



# NEWSLETTER

*March, 2024*

## **WE ARE GOING GLOBAL!**

GBWN is hosting an in-person Parallel Event during the NGO CSW68 Forum, which is taking place on 10 - 22 March 2024 in New York!

**MENTORING  
ACTIVITIES FOR  
SUB-GRANTEES  
ARE STARTING!**

**IMPORTANT  
REPORTS ARE  
PUBLISHED!**



Dear Gender Budget Watchdogs, we have big news to share!

**GBWN together with Keystone International will be hosting an in-person Parallel Event during the NGO CSW68 Forum, which is taking place on 10 - 22 March 2024 in New York.**

Our event: *"Gender Responsive Budgeting: Delivering on Gender Equality Commitments in Multilaterals' External Financing"*

The primary objective of the side event is to present and further identify recommendations for improving gender-responsive budgeting in development cooperation external financing.

**Gender Budget Watchdog Network** will present key findings of monitoring of external development spending of three of the largest multilateral funders: the EU, WB, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). GBWN will also share identified potential improvements to systems and tools used by multilaterals for planning, monitoring, and evaluating expenditures and impacts towards gender equality based on the gender markers (Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Framework (PEFA) for the assessment of gender responsive public financial management (GRPFM), and SDG 5.c.1., respectively).

**Keystone Moldova** will present an analysis of gender- and disability-inclusive budgeting in multilateral agencies, based on a review of initiatives led by UN Agencies and international funding organizations. They will share an example from the Republic of Moldova, with implications for strengthening inclusive budgets at national levels and practical examples from inclusive education. This presentation will highlight the need for greater transparency in resource allocation to ensure that programmes are gender-responsive and effective in addressing gender and disability.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024  
10:30AM - 12:00PM EDT**

**LOWER LEVEL OF THE SALVATION ARMY  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION  
221 EAST 52ND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10022**



# GBWN PARTNERS' LOBBYING FOR GRB WITH EVICENDE-BASED APPROACH

## Women's Action published the Gender Analysis of the Constitution of Montenegro

Women's Action published the Gender Analysis of the Constitution of Montenegro publication, the first of its kind in the country, at the end of 2023. Five female authors, each from their own specific perspective, **analyzed the current Constitution and gave specific recommendations for its reform**, from a gender perspective. The publication attracted a lot of media attention. The publication and video presentation are available [HERE](#)

## Women's Action participated at the Women's Parliament in the Montenegrin Assembly

On March 6, 2024, Slavica Strikovic from Women's Action participated at the Women's Parliament in the Montenegrin Assembly. This is an opportunity for CSOs dealing with Gender Equality to ask decision-makers from the legislative and executive authorities, regarding the current and important Gender Equality issues. Bojana Boskovic, state secretary in the **Ministry of Finance**, in response to this question, **confirmed that the plan of this ministry is to adopt** in the second quarter of this year the amendments to the **Law on Budget and Fiscal Responsibility, which will lead to the introduction of GRB into the legal framework** of fiscal policies in Montenegro.



## **KWN Launches Report on Informality, Demands Progressive Taxation**

On February 27th, KWN also launched its latest research report, titled [In the Shadows: A Gender Analysis of Informal Work in Kosovo](#). The report **addresses the need for gender analysis on women and men's engagement in informality, aiming to inform the upcoming government strategy to address the informal economy, towards ensuring an evidence-based, do-no-harm approach.** In synergy with the aims of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network, the report addresses progressive taxation, calling for the review and revision of Kosovo's tax system to ensure resources reach those most in need. The International Monetary Fund has observed that progressive tax systems can tackle gender inequality and reduce the gender income gap, lower marginal tax rates, and incentivize poor people to work (where women often are overrepresented). Moreover, the tax system should align with the Kosovo government's broader aims towards social protection and wellbeing.

## **KWN Launches Landmark Gender Analysis of Digitalisation, Including GRB**

The Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) launched a landmark research report: [Gender Equality: At the Centre of IT... and Beyond: A Gender Analysis of Digitalisation in Kosovo](#), on February 12, 2024. The gender analysis holds significant policy importance, aiming to support the Government of Kosovo in **integrating a gender perspective into public policies related to digital reforms across multiple sectors, offering evidence-based recommendations.** Additionally, the analysis aims to support the European Union (EU) with gender analysis to inform programming related to the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) III and political dialogues with the government. The report integrates gender-responsive budgeting in every chapter, assessing the extent to which each institution had undertaken gender-responsive budgeting as part of its digitalisation efforts and the extent to which such information was made publicly available.

# GBWN PARTNERS' CONTRIBUTING TO GRB DISCUSSION



## Women's Economic Forum Meets Kosovo President Osmani on Gender Budgeting

The Women's Economic Forum (WEF) met President of Kosovo Vjosa Osmani where among the agenda items was **emphasising the importance of institutionalising and implementing gender-responsive budgeting at both central and local levels.** Activists requested the President's support for greater commitment from all relevant institutions to develop and implement fair and efficient policies that specifically address the challenges faced by women in the labor market. They also demanded urgent progress on the Law on Labour, which is contributing directly to gender-based discrimination against women.

