



**Gender Budget Watchdog Network**

for a gender equal region

# **STATUTE**

## **OF THE**

# **GENDER BUDGET WATCHDOG NETWORK**

This statute will govern the work of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network, as a non-governmental and not-for-profit network.

### **Article 1. Name, form and address**

- 1.1. The network will be called the Gender Budget Watchdog Network.
- 1.2. It may also be known as GBWN.
- 1.3. The regional network operates in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, and Serbia.
- 1.4. The address of the network's coordination office is the same as the Coordination Body of the network, as agreed by its members, as per Article 7.
- 1.5. The network may dissolve based on a two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly of Members.

### **Article 2. Mission and Vision**

- 2.1. The Gender Budget Watchdog Network is a regional network that seeks to further gender responsive budgeting in the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova, towards more efficient, effective, transparent, and just use of resources that benefit diverse women and men. The Network achieves its aims through expanding knowledge and acceptance of feminist economics, research including gender analysis, experience exchanging, coalition-building with other stakeholders, furthering capacities for gender responsive budgeting, advocacy, and monitoring.
- 2.2. The Gender Budget Watchdog Network envisions a world where resources are distributed in an effective, transparent, just, and equitable way that benefits and meets the needs of diverse men, boys, women, and girls.

### **Article 3. Founders**

3.1. The organizations that originally founded GBWN include: Centre for Research and Policy Making (North Macedonia), Gender Alliance for Development Centre (Albania), Centre for Civil Society Promotion (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Kosovo Women's Network (Kosovo), Women Action (Montenegro), Gender Knowledge Hub (Serbia), and Keystone Moldova (Moldova).

### **Article 4. Assembly of Members**

4.1. Together, GBWN member organizations shall form the Assembly of Members, which shall be the highest decision-making body of GBWN. It shall take decisions based on a two thirds (2/3) majority vote by members.

4.2. GBWN membership is open to any non-governmental, non-profit organization located in the countries in Article 1.2. that submits a membership application form and commits in writing to implementing the GBWN Statute, Mission, and Code of Conduct.

4.3. Membership shall be discontinued if:

- The member requests to discontinue its membership;
- The member organization ceases to exist; or
- The member violates commitments made to implementing the GBWN Statute and Code of Conduct, following a decision taken by the Executive Board with a majority vote.

4.4. GBWN members shall be responsible for:

- Approving the Statute of the network and changes to it;
- Participating in GBWN meetings and votes;
- Electing and dismissing the members of the Board of GBWN;
- Paying annual membership fees on time, in the amount agreed by the GBWN membership;
- Engaging in the strategic planning to establish the Strategy of GBWN;
- Collaborating with other GBWN members and actively seeking to avoid duplication of efforts, competition, or words or actions that may harm any other GBWN member;
- Reviewing and approving the annual narrative and financial reports related to the functioning of GBWN compiled and submitted by the Coordinating Body.

### **Article 5. Meetings of the Assembly of Members**

5.1. Assembly of Members shall meet at least twice a year in annual meetings.

5.1. Assembly of Members shall meet in regular members' meetings, as needed.

5.2. Written notification for any meeting, including date and place of the meeting, along with the agenda for the meeting will be distributed to all members at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

5.3. Each member organization has one vote in the Assembly of Members.

5.4. Decisions in the Assembly of Members shall be taken by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote made by the members present.

## **Article 6. Oversight Board**

6.1. The Assembly of Members shall elect a five-member Oversight Board. Implementing partners and organizations receiving funds from GBWN may not be members of the Oversight Board.

6.2. Members of the Oversight Board shall serve a four-year term, after which they will need to take a one-year break before serving another term. In order to ensure institutional memory, two Board members will elect to resign after their first two-year term for the first Oversight Board.

6.3. An Oversight Board member may be removed if:

- The member requests to discontinue her/his role as a board member; or
- The member violates commitments made to implementing the GBWN Statute and Code of Conduct, following a decision taken by the Oversight Board with a majority vote.

6.4. If an Oversight Board member is removed from the Oversight Board mid-term, the Assembly of Members shall elect a new board member at the next membership meeting.

6.5. The Oversight Board has the responsibilities to:

- Review and approve quarterly and annual budgets, financial reports and narrative reports;
- Meet in person or virtually at least twice annually;
- Support and advise GBWN in strategic planning.

