

# GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING:

## IMPROVED CONDITIONS FOR THE SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURE FOR WOMEN



*NGO Maja in Partnership with NGO Priroda implemented the project “Increasing responsibilities of local governments for gender equality of rural women “*

### Overview of the issue

Based on the identified challenges in the economic and food context, especially in relation to the impact of climate change on women in rural areas, the necessity of immediate action through the implementation of gender-responsive measures related to agriculture in both municipalities of Bratunac and Vlasenica was emphasized.

The recognized needs have defined mechanisms with the aim of restoring women's dignity and improving their economic independence. **Activity aim was to create a rulebook with clear and gender-responsive criteria for allocating funds for agricultural development and rural infrastructure.**

This project aim was to improve the alignment between planned allocations and actual needs, and to create opportunities for more self-employment of women in rural areas. **The final goal is to achieve economic stability for women and for their families and entire rural communities.**

**The goals were set to be achieved through training and education of project NGO members, development of regulations and guidelines, organization of workshops for local authorities, communication strategy, cooperation with the media, strengthening of networks and partnerships, and regular monitoring and evaluation of project implementation.**

### GRB analysis

**Through the exchange of information, recommendations and common interests for the development of the Rulebook were defined.** The recommendations were related to support in the registration of commercial holdings, the development of rural tourism, infrastructure, support in the development of small and existing businesses, participation in fairs and study visits, and advisory services for start-ups and existing businesses.

The adopted budgets for 2024 were reviewed, the municipalities of Bratunac and Vlasenica had items aimed at supporting rural population and the new Rulebook was to provide support to women during distribution of the available funds in 2024. Municipalities of Bratunac and Vlasenica had funds in their budgets intended to support women in rural areas. Specifically, funds from item 415200 (about 200,000 KM) for the development of agriculture and the provision of expert assistance, as well as funds from item 511200 (about 250,000 KM) for rural infrastructure.

With analysis of existing practices, it has been identified that these allocations are not aligned with the real needs of women and men in rural areas, and it was impossible to determine how gender-responsive these allocations are. The budget item for the development of agriculture and rural development, ranged from 100-300,000 KM, was not including gender-responsible criteria for the distribution.

The observations during interviews with **women showed they need advisory support in starting and sustaining the small businesses and exchanging information through good practice measures and study visits.** The consultation process with officials and communities involved 87 persons out of which 80 women and 7 men.

## General recommendations

- The first recommendation was to **form Municipal Working Groups for the Drafting of the Rulebook**. The working groups were formed and actively worked and contributed to the development of the rulebook, but also to the process of Strategic planning.
- The suggestion related to: "Improvement of living and working conditions of the rural population". The proposal was to add "with an emphasis on women from the countryside" to the same goals, given that the weaknesses and threats have shown that the demographic structure of the rural population was very bad, the departure of young people from the countryside, etc. This suggestion was explained by the fact that women in the countryside were the bearers of rural development and, of course, the demographic structure. It was necessary to **add a focus on improving the living and working conditions of its population, but to put the focus on women.**

## Advocacy instant impact:

- ✓ Through the activities undertaken (trainings, analyses, regulation development, and advocacy actions) direct contribution was made for increasing the capacity of NGOs, implementing gender-responsive policies, and strengthening the visibility and impact of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network in supporting a gender-responsive approach in rural areas.
- ✓ **The Rulebook for support of agriculture was adopted in Municipality Bratunac.** Both municipalities declared that the document is of significant importance for their future work in the field of implementation of gender-responsive policies in support of a gender-sensitive approach in rural areas. During the preparation of the Rulebook working bodies were formed and active in both municipalities.

In addition to the adopted Rulebook, **The project team got included in the development of the Rural Development Strategy of the Municipality of Bratunac 2023-2030.**

The support for women was provided related to the registration of a commercial farm. A cooperative provided funds for the registration of two commercial farms and thus helped the self-employment of two people who are also subcontractors of the cooperative. By doing so, they are realizing opportunities for incentives from the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Srpska and other projects. One of these registered commercial farms applied for the project of allocating greenhouses and received a greenhouse of 100 m<sup>2</sup>. The project was implemented by the donor and the local self-government.



## Main challenges:

Main challenges were faced with women from the communities that in spite of the improved conditions they need additionally an advisory service that would provide them with information on the mechanisms of exercising the right to incentives as well as running small businesses by following legal regulations.



Gender Budget Watchdog Network

for a gender equal region