



GENDER BUDGET BRIEF

Newsletter # 1

Three trainings – more than 70 trained CSOs on Gender Responsive Budgeting

in the framework of the
Gender Budget Watchdog
Network in Western Balkans
and Republic of Moldova

Foreword



Marija Risteska
GBWN project director

We have embarked on a mission to assess whether public resources are distributed in just and equal way between men and women. We are 88 civil society organizations from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Kosovo, and Serbia. As civil society organizations we take on multiple roles: (i) we will develop gender budget initiatives addressing the different needs of men and women; (ii) we will advocate for use of gender perspective in budgeting (in Montenegro and Republic of Moldova where officially the tools are not used), and to institutionalize GRB practices (as it is the case of Macedonia); and (iii) we will provide expertise in assessing how budgets impacts gender equality and monitor the ways money is spent from gender equality perspective.

The Gender Budget Watchdog Network aims to open up the policy making and budgeting processes for civil society and citizens and to improve transparency and accountability of the governments in the region. It will contribute to more just and equal distribution of public finances responding to the needs of women and men.

In each of the countries of the project there is one CSO that acts like a GRB hub and provides training, mentoring support, financial support in form of grants for gender budget watch-dogging and gender budget appraisal, facilitates networking and is coordinating network wide advocacy. You can rely on the Gender Alliance for Development Center (in Albania); Center for Civil Society Promotion (in BiH), Center for Research and Policy Making (in Macedonia), Keystone Moldova (in Republic of Moldova), Women Action (in Montenegro), Kosovo Women's Network (in Kosovo) and Gender Knowledge Hub (in Serbia).

We are proud to have completed the capacity building of all 88 organizations in our network in these troubled times preconditioned by Covid-19. We thank the supporters of the GBWN and their flexibility to adapt our approach to the 'new normal' – the Austrian Development Agency and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Their understanding and full support allowed us to develop a digital meeting place such as the www.gbwn.net where we plan to interact online in the future. So do not forget to log in and create your organization's and your personal profile on the network.

Yours sincerely,



Impressum

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The GBWN training modules at glance

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted the implementation of the project as initially foreseen. Originally planned as four on spot trainings and in person interactive share of knowledge and ideas, we managed to do only half of them face-to-face while the other half were delivered online.

Train the trainers

18-21, 2019
Skopje, Macedonia

Basically, this was the initial activity within the “Gender Budget Watchdog Network” project. During the three days event, we set base, internalized different experiences, knowledge and ideas on GRB - CSO work in the past and detailed the plan for the project activities to be implemented. We increased capacities for application of Gender responsive budgeting tools and ensured trainers and mentoring skills are acquired by all project partners so that the new additions to the network would have the same understanding, knowledge and support across the GBWN network.



Fun fact: The training was held during the celebration of the International Day of Men that the team marked appropriately.

GRB Advanced Training

February 18-21, 2020
Novi Sad, Serbia



In total, 28 CSOs from the seven project countries experienced in using the GRB tools expanded their knowledge with more advanced GRB tools. The participants internalized the budget planning process, how to do gender budget analysis and assess relationship of the budget with gender policies, but also how to conduct cost effectiveness and resource allocation analysis with rapid checklists.



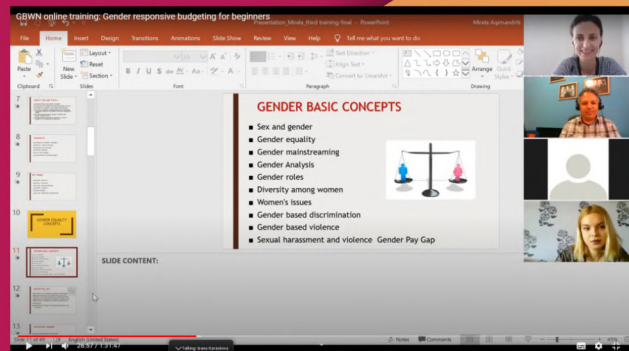
Fun fact: This time we applied different energizers. To be steady and ready we practiced some yoga.

