by UN Women. (evaluators introduce themselves)

This evaluation aims to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the Project in order to assess relevance of the project to the Serbian context, effectiveness of the strategies applied, capture the results, identify key enabling and hindering factors in implementation and support organisational learning. Coordination with national counterparts and other development agencies is also observed.

Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your position in UN Women ECA RO, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

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formation to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your role in the organization, how long you have held the role and what is your role in the GEF project?

Relevance

2. How UN Women initiated GEF initiatives in the Western Balkans? To what needs and priorities they respond?

3. To what extent is GEF aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions in GEEW in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis?

4. To what extent GEF continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

Coherence

5. To what extent does the project fit within UN Women's Strategic Plan and its threefold mandate?

- Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women?

6. Who are the other stakeholders engaged on engendering the EU agenda of the Western Balkans countries and how UN Women coordinates with them?

7. What is the role of ECA RO in GEF initiatives in the region and how UN Women has established synergies in terms of GEF implementation in the Western Balkans?

8. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in implement initiatives related to EU agenda, such as GEF?

Effectiveness

9. What do you see / what would you like to see as the key achievements of GEF?

10. What are the enabling or hindering factors for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results?

11. How to GEF projects affect those most vulnerable and how they contribute to target the underlying causes of gender inequality?

Efficiency

12. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) for GEF in Serbia been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?

13. Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results?

14. To what extent are the project monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets? To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making?

15. To what degree does UN Women team in Serbia have access to the necessary skills, knowledge and capacities needed to deliver? How are ECA RO and other GEF project in the regions contribute to mutual capacity development?

Impact

16. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

Sustainability

17. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of

rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?

18. What are the good practices that have potential to be replicated or up-scaled?

19. What are your recommendations for future UN Women programming related to issues that were covered by GEF?

National Government Stakeholders

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organization:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

Thank you for your time and readiness to contribute to this evaluation process. This interview will inform the final evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia Project (GEF) implemented in the period 2018-2020.

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Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments repre-

sentatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your role in GEF Project and cooperation with UN Women, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

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Background

1. Please briefly describe your role in the institution, how long you have held the role and what is your role in the GEF project?

Relevance

2. What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia? How does GEF Project respond to them?

3. To what extent is the Project aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions on GEEW in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis?

- To what extent is the intervention aligned with nationalized SDGs?

4. To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?

- To what extent were you and other key national partners involved in Project conceptualization and design process?

6. To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

7. To what extent have gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation? To what extent is LNOB principle integrated in the approach?

- Is the choice of partners most relevant to the situation of women and marginalized groups and to achieve GEWE?

- Which groups is the project reaching the most, and are any underserved?

Coherence

8. Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the GEF project and other interventions of UN Women that you are aware of?

9. Did you have any contact with other GEF initiatives in the region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia) and have there been any useful experiences?

10. To what extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of the Government and other actors in the same context?

11. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?

Effectiveness

12. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels? (questions will be adjusted depending to the component in which the institution participated)

- Is the NAP for GE implementation progressing towards planned objectives of the National Strategy for GE?

- How well did the intervention succeed in building the capacities of CBGE to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes?

- How well the MEI and IPA manage to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes?

- What are the results of women CSOs advocacy activities and WEE measures to women's businesses and initiatives in rural areas?

- Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom?

13. How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?

14. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?

- What were the positive factors / enablers contributing to the effective implementation?

- What are the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How covid-19 pandemic affected the project?

- How were these mitigated and overcome?

15. What has been the contribution of UN Women's to the progress of the achievement of outcomes?

16. What contribution are participating UN agencies and other stakeholders making in the thematic area of the Project and implementing global norms and standards for gender equality and economic empowerment of women in Serbia?

17. To what extent the project improved communication, coordination and information exchange within the National Gender Mechanisms at all levels?

18. What evidence exists to support claims that the project is contributing to gender equality and supporting the advancement of women's rights and rights of those most vulnerable?

- To what extent do interventions contribute to

target the underlying causes of gender inequality?

Efficiency

19. To the best of your knowledge have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?

20. Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results?

- Where does accountability lie?
- Is there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved

21. To what extent are the project monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets?

- To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making?

22. Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic, covid-19 pandemic) identified in the implementation of the different actions and how were these mitigated?

- Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?

23. To what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?

Impact

24. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

- What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?

25. How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?

Sustainability

26. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?

27. To what extent has the project identified opportunities and been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?

28. To what extent has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved (normative, financial, institutional, individual), the establishment of partnerships of relevant stakeholders and the development of national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?

- What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out?

- What else should be done?

29. To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?

30. What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained after the phase out?

31. What are your recommendations for future UN Women programming related to issues that were covered by GEF?

EU Delegation to Serbia

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organization:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

Thank you for your time and readiness to contribute to this evaluation process. This interview will inform the final evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia Project (GEF) implemented in the period 2018-2020.

We are external / independent team of evaluators engaged by UN Women. (evaluators introduce themselves)

This evaluation aims to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the Project in order to assess relevance of the project to the Serbian context, effectiveness of the strategies applied, capture the results, identify key enabling and hindering factors in implementation and support organisational learning. Coordination with national counterparts and other development agencies is also observed.

Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

As EU is the major partner and donor to UN Women and the GEF Project, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

Any information that you provide to us will be held confidential - including our notes of this interview. We will not attribute any specific comments or information to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your role in the Delegation, how long you have held the role and what are your tasks in regard to UN Women's GEF Project?

Relevance

2. What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia? How does GEF Project respond to them?

3. To what extent is the Project aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions in GEEW in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis?

- negotiations with the EU and accession, nationalized SDGs?

4. To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?

- To what extent key national partners were involved in Project conceptualization and design process?-

5. To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

6. To what extent have gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation? To what extent is LNOB principle integrated in the approach?

- Is the choice of partners most relevant to the situation of women and marginalized groups and to achieve GEWE?

- Which groups is the project reaching the most, and are any underserved?

Coherence

7. Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other EU and its partner's initiatives in Serbia?

8. To the best of your knowledge, to what extent UN Women in Serbia has capitalized from GEF implementation in other countries and how UN Women

has established synergies in terms of GEF implementation in the region?

9. What extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of the Government and other national or international actors in the same context?

10. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?

Effectiveness

11. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels? What do you see as the most significant results?:

(reference for the evaluators:

Is the NAP for GE implementation progressing towards planned objectives of the National Strategy for GE?

How well did the intervention succeed in building the capacities of CBGE to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes?

How well the MEI and IPA manage to include gender perspective in programming, implementation, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes?

What are the results of women CSOs advocacy activities and WEE measures to women's businesses and initiatives in rural areas?

12. How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?

13. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?

- What were the positive factors / enablers contributing to the effective implementation?

- What are the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How covid-19 pandemic affected the project?

- How were these mitigated and overcome?

14. What has been the contribution of UN Women's to the progress of the achievement of outcomes?

15. What evidence exists to support claims that the project is contributing to gender equality and supporting the advancement of women's rights and rights of those most vulnerable?

- To what extent do interventions contribute to target the underlying causes of gender inequality?

Efficiency

16. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?

17. Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results?

18. How would you assess the UN Women's project monitoring and reporting systems?

19. Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic, covid-19 pandemic) identified in the implementation of the different actions and how were these mitigated?

- Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?

20. To what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?

Impact

21. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional /

systemic?

22. How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?

Sustainability

23. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and good governance?

24. To what extent has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved (normative, financial, institutional, individual), the establishment of partnerships of relevant stakeholders and the development of national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?

25. To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?

26. What are your recommendations for the potential next phase of GEF?

Local Stakeholders and Beneficiaries (Local GEMs, Local CSOs and end beneficiaries)

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organisation:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

Thank you for your time and readiness to contribute to this evaluation process. This interview will inform the final evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia Project (GEF) implemented in the period 2018-2020.

We are external / independent team of evaluators

engaged by UN Women. (evaluators introduce themselves)

This evaluation aims to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the Project in order to assess relevance of the project to the Serbian context, effectiveness of the strategies applied, capture the results, identify key enabling and hindering factors in implementation and support organisational learning. Coordination with national counterparts and other development agencies is also observed.

Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your role in GEF Project and cooperation with UN Women, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

Any information that you provide to us will be held confidential - including our notes of this interview. We will not attribute any specific comments or information to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your cooperation with UN Women PO in Serbia in general and particularly in GEF Project?

