



**At every end,
there is a new
start -**

Welcome GBWN 2.0!



This publication was created within the Gender Budget Watchdog Network in the Western Balkans and Republic of Moldova Project with financial support from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The views expressed in this study are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of ADA or SIDA.

Impressum

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Dear Gender Budget Watchdogs,

Time flies. It really flies. It's been exactly three years since our GBWN journey started. At the beginning of 2019 no one expected that business and professional lifestyles will change dramatically due to the pandemic. Our project was not spared as well, but we are extremely proud of our coping skills and what does the recapitulation show. We have gone extra mile in every aspect – achieved results beyond initial projections, growing our regional network with more than planned members and building seven reliable hubs that serve both as knowledge centers and CSO policy partners to governments in Western Balkans and Moldova.

The Gender Budget Watchdog Network has trained more than 100 CSOs, mentored 42 of them to become proficient in applying GRB tools and produced 36 gender budget watchdog reports and initiatives on local and national level that contributed towards enhanced gender equality. We increased access to knowledge and facilitated important debates by organizing 4 webinars with more than 1000 participants and organized 10 parliamentary hearings to hold governments accountable for gender perspective of public finance spending. Our work led to changes in 2 laws on budgets (Macedonia and Montenegro) with institutionalized GRB and adopted initiative for decreased VAT tax on menstrual products, as well as 30 budget programs as a result of the analysis and advocacy by CSOs, including the 8 promotional campaigns implemented regionally by the network members with an organic reach on social media of +100.000 audience. GBWN established a unique online-academy for CSOs to further acquire GRB knowledge and skills and a web site designed to mobilize each other around relevant budget initiatives.

The CSO gender budget work has contributed to progress in respect to the achievement of the SDG 5c1 indicator and have resulted in best case studies that we share in this newsletter as outcomes we are especially proud of.

This is our last newsletter, but only for this first GBWN phase. The seven partners that commenced this initiative are set for a new phase of our GBWN journey in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Kosovo and Serbia. We will monitor budget spending for gender equality and focus specifically to climate change financing.

At the very end of this foreword, let me thank you once again for following our work and your contribution so far. Considering that numerous new crises are on the horizon: food crisis, energy crisis, human security crisis, that presupposes in the future resilience response measures to be adopted, we promise to keep an eye on the spending from gender perspective. Also, we will work to improve public commitments for gender responsive climate action and increase available financing to implement gender-responsive climate action in the Western Balkans region and Moldova.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marija Risteska".

Marija Risteska

Executive director of CRPM and regional director of GBWN

SDG 5C1 indicator in 2021- progress from 2019

GBWN used the Methodological Note on indicator 5.c.1 to independently check the progress on the indicator in each of the seven economies in the region. The monitoring was conducted for the budget cycle for year 2021.

We focused on three criteria – (i) Existence of policies/programs and corresponding allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment; (ii) Existence of systems to track allocations for gender equality; and (iii) Existence of mechanisms to make resource allocations publicly available to increase accountability to women and men. These are the results:



DELIVERING ON SDG 5.C.1. IN 2021 IN WESTERN BALKANS AND REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA Proportion of Countries with Systems to Track and Make Public Allocations for Gender Equality – A CSO Perspective

# Criteria	ALB	BIH	KOS	MNE	MK	MD	SRB
1 Existence of policies/programs and corresponding allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2 Existence of systems to track allocations for gender equality	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	✓
3 Existence of mechanisms to make resource allocations publicly available to increase accountability to women and men	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	✓

Source: Delivering on SDG 5.C.1. in 2022 In Western Balkans and Republic of Moldova available at www.gbwn.net



As the Gender Budget Watchdog Network assessed the progress against the same criteria in 2019 and provided recommendations for improvement, we note that some economies followed the recommendations provided.

On the criteria one, economies that progressed as of 2019 are Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Moldova. They have worked on improvement of policy and legal framework for gender equality and some even put efforts for institutionalizing GRB in the budget system (Macedonia and Montenegro), a process that has not been finalized in the year of monitoring.

On the criteria two, GBWN detects progress in the case of Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro. The ex-ante analysis is well advanced in these countries although less visible in Serbia. Capacity for ex-post impact analysis is needed to be improved and institutionalized everywhere in the region.

On the third criteria Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro increased transparency and make budget information for gender equality public and easily accessible. Serbia and Albania through publishing a report on GRB provide for accountability of their governments and remain frontrunners in the region in respect of delivering on SDG5c1 indicator.

You can fully access the GBWN knowledge product on SDG 5c1 on this [link](#)

GBWN 2.0

Governments have yet to implement fully commitments to GRB and to fully institutionalize GRB throughout the budget process. Gender analysis and a gender-transformative approach to climate change in the WB and Moldova is limited. Engagement of civil society on gender and climate change is increasing, but mostly separately on gender equality and on climate change. COVID-19 has revealed a lack of capacity for gender transformative resilience response. CSOs and policymakers, lack of knowledge methodologies and skills in GRB, particularly related to climate change, and resilience response financing. GBWN members lack technical knowledge on climate change and in financing climate change action; as well as on high level advocacy. The regional network of CSOs working to integrate a gender perspective in policies and budgets, and to institutionalize GRB has only begun to be recognized as an important actor in international fora.

The new edition of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network project will:

- Strengthen visibility and international recognition of the work of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network;
- Increase CSO capacities to use GRB tools watchdogging climate change policy and financing;
- Improve CSO participation in policy and budgeting processes by using gender budget watchdog tools for increased government accountability, particularly in resilience response, climate change financing and gender responsiveness of the climate change policy framework.

We will focus again on feminist organizations in order to equip them with adequate skills, knowledge and competences on monitoring and evaluating climate change policies and climate finance landscape from gender perspective, whereas simultaneously working with environmental organizations in order to increase their knowledge and skills on gender mainstreaming of climate change policies and climate financing. In regards to this we will upgrade the existing GBWN e-academy with new modules related to climate and gender as well as make it available in local languages. New toolkits are also planned as a buildup to the e-academy curricula.

In this new phase we will continue keep eye on the relevant institutions on the intensity they focus on gender equality with updated SDG 5c1 monitoring reports. In the sphere of accountability and transparency, we will strive on promoting the benefits of available and accessible Gender citizens' budgets, alongside providing annual budget commentaries. Having in mind that our capacities will be also strengthen on the crosscutting point between gender equality and climate change, we will also contribute to numerous reporting deliverables concerning the most vital international agreement and pledges such as the Paris Agreement and Lima Work Program.

The project will additionally strengthen our network and will make it more visible and recognized, with fostered CSO participation in policy and budgeting processes by using gender budget watchdog tools.