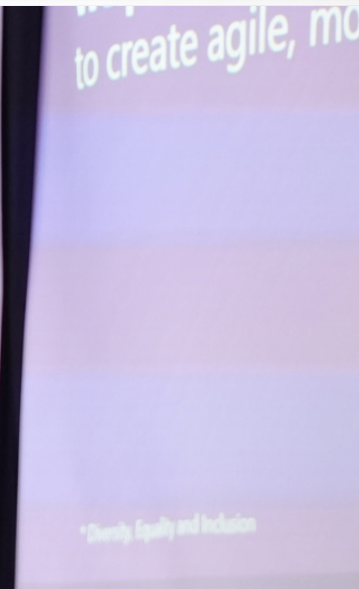




**INNOVATION INDEPENDENCE IMPACT**



Responsive Budgeting FORUM  
Advancing good governance through  
empowering CSOs to use  
gender-responsive budg

# Newsletter #5

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# GRB FORUM

18-20 OCTOBER 2023, SKOPJE, NORTH MACEDONIA

## GRB Forum “Going Glocal: Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Western Balkans & Moldova-Advancing good governance through empowering CSOs to use GRB tools”

- Presented knowledge and experiences using different GRB approaches in transforming local communities, discussing how these can inform global strategies and methods;
- Explored methodologies and tools based on best global and local practices for tracking international funding towards gender equality through improving and developing new gender marker methodologies;
- Developed methodological ideas for GRB to better inform climate change mitigation and adaptation actions;
- Built contacts and synergies among existing networks, experts, and stakeholders working on these issues, towards future joint advocacy and action at national, regional, and international levels;
- Created a space to share how empowering civil society to use GRB tools can serve as a strategy for advancing good governance in the Western Balkans, Moldova and other regions.



**The event started with the Opening Launch of the second phase of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network on October 18**, taking place at the Triumphal Arch of Skopje. This launch event marked our commitment to strengthening the network as an active and recognized entity. The network is dedicated to enhancing civil society participation in policy and budget processes related to gender-transformative resilience response and climate change.

During the launch event, Mr. David Muckenhuber, the ADA Head of Office, Ami Larsson Jain, the Swedish Ambassador to Macedonia, and Marija Risteska, the regional director of GBWN, delivered opening remarks and shared valuable insights. This event set the stage for the subsequent GRB Forum, emphasizing the importance of civil society participation in promoting gender equality and addressing climate change challenges.

## Day one highlights

On October 19th, the forum opened with an address by Marija Risteska, underlining the vital role of GRB in international development organizations, governments, and stakeholder initiatives. Enver Husejin, the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy and Lidija Arsova, CEI representative echoed this sentiment, emphasizing inclusion and addressing vulnerabilities.

- **Panel one:** Experts delved into the current methodologies for tracking financing, including OECD, EU, and UN gender markers. Speakers stressed the importance of gender-disaggregated data and tracking budget expenditure for gender equality.
- **Panel two:** This segment focused on tools for gender budget tracking and institutional mechanisms, addressing gender markers, terminology, impact measurement, and the roles of institutions and policies.
- **Panel three:** Strategies for GRB advocacy were explored, including international cooperation, political challenges, and the importance of integrating GRB into policies and budgets.

**The consensus from day one was clear: practical implementation of GRB, political will, and the promotion of gender equality in budgeting and policies are paramount.**



## Day two highlights

October 20th brought a fresh perspective to GRB, focusing on its methodologies in the context of climate change.

Panel four: Experts discussed the transformative power of GRB at the local level in informing global and local initiatives. Local civil society organizations and governments stressed the importance of political will, gender-sensitive budgeting, and increased participation.

- **Panel five:** The conversation centered on gender mainstreaming in policy and budgeting for development, emphasizing the need for gender-responsive budgeting, communication, capacity building, and inclusive policies.
- **Panel six:** The discussion revolved around climate change financing and gender justice, highlighting the gendered impact of climate change and the importance of gender-responsive financing.
- **Panel seven:** Focusing on gender and resilience programming and budgeting, this panel underscored the importance of integrating gender dynamics into resilience response programs and highlighted the significance of gender-sensitive budgeting.

