



# WOMEN AND MEN IN SERBIA: AT A GLANCE

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN SERBIA

From the beginning of the year, the Republic of Serbia has witnessed several significant processes regarding reporting and monitoring to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Namely, the Government of Serbia submitted the Fourth Report of the Republic of Serbia on the implementation of CEDAW that states major achievements and positive progress regarding gender equality, but also identifies bottlenecks and gaps in the implementation of the Convention. Delegation of the Republic of Serbia, which included all three branches of government, presented the report at the 72<sup>nd</sup> CEDAW Session in Geneva. Meanwhile, 14 Shadow Reports were prepared and submitted to the Committee by civil society organizations and women's organizations, thus representing a highly valued indicator on the current state of human and women's rights in various thematic areas in Serbia, proving the existing dedication and commitment to combat discrimination against women.

To measure progress in the field of gender equality, Serbia's national gender equality mechanism, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, has commissioned the evaluation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of the Serbia National Strategy for Gender Equality 2016–2018. With the support of the UN Women Office in Serbia and financial assistance of the European Union, the evaluation, involving over 100 stakeholders, took stock of the following key criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation will serve as the basis

for development of the Action Plan for 2019-2020. Furthermore, as a preparation of marking 25 years since the Beijing Platform for Action, a framework for change, the Government of Serbia has prepared a National Beijing +25 Review taking a stock of the progress achieved under 12 critical areas of concern.

When it comes to changes to the Serbian legislative framework, discussions on the changes to The Law on Financial Support to Families are underway. Even though the Law broadened the scope of beneficiaries of benefits, it decreased the rights of many beneficiaries, including pregnant women, women on maternity leave and parents – the areas that are now set for change after a heated debate. The long awaited Law on Gender Equality has yet to enter the parliamentary procedure.

Serbia has witnessed a rise in violence against women in public discourse. The nature of the violence includes verbal assaults on their work, personal choices, and opinions. As a result, women in the public eye, especially politicians, journalists, activists, are used to brushing off threats of physical violence, rape and horrendous comments about their appearance. Such hate speech is proliferating, notably on the Internet, with daily calls for violence against women and threats showing up in their inboxes and on their social media platforms as they go about their workday. Both online and offline harassment of women hinders the freedom of expression, which negatively affects the democratic process.



**Fatima al-Fihri**  
founded  
the first  
university



**Olga D. González-Sanabria**  
developed  
space  
station  
batteries

Photo: Khonsali via Wikimedia Commons

Photo: NASA





## COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

On April 16, 2019 the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and with financial support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Norad, through framework agreement with UNOPS, organized an event launching a new project Improved Safety for Women in Serbia. As many as 90 people gathered to support the beginning of a new project not only with their presence but with wearing pins “You are not alone”, as a symbol of solidarity with victims of gender-based violence.

At the event the Ministry of Interior reiterated their strong commitment of the police to improve the protection of victims of gender-based violence and announced that within the project a new measure of protection of victims of domestic violence will be introduced - a system of bracelets for victims and perpetrators of violence. In addition, event participants had an opportunity to enter the world of virtual reality through an intense short film titled “Everything is alright”, produced by UN Women Serbia. The main message of the film, which is available in both Serbian and English, is that violence is not only physical and that not a single woman suffering any kind of violence is alone.

Under this initiative, UN Women Serbia and the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia will partner with the relevant government institutions and CSOs to advocate for ending violence, increase awareness of the caus-

es and consequences of violence, build capacity of partners and promote the need for changing norms towards advancing gender equality and women’s rights, that would multiply the effects of ongoing initiatives, specifically related to women living in rural areas. In 2019, the project will focus on increasing knowledge and capacities of police officers, justice actors, MPs for introducing and implementing innovative practice for better realization of urgent measures for victim protection against perpetrator of violence, through introducing the bracelet for victim(s) and perpetrator(s) system. To this end, UN Women conducted Comparative Analysis of Electronic Monitoring Systems to Prevent Violence Against Women: Italy, Spain, Georgia and Turkey, examining the project within its regional and European context, along with the identification of possible legal and technical issues by comparing and contrasting how similar systems have been run in other countries. Moreover, UN Women initiated the organization of study visit to Madrid, Spain, which is tentatively scheduled for the month of June. The main goal/objective of the study visit is a detailed understanding of the Spanish electronic bracelet system for survivors and perpetrators of gender-based violence as a method of implementing emergency measures, including the necessary procedures and standards for implementation and reporting, as well as the necessary equipment and associated software requirements.

Under the programme “Ending violence against women: Implementing norms, chang-

ing minds”, UN Women with generous support of the European Commission, is gathering 22 women CSOs throughout Serbia and is contributing 1) to better implementation of the legislative and strategic framework towards gender-based discrimination and VAW; 2) exploring new ways for eliminating harmful gender stereotypes; and 3) supporting women CSOs in their efforts to improve policies and practices for all women in need, with specific focus to ones discriminated based on several grounds. The main achievements in this period include:

1. CSOs Women Space on behalf of Roma Women Network, and SOS Network of Vojvodina, with support of the programme prepared the Shadow reports and lobbied with the CEDAW to recognize and capture the most urgent and most important shortcomings in the legislative, policy and practices level women in Serbia are facing in the Concluding observations. In March 2019 CEDAW issued the Concluding observations to the IV Periodic report of Serbia, capturing most of the recommendations from women CSOs. To ensure implementation of the Concluding observations by all relevant Government bodies, UN Women partner SOS Network of Vojvodina organized a high-level conference in partnership with Coordinating Body for Gender Equality, attended by Deputy Prime Minister and President of CBGE, Director of the Office for Human and Minority Rights, EU Delegation to Ser-





bia, UN Women and CSOs partners to discuss urgent actions related to the implementation of CEDAW recommendations to Serbia (total of 84 recommendations grouped under 32 clusters). The conference served as an introduction to the process of developing a matrix of status and progress indicators for monitoring the implementation for each of the CEDAW recommendations to Serbia. The matrix will be prepared in the consultative process lead by SOS Network Vojvodina during June and July. Once completed, the matrix will be presented to the Government Council for Monitoring the Implementation of Ratified HR Conventions formed by the Office for Human and Minority Rights. The indicators developed by CSOs should be compared with the state developed ones, to allow extracting the core values for monitoring by both parties to access progress during the next 4 years (V Periodic report of RS to CEDAW is due in 2023).

Moreover, UN Women partners under this initiative were one of the key informants to GREVIO mission to Serbia held in February-March 2019, while Shadow reports were also submitted to GREVIO on the independent views of women CSOs on the implementation of Istanbul Convention. Results of these activities will be visible once the Baseline Evaluation Report to Serbia is published by GREVIO (January 2020).

2. The partnership with two CSOs has been established for exploring the new approaches aimed at changing the behav-

iors of selected communities towards VAW by applying Communications for behaviors change methodology - COMBI. UN Women provided two in-depth trainings for its partners: CSO Fenomena from Kraljevo and CSO Center for Modern Skills from Belgrade in developing COMBI plans and for their initiatives. In the upcoming period, Fenomena will focus on local media houses and journalists to influence on less stereotypical and sensationalistic reporting on VAW, while Center for Modern Skills will work with the young men on reducing harmful gender stereotypes.

3. To improve policies and/or services towards VAW, UN Women and its partners worked on several grounds:

- Due to high number of femicides in Serbia (annually, number varies from 30-40 women killed by their intimate partners), UN Women in partnership with women CSOs Gender Knowledge Hub, FemPlatz and Research Center Nis have gathered wide range of stakeholders such as: centers from social work, judiciary, municipal and regional prosecution offices, health care institutions and service providers (both civil society organizations and state-run services for women survivors of violence) to strengthen their performance and ensure better response and case management. As a result of this work, the first ever model for femicide review investigation was developed to ensure femicide cases are systematically record-

ed and trends regularly monitored to serve to the creation of the targeted actions for prevention and elimination of femicide;

- Ratification of the Istanbul convention obliged the Republic of Serbia to establish Rape Crises Centers that provide comprehensive support and services to women victims of sexual violence. To respond to this requirement, UN Women and UNTF EAW in partnership with the Provincial Government of Vojvodina and specialized CSOs pioneered this work in Serbia. As a result, in 2017, seven Centers for Victims of Sexual Violence (CVSV) were established within the general hospitals, one in each District of the Vojvodina province. CVSV are specialized in providing immediate medical care, high-quality forensic practice and crisis intervention. Victims in one place receive all necessary help and support for free: medical, legal, counseling and social and educational services (psycho-social support, psychotherapy). However, services provided by CVSV were not taking into consideration the specific needs of women with disabilities victims of sexual violence, thus, through this programme, UN Women supported CSO Eiz kuga Vojvodina to develop the specific guidelines for providing services to the cases of sexual violence against women with disabilities. Moreover, the trainings for all CVSV staff were provided to sensitize them on speci-

ficities in providing complex services to women with disabilities victims of sexual violence;

- Regardless the increased number of reported cases of violence against women in Serbia based on Ministry of Interior statistics since legislation improvements in 2017, the violence against women in rural areas remains underreported due to specific living circumstances in traditional communities where patriarchal values and gender stereotypes are predominant. To respond to this gap, UN Women in partnership with women CSO Pescanik/ Sandglass and six other small local women CSOs from Central Serbia developed wide range of actions targeting specifically women living in rural areas to raise their awareness and recognize violence, focusing mainly on specific forms of violence (psychological violence, economic violence, stalking, forced marriage, sexual violence including marriage rape), as well as improvement of the reporting mechanisms and system of protection in place. Actions include the establishment of an institute of “women of trust”, different workshops, but also improvement of the availability and accessibility of general and specialized services in the rural areas.



