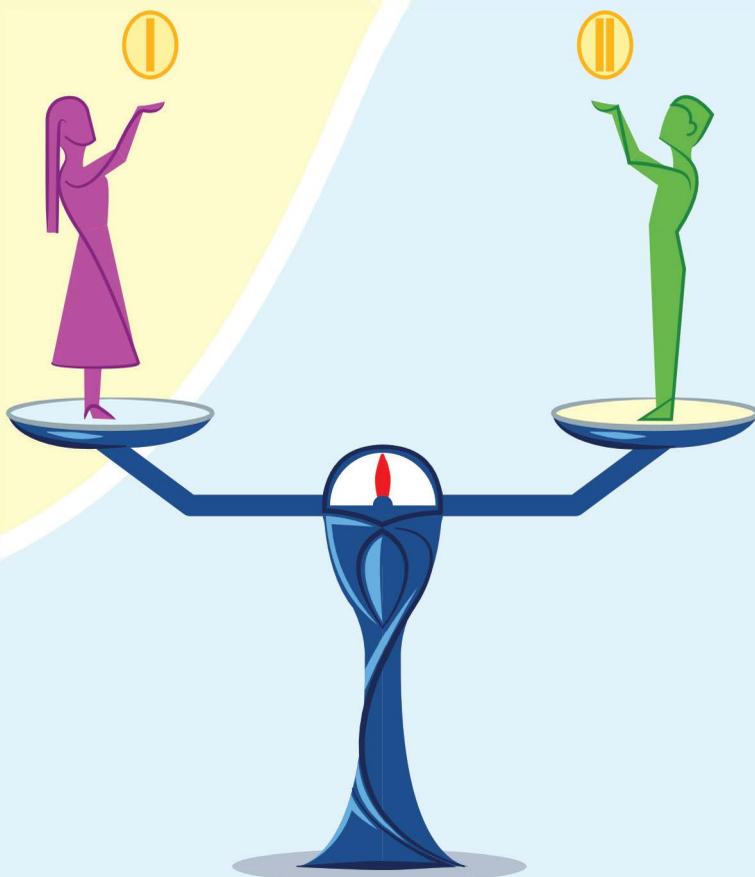


# Results of the analysis on strengthening accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises in three Western Balkan countries



# Results of the analysis on strengthening accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises in three Western Balkan countries

This brochure was produced within the framework of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network project in the Western Balkans region and the Republic of Moldova with financial support from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The views and opinions expressed in this analysis are those of the partner organizations Women's Association Priroda, Journalists for Human Rights and the Bečej Youth Association and do not necessarily represent the views of ADA or SIDA.

## About the project

The project "Strengthening accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises in 3 countries" was implemented by 3 civil society organizations: Women's Association Priroda from Bratunac-BiH, Bečej Youth Association, Bečej-Republic of Serbia and Journalists for Human Rights, Skopje-North Macedonia. The project was implemented in 24 local communities/municipalities, respectively in 8 municipalities in each project country.

**The general objective of the project** is to increase transparency and accountability for gender equality and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises and climate change in 3 Western Balkan countries.

### Specific objectives:

- Improve and increase tools for accountability and resilience of authorities in at least 24 local governments from 3 Western Balkan countries in combating crises by implementing gender-sensitive and responsible policies.
- Increase the capacities of CSOs in at least 24 project municipalities to use GRB tools and their application in policy changes in a gender-responsive manner, which will increase the visibility and recognition of the work of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network

### Expected results:

- Conducted and published research with the aim of providing representatives of state and local authorities, CSOs and citizens of 3 Western Balkan countries and the entire region with insight into the causal links between crises and the state of gender equality established by the research, and the conclusions and recommendations for measures (government policies) determined by the research analysis that can prevent or reduce the impact of crises on gender equality (crisis resilience); The research analysis defined the conclusions and recommendations on the basis of which a platform for action was created related to the application of GRB tools for the purpose of gender equality;
- Increased capacities of 3 project CSOs from 3 Western Balkan countries, members of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network, for the use of GRB tools, monitoring and policy changes; improved cooperation for further action in the target countries and the region.
- Improved visibility and recognition of the work of the Gender Budget Watchdog Network. Expanded network/work and network principles as well as application of GRB tools to at least 24 CSOs from 3 targeted countries.

## About the methodology

The Women's Association "Priroda" from Bratunac (BiH), Journalists for Human Rights from Skopje (North Macedonia) and the Bečej Youth Association from Bečej (Serbia) conducted a study on the impact of the economic crisis on equal opportunities and gender equality. Based on the analysis of the study, a platform for action is being created, with defined steps for campaigns in each country and in the region.

The research activities were: setting up a methodology, developing a questionnaire, conducting the study, processing and publishing and providing recommendations for action based on the study findings.

The direct target groups of the study were 24 local governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia (eight in each), and a total of 168 local government representatives and a total of 480 surveyed citizens, of which 240 were women from marginalized groups. Focus groups were conducted with representatives of 24 municipalities and the same number of civil society organizations, most of whom were women's associations.

In the study, we started from factors that could have a positive impact, in this case, gender-responsive budgeting. The hypothesis is that gender equality in times of crisis is influenced by the following factors: state and municipal policies and practices, the development of women's NGOs working to activate citizens, demographic and economic factors. Considering the diversity of target groups and project beneficiaries, we applied the following data collection methods: Desk analysis of the situation in the municipality in the previous five years - which crises have had a key impact on the municipality (COVID, disasters, economic crisis, growing poverty), what are the social and economic indicators of the situation in the

Project "Strengthening accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises in 3 countries" municipality (is employment/unemployment growing, is the number of reports of domestic violence increasing or stagnating, what is the situation with juvenile delinquency) and whether the municipality has development projects and programs (does it finance entrepreneurship, programs in agriculture, does it allocate money for education, does it invest additionally in health and education and in what way); Focus groups with municipal decision-makers and key people to show whether heads of municipal administrations, persons in charge of the economy and representatives of gender equality mechanisms understand what gender budgeting is; survey of CSO representatives to determine how they see the municipality's interventions so far when it comes to budgets and local policies - whether they are in line with the needs of citizens, whether the municipality adapts them to the needs; Survey for citizens to show how citizens perceive the crisis, whether they consider themselves to live in a poor, underdeveloped, developed municipality, what they see as the key problems of citizens, whether they know what the municipality finances, what programs, what they think the municipality should finance, what would be their response to the crisis, which groups of citizens they believe are most vulnerable and why, whether the crisis affects women or men more and why, whether they know what gender equality is, whether they have heard of gender budgeting, what kind of municipality they would like to live in.

## About GBWN Network

The Gender Budget Watchdog Network brings together 100 civil society organizations from seven countries and aims to strengthen the role of CSOs as stakeholders contributing to increased accountability and transparency and improved management of public funds.

The network builds the capacity of CSOs to increase their participation in policy-making and budgeting processes using reporting and networking by gender monitors. As gender-responsive budgeting is a method of paying and spending public money in many countries, our work is relevant not only for the region but also globally. There is no other network organization that uses gender budgeting tools to assess the compatibility of policies and budgets with the needs of men and women, so our work is unique and there is great interest in replicating it in other regions where we do not currently work. That is why we have recently become an active network in policy advocacy, knowledge and information sharing at the international level.

Therefore, the GBWN program aims to strengthen the role of CSOs as stakeholders contributing to increased accountability and transparency and improved management of public funds, by monitoring and assessing the impact of gender policies and budgets on gender equality.

## About partner organizations

**The Women's Association Priroda from Bratunac, Bosnia and Herzegovina** exists since 1999 with the mission of improving the quality of life of women and families. Through strategic goals related to the economic empowerment of women, development with the active participation of the community with women's active involvement and the creation of a society of equal opportunities, we contribute to gender equality at the local and regional level. We work in a rented space of 50m<sup>2</sup>, we are technically well equipped and the association employs two people with the active involvement of about 10 volunteers. Since 2010, we have been working on gender-responsive budgeting through various trainings, and in 2018, together with the Women's Association Maja from Bratunac, we managed to introduce a new budget item for women victims of war into the budget of the municipality of Bratunac through an advocacy process, which still exists today. In addition to this campaign, we led a campaign to adopt gender-sensitive criteria for budget allocations for sports clubs (in accordance with the needs of male and female athletes) in the municipality. We managed to introduce sensible criteria for allocation to sports organizations, but also to influence the formation of a sports commission in which women in sports participate, which was not the case until then. We also influenced the adoption of sensible criteria for allocations for entrepreneurship development, and for allocations for agriculture, together with the local administration, we adopted a

Project "Strengthening accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises in 3 countries" which was also adopted in September 2022 by the Assembly, with a section that emphasizes the need for further sensitization of the Bratunac municipality budget.

**The Bečej Youth Association BUM, Republic of Serbia**, responds to the problems and needs of young people from the territory of the Bečej municipality through the organization of various activities of an educational, ecological, cultural, sports, humanitarian and anti-corruption nature, promotion of civil society values, raising the level of civic activism and improving human rights and freedoms. BUM was founded in January 2010 and today has more than 180 members aged between 15 and 30. Goals of BUM: The Bečej Youth Association is a voluntary non-political, non-profit, citizens' association, established for an indefinite period of time to achieve goals in the areas of building civil society, youth work, youth policy, formal and informal education, information, health, healthy lifestyles, human security, the fight against corruption, promotion of sports and sports for all, activism, volunteerism, inclusion of marginalized groups, gender equality, international cooperation, development of entrepreneurship and youth employability, mobility, preservation of cultural heritage, sustainable development and environmental protection, with special emphasis on youth. BUM's vision is a proactive society characterized by an orderly system and a quality life for the youth of the Republic of Serbia. BUM's mission is to improve the quality of life of citizens on the territory of the Republic of Serbia through socially responsible action through activism, volunteerism, non-formal education, information, environmental, sports and cultural activities. We are members of the Coalition for Public Finance Supervision and the Gender Budget Watchdog Network.