Relevance

2. What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia and particularly in your region? How does UN Women's GEF Project respond to them?

3. To what extent is the Project aligned with the national or local development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities

on GE? 4. To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

5. Is the choice of local partners most relevant to the situation of women and marginalised groups in your region?

- Which groups is the project reaching the most, and are any underserved?

Coherence

6. Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the GEF project and other interventions of UN Women that you are aware of?

7. To what extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of the Government and other actors in the same context?

8. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?

Effectiveness

9. What are the most significant results of your cooperation with UN Women to your local community / your institution or organisation / you?

10. Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom?

11. How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?

12. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?

- What were the positive factors / enablers contributing to the effective implementation?

- What are the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How covid-19 pandemic affected the project?

- How were these mitigated and overcome?

14. To what extent the project improved communication, coordination and information exchange among the Gender Machineries at all levels? (for local governments / GEMs)

Efficiency

19. To the best of your knowledge have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically?

20. Were there any constraints (e.g. political, practical, bureaucratic, covid-19 pandemic) identified in the implementation of the different actions and how were these mitigated?

- Have the expected outputs of your cooperation with UN Women been delivered in a timely manner?

21. To the best of your knowledge, to what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?

Impact

22. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

- What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?

23. How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?

Sustainability

24. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building your individual and institutional / organisational capacities to ensure sustainability of benefits?

25. What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained after the phase out?

26. What are your recommendations for future UN Women programming related to issues that were covered by your cooperation with GEF?

National Civil Society Organisations / Experts / Consultants

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organisation:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

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Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your role in GEF Project and cooperation with UN Women, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

Any information that you provide to us will be held confidential - including our notes of this interview. We will not attribute any specific comments or information to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your role in the organisation, how long you have held the role and how you cooperate with UN Women and GEF project?

Relevance

2. What are the key needs and priorities of women in Serbia? How does GEF Project respond to them?

3. To what extent is the Project aligned with international commitments, agreements and conventions on GEEW in the context of EU Gender Equality Acquis? (if respondent is aware of these commitments and processes)

- To what extent is the intervention aligned with nationalized SDGs?

6. To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?

7. To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was rel-

evance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

8. To what extent have gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation? To what extent is LNOB principle integrated in the approach?

- Is the choice of partners most relevant to the situation of women and marginalized groups and to achieve GEWE?

- Which groups is the project reaching the most, and are any underserved?

Coherence

9. Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the GEF project and other projects of UN Women that you are aware of?

10. To what extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with the interventions of the Government, local governments and other actors engaged in GEEW?

11. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?

Effectiveness (If respondent is aware of the GEF project results)

12. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels:

- Is the NAP for GE implementation progressing towards planned objectives of the National Strategy for GE?

- How well did the intervention succeed in building the capacities of CBGE to implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and to perform gender mainstreaming of state funded programmes?

- How well the MEI and IPA manage to include gender perspective in programming, implementa-

tion, monitoring and reporting for IPA programmes?

- What are the results of women CSOs advocacy activities and WEE measures to women's businesses and initiatives in rural areas?

- Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom?

13. What do you see as the most significant results the GEF project? What were the most effective strategies and approaches in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been applied?

14. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?

- What were the positive factors / enablers contributing to the effective implementation?

- What are the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How covid-19 pandemic affected the project?

- How were these mitigated and overcome?

15. What has been the contribution of UN Women's to the progress of the achievement of outcomes?

16. Are you aware of other donors and UN agencies interventions and what is their contribution?

17. What evidence exists to support claims that the project is contributing to gender equality and supporting the advancement of women's rights and rights of those most vulnerable?

- To what extent do interventions contribute to target the underlying causes of gender inequality?

Efficiency

19. To the best of your knowledge have the resources provided been strategically used to achieve project results?

20. To what extent did the allocated resources reach

those most marginalized and in need?

Impact

21. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of GEF Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

- What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?

22. How project impacts or is likely to impact women end beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?

Sustainability

23. To what extent the achieved results can sustain after the project ends (normative, financial, institutional, individual aspect of sustainability)? What else is needed?