Support to Priority Actions for  
Gender Equality in Serbia

#EUzatebe

## SUPPORT TO PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN SERBIA

As part of the project “Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia”, the Gender Equality Facility Serbia, funded by the European Commission within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II, UN Women 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 by contributing to the specific measures of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2018 and through support to women CSOs.

UN Women supported eight (8) local self-governments/Local Gender Equality Mechanisms, from Municipality of Aleksinac, Municipality of Knjazevac, City of Krusevac, City of Sabac, Municipality of Temerin, Municipality of Tutin, City of Uzice and Municipality of Zitiste, that were implementing measures and activities from adopted Local Action Plan on Gender Equality. As result of this support, 450 women were trained for women entrepreneurship; product placement and IT support; and agricultural and business development. Women from 2 LSG had chance to exhibit their products and to participate at the local fairs, 2 handbooks were developed as a guideline for women entrepreneurship. In total, more than 600 women entrepreneurs and agricultural producers, women from the labour market, rural women and women in need had opportunity to improve their knowledge and to develop new skills to advance their position for economic empowerment.

Heaving in mind the valuable results of this support, UN Women will enlarge the number of local self-governments/Local Gender Equality Mechanisms that will support in 2019, with additional 12 LSG.

In the reporting period, UN Women organised Annual Conference of Local Gender Equality Mechanisms on 7 December 2018. The idea was to gather National GEMs, gender focal points from line ministries and local GEMs to exchange the knowledge and experiences, and to share best practices in implementing gender equality at the local level. As many as 120 participants (113 women and 7 men) from 74 local self-governments from Serbia got together to hear new information on the processes at the national level, which are of importance for the implementation of the principles for Gender Equality, to promote best practice examples in the work of local mechanisms for Gender Equality and to exchange experience, lessons learned and the ways of overcoming obstacles across the work of Gender Equality bodies at the local level.

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, together with Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia, UN Women organized a Technical Working Group meeting aimed to support preparation of the National Review on the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action. The Beijing +25 National Review will be based on the consolidated inputs of various national partners, non-governmental sec-

tor and UN agencies and will be included in the regional report, which will be based on national reports prepared by each of the UN member states. The report will be presented at the sixty fourth session of the Commission and to the UN General Assembly by the Secretary General. The meeting was held in Vrdnik from 21-22 February 2019 with 27 participants (25 women and 2 men).

UN Women engaged an independent company for the Final Evaluation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2016-2018. The main purpose of the evaluation was to assess the progress made by the Government of Serbia and its key partners, in the framework of the NAP for GE 2016-2018 and to draw findings, lessons learned and recommendations for the development of the next NAP for GE 2019-2020. The evaluation covers almost the full NAP for GE implementation period that started in February 2016 and ended in December 2018, since the evaluation assesses the results achieved until end of June 2018. More than 100 stakeholders had been evaluating the state of gender equality in Serbia based on few key criteria. The main goal was to detect results which the Government of Serbia and its partners achieved during the three years of the implementation of the National strategy for gender equality for the period 2016-2020 and the accompanying Action Plan. The evaluation produced a number of recommendations for the government and various stakeholders, with the aim to provide systematic insights in the implemen-

## GLOBAL CARE WORKFORCE

### WORKERS IN CARE JOBS OR CARE SECTORS



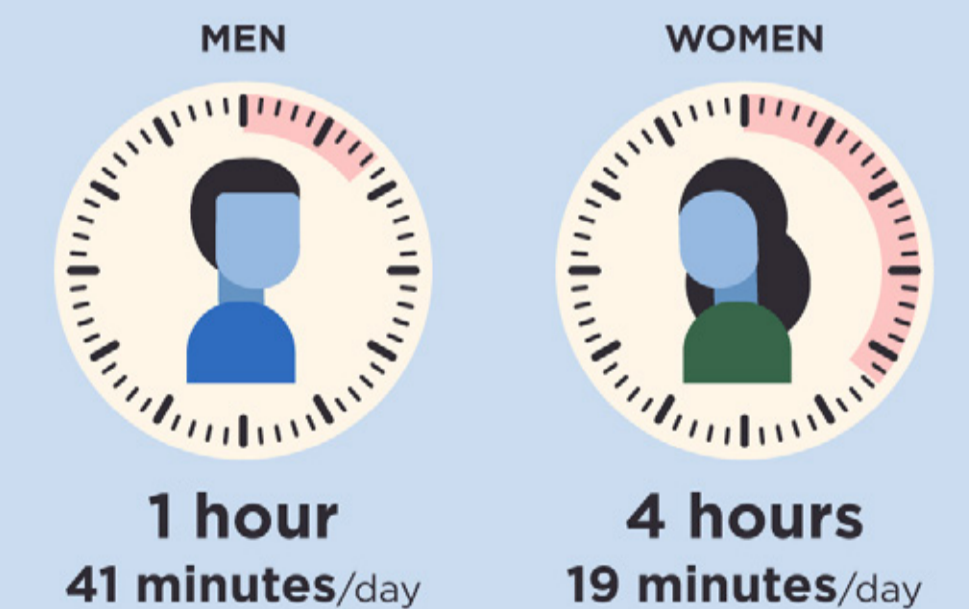
### CARE JOBS AND SECTORS INCLUDE:



SOURCE | Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work, ILO, 2018



### AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON UNPAID CARE WORK GLOBALLY



### EXAMPLES OF UNPAID CARE WORK



\* Based on data from 83 countries  
SOURCE | UN Women, 2018





Support to Priority Actions for  
Gender Equality in Serbia

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tation process and achieved results and to provide recommendations for the second phase of implementation of the Strategy.

To support the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Serbia to draft a National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2019-2020, UN Women has been providing technical guidance in developing new NAP for GE and to support to facilitate participatory consultation process. The aim of the public consultation meetings was to draft NAP for GE through consultative process, involving key gender focal points from line ministries, CSO and technical experts for representing the interests of specific groups of women. In addition to public consultations, draft NAP for GE 2019-2020 was sent to all state authorities, who are the bearers and/or partners in the implementation of the activities, with a request to submit their written comments on the proposed draft. A total of 18 stakeholders, mostly ministries, provided very useful comments and suggestions regarding the measures and activities planned in the draft NAP for GE 2019-2020.

UN Women supported gender mainstreaming of the annual IPA 2019-2020 action documents and developed gender annexes for the human resources and social development, environment, DRR, rule of law and competitiveness sectors. UN Women in cooperation with NALED (National alliance for local economic development) prepared four gender analyses of programmes and measures implemented by Serbian Development Agency, Innovation Fund, as well as local programs and budgets providing financial and non-financial support to micro,

small and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) and civil society organizations. The analyses identified gender gap in access to finance, sectors of support and various administrative burdens.

UN Women supported the economic empowerment of women through partnership with women's civil society organizations, with the aim to encourage women's entrepreneurship and enhance the position of rural women. This benefited 215 women from 14 municipalities across Serbia who took part in business, ICT and occupational trainings, mentorship programs, and received equipment needed for initiating or developing their businesses. In addition, as a result of provided support, women established two women's associations for the first time in their respective municipalities, recognizing the importance of networking and exchanging experiences for women's economic empowerment.

## GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

UN Women continued to support the process of gender responsive budgeting (GRB) implementation and institutionalization, in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and the Provincial Secretariat of Finance. According to the Annual Plan for GRB introduction issued by the Minister of Finance in March 2019, 47 national and 26 provincial budget users will introduce gender perspective in their respective budgets for 2020. In a bid to further institutionalize GRB, UN Women supported the State Audit Institution to include GRB planning and implementation as part of their Annual Plan of Audits, thus enhancing monitoring and evaluation of GRB implementation. According to the GRB Progress Report developed by UN Women, 53 budget users at national and provincial level applied GRB in their 2019 budgets.

## MATERNITY LEAVE



of the world's countries offer  
at least **14 weeks** of maternity leave –  
the minimum standards set out by  
the International Labour Organization.

\* Study of 184 countries with available data as of 2016  
SOURCE | Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work, ILO, 2018



## PATERNITY LEAVE



Around the world, fathers have limited  
to no paid paternity leave.

\* Study of 174 countries with available data as of 2016  
SOURCE | Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work, ILO, 2018





## BEIJING +25 NATIONAL REVIEW

In 2020, the global community will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). A five-year milestone will be reached towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 2020 is therefore a pivotal year for the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, everywhere.

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will carry out in its sixty-fourth Session an appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PoA) and the outcomes of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly. The review will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The sixty-fourth session of the CSW will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in March 2020. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world are invited to attend the session.

UN Women Programme Office in Serbia has been supporting the work of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia to prepare a national report on progress made towards the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The National Review

Report is based on consolidated inputs by various national partners, non-governmental actors and UN informants within Serbia, which will then be fed into a regional report. The regional report, to be based on national reviews conducted by each of the UN member countries, will then feed into a global report to be consolidated by CSW Secretariat at UN Women in time for the CSW 64th Session which the Secretary General will present to the General Assembly.

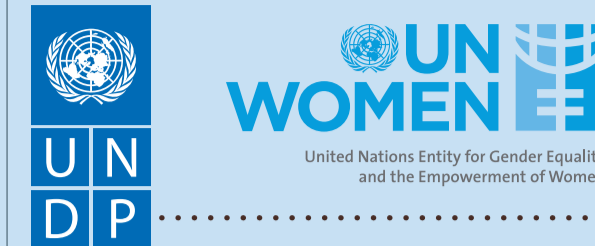
Furthermore, the UN Women Programme Office in Serbia is supporting the facilitation of the Beijing 25+ National Review to ensure gender perspective is consistently applied throughout the project indicators, targets and activities.