**Journalists for Human Rights from Skopje, North Macedonia**, since its foundation more than 20 years ago, has been working to promote the protection of citizens' right to access, environmental democracy and poverty reduction, promotion of the human right to health, a safer environment, improving the quality of life, developing democracy and advocating for political reform. The goals are to ensure economic security for youth and gender equality, equal access to water and sanitation for all and menstrual hygiene management for girls in schools, access to safe products and youth development, promotion of the SDGs and implementation of projects to achieve them in relation to SDG 5, 6 and 12. The organization's members are constantly trained and active at international levels of implementation and locally networking with national and regional NGOs. In addition to monitoring gender budgets at the local level, since its first survey in 2015, the organization has been actively advocating for an institutional response to the menstrual hygiene management in schools, as well as for improving conditions (WOMEN 2030 projects, Scorecard on equal access to water and sanitation). We advocated for the use of sustainable alternatives like menstrual cups during crises like Covid-19, when MHM was a serious problem for healthcare workers. In a project awarded by GBWN, we lobbied to reduce VAT on menstrual products from 18% to 5%, and our main success is that gender tax discrimination is also a political issue in parliamentary and municipal processes to achieve gender equality and implement the GRB. The target groups are the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Government, women in parliament, the media, as well as the private and public sectors.

## Municipality of Srebrenica - Republika Srpska - BiH

Srebrenica is a city and municipality that covers an area of 527 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of approximately 13,400 inhabitants, of whom 49% are men and 51% are women (Serbs 46.73%, Bosniaks 52.33%, Croats 0.12% and others 0.82% municipalities 02 euros. The biggest problem according to those surveyed is unemployment, public transport and an underdeveloped economy.

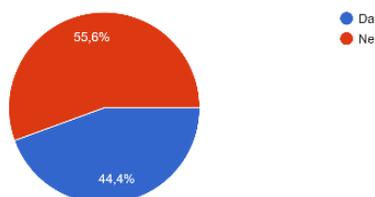
The municipality allocates most of its budget funds to finance socially vulnerable categories, transport of students and rural development. In the coming period, more work should be done on economic development, possible retraining and self-employment. Funds are allocated from the municipal budget for mothers and for in vitro fertilization, as one of the pro-nativity measures. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, since there is no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations.

The analysis of the survey determined that CSOs, in addition to focusing on their target groups, should focus on all residents and conduct advocacy campaigns to improve the lives of citizens, participate more in public debates and have joint projects with the municipality to improve the quality of life in this municipality. The urban and rural population of Srebrenica was surveyed in equal proportions.

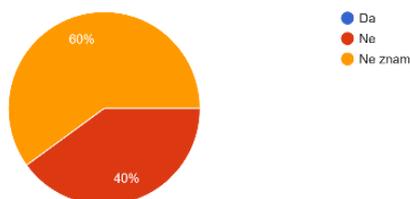
The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the opportunities they have and believe that the quality of life of women in Srebrenica is worse than in other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all residents equally. Half of the respondents do not know what the municipal budget is, and 20% of them have never participated in budget discussions. 80% of the respondents believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups and believe that more money should be allocated for different social groups as well as for economic development.

They agree that local associations do not have much influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of their target groups. On the other hand, local women's NGOs have worked very hard to improve the economic, social and cultural quality of life of women and of course to promote coexistence, which is very important in this local community. If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of young, unemployed and socially vulnerable residents. In emergency situations, they believe that a response plan, good coordination of services and the engagement of all available resources are of crucial importance. According to the respondents, no one consults women regarding reactions in emergency situations, and they are mainly responsible for caring for the elderly, the sick and children, and they are more likely than men to be unemployed. More than half of the respondents feel safe in their municipality and consider their municipality to be beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
18 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 odgovora



## Municipality of Nevesinje - Republika Srpska - BiH

Nevesinje municipality is covering an area of 923 km<sup>2</sup> and has 12,542 inhabitants, of whom slightly more than 50% (50.28%) are women and slightly less men, living in 17 local communities. The majority of the inhabitants identify as Serbs, 95.40%, while 4% are Bosniaks, 0.2% are Croats and a small percentage of others. The municipality's budget for 2024 is approximately 6,496,566 euros. The biggest problems, according to those surveyed, are unemployment, lack of investment, population displacement and poor infrastructure. The municipality allocates most of its budget funds to finance socially vulnerable categories, and in the coming period it should allocate more funds for youth, women and people from rural areas. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, since there is no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations. The population of Nevesinje from urban and rural areas was surveyed in equal proportions.

The analysis of the survey determined that civil society organizations, in addition to focusing on their target groups, should focus on all residents, publicly criticize the work of the municipality, have joint projects with the municipality, and also participate in the work of municipal working bodies in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality.

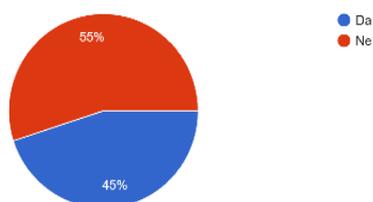
The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the opportunities they have and believe that the quality of life of women is worse compared to other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all residents equally, and especially the young. Their biggest problem is unemployment, poor infrastructure and population emigration.

More than half of the respondents do not know what the municipal budget is, 25% of them had the opportunity to participate in the budget debate. 70% of respondents believe that the municipality does not fund enough programs for the most vulnerable groups and believe that more money should be allocated for young people, people from rural areas and different groups of social categories.

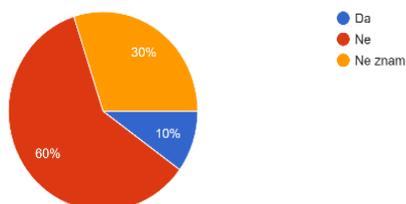
80% are of the opinion that local associations do not have an influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of their target groups and personal interests. If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of socially vulnerable residents, young people and the unemployed.

In emergency situations, good coordination of services, informing citizens and a response plan are essential. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, work on the front lines of defense and often lose their jobs. More than half of those surveyed feel safe in their municipality and consider their municipality to be beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 odgovora



## Municipality of Teslic - Republika Srpska - BiH

Teslić is a city and municipality covering an area of 846 km<sup>2</sup> and has more than 53,000 inhabitants, of whom 48% are men and 52% are women, living in 49 local communities. Most residents identify as Serbs 75.64%, Bosniaks 18.50%, Croats 3.6% and a small percentage of others. The municipality's budget for 2024 is approximately 17,281,665 euros. They consider unemployment, discrimination and inequality, as well as addiction to gambling and games of chance, to be the biggest problems. They lack a shelter for dogs. The municipality allocates the most funds from the budget for people with disabilities, financing public institutions and scholarships, and in the coming period it should allocate more funds for the development of tourism, culture and the economy. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, as there are no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations.

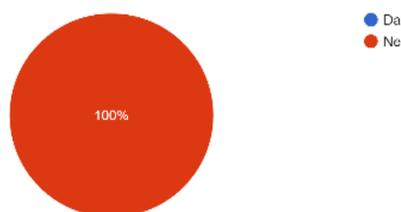
80% of the surveyed population of Teslić is from the urban area, and 20% from rural areas. The analysis of the survey determined that civil society organizations are mostly focused on their personal interests and should participate in the work of municipal working bodies, publicly criticize the work of the municipality, as well as have joint projects with the municipality in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality.

The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the life opportunities offered to them by this municipality. They believe that the quality of life of women in this municipality is the same compared to other municipalities. For them, Teslić is among the medium-developed municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has hit the poor and the unemployed the hardest.

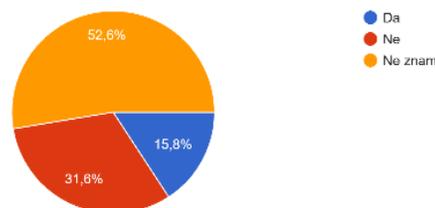
More than half of the respondents do not know what the municipality's budget is, and 20% of them had the opportunity to participate in the budget debate. 65% of the respondents believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups and believe that more money should be allocated for pensioners, socially vulnerable and elderly people.

80% are of the opinion that local associations have no influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent their personal interests. If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of young people, pensioners and socially vulnerable residents. In emergency situations, good information for citizens and a response plan are crucial. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, often losing their jobs and working on the front lines of defense against crises. More than half of the respondents feel safe in their municipality and think that their municipality is beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
19 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
19 odgovora



## Municipality of Višegrad - Republika Srpska - BiH

Višegrad is a municipality covering 448 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of around 13,500 inhabitants, of whom 47% are men and 53% are women, living in 14 local communities. Most of the inhabitants identify as Serbs 88.3%, Bosniaks 8.8%, Croats 0.3% and a small percentage of others. The budget for 2024 was around 5,844,066 euros. The biggest problems examined are poorly organized health services, poverty and unemployment.

The municipality allocates the most funds from its budget for the socially vulnerable, veterans and war invalids, and in the coming period it should allocate more funds for the youth and the unemployed so that they do not leave Višegrad. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, as there are no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations.