24. To what extent has the project identified opportunities and been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?

25. What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained?

26. What are your recommendations for future UN Women programming related to issues that were covered by GEF?

Media

Date:

Name of Interviewee:

Position held in organization:

Organisation:

Interviewers:

Opening Statement

Thank you for your time and readiness to contribute to this evaluation process. This interview will inform the final evaluation of the Project Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia Project (GEF) implemented in the period 2018-2020.

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Findings, lessons learnt and recommendations will also inform future programming of UN Women in Serbia. In addition to interviews with UN Women, EU Delegation, national and local governments representatives, CSOs, media and experts participating in the project, we analyse broad spectrum of documentation produced by the project and the institutions and organisations involved.

Considering your cooperation with UN Women, your perspective is extremely valuable. UN Women is in no way influencing this evaluation.

Any information that you provide to us will be held confidential - including our notes of this interview. We will not attribute any specific comments or information to you or your organization. We are taking notes for our own use, but we are not otherwise recording this conversation.

Background

1. Please briefly describe your cooperation with UN Women PO in Serbia in general and particularly in GEF Project?

Relevance

2. How do you see UN Women's work with media respond to the key needs and priorities of women in

Serbia?

3. To what extent is the Project aligned with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, and reflect national priorities on GE?

4. To what extent the project intervention continues to be relevant for the situation of gender equality and needs of relevant stakeholders? How was relevance ensured after covid-19 pandemic outbreak?

- What else should be done to strengthen the project relevance in the current context?

Coherence

5. To what extent the project is complementary, harmonized and coordinated with what other stakeholders are doing in the area of GEEW including the Government?

6. What is UN Women's comparative advantage in Serbia to implement this project?

Effectiveness

7. What are in your opinion the most significant results of this project?

8. Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom?

9. How effective have the Project strategies and approaches been in achieving results? What types of innovative / good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?

10. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results (outputs and outcomes)?

11. How and to what extent media contribute to achievement of GEEW results?

Efficiency (if relevant to one of the CSOs running a media outlet)

12. To the best of your knowledge, to what extent did the allocation of resources to targeted groups take into account the need to prioritise those most marginalized and in need?

Impact

13. What are the areas of achieved or potential measurable impact of the Project on the target groups and beneficiaries across all its dimensions of empowerment (individual, collective and institutional / systemic)?

- What evidence exists that the programme has delivered / or is likely to deliver longer term results from processes through to benefits?

14. How project impacts or is likely to impact women and beneficiaries and the most vulnerable groups?

Sustainability

18. To what extent the achieved results can sustain after the project ends (normative, financial, institutional, individual aspect of sustainability)? What else is needed?

19. What is the likelihood that the results achieved for those most vulnerable will be sustained after the phase out?

20. What are your recommendations for future UN Women programming related to issues that were covered by GEF?

ANNEX 5: LIST OF CONSULTED DOCUMENTS

GEF Project Documents

1. Project Document "Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia", logical framework matrix and budget
2. EU-UNW PO Serbia Contract with Annexes
3. Project Annual Work Plans
4. Consolidated Narrative Project Report to The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, 01/02/2019-31/02/2020, with financial report
5. Consolidated Narrative Project Report to The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia, 01/03/2018-31/01/2019, with financial report
6. "Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia" – Quarterly Reports
7. Project Steering Board Meeting minutes
8. Local Gender Equality Mechanisms - Selection Process Report for the Provision of Support to Local GEMs with Criteria for Selection
9. Narrative Reports of the Local GEMs – beneficiaries of the financial support
10. Project documents and narrative reports on implementation of the local CSOs – beneficiaries of the financial support
11. Smernice za uvođenje rodne perspective u programiranje EU pomoći
12. Sugestije za unapređenje mehanizama koordinacije međunarodne razvojne pomoći kod sektorskih radnih grupa
13. Reports of annual conferences of local mechanisms for gender equality 2018, 2019
14. Quarterly Newsletters
15. Human Interest stories
16. Gender inputs to NAD and gender annexes to IPA programming documents (2018, 2019-2020)
17. Future of Equality: Western Balkans and Turkey Feminist Talks - joint summary report from sub-regional Western Balkans and Turkey consultations (2020)