### UNFPA

With the support of UNFPA, Gender Based Violence Sub-cluster Working Group (GBV Sub-cluster WG) in the Republic of Serbia led by MOLEVSA met twice from the beginning of 2019. Working Group aims to consolidate and coordinate the activities of all relevant stakeholders to improve support for the prevention and response to GBV in humanitarian and developing context.

More information on UNFPA work is available under joint programme “Integrated Response to Violence against Women and Girls in Serbia” below.



## GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

For the very first time, UN Women Serbia participated at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties COP24, which took place from December 2-14, 2018 in Katowice, Poland. UN Women coordinated the presentation of achieved result on mainstreaming gender into climate change with UNFCCC Gender Team, leading the organization of Gender Day at COP24. Gender Day was organized on 11 December and took place in and around the Climate Action Hub, a space designed for open, dynamic exchange and innovative formats. In addition to participating at the mini-Market Place and Exhibition space, UN Women hosted an event within the Climate Action Hub in the form of a TED-style talks with presentation of concrete climate action including demonstrations, presenting capacity building and monitoring initiative within the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia. During the Gender Day, UN Women Serbia also had its booth where additional interactions with COP24 participants took place and learning products in format of QR codes shared, in line with no-printing policy. UN Women participation at COP24 further facilitated learning and exchange of experience among key government representatives on specific measures implemented towards mainstreaming gender into climate adaptation and mitigation activities and discuss main challenges and major issues of implementing this process on both national and local level.

The findings of the Survey on Household Waste Management in Serbia, conducted by UN Women in 2018, showed that women are the main “agents of change” of habits of the entire family and are the key protagonists of the current re-

cyclung activities (68%) in Serbian households. They are also more prone to change their daily routine towards more sustainable lifestyles (61%) and much more willing to share the information about benefits of recycling and waste reduction within their communities. This is the main gender-based difference in habits and attitudes of citizens of Serbia in relation to household waste management. For this reason, UN Women Serbia, in collaboration with partnering organizations, conceived and realized an awareness-raising campaign BE THE AGENT OF CHANGE IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT, targeting specifically women and their capacity to induce changes in themselves, their households, and their immediate surroundings. The campaign was realized in November and December 2018, as a digital media campaign and a press awareness raising event. To additionally support the impact of the digital campaign, an event was organized in collaboration with IKEA Serbia, on February 22nd. The event was aimed at informing the press, as well as bloggers and influencers, on the Survey findings and the on-going campaign. By inviting bloggers and influencers to take the pledge and share the campaign, UN Women aimed at introducing the proposed changes as the “new cool”, playing into the global conversation on environment protection. The event was consisting of four components: Information, Education, Call for action and Networking.

Moreover, the Republic of Serbia has been recognized as an example of good practice when it comes to gender mainstreaming of environmental actions and as such presented at the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in UNECE Region, held in March 2019 in Geneva.



## WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Mentoring Programme for Women and Girls with Disabilities, established by UN Women within the framework of a joint project Autonomy, *Voice and Participation of Persons with Disabilities*, as a main goal has supporting and helping women and girls with disabilities to achieve their rights, encourage and motivate them to improve their everyday life, to assist with career and professional development. The Programme gathered ten women with disabilities who have activist, professional, or personal experience in advancing the rights of women with disabilities with the special focus on:

- Prevention of violence against women with disabilities,
- Political and social participation of women with disabilities,
- Ensuring accessible inclusive education,
- Realization of rights of women with disabilities and prevention of gender-based discrimination.

Two training sessions were organized for the selected mentors where they gained skills and understood tools necessary for building of a relationship with the mentee and advanced their knowledge and skills necessary for conducting and realizing mentoring programme for women with disabilities (values, principles, steps through realization, communication and active listening). After a public call for mentees was announced in February, UN Women together with the mentors jointly selected 10 mentees and agreed on the mentoring pairs. Mentees are of different age (from 21 to 32), with different

background and living circumstances, different types of disability (however, type of disability was not a determining criterion for the selection). One mentee lives in one big residential institution and she is deprived of legal capacity (her guardian is an employee in the centre for social work). Also, one mentee lives in a supported living arrangement. Others live with their families. Three mentees are university graduates, others completed secondary or primary schools. In the following period, until June 2019, mentors and mentees will hold individual mentoring sessions (at least five) that can be held online or offline.

In addition, UN Women commissioned a research that mapped women and girls with disabilities at top management positions within DPOs and women CSOs in the Republic of Serbia, identified challenges they face and their training needs in order to strengthen their capacities to obtain leadership positions within the DPOs and women CSOs. Challenges and obstacles that women with disabilities face on their personal path to advancement are primarily related to the type of organisational culture, the system of internal shared support, teamwork standards and working atmosphere. The need for balancing work with internal relations within the organisation is strongly emphasized among women with disabilities in leadership positions. Other factors, such as cases of discrimination, physical and other barriers, level of support services and adequacy of qualifications are identified as well, but their importance has not been valued as the most critical.

Based on the actual capacity gaps of women with disabilities in leadership/management positions and the need for support from the existing and future women with disabilities leaders, the following key directions for systematic capacity building programmes have been identified: a) awareness of disability-based and gender-based discrimination within the broader human rights framework, followed by the process of building self-awareness and self-acceptance; b) assertiveness, confidence, public speaking and presentation skills in combination with psychological support in achieving higher confidence; c) organisational management skills that include general management, strategic orientation, planning, human resource development, fundraising and a similar standard set of skills.

The mapping especially emphasizes that building self-esteem, confidence and trust in personal abilities and values of women with disabilities should be treated as a cross-cutting theme. Women believe that this approach is the only way forward that helps women to aim for and achieve leadership positions.

Overall, the mapping confirmed the need for strategic action towards building motivation of women with disabilities to be actively included in the work of their organisations and generating their aspiration and ambition to take up senior leadership positions.

Globally, only **41%** of mothers with newborns receive a maternity benefit



**81%** Europe and Central Asia



**69%** Americas



**33%** Asia and the Pacific



**16%** Africa



Women do  
**2.6 times**  
more unpaid care  
work than men



## UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM

DE-PATHOLOGIZATION OF  
TRANSGENDER IDENTITY: REVISED  
INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION  
OF DISEASES (ICD 11)

By the endorsement of the ICD 11 by World Health Assembly members, transgender identity was removed from the list of mental health diseases in the last week of May 2019. In this regard, UN Human Rights Team in Serbia, jointly with UNFPA in Serbia and ERA (LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey), with the support of WHO in Serbia and Ministry of Health, organized initial discussion regarding national implementation of those changes, in the aim of supporting relevant State authorities in their work to de-pathologize transgender on the national level. This discussion gathered all relevant representatives of different State institutions which mandate is to support, help, protect and legally recognize transgender population, as well as representatives of LGBTI CSOs and transgender community in order to create an open and inclusive dialogue and to establish strong future cooperation on the national implementation of ICD 11.

MONITORING AND MEASURING  
IMPLEMENTATION OF UN HUMAN  
RIGHTS RECOMMENDATIONS

Through its support to the Platform of CSOs for Interaction with the UN Human Rights Mechanisms, UN Human Rights in Serbia continued the hands-on interactive process of producing human rights indicators for monitoring the recommendations stemming from review of Serbia by UN committees on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW), rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD) and from the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Together with roadmaps guiding the national implementation of these recommendations, indicators will be used not only to measure the State's progress in human rights implementation, but also presented to the Government as expert and policy support from the civil society.

SWISS PRO SUPPORT  
TO ENHANCEMENT  
OF GENDER EQUALITY  
AT LOCAL LEVEL

The Swiss PRO Programme has conducted in the period from November 2018 to March 2019 a snapshot assessment of the institutional status and existing capacities of the local self-governments (LSGs) and Gender Equality Mechanisms (GEMs) in 99 LSGs in the Programme Area of Responsibility<sup>1</sup>, as well as the availability of local GE action plans (GELAPs).

The assessment showed that the lack of procedures for institutionalisation of GEMs is the key obstacle for development of GEMs and that further support should focus on their capacity building, development and implementation of local action plans for gender equality, collecting gender statistics, consultation with women in local communities and gender mainstreaming of local policies.

Local GEMs are poorly visible, not recognised in local structures and not consulted during policy making processes, budget planning and drafting of other documents that would contribute to the gender mainstreaming at the local level.

The institutional framework and position of GEMs could be improved in part by their participation in the decision-making processes at the local level, and by providing required comments/opinion and guidelines, based on gender segregated data and consultations with women in local communities. On the other side, important local actors-to-be - the informal Local Women Councillors Networks

(LWCN), has a potential for advancing the gender equality agenda within the political parties and decision makers. As the assessment showed, LWCNs members need capacity building and mentorship support for advocating gender equality.

In response to the local needs, the Swiss PRO Programme will, in the coming period, provide technical support for establishing and/or strengthening of at least 30 local GEMs and establishing and/or strengthening of at least 30 LWCNs, with the aim of promoting and advocating gender equality, strengthening the local institutional framework for the application of gender equality agenda and enhancing local gender equality policies, which will contribute to a better position and respect for the rights of women and girls.

All established and functional GEMs will have an opportunity to apply for Swiss PRO grants to pilot projects identified as a priority in their local GE action plans, which will be launched in 2020.

<sup>1</sup> Programme is implemented in 99 LSGs in the Region of Šumadija and Western Serbia, and the Region of Southern and Eastern Serbia.





SEESAC initiated the second phase of the project *Strengthening of Regional Cooperation in Mainstreaming Gender in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans (2019 – 2021)* in close cooperation with four Ministries of Defence from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia and Republic of Serbia.

In order for both women's and men's needs and priorities to be addressed adequately in a society, both need to be involved and represented in the decision-making process, in policy creation and its implementation. This holds true in the security sector as well.