Civil society organizations are mostly focused on their target groups and should participate more actively in the work of municipal working bodies, publicly criticize the work of the municipality and have joint projects with the municipality, in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality. 60% of the surveyed population of Višegrad is from the urban area, and 40% from rural areas.

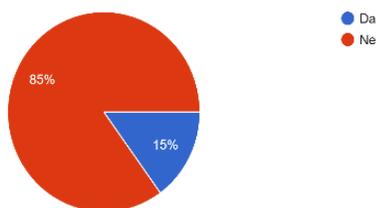
The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the opportunities that this municipality offers them for life. They believe that the quality of life of women in this municipality is the same as in other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all citizens equally, and the poor the most.

None of the respondents knows what the municipal budget is, although 30% of them had the opportunity to participate in the budget debate. Only 5% of the respondents believe that the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable groups. They believe that they should allocate more money for different social categories and for the unemployed.

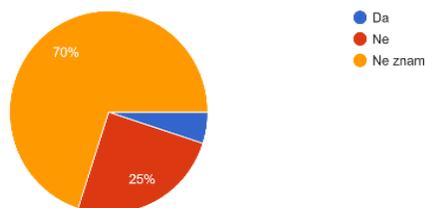
85% are of the opinion that local associations have no influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of their target groups only. If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of young people, the unemployed and demobilized soldiers.

In emergency situations, good coordination of services, an emergency response plan and the engagement of all available resources are essential. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, work on the front lines of defense and often lose their jobs. More than half of those surveyed feel safe in their municipality and consider their municipality to be beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 odgovora



## Municipality of Jablanica – Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – BiH

Jablanica is a municipality that covers an area of 301 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of about 10,111 inhabitants, of whom 49% are men and 51% are women. The municipality has 9 local communities. The municipal budget for 2024 was about 8,268,080 euros. They consider unemployment, inequality and passivity of the population to be the biggest problems.

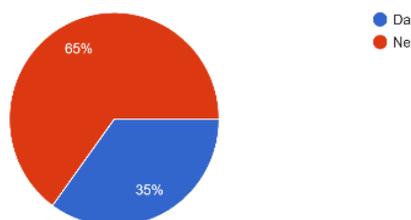
The municipality allocates the most funds from the budget for socially vulnerable categories of residents, and the soup kitchen should allocate more funds for young people and the unemployed in the coming period. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, since there are no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations.

Civil society organizations are mostly focused on their target groups and should participate more actively in the work of municipal working bodies, publicly criticize the work of the municipality and have joint projects with the municipality in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality. 60% of the surveyed population of Jablanica is from the urban area, and 40% from rural areas.

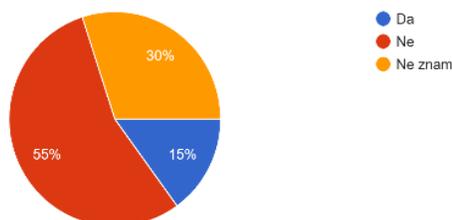
The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the opportunities that this municipality offers for their lives, but they believe that the quality of life of women in this municipality is the same as in other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all citizens equally, especially young people. 35% of respondents know what the municipal budget is, and 30% of them have had the opportunity to participate in budget discussions.

Only 10% of respondents believe that the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable groups. They believe that they should allocate more money for different social categories and for the poor. Half of those surveyed believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of only their target groups. If given the opportunity, the surveyed citizens would advocate for the interests of young people and women so that they would stay in Jablanica. In emergency situations, good coordination of services, the engagement of all available resources and an emergency response plan are essential. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, organize themselves in citizen associations and are more likely to be unemployed. More than half of those surveyed feel safe in their municipality and consider their municipality to be beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 odgovora



Project "Strengthening accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises in 3 countries"  
**Municipality of Doboj Istok – Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – BiH**

Doboj Istok is a municipality covering 41 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 9,879 inhabitants, of whom 49% are men and 51% women (95% Bosniaks, 0.17% Croats, 0.15% Serbs and others in a negligible percentage). The municipality has 5 local communities. The municipality's budget for 2024 was approximately 3,227,334 euros. The biggest problem for those surveyed is unemployment, healthcare, lack of cultural content, inability to engage in lifelong learning and disrespect for workers' rights.

The municipality allocates most of its budget funds to various associations, sports and social cases. According to respondents, it should allocate more funds for people with disabilities, youth and women. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, as there are no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations.

Civil society organizations are mostly focused on their target groups and personal interests and should have more joint projects with the municipality, participate more actively in the work of municipal working bodies and publicly criticize the work of the municipality in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality.

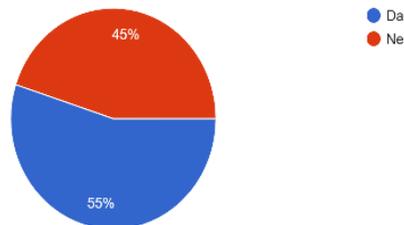
65% of the surveyed population of Doboj is from urban areas, and 35% from rural areas.

Most citizens are not sure about the opportunities that this municipality offers for their lives, but they believe that the quality of life of women in this municipality is the same as in other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all citizens equally, and the elderly the most. 35% of respondents know what the municipal budget is, and 30% of them have had the opportunity to participate in budget discussions.

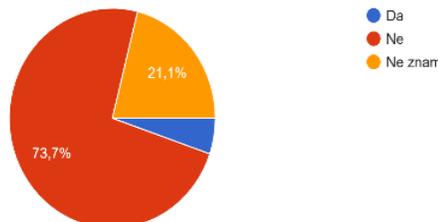
Only 10% of respondents believe that the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable groups. They believe that more money should be allocated for people with disabilities and the organizations that unite them, for cultural events and for the elderly. 25% of respondents believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of their target groups. If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of people with disabilities, young people and the unemployed.

In emergency situations, good information, good coordination of services and the engagement of all available resources are crucial. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, no one asks them anything, so they organize themselves in citizens' associations. The majority of respondents feel somewhat safe in their municipality and consider their municipality to be beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
19 odgovora



## Municipality of Ključ – Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – BiH

Ključ is a municipality that covers 358 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of approximately 16,744 inhabitants, of which 50% are women, 50% men (96% Bosniaks, 1.6% Serbs, 0.17% Croats and a small percentage of others). The municipality has 10 local communities. The municipality's budget for 2024 was approximately 6,618,162 euros. The biggest problems respondents consider to be unemployment, poor working conditions, low living standards and generally poor living conditions.

The municipality allocates the most funds from the budget for socially vulnerable cases and the sick, and according to those surveyed, they should allocate more funds for people with disabilities, young people and women. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, since there are no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations.

Civil society organizations are most focused on their target groups, they should have more joint projects with the municipality, participate more actively in the work of municipal working bodies and publicly criticize the work of the municipality in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality. 70% of the surveyed population of Ključ is from urban areas, and 30% from rural areas.

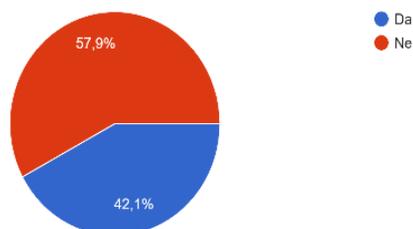
The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the opportunities that this municipality offers for their lives, but they believe that the quality of life of women in this municipality is the same as in other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all citizens equally, especially people with disabilities.

20% of respondents know what the municipal budget is, half of them have not had the opportunity to participate in discussions about the municipal budget. None of the respondents believe that the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable groups. They believe that more money should be allocated for people with disabilities, young people and sick women. 10% of respondents believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of their target groups.

If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of people with disabilities, young people and women. In emergency situations, good coordination of services, timely allocation of budget funds and engagement of all available resources are of crucial importance. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, remain unemployed, and their specific needs are not seen. Half of the respondents feel somewhat safe in their municipality, and all of them consider their municipality to be beautiful.

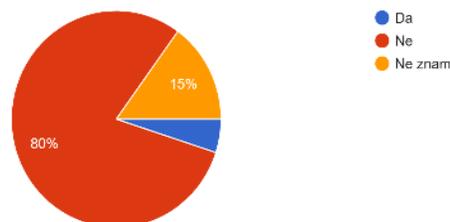
2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?

19 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?

20 odgovora



## Municipality of Bosansko Grahovo – Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – BiH

Bosansko Grahovo is a municipality that covers 780 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of about 2,500 inhabitants, of whom about 53% are men and 47% are women (Serbs 81%, Croats 16%, Bosniaks 0.2% and a small percentage of others). The municipality has 5 local communities. The municipality's budget for 2024 was about 1,249,699 euros. The biggest problem highlighted by the respondents is the lack of a health center, bank or social work center, and most of the population is elderly. Unemployment and alcoholism stand out as very big problems. They believe that their municipality should allocate more funds for children, youth and the disabled.

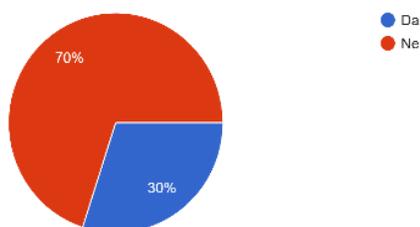
Civil society organizations are equally focused on all citizens. The respondents believe that they should criticize the work of the municipality more openly, have more joint projects with the municipality and participate more actively in discussions on the public budget in order to improve the quality of life in this municipality. The budget is not gender-responsive and it is very difficult to obtain data on budget allocations broken down by gender, as there is no gender-responsive criteria for certain allocations. 65% of the surveyed population of Grahovo is from urban areas, and 35% from rural areas.