## General Assembly of the Platform for Gender Equality in Moldova elected new members

On 10 February 2024, the **General Assembly of the Platform for Gender Equality in Moldova met to elect the members of the Board** (for a period of 1 year) for its 10th mandate. Among the persons **elected for this mandate is Alexandru Gribincea, who works as country project coordinator for GBWN** at Keystone Moldova. Alexandru's election to the Board is a testament to his expertise in gender budgeting and it is anticipated that his contributions will significantly enhance the Platform's initiatives in promoting gender equality.

## Women's Action attended the session of the Coordinating Committee for Women's Entrepreneurship

Women's Action, Montenegro attended the session of the Coordinating Committee for Women's Entrepreneurship, as a full member of this committee. Two important publications were presented at the same session:

- 1. The first was published by the [International Labor Organization- The Gender Pay Gap in Montenegro, A statistical update and policy implications](#): The results of the statistical analysis reveal that the average GPG in Montenegro was equal to 21.6 per cent in 2021. This means that, on average, women earned 78.4 cents for every euro earned by men. . The results of the statistical analysis reveal that the average GPG in Montenegro was equal to 21.6 per cent in 2021. This means that, on average, women earned 78.4 cents for every euro earned by men.
- 2. According to the data of [Top Women Business Montenegro](#), whose source is the Commercial Register, in 2022 there were 13.44% of companies owned by women and only 6.85% of companies managed by women. Women's business achieves a share of 14.26% of the total income of companies in Montenegro and 16.26% with the number of employees.

## We spoke about our work at the "Gender-Responsive Budgeting & the Role of Parliaments" webinar

On 24th of January 2024, we took part in the "*Gender-Responsive Budgeting & the Role of Parliaments*" webinar organized by the AGORA Portal for Parliamentary Development. Claire O'Donnell, Gender Budget Research Specialist, presented her excellent [paper collecting case studies on CSOs holding governments accountable to GRB](#) implementation through budget execution, that was created in collaboration with the GBWN. This event was a great opportunity to discuss and promote lessons learned and good practices to Gender-Responsive Budgeting implementation by the parliaments. We especially appreciated an interactive form of the webinar that gave us a chance to share our network achievements and challenges during the discussions in the breakout rooms.

# ANNUAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

The project follows the budget making, discussion and adoption and every year each GBWN hub submits **annual budget commentaries and recommendations from a gender perspective** to Ministries of Finance and Parliaments in the spirit of The Fiscal Femme.

In the Albanian state budget for 2024, about 9.3% of the general public expenses will be dedicated to gender-based public policies, which aim to reduce gender gaps in different fields.

Budget of North Macedonia for 2024 is not a gender sensitive budget. Although the country has a gender policy, the funds corresponding to its implementation are not visible in the budget (if any) and are insufficient.

In Moldova, funding for environmental protection was set at 508 million MDL, representing 0.6% of total budget expenditure, it is 23.7% higher than the previous year and 47.2% higher than 2022, marking the largest percentage increase in state allocations.

“We consider the absence of open and broad public discussion in process of adopting the Montenegro Budget Plan for 2024, and absence of efforts to increase the participation of citizens in creation of budget policies of previous years and decades, to be worrying.”

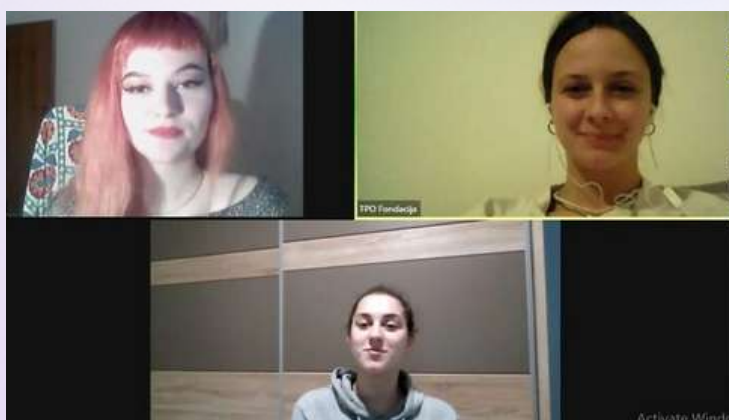
“The role of Coordination Body for Gender Equality in monitoring and reporting on GRB should be increased, including the cooperation and accountability to women's organisations and other interested CSOs in Serbia.”