A tremendous amount of work in tackling gender issues in the security sector has been undertaken by the MoDs and AFs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia with the support of UNDP SEESAC. Build upon successful implementation of the Phase I of the project (completed in 2016), UNDP SEESAC and regional project partners started to implement Phase II of the project *Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans*. The objective of the project is to foster regional cooperation on gender equality in the military and ensure consolidation and institutionalization of results achieved during Phase I.

The Phase II will contribute to: 1) Gender responsive and evidence-based policy development and implementation; and 2) Improved Integration of Women in the military through Gender Sensitization.

Support is provided to Gender Equality Mechanisms (GEMs) to further strengthen their capacities for gender mainstreaming in

MoDs and AFs through information sharing, knowledge exchange and learning grounded on regional meetings, and support for implementation of small-scale projects. Since the quality and availability of data is a prerequisite for evidence-based policy making, Human Resources Departments will be supported to collect and analyze gender disaggregated data to inform the development of gender sensitive human resources policies. This will be achieved by the organization of regional training and workshops, and provision of technical support for standardization of procedures through development of SOPs. In addition, HR Departments will be supported through technical assistance, training and support for outreach activities, to provide advisory services on gender equality, thereby boosting the implementation of gender equality policies. MoDs and AFs will be supported to address misconduct and unwanted behavior more effectively; their capacities will be strengthened through review of gaps in policies and procedures; development of guidelines, toolkits and provision of training with the aim to influence attitudes and behavior to contribute to a safe and non-discriminatory professional environment for both women and men.

Diverse activities are planned with the aim to contribute to a more gender sensitive organizational culture, free from obstacles to balanced and meaningful participation of women in the defense system. The project will further strengthen the Regional Network of Gender Trainers through provision of regular regional meetings. The meetings of the Network will enable networking, information exchange and knowledge sharing on the var-

ious training approaches to increase gender awareness in the military, as well as challenges and lessons identified. They will in turn deliver national level gender awareness activities for soldiers, NCOs and officers and thus increase gender sensitization of military personnel; and a Regional Train-the-Trainers Programme to expand the existing Regional Network of Trainers. In order to facilitate the integration of a gender perspective in military training and education and thus ensure a systematic approach to gender sensitization in the military, technical support will be provided for gender training of curriculum developers and teaching staff in military training and education institutions (Military Academy/Officers training; NCO; basic military training). In addition, support for curricula revision will be provided through 4 pilots involving analysis and workshops, to create capacities for systematic integration of the gender perspective in military education. To enforce the implementation of gender equality policies, decisionmakers and commanders will be targeted through capacity development activities such as the Gender Coach Programme, as well as Commanding officers seminars.

Within the Phase II of the Project, SEESAC has already organized the following activities:

1. **The 10th Regional Meeting of Gender Equality Mechanisms in the MoDs and the AFs**, which gathered twenty-four representatives of MoDs and AFs. The meeting took place in Montenegro on 19 and 20 February 2019 and enabled: information and knowledge exchange

among the MoDs and AFs on the achieved results in gender equality in the military in the region since the completion of the first phase of the project and the remaining challenges; update on ongoing initiatives on gender mainstreaming into the security sector reform and development and harmonization of the annual work plan for 2019 at the national and regional level.

2. **Three mapping and planning meetings** were organized in Montenegro, BiH and the RNM (8 April, 10 April and 15 April respectively). The meetings were organized with the aims: to map and collect best practices and concrete examples of gender mainstreamed policies/practices in MoDs and AFs; to jointly identify policy and practice gaps and challenges in achieving gender equality in military; and to plan the implementation of project activities.
3. **Regional Workshop on combating Gender-based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse** was organized on 18 and 19 June 2019 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim to enhance capacities of MoDs and AFs representatives to recognize discrimination and its negative effects as well as to better respond to gender related complaints. The workshop enabled sharing of practices on gender complaints mechanisms in the AFs and initiation of knowledge tool – Regional Manual on combating gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse.





## JOINT PROJECT INTEGRATED RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SERBIA II

### TOWARD BETTER MULTI-AGENCY PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- To accelerate implementation of the Law on Preventing Domestic Violence, UNDP and UNFPA in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice continue to provide support to the multi-agency groups for cooperation and coordination. Cooperation among all relevant institution which place the rights of the victims in the centre of all interventions is mandatory by the Law on Preventing Domestic Violence. It binds the responsibility of three state bodies: police, prosecutors and centres for social work, but also includes other institutions such as health-care and educational system, employment services, and civil society organizations. Though, long-term comprehensive and integrated protection of victims and prevention of repetition of violence is lacking, individual plans of protection and support to the victim are developed in only half of the cases that are processed through multi-sectoral groups for cooperation and coordination. To improve the effectiveness of these multi-agency groups for cooperation and coordination, Ministry of Justice, UNDP and UNFPA trained more than 120 representatives of responsible institutions from Vranje, Bujanovac, Trgoviste, Vladicin Han, Surdulica, Bosilegrad, Pirot,

Bela Palanka, Dimitrovgrad and Babusnica to provide protection to victims and prevent further violence. As a follow up to the trainings, these professionals are being supported in hands-on learning to assess the risks and develop adequate individual protection plans for victims.

- Ministry of Justice, with the support of UNDP provides monthly information on victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. This information, available on the web-site [www.iskljucinasilje.com](http://www.iskljucinasilje.com), is collected from the local prosecutors' offices and refer to the cases in which the emergency barring orders are extended by the court to 30 days.
- The Ministry of Justice in cooperation with UNDP is also developing a guidance based on professionals' questions on how to proceed or act in specific situations of domestic violence.

### STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES OF HEALTH SECTOR TO RESPOND TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- In March 2019, Women Health Promotion Centre (WHPC) in cooperation with UNFPA Serbia prepared and delivered training titled **"Health Sector Responses to Gender based Violence"** to health care professionals from Raska district, including following cities Kraljevo, Novi Pazar, Tutin and Vrnjaska Banja. Health care providers from Surdulica participated, as well. 18 participants, general practitioners, internist, urgent medicine specialist, forensic medicine specialist, public health specialists and nurses were trained to provide effective and efficient response to GBV in Health Centers involved.
- In June 2019, Women Health Promotion Centre (WHPC) in cooperation with UNFPA Serbia organized advanced training for trainers (ToT) "Capacity building of health workers for planning, organization and education in the area of gender-based violence in the health sector.
- The training was intended for healthcare workers who have undergone basic training in the previous period and who are interested in being educators and further train their colleagues on gender-based violence. 17 health professionals from Kraljevo, Majdanpek, Zajecar, Dimitrovgrad, Prijepolje, Priboj, Cajetina and Užice participate in the training.

APRIL 2019. GODINE



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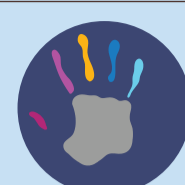
ŽRTVE NASILJA U PORODICI PREMA POLU

ŽRTVE ŽENSKOG POLA  
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ŽRTVE MUŠKOG POLA  
NAD KOJIMA SU NASILJE IZVRŠILI MUŠKARCI





## LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND – WOMEN FROM MULTIPLY DISCRIMINATED GROUPS TOWARDS GREATER ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES

- UN Women, in partnership with the Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality, has continued to provide capacity development for professionals from the social protection, police, healthcare, education, prosecutor's office, judiciary and non-governmental sectors on the a) specificities of working with women from multiple marginalized groups, such as: Roma women, women with disabilities, women living in rural areas and older women, as well as for b) working with women survivors of specific forms of violence as specified in CAHVIO: stalking, sexual violence (including rape), forced marriage and sexual harassment. The capacity development was organized in form of trainings for mixed groups in line with the tailored-made training programs that were developed based on the findings from the Baseline study on professionals' awareness, attitudes and responses regarding women victims of violence from multiply marginalized groups, as well as professionals' awareness, attitudes and response to the specific forms of violence against women. During the 2019 training cycle, 195 general and specialized service providers from Backa Palanka, Becej, Bac, Alibunar, Stara Pazova, Zrenjanin, Sombor, Subotica, Sremska Mitrovica and Pancevo municipalities completed the trainings. According to the immediate participants' feedback, the knowledge gained will help them improve everyday's work and performance by applying the practical exam-

ples they learned about at the trainings, but also to more easily identify common shortcomings in the procedures, as well as the importance of multi-sectorial cooperation and coordination. Detailed external trainings assessment, as well as a % of change in knowledge of the professionals who attended the trainings will be available in September 2019.

- Moreover, UN Women supported the Provincial Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography and Gender Equality, to develop a Methodology for organizing Case conferences, as a complementary mechanism to the Coordination and Cooperation Groups, for resolving the most complex cases of violence against women. In partnership with Roma women CSO "Association of Roma Novi Becej" and with support of prominent gender experts, Case conferences will be organized in 10 selected municipalities in the Province of Vojvodina in June and July 2019.



## VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

- There is no mechanism at the national level that would enable systematic monitoring of effects of the measures taken to prevent violence against children and students in educational institutions. In order to develop a mechanism to monitor violence in schools aimed at supporting schools to combat violence, UNICEF in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) conducted an analysis of data collection and reporting on violence against children in educational institutions. In partnership with the MoESTD, the Center for Interactive Pedagogy and UNICEF will provide capacity building of the network for support to schools to develop safe environment for children and prevention of violence. In April 2019, the Ministry of Education established the network of 80 external advisors who will in cooperation with school advisers from the Regional School Administrations, monitor and support schools and preschools to prevent violence and discrimination. In addition, support will be provided for revision of the materials developed in the framework of the School without Violence Programme, to be used by educational institutions and also for development of a software which will support educational institutions and the Ministry to monitor violence and discrimination in educational institutions and to provide adequate support at all levels.
- The school component of the project was implemented in four mentoring and eight

partnering schools (in Belgrade, Sombor, Zaječar and Vranje). A capacity building programme on different tools and techniques to prevent GbV was developed and implemented which included trainings, mentoring and horizontal exchange between institutions. 3578 primary and secondary school students participated in activities promoting gender equality through 476 workshops and 26 local actions. Total of 848 students and 183 teachers and professional associates participated in the final research in March 2019. Results showed positive trends in disagreements with attitudes that reflect gender prejudices, physical / sexual harassment and insulting from 10 to 20% compared to initial research, while the percentage of students in grades 6-8 who don't approve physical violence against girls increased to 63% and students who don't approve sexual harassment to 62%.