The majority of citizens are not satisfied with the life opportunities offered by this municipality and believe that the quality of life of women in this municipality is worse than in other municipalities. The majority opinion is that the crisis has affected all citizens equally, and the elderly the most.

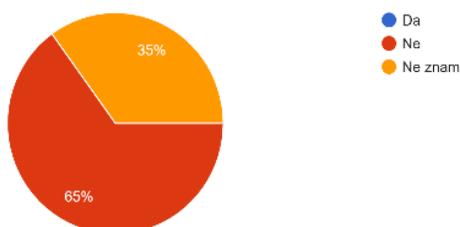
40% of respondents know what the municipal budget is, and 15% of them have had the opportunity to participate in discussions about the municipal budget. None of the respondents believe that the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable groups. They believe that more money should be allocated for the elderly, the disabled and the poor. 15% of respondents believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies and that local CSOs represent the interests of all citizens.

If they had the opportunity, they would advocate for the interests of young people under 30 and older. In emergency situations, a response plan, good citizen information, and timely allocation of budget funds are essential. In such situations, women traditionally care for the elderly, are more likely to lose their jobs, and work on the front lines of crisis defense. Most respondents feel safe in their municipality and consider their municipality to be beautiful.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 odgovora



## Conclusions

- Out of 8 project municipalities, in 5 of them (Srebrenica, Teslić, Višegrad, Jablanica, Doboј Istok) there are more women than men (1-3% more), in one the percentage is the same (Ključ), while in one there are slightly more men (Nevesinje) by 0.2% more, and in one Grahovo by 3% more.
- In all 8 project municipalities, the biggest problems are unemployment, health, poverty, population outflow, but also poor infrastructure, lack of cultural content, inequality and discrimination. Specific problems in two municipalities include: alcohol addiction and gambling. In two municipalities, the problem of the lack of institutions was highlighted: a health center, a bank and a social work center (Bosansko Grahovo) and a dog shelter (Teslić).
- In none of the project municipalities is the budget gender-responsive nor are there gender-responsive criteria for budget allocation. In the project municipalities, there are "indications" for gender budgeting, such as budget lines for prenatal policies (newborn benefits or in vitro fertilization), and certain budget allocations for NGOs that deal with gender equality issues, but not as a line item in the budget.
- In 7 project municipalities, respondents believe that CSOs are only concerned with solving the problems of their beneficiary groups (or even their personal interests), believe that NGOs do not have much influence on local policies, while in Bosanski Grahovo they believe that NGOs are concerned with solving the problems of all citizens.
- In all 8 project municipalities, respondents believe that NGOs should work more in cooperation with the municipality to solve citizens' problems, work more on campaigns to change municipal policies, and participate more actively in public debates on the budget in order to improve the quality of life of citizens.
- In all 8 municipalities, citizens are not satisfied with the quality of life and believe that crises affect all residents, but mostly women, young people, the elderly and the poor.
- Half or more of the respondents in all project municipalities do not know what their municipality's budget is, while 15-50% of them have not had the opportunity to participate in discussions on the public budget.
- If they had the opportunity, the respondents would represent the interests of young people, women, old and frail people, people with disabilities, the unemployed and socially vulnerable in all municipalities.
- All respondents in all project municipalities believe that in emergency situations, a response plan, good information for citizens and timely allocation of budget funds are essential. In such situations, women traditionally take care of the elderly, are more likely to lose their jobs and work on the front lines of defense against crises.
- The majority of respondents in all municipalities feel safe in their local community and think that their municipality is beautiful.
- Of the 160 respondents in 8 project municipalities, around 66% have not heard of gender-responsive budgeting, and 53.6% believe that the municipality does not sufficiently support women's empowerment.

## Recommendations

- It is necessary to introduce gender-responsive criteria for budget allocation and to continue working on sensitizing the budget of each municipality
- It is necessary to make the municipal administration more transparent (announcing public hearings and other mechanisms for citizen participation)
- It is necessary to plan resources for a transparent and adequate response of local government to crises
- It is necessary to work on partnerships between municipalities and non-governmental organizations that work in them in order to more efficiently and effectively solve citizens' problems
- It is necessary to work on adopting or amending local policies in accordance with the needs of women and men in the local community
- It is necessary to work more on representing the interests of marginalized groups (youth, women, elderly people, people with disabilities, unemployed, socially vulnerable)
- It is necessary to conduct campaigns for the establishment and (or) more efficient and transparent operation of institutions such as health institutions, social work centers, as well as employment offices
- It is necessary to establish a more transparent, efficient and effective work of NGOs
- A comprehensive information and educational campaign on the concept and importance of GRB is needed

## MUNICIPALITY OF ALEKSINAC, Nišava District, Serbia

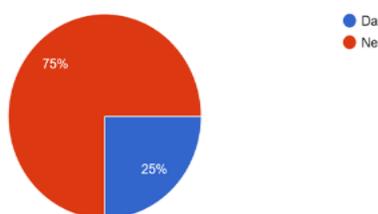
Population: 42,766 (21,585 women and 21,181 men). One of the specificities of this municipality is that it has 72 local communities, one of which is urban, one suburban, and 70 rural. The municipal budget is 1,952,707,570 dinars (16.7 million euros). The municipality's economy is characterized by insufficient economic growth and an economic crisis that has particularly affected the secondary sector (industry, construction). Over the last ten years, agriculture has been the most vital part of the economy, primarily within the private sector, particularly in primary production. The municipality's development is hindered by the economic and financial crisis, which impacts infrastructure development, deforestation, and environmental degradation. There are insufficient funds in both the local and national budgets for environmental protection investments, while climate change and the uncontrolled use of chemical substances in agriculture further exacerbate the situation.

When asked about their satisfaction with the opportunities available in the municipality to lead the life they desire, 45% of respondents were uncertain, 30% were satisfied, and 20% were dissatisfied. Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as women in neighboring municipalities, 55% said they had equal opportunities, while 25% believed they had significantly worse opportunities. The crisis has affected women the most (according to 50% of respondents), followed by young people (35%). The three biggest problems for women in Aleksinac are gender inequality, poor infrastructure, and unemployment. A striking 95% of respondents were unaware of the municipal budget, and an equal percentage had not participated in public budget discussions. Furthermore, 80% of respondents were unsure whether the municipality adequately funds programs for the most vulnerable groups. Local associations reportedly have no influence on municipal policies and decisions, according to 80% of respondents. Regarding the interests represented by local NGOs, 40% said they serve their target groups, while another 40% believed they represent all citizens. Only 25% had heard of gender-responsive budgeting. When asked which target group they would support if they had the opportunity to influence public policy, the most common answers were rural women, farm owners, and young people in rural areas, as they deserve greater support. When asked whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 55% responded "I don't know," and 40% said "No."

In emergency situations (fires, floods, hailstorms, droughts, earthquakes, epidemics, economic crises, security issues, refugee crises), 80% of respondents believe that having a response plan is crucial, while 75% emphasize the importance of well-informed citizens. Regarding how the crisis specifically affects women, 80% of respondents stated that women traditionally take on the responsibility of caring for the elderly, the sick, and children. Furthermore, 60% of respondents believe that a higher standard of living is missing in the municipality, while 50% identified employment and incentives for agricultural development as additional concerns. To create an ideal place to live, 80% of respondents believe the municipality should listen to its citizens.

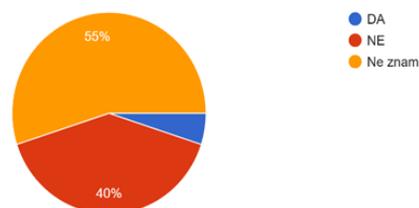
2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?

20 одговора



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?

20 одговора



## MUNICIPALITY OF BABUŠNICA, Pirot District, Serbia

The municipality has a population of 8,939, including 4,293 women and 4,646 men. The municipal budget is 475,800,000 dinars (4.07 million euros). It comprises 53 settlements and belongs to the fourth category of local government development, classified as devastated, with a development level below 50% of the national average. The municipality is characterized by slow economic growth, low investment levels, high unemployment, and depopulation. Threats to development include uncontrolled logging and timber theft, unregulated collection of medicinal plants and forest fruits, heavy machinery and trucks damaging local roads, and the rapid deterioration of rural housing infrastructure.

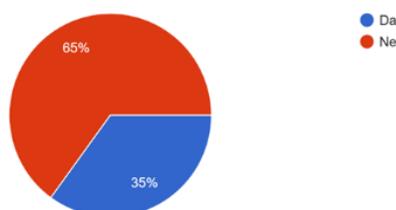
More than 70% of meadows and pastures classified for organic production are located in the Pirot region, and priorities for sustainable spatial agricultural development should include increasing the participation of women and young people in land ownership and modernizing small-scale agricultural production. However, a systematic gender analysis is not conducted in this municipality. Regarding gender-responsive budgeting, the Agriculture and Rural Development Program of the Budget Decision includes a gender indicator, expressed as the number of women encouraged to become farm owners.

When asked about their satisfaction with opportunities in the municipality, 45% responded "Uncertain," and 35% said they were "Dissatisfied." Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as those in surrounding municipalities, 65% responded "Equal to other municipalities," while 20% believed they had worse opportunities. The crisis has mostly affected young people (50% of respondents), followed by the elderly and women (45% each). The main issues for women in Babušnica are unemployment, lack of local government support, lack of information, domestic violence, lower incomes than men, poor status of women, limited cultural activities, and poor infrastructure.