**Full budget commentaries are to be found here: <https://gbwn.net/en/contributions/>**

## PROGRESS OF OUR SUB-GRANTEES

### implementing the projects in resilience response and gender responsive budgeting

**UŽ Maja and UŽ Priroda from Bratunac** has held numerous meetings with the local government and are now participating in the Working Group for development of gender responsive criteria in budget allocations for agricultural and rural infrastructure



**TPO Foundation** has networked with Ženska inicijativa from Novi Sad, Serbia to organize exchange of knowledge, experiences, and how-to for introducing free menstrual hygiene products in universities.

### Center for research and analysis

researched the inclusive solutions for citizens of marginalized communities during crisis. Their results indicate that these citizens are the most threatened. They recommend greater involvement and transparency during decision making processes as a way to build a more inclusive society and solutions that improve their lives.

Their research is available for download in Macedonian language.





**NGO MOZAIK** conducted two trainings led by trainer Nada Drobnjak, an expert with extensive experience in the field of women's rights and gender equality, in coordination with mentor Slavica Striković. The trainings covered topics such as: understanding gender, gender analysis, budgeting, legal frameworks for GRB implementation, components and tools of GRB, basic steps in gender mainstreaming of the budgetary process, and GRB from planning to implementation. Additionally, the trainings presented the results of the Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Budget Analysis for the years 2020, 2021, and 2022 in the municipality of Nikšić, conducted by the Women's Alliance for Nikšić Development as part of the "Gender Budget Watchdog Network in Western Balkans and Republic of Moldova" project. One exercise involved advocating for the integration of GRB, while another analyzed the Nikšić municipality's 2023 budget within the Department of Social Welfare and created a gender-responsive budget program for 2024 for the same expenditure unit.



**Association for Human Rights Lex XXI** conducted a comprehensive analysis of the Green Plan, reviewing all 177 pages with a gender impact lens. They applied a gender impact lens to analyse the 30 monetary commitments outlined in the Green Plan and also explored potential positive impacts on women, children, and vulnerable individuals through an interview with a gender specialist from UN Women Moldova.

## GBWN MENTORSHIP SCHEME FOR SUBGRANTEES STARTED

The GBWN created a pool of experts who will be giving a professional support to the sub granted projects. **The pool of 5 mentors will provide support to 20 organizations** based on their Organizational and Advocacy Assessments (OACA) and Development plans implementing GRB advocacy actions at the local and regional level.

**Mentorship is an important part of the capacity building of the CSOs.** Mentors will be giving the training to the group of CSOs followed by the individual mentoring sessions. We are very happy to collaborate with these experts who will ensure guidance and support to the organizations throughout the GRB advocacy actions of our subgrantees towards local and regional authorities.



# INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

## Conference on Gender Budgeting in Cyprus

The **Cyprus Platform for Gender Budgeting**, supported by 5 Cypriot universities, organized the **European Conference for Gender Budgeting** in Nicosia, Cyprus on the 22 and 23 February 2024. The goal of the Conference was to examine the challenges and achievements made in European countries regarding GRB, exchange experiences and improve the tools and the methodology that is used.

A part of our regional team joined the conference to present the working paper on multilaterals' external financing. This was a chance to hear and learn from prominent GRB experts from all over Europe, such as Diane Elson, Angela O'Hagan, Elizabeth Klatzer, and many more. We are very glad that the collaborations on GRB are growing.



# Raisina Dialogue, 21 - 23 February, 2024, New Delhi, India

The Raisina Dialogue is India's premier conference on geopolitics and geo-economics committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the global community. Every year, leaders in politics, business, media, and civil society converge in New Delhi to discuss the state of the world and explore opportunities for cooperation on a wide range of contemporary matters. Marija Risteska spoke on the subject of the Future of Western Balkans and emphasized the need to have more inclusive, democratic and cost effective solutions in individual states.



# JOIN OUR FREE E-LEARNING PLATFORM

**UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL:**

Enter the world of  
Gender Responsive Budgeting



# Our e-learning platform is up and running

If you have ever wondered what is GRB, how to implement it, what is the connection between gender and climate change or how to advocate for GRB initiatives – now is your chance!

Our e-academy is open for all interested individuals – practitioners, scholars, civil servants, activists who are very welcome to join. If you are interested in joining our training courses please write an e-mail to [gbwn@crpm.org.mk](mailto:gbwn@crpm.org.mk) in which you will list the following details:

- Name and surname;
- Country;
- Short motivation on why do you want to complete the GRB for Beginners module;
- Which language variation(s) you want to be enrolled to (English, Albanian, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbian/Montenegrin/Bosnian).

**[More information on the current courses on our website.](#)**



# Newsletter #1

## Message

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*International presence of GBWN amplifies our voices and influence as a platform to advocate for gender-responsive budgeting practices at a broader scale! It enables us to engage with policymakers, government officials, and other stakeholders on an international level, facilitating the exchange of best practices, knowledge, and resources. As we continue our journey, let's connect to mobilize more resources and advocate for policies that prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment in budgetary decisions.*

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*Marija Risteska*

Regional Directress  
Gender Budget Watchdog Network



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