**In the closing remarks, speakers emphasized the need for collaboration, advocacy at the international level for gender-responsive budgeting, and influencing climate change financing from a gender perspective. Building coalitions and expanding the network were also highlighted as essential steps for furthering gender equality initiatives.**





# NETWORK DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## Workshop

**Right after the GRB Forum in Skopje, from 20 to 23 October 2023, the CSOs representatives of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network moved to a beautiful mountain place, Berovo in North Macedonia to create a space for bonding of the network members as well as work on the network development strategy.**

Strategic planning process to establish a shared Strategy for GBWN is a consultative process that involves all our members and other key stakeholders. Therefore, we organized an online consultation on strategy on 16 October from 10:00 - 12:00 via Zoom.

The workshop in Berovo was intended for our current sub grantees and was led by Kosovo Women's Network. In the groups we worked on situation analysis per partner country, discussed the root causes of the current situation and based on it we developed a risk analysis and activities contributing to each result we want to achieve. Additionally, the SWOT analysis of the network was reviewed and updated during which all representatives of partner CSOs had the opportunity to give their opinion on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the Network.



# GBWN RECENT EVENTS' PARTICIPATION

## GBWN workshop at the Gender Summit

GBWN hold a workshop on Improving gender equality in allocation of public financing through gender responsive budgeting during the Gender Summit The New Gen(D)eration, which took place on October 4-5, 2023, in Skopje.

The workshop introduced participants to gender responsive budgeting by looking at public finance allocations in one area (it could be sports / energy efficiency / urban mobility / infrastructure), providing basic budget literacy skills, discussing what role CSOs, academia and activists could have, how they can organize a watchdog or gender budget initiative and affect local and central government decision making and budgeting process. It is a practical crash course on GRB for beginners.

## GBWN & Friends of Europe

We have participated at the Women's economic empowerment in the Western Balkans, WORKING GROUP meeting in Skopje on 29th of September 2023 together with the Friends of Europe on the theme of gender-responsive budgeting. The discussion from the Working Group will be summarized in the report to be launched at Friends of Europe's EU-Western Balkans Summit on the 7 December in Brussels.

## GBWN at the World Forum for Democracy



World Forum for Democracy is a platform for dialogue and innovation which promotes the Council of Europe's principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law across the world. **GBWN initiative was presented in one of the forum's labs.**

The Forum highlighted and encouraged democracy innovations at the grassroots and their transfer on a systemic level in order to strengthen the foundations of democratic societies, as well as actively empowered young people to participate at the forum discussions.

# Newsletter #5

## Messages

*"Gender budgeting matters as it reveals how policies affect men and women differently. Integrating gender and inequality budgeting into policy processes fosters societal equality and equal opportunities. This benefits society economically, enhances health, and reduces poverty."*

**ALEXANDRA POWELS**

European Parliament, Policy department for Budgetary Affairs

*"If you are gender-neutral you are reproducing the gender inequalities. Closing the gender gap for 1% is better than staying in place or shrinking the gap."*

**BLAI MARTÍ PLADEMUNT**

Barcelona Gerència Municipal

*"We have very genuine intentions to improve the tracking system of budgeting from a gender perspective we need the global improvement of gender equality."*

**MARIJA RISTESKA**

GBWN Regional Director

**NEW PODCAST  
EPISODE RELEASED**

# BREAKING BARRIERS

**Adelina Tershani from Kosovo Women's Network, Alexandru Gribincea from Keystone Moldova and Kristian Lika from Gender Alliance for Development Centre in Albania**

delve into the importance of involving more men in gender equality advocacy and the broader gender equality movement. They talk about breaking barriers such as stereotypes, promote shared responsibilities, and the significance of gender-responsive budgeting in achieving gender equality. The speakers believe that gender equality is the future and encourage young boys and men to join the movement for a better quality of life for all genders.



**YOUTUBE CHANNEL**

[@GenderBudgetWatchdogNetwork](https://www.youtube.com/@GenderBudgetWatchdogNetwork)



**SUBSCRIBE**





We are glad to have taken part in the brief on "**Addressing Gender Responsive Budget Implementation: How civil society is holding governments accountable to gender promises in budget execution**" published by the International Budget Partnership.

The paper consolidates findings from these collaborations, aiming to share the experiences, perspectives, resources and methodologies that CSOs have used to hold their governments accountable to GRB commitments. The first section provides some background on the GBWN and its approach to accountability. The second section looks at methodologies for monitoring the implementation of GRB in Argentina, Mexico and India.



Gender Budget Watchdog Network  
for a gender equal region

*New Brief!*

by Claire O'Donnell in collaboration with  
the Gender Budget Watchdog Network