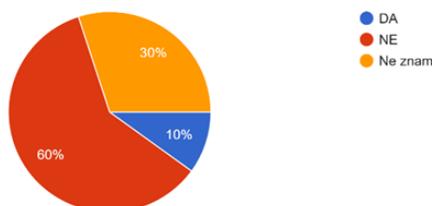
A staggering 95% of respondents did not know the municipal budget, and 90% had never participated in budget discussions. When asked if the municipality sufficiently funds programs for vulnerable groups, 65% answered "I don't know," and 30% said "No." Respondents believe more funds should be allocated for the elderly, the socially disadvantaged, farmers, and unemployed individuals. Local associations reportedly have no influence on municipal policies, according to 65% of respondents.

Regarding the interests represented by local NGOs, 45% said they serve their target groups. When asked if they had heard of gender-responsive budgeting, 65% answered "No," while 35% said "Yes." If given the opportunity to influence public policies, most respondents said they would advocate for young people to have better opportunities in their hometowns and for the elderly, as many live alone and are helpless.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 odgovora



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 odgovora



## MUNICIPALITY OF KOSTOLAC, Braničevo District, Serbia

The City Municipality of Kostolac is one of two city municipalities within the City of Požarevac. It is located in the Braničevo District and consists of five settlements. The population is 12,077, with 6,042 women and 6,035 men. The municipal budget is 400,288,002 dinars (3.42 million euros). In April 2024, drinking water in Kostolac and surrounding areas was deemed unsafe for consumption and food preparation, significantly impacting the quality of life, especially for vulnerable groups. The local government provided water tanks, but they were insufficient.

When asked about their satisfaction with opportunities in the municipality, 40% were uncertain, and 25% were satisfied. Regarding whether women have the same opportunities as those in neighboring municipalities, 45% answered "Equal to other municipalities." The crisis has mostly affected the poor (55% of respondents) and all citizens equally (45%). The three biggest problems for women in Kostolac are gender inequality, economic dependence, and unemployment. None of the respondents knew the municipal budget, nor had anyone participated in budget discussions.

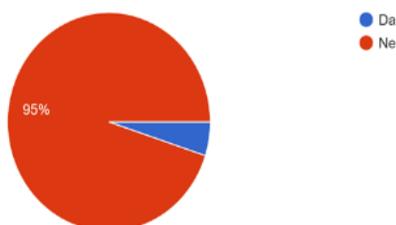
When asked if the municipality sufficiently funds programs for vulnerable groups, 60% answered "No," and 40% said "I don't know." More funds should be allocated to people with disabilities, the elderly, and women. Local associations reportedly have no influence on municipal policies, according to 80% of respondents.

Regarding crisis impacts on women, 70% stated that women traditionally take on caregiving roles for the elderly, the sick, and children, and the same percentage noted that women are more likely to lose jobs due to economic crises.

The greatest needs in the municipality include better healthcare (90% of responses) and a higher standard of living (70%). To create an ideal place to live, respondents believe the municipality should invest more in education and healthcare (both receiving 85% of votes).

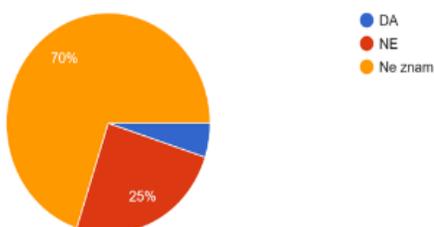
2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?

20 одговора



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?

20 одговора



## MUNICIPALITY OF MAJDANPEK, Borski district, Serbia

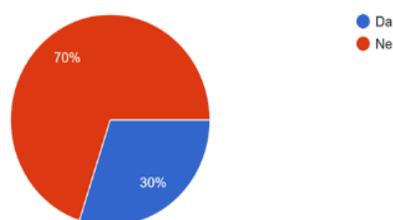
The Municipality of Majdanpek has a population of 14,559 (7,214 women and 7,137 men) and consists of 14 settlements. It covers a vast area of 932 square kilometers, making it one of the largest municipalities in Serbia (ranked 11th). The municipal budget is 2,235,740,057 dinars (19.1 million euros). Majdanpek is classified as a second-tier developed municipality. In subsidy competitions for investments in agricultural holdings, cattle farming, traditional crafts, non-agricultural activities, and rural tourism, a gender criterion was established, awarding a maximum of 15 points if the applicant is a woman. During the summer of 2024, the central settlement of Majdanpek was without water for months due to the negative effects of mining activities. Water restrictions lasted for several hours daily, severely affecting all citizens, particularly women.

When asked about their satisfaction with life opportunities in the municipality, 35% said they were dissatisfied, 30% were uncertain, 20% were very dissatisfied, and 15% were satisfied. Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as those in neighboring municipalities, 40% answered "Equal to other municipalities." The crisis was perceived to have affected all citizens equally (45%) and young people (45%). The three biggest problems for women in Majdanpek are environmental pollution, water supply, and poor sports infrastructure. When asked if they knew the municipal budget, 20% answered "Yes," and an equal percentage had participated in a public budget discussion. When asked if the municipality sufficiently funds programs for the most vulnerable groups, 60% responded "No." The most commonly mentioned groups needing more budget support were women victims of violence, economically dependent women, and people with disabilities.

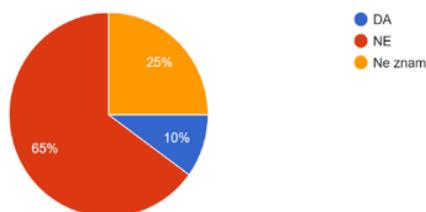
When asked if local associations influence municipal policies, 100% of respondents answered "No." Regarding the interests represented by local NGOs, 40% said they serve their target groups. Awareness of gender-responsive budgeting was low, with 70% having never heard of it. The most commonly mentioned target groups for public policy advocacy were socially disadvantaged individuals (for financial and healthcare support) and young people (to help them stay in their communities). When asked if the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 65% said "No," while 10% said "Yes."

Key factors in crisis situations included emergency response plans (73.7%), well-informed citizens (68.4%), and mobilizing all available resources (68.4%). The crisis particularly affects women through caregiving responsibilities (75%) and exclusion from decision-making (50%). The most pressing need in the municipality was better healthcare (85%). To create an ideal place to live, 80% of respondents said the municipality should listen to its citizens, and 65% emphasized environmental protection.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 одговора



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 одговора



## MUNICIPALITY OF NOVI BEČEJ, Central Banat District, Serbia

The municipality of Novi Bečej has a population of 19,774, including 10,056 women and 9,718 men. The municipal budget is 1,143,711,000 dinars (9.8 million euros). Compared to its population, Novi Bečej has a relatively large area of 608.6 square kilometers. Some of the weaknesses of the municipality include the lack of local networking (connecting primary production and services) and the risk of flooding. Owners of newly established businesses are primarily young people and middle-aged women.

A chemical analysis of the groundwater revealed that the water quality does not comply with drinking water hygiene regulations due to increased concentrations of ammonia, arsenic, sodium, and orthophosphates, as well as altered organoleptic properties such as color. Plans include improving the water supply and sewage network, greater utilization of the Tisa River's potential, strengthening tourism offerings, and developing and supporting agricultural production.

When asked about their satisfaction with the opportunities available in the municipality, 61.9% of respondents said they were dissatisfied, and 19% were very dissatisfied. Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as women in other municipalities, 42.9% said conditions were worse than in other municipalities, while the same percentage believed they were equal.

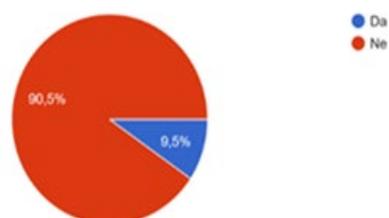
The crisis has impacted all citizens equally (47.6%), followed by the unemployed and young people (23.8% each). The biggest problems for women in Novi Bečej include a lack of jobs for women, economic inequality, legal inequality, poor roads, water quality, and unemployment. None of the respondents knew the municipal budget, and only two people had participated in a public budget discussion.

When asked if the municipality sufficiently funds programs for the most vulnerable groups, 66.7% said "No." Respondents believe the municipality should allocate more funds for youth, women, people with disabilities, the socially disadvantaged, and pensioners. Regarding whether local associations influence municipal policies, 71.4% answered "No."

When asked whose interests local NGOs represent, 38.1% said "All citizens," while an equal percentage believed they represent their own interests. Awareness of gender-responsive budgeting was high, with 90.5% having heard of the term. The most frequently mentioned target groups for public policy advocacy were youth, women, people with disabilities, and Roma. To improve the municipality, 66.7% of respondents suggested that the local government listen to citizens, fund employment and retraining programs (52.4%), invest in healthcare (47.6%), and attract new investments (42.9%).

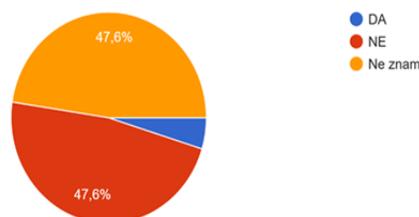
2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?

21 odgovor



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?

21 odgovor



## MUNICIPALITY OF OPOVO, South Banat District, Serbia

The municipality of Opovo in the South Banat District has a population of 9,435, including 4,707 women and 4,728 men. The municipal budget is 499,142,000 dinars (4.26 million euros). It is one of the smallest municipalities in Vojvodina, covering an area of 203 square kilometers and consisting of four settlements. Some of the main weaknesses include the lack of air pollution monitoring, illegal waste dumps, and unresolved issues regarding waste disposal at a regional landfill. Additionally, the reconstruction of the water supply network remains incomplete in all settlements. Opovo, like the other settlements, lacks a sewage system. The economic status of residents is affected by an underdeveloped industry and a weak labor market, particularly impacting women.