The training was prepared and delivered by Sanja Nikolin and Aleksandra Vladislavljevic, consultants with more than 20 years of experience in gender equality, gender mainstreaming and 10 years of experience GRB. Marija Risteska and Vishnja Bacanovic (project coordinator in Serbia), contributed to the training as well. The training used mixed method approach featuring lectures, tailor made assignments and small group workshops.

GRB Public finances and procurement training

May, 20th, 22nd & 26th, 2020

via ZOOM



Since March as everyone else the GBWN was faced with a challenge to implement activities with physical distancing. As the travel was suspended across the region, we have opted to continue with capacity building via ZOOM. The advantage was that we could train more CSO activists than planned. Thereof on the training targeting organizations that monitor public finances and procurement from good governance perspective we have gathered 43 participants from 20 regional CSOs from each of the seven GBWN project countries. The training provided basic knowledge on gender (in)equality and how public finances impact on gender relations. In particular capacities were built to conduct budget revenue analysis, budget expenditure incidence analysis, and budget execution reporting from gender lenses.

Key points



Riste Jurukovski
(trainer)

“When we decide from whom and how many money we will collect in the state budget, should be accompanied with a clear model how this money will be spent in terms of assuring decent quality of life both for women and men. That is why we need the GRB concept in practice”.



Blerina Xhani
(trainer)

“The procurement should be seen through gender lenses. It’s about the public money. In this regard it is of upmost importance to inspect whether the public procurement staff in the institutions are aware on this concept”.



Nerina Guri
(trainer)

“Gender Expenditure Analysis focuses exclusively on the genders impacts and should be the starting point for further development of each specific budget plan and program”

In June we introduced new 28 CSOs and 47 participants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Macedonia Kosovo and Serbia to GRB and GRB tools for watchdogging on public finances. We spoke about the concept, the preconditions for doing GRB -gender-disaggregated statistics, time use data and gender indicators; but also gender beneficiary analysis, expenditure analysis and cost benefit analysis as tools that CSOs can use in their work holding government accountable on how they spend public money; while advocacy was in our focus on the last day.

Key points



Mirela Arqimandriti

“Women and men can have equal opportunities only if we shape the state budget in that manner. Just like we do it with our home budgets in order to fulfill our needs. The balance is the key and the government must be aware on this”.



Marija Risteska

“The gender responsive budgeting is reflection of the political will and steps undertaken in achieving gender equality through application of tools that are allowing for including gender perspectives in budgeting.”

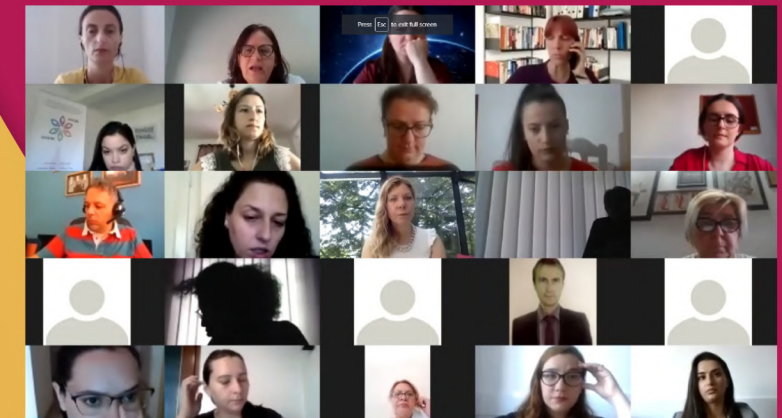


Nicole Farnsworth

“No matter how much you might have been advocating for different reasons, it’s always good to go a bit back and revise through the toolbox in order to understand how you are using ADVOCACY in gender responsive budgeting”

GRB Entry Level Training, via ZOOM, June 24-26, 2020

via ZOOM





In the spotlight

Here are some testimonials from the participants who successfully completed one of the trainings.