6.6. The work of the Oversight Board shall be on a voluntary basis, though the transport and per diem costs of travel directly affiliated with Executive Board responsibilities may be reimbursed.

## **Executive Committee**

7.1. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for taking strategic decisions regarding the direction of the network and fundraising for the network.

7.2. Other responsibilities of the Executive Committee include:

- Takes strategic decisions on behalf of GBWN;
- Represents GBWN in relation to third parties and acting on his behalf;
- Assists the Regional Director in ensuring funds for the operation of GBWN;
- Prepares semesterly work plans and reports of GBWN;
- Reports to the Oversight Board;
- Prepares Assembly sessions of GBWN;
- Takes executive financial decisions for the day-to-day management of the assets of the association;
- Prepares proposed changes and amendments of the Statute and submits to the Assembly for approval;
- Decides on and provides recommendations concerning cooperation and relation with other associations and institutions;
- Responsible to inform the members and the public on the work and activities of the GBWN;

- Performs other duties according to the orders and instructions of the Assembly of GBWN.

7.3. The initial Executive Committee members shall include representatives from Founding Members enlisted in Article 3, as elected by the other Founding Members, as follows:

- 1) Centre for Research and Policy Making (North Macedonia) for a period of two calendar years from the adoption of this Statute;
- 2) Gender Alliance for Development Centre (Albania) for a period of two calendar years from the adoption of this Statute;
- 3) Centre for Civil Society Promotion (Bosnia and Herzegovina) for a period of one calendar year;
- 4) Kosovo Women's Network (Kosovo) for a period of two calendar years;
- 5) Women Action (Montenegro) for a period of one calendar year;
- 6) Gender Knowledge Hub (Serbia) for a period of two calendar years;
- 7) Keystone Moldova (Moldova) for a period of one calendar year.

7.4. Thereafter, the Executive Committee members shall be elected by the GBWN Assembly of Members based on a majority vote, following nominations of potential candidates made by the Assembly of Members.

7.5. The Executive Committee shall include seven members, including one representative from one organization from each of the countries in which the network is located, as per Article 1.3.

7.6. Each Executive Committee member shall serve for a period of two calendar years.

7.7. An Executive Committee member may be re-elected by the Assembly of Members for a second term of two years.

7.8. An Executive Committee member may not serve more than two consecutive terms but may be re-elected after a one-year break.

7.9. An Executive Committee member may be removed from the Executive Committee if:

- The member requests to discontinue her/his role as a board member; or
- The member violates commitments made to implementing the GBWN Statute and Code of Conduct, following a decision taken by the Executive Board with a majority vote.

7.10. If an Executive Committee member is removed from the Executive Committee mid-term, the Assembly of Members shall elect a new board member from the same country at the next membership meeting. During the interim period, any tied votes within the Executive Committee shall be resolved by the decision of the Chair of the Committee.

7.11. The Executive Committee members shall elect annually by majority vote one member of the Executive Committee to serve as the Chair of the Committee, who will have the responsibilities of:

- Calling Committee meetings at least quarterly;
- Setting the agenda for Committee meetings in close consultation with other members;
- Calling votes on decisions;
- Moderating Committee meetings; and

- Representing GBWN publicly, as agreed with other Executive Committee members.

7.12. The Executive Committee shall elect annually a Secretary who will be responsible for:

- Taking meeting minutes at each Executive Committee meeting, including clearly noting all votes and decisions taken by Executive Committee;
- Sending the meeting minutes to Executive Committee members for their comments and verification after board meetings;
- Maintaining digital folders of meeting minutes and other GBWN official documents; and
- Granting and removing access to GBWN official documents among Executive Committee members in the current and next board mandate during the transition period until a new Secretary is elected.

## **Article 8. Membership Fees**

8.1. The Assembly of Members shall decide whether an annual membership fee will be required from members and the amount of this fee by 31 December.

8.2. The Executive Board shall decide on the amount, rules, and procedures for paying membership fees annually by 31 January of each year.

8.3. The Coordinating Body shall be responsible for collecting the fees and informing the Executive Board of members' failures to pay fees.

8.4. Annual fees must be paid by the end of the first quarter of the year.

## **Article 9. Coordinating Body**

9.1. The Coordinating Body shall be selected by the Assembly of Members by a majority vote to coordinate the work GBWN towards achieving its mission and strategy.