- Based on the analysis of online research, school teams defined priorities and actions in school's yearly annual plans for further improvement in combating gender-based violence.
- Four pre-school institutions from Belgrade, Sombor, Vranje and Zaječar have participated in the program Kindergarten as a Safe and Enabling Environment for Learning and Development, that promotes safe, secure and stimulating environment in which each child has equal opportunities for learning. Along with the training which through 5 modules addressed the topics



related to respecting diversity, equality and equity in the kindergarten, socio-emotional learning in support of the development of constructive relationships in the peer community, the role of the educators and family in building a safe, supportive and stimulating environment in kindergarten mentorship and horizontal exchanges have been provided to enhance the program implementation. Around 130 pre-school staff from 4 kindergartens participated directly in these activities and preschools made plans to disseminate the programme to other kindergartens within their institutions.

## HEALTH COMPONENT

- Upon introduction of the new version of the Special protocol of the health care system for protection of children from violence, the Special Working Group of the Ministry of Health and the team of experts have drafted the Guidelines on VAC and implementation of the special protocol for health care professionals. The Guidelines will be published by September 2019. They are addressing, among other, all the issues that have been introduced for the first time in the Special Protocol such as digital and gender-based violence, specificities of protecting children with disabilities, corporal punishment, with greater attention being paid to the prevention of violence.

## GENDER EQUALITY AWARENESS RAISING

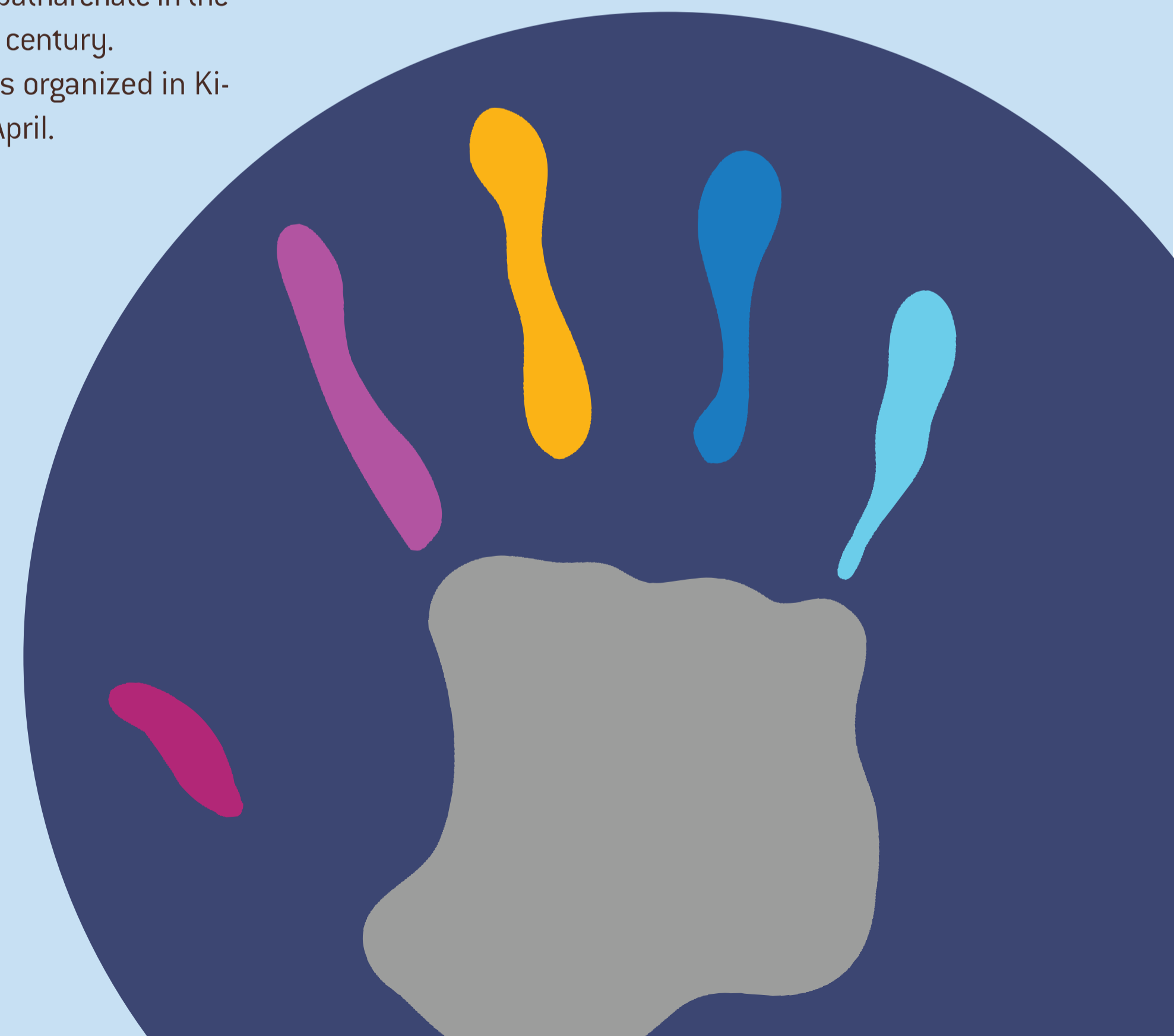
- At the end of 2018, UNFPA with IP Atina, held 5 one-day trainings in 5 municipalities (Obrenovac, Jagodina, Novi Pazar, Kikinda and Vranje for 50 young girls – activists and volunteers of the Local Youth Offices on how to raise the awareness of gender stereotypes and gender-based violence. After initial training, 7 mentoring sessions in several locations, in Obrenovac, Jagodina, Novi Pazar, Kikinda and Vranje were organized in first part of the 2019. Mentoring sessions had the specific goals to empower girls and strengthen their capacities, skills and competences to become agents of change within the local community and through the peer approach to tackle the wider youth community. Mentoring sessions built on the activities conducted during the training and created the platform for further development of the local actions within the local community focused on gender perspective, and preparation of action plan for the further work within the local community. Every girls club have planned and implemented local actions which had multiple benefits for both, the girls and the community. Girls had a chance to gain experience in organisation of public actions and communication with the local actors and decision makers, representatives of the different institutions and organizations. Hosting communities had a chance to meet a new, fresh youth initiative of the young girls promoting gender equality and women's rights. Ap-

proximately, 250 local youth population has been reached through these three local actions.

- Local girls' clubs in Jagodina and Novi Pazar had decided to organize the Local actions for the 8th of March, to remind their peers and wider community of the century of women's struggle for economic, social and gender equality.
- Local girl club in Obrenovac designed and created an Exhibition named „Neizbrisiv trag žene“ which showed the strength of women, their courage, their determination to break down the stereotypes and defy to the strong norms of the patriarchy in the late 19th and early 20th century.
- The same exhibition was organized in Kikinda, at the end of an April.

## JOURNALISTS AGAINST VIOLENCE

- The Journalists against Violence - group of more than 30 editors and journalists committed to improve media reporting on domestic violence and violence against women, has developed a guidance for media on how to report in the cases of domestic violence in a gender- and victim-sensitive manner. In addition to this, the group developed indicators that monitor media reporting on violence against women.





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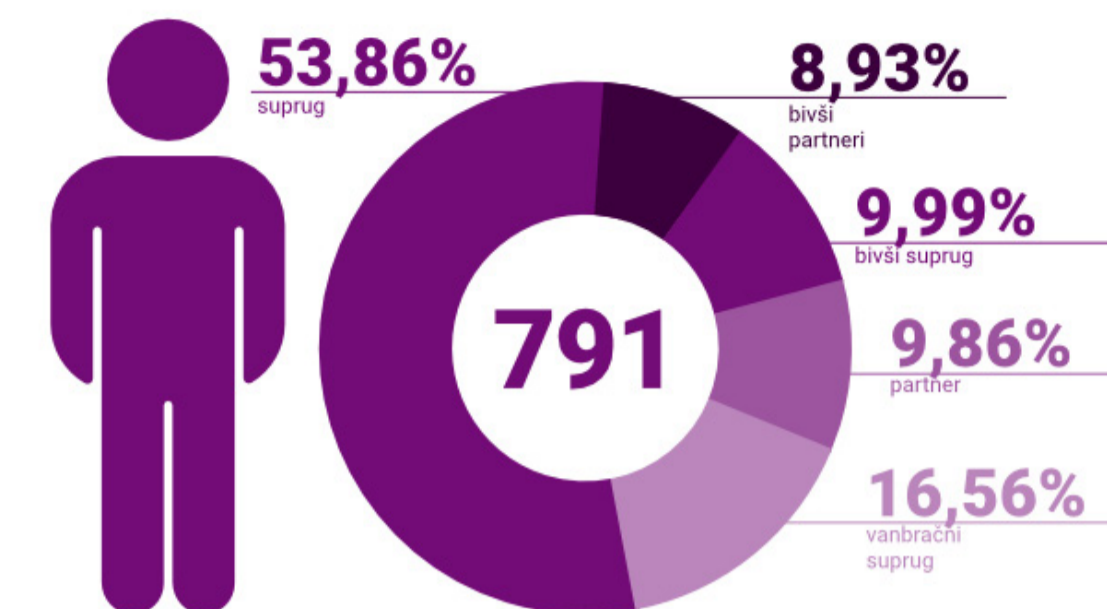
## MUTUAL LEARNING SESSIONS