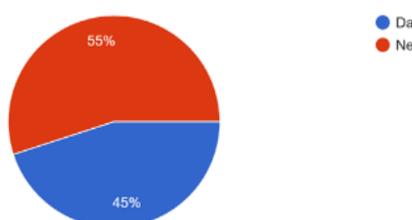
When asked about their satisfaction with opportunities in the municipality, 65% of respondents said they were satisfied, while 30% were uncertain. Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as those in neighboring municipalities, 75% answered "Equal to other municipalities." The crisis has impacted all citizens equally (65%), followed by the elderly (20%). The three biggest problems for women in Opovo are education, unemployment, and family relations. When asked if they knew the municipal budget, 20% said "Yes," while 90% had never participated in a public budget discussion.

When asked if the municipality sufficiently funds programs for vulnerable groups, 40% answered "Yes," while an equal percentage said "I don't know." Respondents believe the municipality should allocate more funds for athletes. Regarding whether local associations influence municipal policies, 60% answered "Yes." When asked whose interests local NGOs represent, 35% said "All citizens," while 25% were undecided. Awareness of gender-responsive budgeting was moderate, with 45% having heard of the term.

The most frequently mentioned target groups for public policy advocacy were single parents, the elderly, economically dependent women, the sick, children, and women. The most important factors in crisis situations were coordination of municipal services (55%), well-informed citizens (50%), and good governance (40%). The crisis particularly affects women through caregiving responsibilities (45%) and frontline work in healthcare, retail, and education (40%). The greatest needs in the municipality include better public transportation (70%) and a higher standard of living (65%). To create an ideal place to live, respondents believe the municipality should attract new investments (70%), listen to citizens (40%), improve institutional efficiency (40%), and invest in rural development (40%).

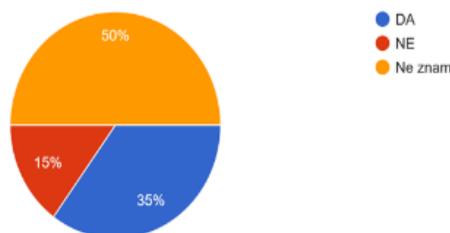
2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?

20 одговора



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?

20 одговора



## MUNICIPALITY OF SMEDEREVSKA PALANKA, Podunavlje District, Serbia

The municipality of Smederevska Palanka is located in the Podunavlje District. It consists of 18 settlements, with a total population of 41,817, including 21,185 women and 20,632 men. The municipal budget is 1,969,021,221 dinars (16.82 million euros). The biggest problem for women in Smederevska Palanka is unemployment, with nearly every second woman in the municipality being unemployed. Weaknesses: In 90% of villages, the water supply is not connected to the city water system with quality control. A large number of illegal landfills exist in both urban and rural areas.

When asked about their satisfaction with life opportunities in the municipality, 45% of respondents were uncertain, while 25% were dissatisfied. Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as women in other municipalities, 50% said conditions were worse, while 40% believed they were equal. The crisis has mostly impacted the unemployed (40%) and all citizens equally (40%).

The three biggest problems for women in Smederevska Palanka are insufficient job opportunities, lack of labor rights enforcement, and water supply issues. When asked if they knew the municipal budget, 80% answered "No." Regarding participation in public budget discussions, only 15% had ever taken part. When asked whether the municipality sufficiently funds programs for the most vulnerable groups, 60% of respondents said they did not know.

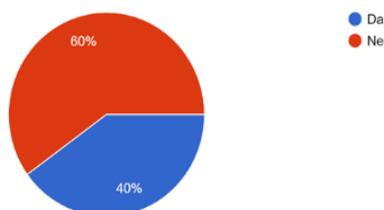
Respondents believe the municipality should allocate more funds for youth, the elderly, farmers, and women. Regarding whether local associations influence municipal policies, 45% answered "Yes." When asked whose interests local NGOs represent, 50% said "Their target groups," while 40% said "All citizens." Awareness of gender-responsive budgeting was moderate, with 40% having heard of the term.

The most frequently mentioned target groups for public policy advocacy were people with disabilities (due to lack of employment and socialization opportunities) and women from vulnerable groups, such as Roma women, who need support to improve their quality of life. When asked whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 80% said "No."

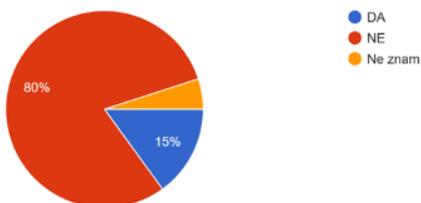
Key factors in crisis situations were well-informed citizens and good coordination of municipal services, each receiving 60% of responses. The crisis particularly affects women through caregiving responsibilities (55%) and frontline work in healthcare, retail, and education (40%). Additionally, 40% noted that women are more likely to lose jobs during economic crises and that they organize within civil society groups.

The greatest needs in the municipality include job creation (65%), rural development (60%), and environmental protection (45%). To create an ideal place to live, respondents believe the municipality should listen to citizens (75%), fund employment and retraining programs (55%), and invest in rural development (55%).

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 одговора



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 одговора



## MUNICIPALITY OF SRBOBRAN, South Bačka District, Serbia

The municipality of Srbobran consists of three settlements, with a total population of 14,299, including 7,305 women and 6,994 men. The municipal budget is 1,089,663,000 dinars (9.31 million euros). Some of the municipality's weaknesses include poor drinking water quality, the pollution of the Veliki Bački Canal (one of the most polluted waterways in Europe), a high number of households not connected to the sewage system, lack of wastewater treatment, and an unsanitary main landfill that poses a major threat to the quality of life. Additional threats include climate change and poor coordination between local authorities and provincial/national institutions. According to planning documents, by 2030, the local government aims to provide clean and safe drinking water for all residents and to ensure that 70% of wastewater is properly treated and discharged.

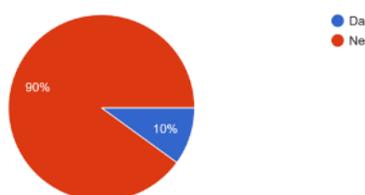
When asked about their satisfaction with life opportunities in the municipality, 40% of respondents said they were very dissatisfied, while 35% were uncertain. Regarding whether women in the municipality have the same opportunities as those in other municipalities, 45% said conditions were equal, while 35% believed they were significantly worse. The crisis has affected all citizens equally (50%), followed by the poor (40%) and the elderly (35%).

The three biggest problems for women in Srbobran are gender inequality, employment, and violence. None of the respondents knew the municipal budget, and only one person had participated in a public budget discussion. When asked if the municipality sufficiently funds programs for the most vulnerable groups, 90% responded "No." The most frequently mentioned groups that require additional municipal funding were elderly individuals over 65 without pensions and female entrepreneurs needing business support. When asked whether local associations influence municipal policies, 55% of respondents said "No." Regarding whose interests local NGOs represent, 35% had no answer. Awareness of gender-responsive budgeting was extremely low, with 90% of respondents never having heard of the term.

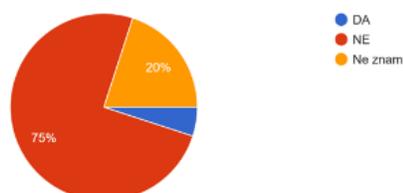
The most frequently mentioned target groups for public policy advocacy were mothers with children and young people. Respondents noted that mothers are expected to balance work and home responsibilities, while young people face limited opportunities to further their education due to economic constraints. When asked if the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 75% answered "No." Good governance was considered the most critical factor in crisis situations (60%), followed by well-informed citizens (55%) and emergency response plans for disasters such as fires, floods, droughts, and economic crises (55%). The crisis particularly affects women through caregiving responsibilities (85%).

The greatest needs in the municipality include a higher standard of living (80%), job opportunities (75%), environmental protection (60%), better healthcare, and cultural programs (both 55%). To improve the municipality, respondents believe the local government should attract new investments (70%), invest in agriculture (65%), and support small businesses (65%). Additionally, 60% of respondents believe the municipality should focus on rural development, create a well-structured development plan, promote new technologies and innovations, protect the environment, invest in education, and fund employment and retraining programs.

2. Da li ste ikada čuli za izraz rodno odgovorno budžetiranje?  
20 одговора



10. Da li po vašem mišljenju opština u dovoljnoj meri podržava osnaživanje žena?  
20 одговора



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

**The municipality of Aleksinac** is facing an economic crisis, particularly in industry and construction, while agriculture remains the key sector with potential for development in this expansive municipality. There is a need for greater citizen involvement in decision-making through public discussions and transparency in budget spending, as well as increased support for women, youth, and farmers. Additionally, further investment in infrastructure, education, employment, and crisis preparedness is essential, along with stronger cooperation with non-governmental organizations and local communities. Despite being one of the municipalities with developed gender equality mechanisms, more comprehensive work on gender-responsive budgeting is needed.

**The municipality of Babušnica** is facing challenges in the economy, social inclusion, gender equality, and infrastructure investments. However, there is potential for improvement through the engagement of local authorities, strengthening citizen participation, improving social protection, and investing in agriculture and rural development. Full implementation of gender-responsive budgeting and gender analysis in all municipal programs and strategies is necessary. Special attention should be given to strengthening the role of women in agriculture, education, and employment.

**The municipality of Kostolac** should involve citizens more in decision-making processes, especially sensitive issues where certain groups do not participate in social life. Transparency needs to be increased, citizens should be included in public debates, and crisis communication should be improved. It is also important to increase funding for social protection, particularly for vulnerable groups, and invest in healthcare and education. Increasing investment in infrastructure and support for women and families will contribute to improved living standards and quality of life.