GRB advanced training
**Gordana Micova
Nestorovska**

Radar, Macedonia

—

“The advanced training on gender responsive budgeting is of particular importance to Radar as a new CSO that has yet to promote itself. We have acquired important knowledge, especially in terms on the modalities to prepare gender analysis on public policies and budgets. I highly recommend GBWN programs to anyone who intends to deal with this extremely important issue.”



Basic GRB training
**Andjela
Radovanovic**

Association of Youth
with Disabilities

—

“The Basic Training provided us a better insight into the principles of Gender Responsive Budgeting, and thus greater opportunities for activities aimed at advocating for rights of women with disabilities.”



GRB Public finances and
procurement training

**Parascovia
Munteanu**

Alliance of
Organizations
for Persons with
Disabilities (AOPD)
Republic of Moldova

—

“The gender responsive budgeting training gave me the opportunity to have an improved approach about social inclusion policy aimed to advance CRPD and SDGs implementation. The obtained knowledge and skills underlined that budgets are the most important policy tools to mainstream human rights based approach with a focus on women and girls and most marginalized groups of persons with disabilities in policy frameworks, including in the context of COVID-19 response and recovery. Thanks to the GBWN we were able to gather deeper insight on policy analysis to ensure that all public utilities, information, goods and services are accessible and age, gender and disability sensitive. “



GRB Advanced training
**Alketa Dhimitri
Lamani**

Vlora Youth Centre,
Albania

—

“This training gave us the opportunity to get introduced to best practices from each country, through the case studies and group work analysis. Being introduced to GRB tools and concepts, analyzing gender policies in the region would help our organizations to develop better watchdogging plans and agendas, to become stronger in the field and to further establish joint collaborations for the future”



GRB Public finances
and procurement
training

Ferdian Shala

Youth Association
for Human Rights
(YAHR), Kosovo

—

“The Youth Association for Human Rights (YAHR), which operates in the municipalities of Lipjan, Ferizaj and Shtime, has as its main base the monitoring program of local institutions and the advocacy program for human rights. Training on public procurement and gender responsive budgeting from Gender Budget Watchdog Network, is of particular importance to us as has helped us with our work with institutions at the local level. We as an organization, after these trainings have managed to organize an information roundtable in the Municipality of Lipjan with representatives of local institutions, citizens, civil society organizations and the media on the importance of drafting a municipal budget with gender responsibility, as a direct result of the training received by GBWN and Kosovo Women's Network. We recommend these trainings for anyone working with local as well as central budgets from a gender perspective and aiming to institutionalize gender responsive budgeting.”



GRB Advanced training

Diana Grosu

Association for
Human Rights Lex
XXI, Moldova

—

“The Association for Human Rights Lex XXI will apply the principles that were explained at the advanced training on GRB. We have to promote these ideas in our community in order to build a democratic society. I am happy that I had such a great opportunity to learn from the best trainers from Serbia.”



Basic GRB training

**Amela Hajvaz-
Pozderović**

Women's Vision
Association, BiH

—

“An excellent training about gender responsive budgeting. It is especially important for new organizations who encountered this issue for the first time. For me personally, this is useful because the tools we learned about at the training are explained well and are applicable, which in turn results in greater visibility of organizations through advocacy for gender responsive budgeting. I would recommend Gender Budget Watchdog Network and their trainings to everyone.”



GRB Advanced training

Ana Acimovic

BUM - Becejsko
udruzenje mladih,
Serbia

—

“For several years now, we have been trying with our colleagues to involve the citizens of the municipality of Becej as much as possible in decision-making, mostly within the action “Budget tailored to citizens - You are asked, too!”. The tools I learned at the advanced training and the experiences of other participants contributed to improving this important activity. I learned how to use GRB tools for advocacy for the budget that meets the needs of all its residents, especially women from the village, the elderly, children ...”