- The Joint Project aims to enable mutual learning, exchange of experiences and good practices among professionals dedicated to preventing and protecting women and girls from violence, as well as to look at possible solutions that will contribute to better and more efficient treatment of institutions in the context of domestic violence and violence in intimate partner relations.
- In December 2018, the Joint Project gathered international and national experts in the field of gender-based violence: Prof. dr. Liz Kelly, London Metropolitan University, who manages one of the world's leading research centers dealing with sexual violence and violence against women and children; Biljana Brankovic, an independent researcher and member of the GREVIO Group of Independent Experts who monitors the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the countries that have ratified it; Marie-Theres Prantner - deputy in the Coordination Body for Violence Against Women in Austria; Angjele Gigovski from the Ministry of Interior of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Stana Pantelic from the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia who spoke about the practice of police treatment, as well as challenges in protection of domestic violence.
- UNDP supports the development of the work with perpetrators programmes in accordance with the Istanbul Convention and the standards of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Violence. Since 2017, a review of good prac-

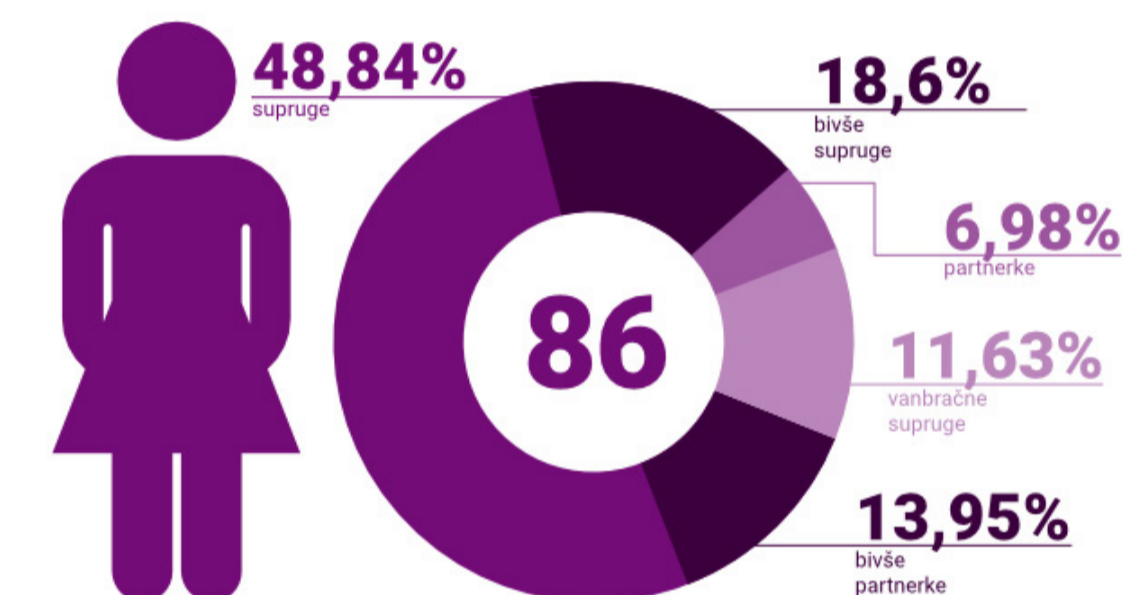
tices, the analysis of the current situation, recommendations for the improvement of programmes and proposed standards for the implementation of programmes which are currently being piloted in Novi Sad and Kragujevac have been conducted. Guided by the principle that work with perpetrators programmes cannot be implemented in isolation and must be part of a multisectoral integrated response to violence and based on best practices, UNDP opened a discussion on the future of these programmes by particularly addressing the following issue how to implement the responsible programmes for the work with perpetrators of domestic violence. The conference hosted Ph.D. Alessandra Pauncz, the director of the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Violence, Nina George who has provided support to women victims of violence whose partners were on a perpetrator programme as well as leading and developing perpetrator programmes, Rory Macrae, a founding member of Respect, who is currently seconded to the Scottish Government as a National Coordinator of the Caledonian System monitoring the implementation of the programme.

- To introduce professional and general public with the different aspects of the phenomenon of gender-based violence and to promote good practices, the Joint Project is publishing a quarterly newsletter Integrated Response to Violence against Women and Girls in Serbia.

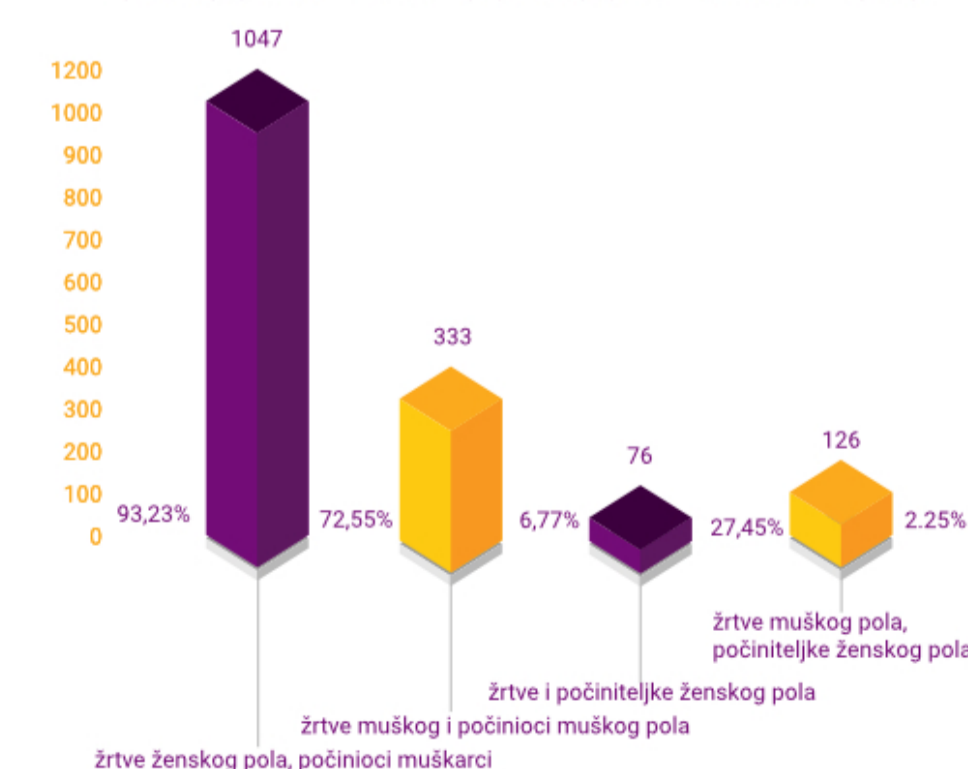
### MUŠKI POČINIOCI NASILJA NAD ŽENAMA PREMA PARTNERSKIM RELACIJAMA



### ŽENE POČINITELJKE NASILJA NAD MUŠKARCIMA PREMA PARTNERSKIM RELACIJAMA



### ODNOS ŽRTVE I POČINIIOCA PREMA POLU



## CHILD MARRIAGE

UNICEF in Serbia continued the implementation of the programme towards ending child marriage in Serbia in three localities: Novi Bečej, Belgrade and Pirot. The program includes joint actions in cooperation with Roma women's organisations, relevant national and local institutions in the sectors of social welfare and education. Activities with girls and their mothers and fathers in selected Roma communities are based on the results of the baseline research that informed intervention profiling and indicators for evaluation of change. Working with schools in the vicinity of girls-at-risk-of-child-marriage contributed to raising awareness of early warning signals for school drop-out and support to girl's education. Further support has been planned to local level network in selected municipalities to answer the specific challenges of each Roma community, upscale work in the whole community, including Roma boys and men, and facilitate intersectoral collaboration in prevention and response.

The National Coalition for ending child marriage has been established on 21 February and includes 21 organizations and institutions devoted to ending the detrimental practice of child marriage in Serbia. The National Coalition will work on creating safe options for girls of Roma nationality and towards empowering Roma boys and girls, women and men to change the existing practice. The overall goal of the Coalition is to contribute to ending child marriages in Serbia, especially in the Roma population, through removal of institutional and social barriers to law enforcement and promoting examples of good

practice in partnership with local communities, non-governmental, governmental and private sectors and the media. The Coordination Body for Gender Equality co-chairs the work of the National Coalition jointly with Roma women NGO Ternipe.

## ACTION AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AFFECTING REFUGEE AND MIGRANT WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Within the framework of the implementation of the Phase II of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) funded regional project "Action Against Gender-based Violence Affecting Refugee and Migrant Women and Children", approximately 1400 individuals at risk or survivors of GBV, benefitted from GBV services across Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, and Serbia. As of end of April, UNICEF Serbia has reached 398 individuals (77 being women, 15 being girls, 8 being boys) with dedicated GBV prevention and response services through two Women and Girls Safe Spaces and 3 Child Friendly /Youth Spaces. Approximately 314 frontline workers were trained in the whole region: in Serbia 38 frontline staff (29 women and 9 men) were trained on GBV prevention, identification, referral and/or care. Special attention is currently drawn to setting up a pool of 13 national trainers who can deliver child protection and gender-based violence in emergencies integrated training, making use of a UNICEF 4-days curriculum currently under accreditation process with the Republican Institut for Social Protection. Finally, UNICEF is focus-

ing on understanding more Unaccompanied and Separated Girls identification and specific needs. Since 2017, UNICEF and partners realized that available resources that focus specifically on the numbers, patterns and experiences of unaccompanied and separated asylum seekers, refugee and migrant girls in Europe, are scarce. Initial information indicates that girls tend to be more invisible than their male counterparts, tend to travel with other families or adults, as well to self-identify, at times due to external pressure, as over 18 to avoid entering protective mechanisms. Therefore, a desk review and consultation with 46 experts (12 from Serbia) were organized and an identification tool was elaborated, still in a draft form.

## PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT - TRANSFORMING TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES

Within the programme that is supporting quality provision of early childhood development services, through improved health and other system's response to parents of young children, additional focus has been given to the most vulnerable populations and engagement of fathers. The communication and education package developed is promoting fathers' engagement in nurturing care – from health, nutrition, early stimulation and play. The second phase of the early childhood development campaign "Early Moments Matter" will have its peak in the month of June, globally announced as a Parenting Month. Throughout the campaign, and par-

ticularly on the 16th of June, celebrated as Father's Day, UNICEF in partnership with policy makers, institutions, organizations, businesses and communities will be promoting the importance and benefits of mother's and father's involvement in early childhood development. In Serbia, the campaign is organized jointly with line ministries (health, education, social welfare and the Ministry of demography and population policy) under the slogan "Positive Parenting – A Gift for a Lifetime".



## OVERVIEW

- UNHCR and partners provided 1,004 protection interventions to asylum-seekers and refugees throughout Serbia (of which 44% were legal aid, 36% psychosocial services, 10% mediation, 5% skills training and 1.2% advocacy/direct interventions).
- UNHCR and partners conducted focus group discussions from 30 January - 1 February with women and girls residing in Tutin, Krnjača, Banja Koviljača, Bogovadja asylum centres, as well as with recognized refugees in Belgrade. On 30 April and 2 May, UNHCR and partners conducted Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Participatory Assessments in Belgrade and border areas of West Serbia to endorse a new Communication with Community (CwC) questionnaire linked to Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). On 4, 10 and 11 April, UNHCR conducted focus group discussions to raise awareness of PSEA with residents of centres in Banja Koviljača, Subotica, and the West.
- Out of total 25 positive asylum decisions made by the Asylum Office, there were 12 males and 13 females, including an unaccompanied girl child who was a survivor of trafficking and an unaccompanied boy child, as well as five refugees with sexual orientation and gender identity based refugee claims. UNHCR and partners provided legal assistance and an individualized integration support to recognized refugees.
- UNHCR provided its input regarding Serbia's compliance with its obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

against Women during the 72nd Session of the **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**, which was held in Geneva from 18 February – 8 March 2019. The feedback report consisted of a summary of the main issues of interest to UNHCR that were raised during the constructive dialogue between the State delegation and the Committee and excerpts of recommendations of particular interest from the Committee's Concluding Observations.

## GENDER REPRESENTATION

**UNHCR Partners reported the following gender representation among their staff:**

- **Association of Citizen Amity** has 5 full-time employees (3 women and 2 men) and 10 associates in the field, engaged via Centers for Social Work (9 women and 1 man).
- **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** had 15 female staff working on their medical project – Medical Program Coordinator, Medical Assistant, Medical Doctor and two facilitators, as well as 5 medical doctors and 5 nurses engaged through the Primary Health Centres. As for their protection project, DRC employed female staff is 5 – Programme Manager, Child Protection Officer, Women Protection Counsellor and 1 translator for Farsi.
- **INDIGO** staff consists of 11 female and 3 male staff members in South and East Serbia covering child protection and non-formal education, among which one female is a Field Coordinator, four are Child Protection Officers, two are interpreters, two are facilitators and two are educators. One male staff member is a Child Protection Officer and two are interpreters.
- **International Aid Network (IAN)** staff consists of 10 women and 5 men.
- **Psychosocial Innovation Network (PIN)** has 5 female psychologists (1 Project Coordinator, 2 Senior Psychologists, 1 Psychologist/ Field Worker, 1 Psychologist/ Researcher) providing psychological and psychosocial support through various culturally, age and gender sensitive activities (psychological support and counselling, psychological assessment, psychoeducational workshops, integration, advocacy, and research activities), aimed at strengthening self-reliance and well-being of beneficiaries and supporting integration and asylum system in Serbia.
- **Praxis**; There is a total of 24 staff members in the organization, 16 women and 8 men.
- **Sigma Plus**, 10 female and 6 male.
- **Humanitarian Center for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT)**, 12 out of 30. 3 females that are cleaners - one in NS HQ, one each in Subotica and Sid office; 7 out of 9 interpreters are males; 2 drivers, also men; 3 lawyers engaged in the old caseload (ex YU legal aid program) also men.
- **Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR)**; has 16 female staff (including the Executive director and programme director) and 12 male staff.
- **A11 Initiative for Economic and Social Rights** has 3 male staff and 4 female staff.



- **Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC)** staff consists of 34 persons, out of which 13 are female employees covering protection issues, cultural mediation and other. Majority of the management positions are held by women (4 out of 5 positions).

## LEGAL AWARENESS AND CONSULTATION

- **DRC** provided timely identification of vulnerable cases and first line response. DRC's Women Protection Counsellor monitors the implementation of legal procedures and referral pathways in SGBV cases. Total number of 154 female asylum seekers and refugees were provided with legal information and counselling on their opportunity to seek asylum in Serbia and how to seek protection against sexual and gender based violence. In case of need, DRC provides legal aid to the SGBV survivors. DRC's Women Protection Counsellor and Legal Counsellor participated as facilitators at UNHCR SGBV training for frontline workers during a two days training in December 2018. DRC conducted PSEA and Code of Conduct refresher sessions for protection staff on March 6, 2019. DRC participates in sub-protection working group led by UNFPA.
- **Association Amity** does not provide direct support to persons of concern, but refers them to organisations addressing those issues when needed.
- **PIN** conducted 33 psychological assessments for the purposes of asylum proce-

cedure on the request of Asylum Office and BCHR. At the beginning of 2019, first positive decision was made that took into account psychological vulnerability of persons in question while referring to PIN's psychological reports, after which the trend continued. Taking into account psychological assessment in the process of decision making by the Asylum office represents a significant development in the asylum system that emphasizes the importance of supporting multidisciplinary approach to the asylum procedure and the efforts to make it more mental health sensitive. Additionally, PIN provided psychological assessment for one woman's resettlement procedure.

- **Praxis** worked with stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness, mainly with members of Roma population through the provision of free legal assistance, information dissemination and counselling in individual cases related to birth registration and acquisition of citizenship, with the aim to reduce the number of persons at risk of statelessness in Serbia. Activities also focused on raising awareness about the consequences of child, early and forced marriages (CEFM) among the school children and all relevant stakeholders, along with the engagement in the prevention and elimination of harmful practices. In the stated period, a total of 19 persons (6 men and 13 women) had their nationality granted or confirmed with the assistance provided by Praxis. Praxis also organised activities aimed at raising awareness of harmful practice of CEFM among school children.

Praxis held 4 awareness-raising workshops with 109 children (95 girls and 16 boys) from 6th and 7th grades in 4 newly selected primary schools in Serbia. In December 2018, Praxis held a conference in Belgrade to present the achieved results and remaining challenges in the fields of prevention and elimination of statelessness and child marriages in Serbia. The conference was attended by more than 20 representatives of authorities, media, civil sector and Roma community.

- **HCIT** provided 80 asylum seeking women with counselling on asylum procedures and registration.
- **BCHR's** legal team provided free legal aid to asylum seekers and persons granted asylum in Serbia in all asylum and receptions centres (1198 persons legally counselled until 1 June 2019, out of which 365 were women). BCHR focused on monitoring of implementation of the new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection and the new Law on Foreigners.
- **A11 Initiative for Economic and Social Rights** (hereinafter: **A11 Initiative**) advocates for the rights of and provides legal counselling to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Serbia. As part of the project A11 Initiative is implementing through the support of UNHCR - "Improved local integration of IDPs through enhanced access to social rights" - A11 Initiative provides legal aid and counselling to particularly vulnerable internally displaced persons in Serbia. Regarding legal aid and counselling, the annual work plan for 2019 envisions the coverage of 33 locations in 25 municipalities where internal-

ly displaced Roma reside. A11 Initiative visited 14 municipalities and provided legal counselling to approximately 100 people. A11 Initiative currently has 50 ongoing procedures in front of administrative bodies and four in front of the Constitutional Court. As part of advocacy and awareness raising aspects, a panel was held on 16 May 2019, to mark 20 years of internal displacement in Serbia, with a focus on local integration of internally displaced Roma. The panel discussion was followed by a short movie projection on access to rights and possibilities for local integration of Roma living in Salvatore, the last collective centre for internally displaced persons in Serbia, and a photography expedition entitled "Internal displacement through the eyes of children" where photographs by children living in Stara škola informal collective centre, were shown. A11 Initiative held several other panels and trainings aimed at raising awareness about human rights and human rights protection mechanisms and methodologies, predominantly connected to access to economic and social rights of particularly vulnerable groups. A training was held in February 2019 on administrative justice and access to economic and social rights of particularly vulnerable groups. Participants included members of civil society organisations, government bodies dealing with administrative procedures. In March, two panels were held; one on access to economic and social rights of LGBTQI individuals and another on the position of women in the labour market, as well as a human rights





campaign on Twitter and Facebook to raise awareness regarding human rights protections (human rights should be focused on and attended to every day of the year, and not just on Human Rights Day, and that they are important for all people).