**The municipality of Majdanpek** should focus its efforts on improving living conditions, gender equality, and quality infrastructure, as well as providing better financial support for vulnerable groups. Increasing citizen participation in decision-making and strengthening education on gender-responsive budgeting are key steps toward sustainable development and better conditions for all citizens, especially women. There is a general belief that women in the municipality have the same or similar opportunities as women in other surrounding municipalities (40%), which may indicate a lack of specific initiatives for empowering women. The municipality needs to focus on solving water supply and environmental pollution issues, which particularly affect women who care for households.

**The municipality of Novi Bečej** should increase investment in employment, retraining, and education to create more jobs, especially for women, youth, and people with disabilities. Improving water quality and addressing issues with the sewage system, as well as renewing infrastructure, particularly roads, should be priority tasks in budget planning. The municipality should increase funding for social programs, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as youth, women, people with disabilities, and pensioners, ensuring their greater visibility and access to resources.

**The municipality of Opovo** has potential for development, but faces major infrastructure and economic challenges. The completion of key projects, such as water and sewage systems, would significantly improve living conditions. Women, especially in rural areas, face specific problems, including education, unemployment and family relations. Investing in education and supporting women in the labor market is key to reducing inequality. The municipality should focus on responsible resource management and citizen involvement in decision-making processes, as well as creating an enabling environment for the development of civil society. Key factors for overcoming the crisis, such as good coordination of services and good management of municipal resources, must be at the focus of decision-making in order to achieve sustainable development and improve the quality of life of all citizens of Opovo.

**The municipality of Smederevska Palanka** should direct more budgetary funds toward youth, the elderly, women, and farmers. These groups face significant challenges and need additional resources and support. Gender equality and the empowerment of women should be the focus of local policies, as most respondents believe that the municipality does not provide enough support for women, especially those from vulnerable groups. Measures taken and a shift in focus toward these areas can significantly improve the lives of the citizens of Smederevska Palanka.

**The municipality of Srbobran** is not sufficiently implementing activities aimed at citizens that could contribute to better information and greater trust in the authorities. Poor quality of life and inadequate infrastructure (water, sewage, and pollution) make daily life unsatisfactory for residents, and this should be prioritized to create conditions for attracting more investments and development. Inequality and economic disparities are visible problems, particularly among women and the elderly, indicating a need for specific support and protection programs. The municipality must work on improving social protection and increasing employment opportunities, especially for vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, the elderly, and the unemployed.

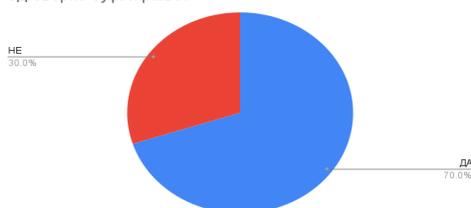
## MUNICIPALITY OF VINICA (Eastern planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA

-total population 14,475 (7,219 men, 7,256 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Serbian, Vlach and other population. Budget for 2024 – 5,905,919 euros

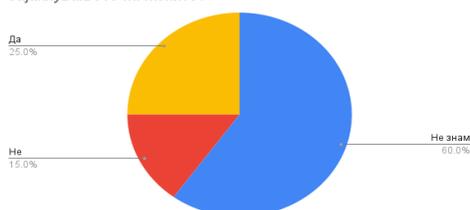
The municipality deals with crises, such as Covid, with rebalancing and other measures, approved requests for hospital expenses, protection measures, with a high degree of solidarity, and the main problem is the number of people. Cooperation with civil society organizations is good, women are particularly active as volunteers, and support is provided through programs for the unemployed, the elderly and disaster relief. For CSOs, coordination is key when facing crises (health, climate), but there are shortcomings that can be improved by organizing budget forums and citizen participation (especially from rural areas), and CSO financing is without methodology. A gynecologist, a center for the elderly, space for CSOs are needed, functional analysis, written procedures, approval of a detailed urban plan are missing.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Vinica, out of 20 respondents (14 from the city, 6 from the village), 40% are not or not at all satisfied, and 60% are satisfied with the opportunities in the municipality to lead the life they want. 60% of respondents believe that women in Vinica have the same and 25% better opportunities than women in other municipalities, and 15% worse. 60% of them believe that the crises they are going through have affected all citizens equally, 25% the unemployed, 10% the elderly and women, but also the poor and people with disabilities. The three biggest problems for women in Vinica are the exclusion of (rural) women from gender policy and decision-making, economic dependence and poor infrastructure (lighting, paths, sewage). 50% of respondents know what the municipal budget is, and 35% have had the opportunity to participate in budget discussions. 35% do not know whether the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable, 20% consider them sufficient, and 45% insufficient for socially vulnerable groups, the elderly and people with disabilities. As many as 65% of respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies, 50% believe that NGOs represent the interests of all citizens, 25% of their target groups, 20% of their own, and 5% of the interests of the authorities. As many as 70% have heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would advocate the most for the most vulnerable of all target groups according to the adopted methodology, people in rural areas, but also young people, who are the future of the municipality. As many as 60% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 25% think so, and 15% do not. In crisis situations, it is crucial to inform citizens, have a response plan in emergency situations (fires, floods, hail, drought, earthquake, epidemics, economic crisis, security crisis, refugee crisis...), good coordination of services, timely allocation of funds from the budget, engagement of all available resources, good management of municipal leadership to see solid assistance from the state level, to show solid assistance from the state level or to show solid assistance from the state level. Crises particularly affect women because they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children and are more likely to lose their jobs and feel less safe, working on the front lines of defense and no one asks them what to do in such situations. Vinica, they say, is missing the most participation in decision-making, cultural programs, better organized health care and public transport, higher living standards and education, environmental care and infrastructure. To achieve the image of an ideal place to live, a municipality needs to listen to citizens, attract new investments, innovations, finance retraining and employment programs, invest in education, culture, healthcare, agriculture, and foster community responsibility and solidarity.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушнале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



10. Според Вас, дали општината доволно го поддржува зајакнувањето на жените?



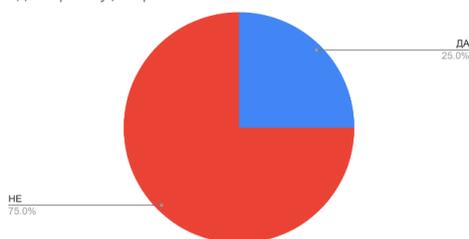
## MUNICIPALITY OF DEBAR (Southwestern planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA

- total population of 15,412 (7,677 men, 7,735 women), majority Albanian, but also Macedonian, Turkish, Roma, Vlach, Serbian and other populations. Budget for 2024 – 6,692,992 euros

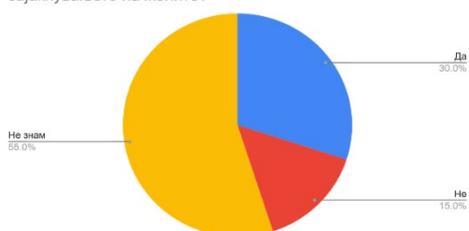
The municipality sees gender-based violence as one of its main problems, and in crisis situations it faces a lack of equipment (for firefighters), a lack of volunteers and a nursing home, which is contributed to by emigration. Cooperation with CSOs is good, and they see the potential of the municipality, which is weak, in the development of tourism (religious, cultural), planned urbanization, better ecological culture of citizens, greater awareness of young people and increasing their interest in and financing of youth organizations. According to them, the budget should include an item for unforeseen expenses that will be used for interventions in crisis situations, and statistical data should be improved, women's participation in decision-making, especially in rural areas, access to social services such as home care, non-formal education, women's entrepreneurship.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Debar, out of 20 respondents (17 from the city, 3 from the village), 50% are satisfied, while the rest are not or not at all satisfied with the opportunities they have in the municipality to lead the life they want. They believe that women in Debar have equal opportunities – 55%, worse – 30%, or better – 10% compared to women in other municipalities. For 50 percent of the crisis they are going through, all citizens have been affected equally, and 35 percent have also affected young people. The three biggest problems for women in Debar are unemployment, cultural norms and lack of access to different social spheres. Only two out of twenty respondents know what a municipal budget is, and five have had the opportunity to participate in discussions on the municipal budget. As many as 50% believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups of citizens (people with disabilities, farmers, the elderly, young people), and the rest are not sure, while only two believe that they are sufficient. 75% of respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. The majority of them, 45%, believe that NGOs represent the interests of their target groups, and 55% of all citizens. Only 25% have heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would advocate most for young people, but also for the elderly, people with disabilities and social cases, for preventing emigration, community progress and integration into the system. As many as 55% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 30% think so, and 15% do not. In crisis situations, it is crucial to have good citizen information, a response plan for emergencies (fires, floods, hail, drought, earthquake, epidemics, economic crisis, security, refugee crisis...), and good coordination of services. Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children and are more likely to lose their jobs, and their specific needs are not seen. They believe that what Debar lacks most is work, infrastructure, better organized health care and public transport, better quality education and investments in rural development. To achieve the image of an ideal place to live, it is necessary to finance employment and retraining programs, attract new investments, but also invest in agriculture, education and healthcare.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушнале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



10. Според Вас, дали општината доволно го поддржува зајакнувањето на жените?