Research and Knowledge Products produced by the GEF Project

18. Copic, Sanja, Report on Women's CSOs Contribution in Implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020, UN Women, Belgrade, 2020
19. Ćopić, Sanja, Sprovođenje Nacionalnog akcionog plana za realizaciju strategije za rodnu ravnopravnost Republike Srbije 2016–2020. – Pregled realizacije u 2018. godini
20. Cvetinčanin Knežević, H, Lalatović, J. Priručnik za upotrebu rodno osetljivog jezika, Koordinaciono telo za ravnopravnost polova Republike Srbije, UN Women, Beograd, 2019.
21. Ekonomija brige u vreme COVID-19 pandemije i mera za njeno sprečavanje u Srbiji, UN Women, Secons, Beograd 2020
22. Policy Brief 1: Predlog mera za rodno odgovorne ekonomske politike: Iskorak u samostalnost, Beograd, 2019.
23. Policy Brief 2: Predlog mera za unapređenje položaja žena u medijima i transformaciju rodних stereotipa u medijskim sadržajima, Secons – Grupa za razvojnu inicijativu, Beograd, 2019.
24. Policy Brief 3: Predlog mera za osnaživanje akademskih radnica i unapređenje rodne ravnopravnosti unutar akademske zajednice, Secons, Beograd, 2019.
25. Rodna analiza ekonomskih programa i finansijskih mera u Srbiji: Analiza uticaja na rodnu ravnopravnost programa i mera finansijske podrške MMSP sektoru na lokalnom nivou, Nacionalna alijansa za lokalni ekonomski razvoj (NALED), UN Women, Beograd, 2020
26. Rodna analiza ekonomskih programa i finansijskih mera u Srbiji: Izveštaj o rodним raylikama u javnim poyivima za podršku organizacijama civilnog društva (OCD) na lokalnom nivou, Nacionalna alijansa za lokalni ekonomski razvoj (NALED), UN Women, Beograd, 2020

27. Rodna analiza ekonomskih programa i finansijskih mera u Srbiji: Pregled programa i mera Razvojne agencije Srbije i analiza uticaja na rodnu ravnopravnost, Nacionalna alijansa za lokalni ekonomski razvoj (NALED), UN Women, Beograd, 2020
28. Rodna analiza ekonomskih programa i finansijskih mera u Srbiji: Rodna analiza programa, rezultata, uticaja Fonda za inovacionu delatnost sa preporukama zasnovanim na identifikovanim rodnim jazovima, Nacionalna alijansa za lokalni ekonomski razvoj (NALED), UN Women, Beograd, 2020
29. Uticaj COVID-19 pandemije i mera za njeno sprečavanje na preduzetnice u Srbiji, Secons, UN Women, Beograd, 2020
30. Uticaj COVID-19 pandemije i mera za njeno sprečavanje na socio-ekonomski položaj žena koje žive na selu, sa fokusom na poljoprivredu, Secons, UN Women, Beograd, 2020
31. Uticaj COVID-19 pandemije i mera za njeno sprečavanje na zaposlenost i uslove rada žena i muškaraca u Srbiji, Secons, UN women, Beograd, 2020

Other documents

32. Annual Reports of CBGE for 2018. and 2019.
33. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
34. Babović, M. Work Strategies and Intrahousehold Relations: Serbia 2003-2007, in Milic, A, Tomanovic, S. (eds.) Contemporary Families in Serbia in Comparative Perspective, ISIFF, Belgrade, 135–150, 2009.
35. Babović, M, Vuković, O. Rural Women in the Status of Family Helpers: Position, Roles and Welfare Rights, UNDP Belgrade, 2009.
36. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Serbia, March 2019
37. Development Partnership Framework 2016-2020 Government of the Republic of Serbia and United Nations Country Team in Serbia
38. Evaluation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Serbia National Strategy for Gender Equality – Final Report, SeCons, 2018
39. European Commission, Serbia 2020 Report, accessed on 24.10.2020. at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/serbia_report_2020.pdf
40. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women): Strategic Plan 2018-2021