- **BCHR's** legal team litigated cases to state and international judiciary, as well as UN mechanisms, in cases when rights of asylum seekers or recognised refugees had been denied or limited. Additionally, BCHR's integration team aided those granted asylum in exercising their right to integration including access to education, and the labour and housing market. BCHR focused on the situation at Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport to ensure that all refugees who arrive there may access the asylum procedure, referring problematic cases to the proper judicial institutions, including the ECtHR. In cases when the BCHR was contacted by women or a group that includes women from the transit zone of the Nikola Tesla Airport to provide gender sensitive legal counselling, BCHR always included one female legal officer and female translator when possible. From December 2018 to 1 June 2019 there were 5 women who were provided with free legal assistance on Nikola Tesla Airport. On 4 and 5 December 2018, two BCHR legal officers held a lecture about the international and national legal framework related to asylum procedure with a focus on vulnerable groups of migrants and refugees, such as women and other survivors of SGBV at a SGBV Training for UNHCR partner staff. BCHR's SGBV focal point participated at the UNFPA SGBV working group and took part in revision of country wide SGBV SOPs. In May

2019, BCHR's Executive Director presented BCHR contribution to CEDAW report focusing on the gender perspective of the rights of migrants at the conference organised by SOS Vojvodina.

- During the reporting period, CRPC referred 48 women to appropriate legal aid actors and identified 106 women and 1262 children (62 of which were girl) as newly arrived in Belgrade, and assisted them with legal counselling and registration.

### PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELLING FOR WOMEN REFUGEES

- **Amity** Field associates provide psychosocial counselling for women. From December 2018 to June 2019, approx. 1,000 women were advised.
- **Indigo** provided psychological first aid to 37 women, and psychological support to 44 woman and 10 girls in Bujanovac, Vranje, and Pirot.
- **IAN**; provided in depth holistic psychosocial and psychiatric support to 26 women.
- **PIN** provided 36 women and 23 girls with individual and group psychological counselling, psychosocial support, relevant information and referral for required specific services.
- **CRPC** identified women in need of individual support and made referrals for specialized services. From December 2018 to April 2019, CRPC supported refugee/migrant women from Adasevci reception center to participate in Handicraft festivals in Kombank Dvorana, Dorcol Platz, Merkator Shopping Centre.

### WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT IN REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

- **PIN** conducted a Psychological First Aid Training in Niš for 5 women and 2 men experienced in provision of interpretation services and recognized as informal community leaders, accommodated in reception centres in Vranje and Bujanovac and in Center for Unaccompanied Minors in Niš (Zavod). The training enhanced self-reliance by strengthening the existing capacities among refugee community and to identify participants who could be able to conduct the same training independently for other refugees, which would contribute to the overall psychological well-being of the community members. Considering participants' high interest and motivation, PIN will organize a Training of Trainers session on this topic for all the participants and provide them with opportunity to become peer counsellors in their communities.

### EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- **DRC** organised educational and recreational activities for asylum seekers accommodated in Asylum Centres, including women and girls. From January 2019, DRC conducted intensive Serbian languages classes for those accommodated in Banja Koviljaca, including 8 female asylum seekers.
- **Amity** does not implement educational and recreational activities, but provides support in the form of mediation with educational in-

stitutions, help with enrolment in schools, providing financial social assistance for the purchase of books (through CSW) or providing transportation benefits for the schoolchildren. Also, in 2019, the costs of going to excursions were paid for two refugees.

- **INDIGO** organised educational, creative and recreational activities for children, including 64 girls, assisted children in doing homework and studying, as well working on their motivation for going to school. Non-formal educational and recreational activities were organised in Bujanovac, Vranje, and Pirot. Twelve girls and women were involved in planning, organisation and implementation of the educational, creative and recreational activities. INDIGO had conducted workshops for parents in Vranje and Bujanovac, where around 35 mothers were included.
- **A11 Initiative** implemented its annual "Practicum for Economic and Social Rights" in cooperation with the Law Faculty of Union University. The Practicum is intended for the students of the Law Faculty of Union University, as well as other activists, journalists and members of civil society interested in the subject of economic and social rights.
- **CRPC** held seminars on harmful practices and attitudes towards LGBTI persons in their countries of origin in February 2019 for state stakeholders - MOI, MoLEVSA, CSW, MFFW. Open class for students and teachers "Meet other cultures, and then conclude" was held at Pozarevac High School of Economic and Trade in March 2019. Refugee students of Branko Pesic Elementary School were supported with cultural mediation in native languages during school year.



## SGBV IDENTIFICATION AND FOLLOW-UP

- **DRC** implemented a set of actions at all levels (individual, community and society level). At the individual level, DRC provided information on referral services and those at risk of abuse throughout regular protection monitoring activities and provision of legal aid, as well as conducting special designed workshops with the aim to raise awareness among women asylum seekers and refugees. At the community level, the activities included establishing and coordinating integrated SGBV response and referral systems (in order to strengthen the protection systems in their response to SGBV, including a cross-sectorial cooperation, Key Stakeholders Meetings, and assure that referral pathway between duty bearers and humanitarian organisations is in place). At the society level, DRC contributed to ensuring compliance with relevant international laws as well as assessing and identifying areas for legal and policy reform; advocating to enable the reform to happen at the national level. Total number of 21 SGBV cases was identified and followed up on by DRC.
- **Amity's** Field associates identified and monitored SGBV cases. From December 2018 to June 2019, 4 SGBV cases were identified. In accordance with their competencies, the collaborators mediated in resolving these cases.
- 15 previously identified SGBV survivors have been followed up and provided with psychological support and counselling by PIN and referred to relevant actors (Cen-

tre management, CSW, UNHCR, medical institutions) for required assistance accordingly.

- **BCHR** legal team currently represents 57 women and 12 unaccompanied children in the asylum procedure before the relevant national institutions. Out of 57 women, 5 are survivors of SGBV. BCHR pays special attention during identification and further representation of members of this particular groups, and fully respects and advocates for gender sensitive approach of asylum process (lawyers, AO officials and translators of the same sex).
- **A11 Initiative** does not necessarily have specific SGBV focal points, but does have informal referral mechanism in case it encounters such cases and cooperated with NGOs Atina and Astra through a working group on economic and social rights functioning through the Platform of Organisations for Cooperation with United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms.

## PROTECTION AND WELL-BEING OF REFUGEE AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

- **DRC** provides timely identification of vulnerable cases and first line response. Adequate counselling, and individual case follow up is in place through regular presence and involvement of experienced DRC Child Protection Counsellor (legal advisor), monitoring the implementation of legal procedures and referral pathways. Total number of 7 children and 2 UASC were provided with this type of assistance. During

December 2018, within the UNHCR funded project "Assistance to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Serbia", DRC organized visit to National Museum of Serbia, Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade and the Museum of Natural History on the Belgrade Fortress for the 30 UASCs from Krnjaca AC. In April 2019, DRC has started with movie workshops for UASC in Krnjaca AC. The purpose of the workshops is to tackle human rights issues and discrimination based on the movie they would see. Average number of participants at the workshop is 20 UASC.

- **Amity** Field associates worked on the protection and wellbeing of children in the form of mediation at educational (help with enrolment in schools, provision of financial social assistance for the procurement of books, provision of benefits for transportation of schoolchildren) and health institutions. In the period from 1st December 2018 to 1st June 2019, we provided support to approx. 700 children, out of whom 320 were girls.
- **PIN** conducted more than 60 counselling sessions and psychoeducational workshops with 89 children (23 girls, 66 boys) in Belgrade and Asylum Centres in Banja Koviljaca, Bogovadja, Sjenica and Tutin. The activities aimed to ensure prevention and timely interventions and to enhance children's cognitive, emotional and social skills through addressing different age-relevant topics and issues significant for beneficiaries' well-being and self-esteem.
- **BCHR** Child Protection Officer provided child-sensitive information, counselling and support to children to file an asylum claim and guide them through the entire

asylum procedure, making sure that the best interests of a child are properly taken into consideration with due diligence. Child Protection Officer actively participated at Child Protection Working group organised by UNICEF and participated at various national and international forums in order to advocate and promote mainstreaming of protection considerations related to child protection and child friendly procedures into the activities and approaches by all stakeholders. (Until 1 June 2019 BCHR provided legal counselling to 106 UASC)

- Research results conducted by the Child Protection officer on the state of respect of children rights in the asylum procedure in the Republic of Serbia against international, regional and national standards are included in the regular quarter and annual report the BCHR prepares on the right to asylum in the Republic of Serbia.
- **CRPC**; During the same period a total of 1132 UASC children (1 girl) was identified and referred. Beneficiaries of Centre for Minors in Vodovodska St. were provided with cultural mediation.



## INTERNATIONAL DAYS

### International Women's Day

On 8 March, UN Women in Serbia showcased, using an innovative approach, the legacy of female architects who contributed greatly to the architecture of Belgrade, the capital, but remained unknown. As a result of the campaign, conducted in cooperation with the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and the EU Delegation to Serbia, five buildings in Belgrade center built by famous women architects are now featuring special plaques containing a QR code. By scanning the QR code with a mobile phone, or other devices, people passing by will be able to learn more about the work of the architects and the buildings. The campaign was launched at "Kralj Petar Prvi" elementary school, a famous building by the first woman architect in Serbia, Jelisaveta Nacic. Zorana Mihajlovic, Deputy Prime Minister and the President of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality in Serbia; Sem Fabrizi, Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia; Frederic Mondolini, French Ambassador; Tracy Galagher, the Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy; and Milena Zindovic of the Women's Architectural Society in Serbia delivered opening remarks.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Together with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality, UN Women will organise a signing ceremony with selected women CSOs and local gender equality mechanisms. The event will be hosted by Zorana Mihajlovic, Deputy PM and President of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality with the support of the Delegation of the European Union to Serbia.**
- **Marking of the International Day of Rural Women on 15 October.**
- **Campaign entitled 16 Days of Activism Against Violence against Women from 25 November – 10 December.**