9.2. The Coordinating Body shall be a GBWN member organization that is an officially registered non-governmental and non-profit organization with its primary address in one of the countries enlisted in Article 1.3.

9.3. In order to be nominated to serve as the GBWN Coordinating Body, an organization must have at minimum:

- At least five years' directly applicable experience with gender responsive budgeting;
- A least five years' experience and a positive track record with project cycle management;
- A clear organizational structure;
- An independent, functioning oversight board or body responsible for reviewing and approving the organization's narrative and financial reports at least annually (based on the calendar year);
- Established financial management procedures, including the "four-eye" principle in review and approval of expenditures;
- Commitment to undergo an annual independent audit of all finances related to their organization and GBWN;
- Has undergone three successful organizational annual audits;

- Documented experience successfully managing an annual turnover of at least 200,000 euros.
- Positive working relations with other GBWN members.

9.4. The GBWN Executive Board shall review expressions of interest by GBWN members to become the GBWN Coordinating Body based on evidence submitted of the fulfilment of the criteria in 9.3. Based on this evidence the Executive Board will recommend all eligible candidates to the Assembly of Members for election.

9.5. The GBWN Coordinating Body shall serve a term of four calendar years. It may be re-elected by the Assembly of Members to continue to serve.

9.6. The initial GBWN Coordinating Body shall be the Centre for Research and Policy Making in North Macedonia, starting from the calendar year in which the Statute is adopted.

9.7. The GBWN Coordinating Body shall have the following responsibilities:

- Ensure the effective implementation of the GBWN strategy, established by the Assembly of Members;
- Maintain a separate bank account holding all GBWN funds and ensure that the funds are used only for the purpose of implementing the GBWN strategy;
- Organize GBWN networking meetings at least quarterly;
- Prepare narrative and financial reports for the Assembly of Members and Executive Board at least annually;
- Prepare reports to funders of GBWN activities in close consultation with other GBWN members;
- Fundraise for GBWN, based on the ethical code agreed by the members regarding GBWN funders;
- Represent GBWN publicly, based on the agreement of members;
- Maintain the GBWN social media accounts and website;
- Collect membership fees;
- Undergo an annual audit of GBWN-related funds; and
- Other tasks agreed upon by members.

9.8. For its work, the GBWN Coordinating Body shall be entitled to the use of Network funds for the reimbursement of at least two staff members working up to full-time for the programs and finances of GBWN respectively, as well as the coverage of administrative costs up to 7%.

9.9. The Coordinating Body's responsibilities shall end when:

- Its term ends and a different organization is elected by the Assembly of Members to serve as the Coordinating Body;
- It informs the Assembly of Members that it no longer wishes to serve as the Coordinating Body with at least six months' notice, and another organization is elected by the Assembly of Members;
- It has failed to fulfil its responsibilities under Article 9.6 and/or violated the Code of Conduct, as determined by the Assembly of Members and based on a majority vote; and/or
- It has been found to misuse GBWN finances.

9.10. After a Coordinating Body's mandate has ended, it shall transfer all GBWN funds to the new Coordinating Body via bank transfer.

### **Article 10. Dissolution of the network**

10.1. GBWN may be dissolved by decision of two-thirds vote (2/3) of the members of the Assembly of Members.

### **Article 11. Amendments to the Statute**

11.1. The current statute may be amended by decision of two-thirds (2/3) majority of Assembly of Members.

### **Article 12. Approval**

12.1. This Statute is approved by the Assembly of Members of GBWN on 25 August 2021.



- Marija Risteska, executive director of the Centre for Research and Policy Making


- Mirela Arqimandriti, Executive Director, Gender Alliance for Development centre

  
  
*authorized signature*

- Igballe Rogova, Executive director of Kosovo Women's Network

  
  
Signed by the founding members

- Visnja Bacanovic, director of Gender Knowledge Hub

*Uroš Bašović*



- Slavica Strikovic, Executive Director, Women Action

*Slavica Strikovic*

- Ludmila Malcoci, Regional Director of KHSI, Central and Eastern Europe, Keystone Moldova Executive Director

*Ludmila Malcoci*



Signed by the founding members

- Aida Daguda, Director of Centar za promociju civilnog društva

*Aida Daguda*