ANNEX 6: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

UN Women

1. Head of Programme Office in Serbia
2. Project Officer – Result 1, Programme Office in Serbia
3. Project Officer – Result 2, Programme Office in Serbia
4. Project Officer – Result 2, Programme Office in Serbia
5. Project Officer – Result 1/3, Programme Office in Serbia
6. Communication Officer, Programme Office in Serbia
7. Operations Officer, Programme Office in Serbia
8. Programme Officer, UN Women GEF Project, CO Albania
9. Programme Officer, UN Women GEF Project, CO Bosnia and Herzegovina
10. Programme Specialist / Head of Office, UN Women Programme Office in North Macedonia
11. Programme Specialist, ECA RO

International Organisations

12. Programme Manager, UNOPS
13. Programme Officer, OSCE

Government at National Level

14. Advisor to CBGE
15. Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia
16. Head of Department, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
17. Senior Advisor, Department for Planning, Programming, Monitoring and Reporting on EU Funds and Development Assistance, MEI
18. Senior Advisor for Legal Matters, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Local self-governments

19. Gender Equality Mechanism Member, Tutin
20. Gender Equality Mechanism Member, Becej
21. Gender Equality Mechanism Member, Zitiste
22. Gender Equality Mechanism Member, Raska

Civil society organizations and experts

23. Beneficiary of the Project implemented by Women's Association of Kolubara County
24. Beneficiary of the Project implemented by Zrenjanin Education Centre
25. Executive Director, SeCons, Belgrade
26. Financial Manager, Women's Association of Kolubara County
27. Gender Expert, Public and Private
28. Gender Expert, Association of Women "FemPlatz"
29. Project Manager, Association for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and all Forms of Gender Based Violence "Atina"
30. Project Manager, "Jednake mogucnosti", Belgrade
31. Project Manager, Women's Association of Kolubara County
32. Project Manager, "Zenski centar" Uzice
33. Project Manager, NALED, Belgrade
34. Independent Expert
35. Independent Expert
36. Independent Expert
37. Independent Expert

EU Delegation

38. Task Manager, EU Delegation in Serbia

Media

39. Executive Director, "Women's Forum" Prijepolje
40. Director "Vreme" weekly magazine

ANNEX 7: EVALUATION TEAM CVS

Aleksandar Zivanovic is a development professional with 20 years of experience in civil society and international development organizations in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe and consultancies worldwide. His primary areas of interest are conflict prevention and peacebuilding, post-conflict transition and development, gender equality and women's empowerment. He served as an evaluation expert in programmes supported by UNDP, UN Women, DPPA, European Commission, IFC, OSCE and bilateral governmental development agencies (Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, the Netherlands, USA). His most recent relevant evaluations are of UN Women's support to development and implementation of National Action Plans for implementation of UNSCR 1325; UN – EU initiative on building national capacities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in 9 fragile states; UN Women – Sida strategic partnership framework, Norwegian programme of intercultural education in North Macedonia, UN Women reform projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine. Aleksandar has an MSc degree in Sociology and BA Degree in Journalism at the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He advanced in evaluation at United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy; RoI Institute, Birmingham, AL, USA; and Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.

Dr Marija Babovic is full professor at the Department for Sociology of the Faculty of Philosophy – University of Belgrade and Director of Programmes of NGO SeConS – Development Initiative Group, the organization profiled for applied research and policy analysis. Her main area of expertise is gender and development and she has over 15 years of experience in research on gender equality, gender mainstreaming and rights of vulnerable groups (Roma, forced migrants, unemployed, people under risk of poverty, from remote rural areas, etc.). She was also engaged as leading expert or member of experts' team in drafting various strategies and action plans, and in evaluation of policies, programmes and projects, particularly gender equality policies, policies for combating violence against women and other related to the improvement of the position of different marginalized groups. She has experience with international organizations, such as EC, UN Women, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, in Serbia and in wider region of South-East Europe. She was the author of first EIGE's Gender Equality Index Report for Serbia and lead researcher in numerous studies conducted by UN agencies, such as first Mapping of Domestic Violence against Women in Serbia (UNDP), first study on the prevalence of gender based violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNFPA), study on the position of women on the labour market in Serbia (UNDP), baseline study on women's entrepreneurship in Serbia (UN Women), position of rural women in Serbia and social exclusion in rural areas (UNDP), access of women and children in rural areas to social services (UNICEF), and many others.



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