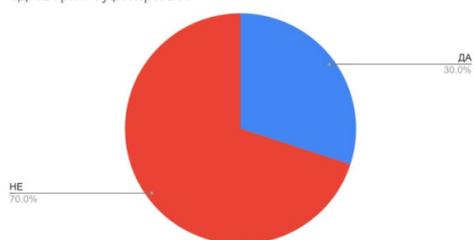
## MUNICIPALITY OF DEMIR KAPIJA (Vardar planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA

- a total of 3,777 inhabitants (1,949 men, 1,828 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Vlach, Serbian and other populations. Budget for 2024 – 3,148,995 euros

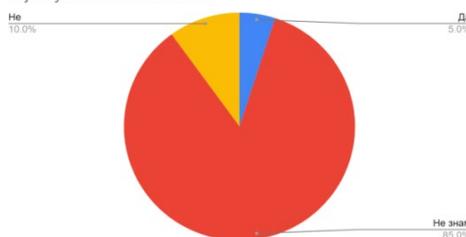
The municipality has dealt with the Covid crisis relatively independently, with changes in the public procurement plan, subsidies that PUC, has enough funds, projects, cross-border, IPA, although it is poor it has potential for tourism, natural resources, immigration of foreigners, businesses, but there is no interest in the sessions, there is a first call for CSOs for a gender equality program, lacks regulation, finances, to become a tourist destination with more young people. For CSOs, transparency, public hearings, education on the methods of participation, especially in local communities, human resources, family doctors, gynecologists are lacking. The vision is for Demir Kapija to have promotion as a tourist destination and twinning and exchange with other cities in the region and Europe, and local self-government with an ear for different gender needs.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Demir Kapija, out of 20 respondents from the city, 55% are not or not at all satisfied, and 45% are satisfied with the opportunities they have in the municipality to lead the life they want. They believe that women in Demir Kapija have 50% worse, 25% much worse, and 25% less equal opportunities compared to women in other municipalities. For 60%, the crisis they are going through has affected all citizens equally, and the rest mostly the elderly, unemployed and people with disabilities. The three biggest problems for women in Demir Kapija are unemployment, poor access to services (health, bank, playroom, education, social life). Only one in twenty respondents knows what the municipal budget is, and 5% have had the opportunity to participate in discussions about the municipal budget. As many as 65% do not know whether the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable groups of citizens, 30% believe that they are not enough, especially for the socially vulnerable, the unemployed and people with special needs. 55% of respondents believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. 55% believe that CSOs represent the interests of their target groups, 30% of all citizens, while 15% believe that they represent their own. Only 30% have heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would most advocate for youth, social cases, the vulnerable, to improve the lives of these groups. As many as 85% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 10% believe that this is insufficient, and 5% believe that it is sufficient. In crisis situations, good information for citizens, timely allocation of budget funds and good management by the municipal leadership are of key importance. Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children and are more likely to lose their jobs, do not feel safe and their specific needs are not seen. They believe that what Demir Kapija lacks most are jobs, a higher standard of living, information, culture, better organized healthcare and public transportation, environmental care, a sense of community, participation in decision-making, incentives for entrepreneurship, and agriculture. In order to achieve the image of an ideal place to live, it is necessary to finance employment and retraining programs, more investments, innovations, support small entrepreneurs, and invest in healthcare and nature protection.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



10. Според Вас, дали општината доволно го поддржува зајакнувањето на жените?



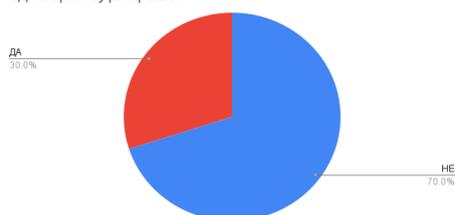
## MUNICIPALITY OF DOJRAN (Southeastern planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA

- a total of 3,084 inhabitants (1,569 men, 1,515 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Serbian, Vlach, Bosniak and other populations. Budget for 2024 - 6,805,285 euros

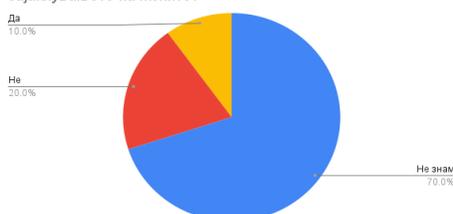
The municipality deals with crises through the Protection and Rescue Headquarters and the Disaster Commission, with claims for compensation. The potential for tourism development is hampered by the adoption of an urban plan to avoid deterring investors, there is interest in resettlement, but the main problem is infrastructure (secondary sewage, reconstruction of the treatment plant), there is potential for social entrepreneurship with elderly care centers. Cooperation with CSOs needs to be improved, there are no environmental associations, there is no tourist association, the youth council is not active, there is a need to improve education, and there is no general clinic in Star Dojran. In order to improve the situation, understanding at the central level, finances and organization is needed. For CSOs facing crises (health, energy) there is assistance from the municipality, but there is a need for services, such as emergency care (the closest is Đevđelija). There is potential for retirement resorts, which are the most vulnerable and need a separate budget line for support, youth motivation, greater participation of women, national funding for CSOs in small municipalities, as well as national funding in crises.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Dojran, out of 20 respondents (15 from the city, 5 from the village), 50% are not or not at all satisfied, and 50% are satisfied with the opportunities in the municipality to lead the life they want. They believe that women in Dojran have worse -55% or much worse opportunities -5% compared to women in other municipalities, and 35% of respondents believe that women in Dojran have the same and 5% better opportunities than women in other municipalities. 60% of them believe that the crises they are going through have affected all citizens equally, 20% the elderly, but also the young and poor. The three biggest problems of women in Dojran are unemployment, access to health services (gynecologist) and the inability to advance. 20% of respondents know what the municipal budget is, and 40% have had the opportunity to participate in budget discussions. As many as 60% do not know whether the municipality finances enough programs for the most vulnerable, 30% do, and 10% do not know enough about socially vulnerable groups. As many as 80% of respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. 35% believe that CSOs represent the interests of their target groups, 30% all citizens, 25% their own, and 5% government interests. Only 30% have heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would advocate most for the socially vulnerable, but also for young people, to prevent emigration and promote economic growth and development. As many as 70% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 20% think they do not know, and 10% do. In crisis situations, it is crucial to inform citizens well, have an emergency response plan, coordinate services well, allocate budget funds in a timely manner, manage municipal governance well, call on citizens for solidarity and seek help at the national level or from other municipalities. Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children and are more likely to be unemployed and feel less safe. Dojran, they say, is missing jobs, cultural programs, better organized health care and public transportation, a higher standard of living and education, and care for the environment. In order to gain the image of an ideal place to live, the municipality needs to design a development plan well and implement it, attract investments, finance retraining and employment programs, invest in education, culture, health and agriculture.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушнале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



10. Според Вас, дали општината доволно го поддржува зајакнувањето на жените?



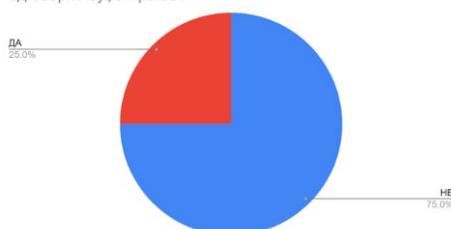
## MUNICIPALITY OF JEGUNOVCE (Polog planning region) NORTH MACEDONIA

-total population 8,895 (4,503 men, 4,392 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Roma, Serbian and other population. Budget for 2024 - 3,375,150 euros

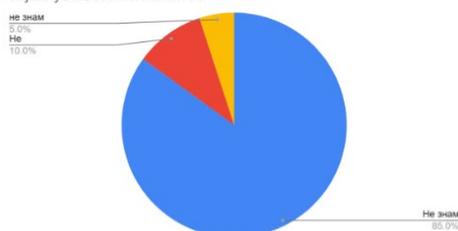
The municipality faces financial challenges in dealing with crises, such as the energy crisis affecting institutions under its jurisdiction, or healthcare when citizens do not have access to healthcare, and the main problem is dysfunctional decentralization and political obstruction. The decline of industry, livestock farming and agriculture as secondary branches make rural life unattractive. Finances, regulations, human capacities and inter-municipal cooperation and citizen participation are needed to develop the municipality in accordance with their needs. There is a need for a fire department, an ambulance and a team, independent public enterprises, greater engagement of civil society organizations and a special budget for gender equality. For CSOs, coordination and adaptation are key when facing crises (health, climate), citizen participation is unsatisfactory, and CSO funding is weak. A rural development strategy is needed, especially tourism (cultural, religious), infrastructure, finance, with entrepreneurship for women, tourism products and services.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Jegunovce, out of 20 respondents from rural areas, 85% are not satisfied, and 15% are satisfied with the opportunities they have in the municipality to lead the life they want. According to 85% of respondents, women in Jegunovce have worse opportunities than women in other municipalities, and according to 15% they have equal opportunities. 65% of them believe that the crises they are going through have affected all citizens equally, and 35% also the unemployed, poor, elderly, women and young people. The three biggest problems for women in Jegunovce are unemployment, health services and exclusion. Only one in twenty respondents knows what the municipal budget is, and two have had the opportunity to participate in discussions on the municipal budget. 30% believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups of citizens (single parents, poor, unemployed, marginalized), and 60% are not sure. As many as 60% of respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. According to 60% of CSOs, they represent the interests of their target groups, 20% their own, and 20% think of all citizens. As many as 75% have not heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would advocate most for youth, women, social cases, people with disabilities, to improve their lives, financial situation and future. As many as 90% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 10% believe that it does not. In crisis situations, it is crucial to inform citizens well, coordinate services well, manage the municipal leadership well, call on citizens to show solidarity, have a response plan in emergency situations (fires, floods, hail, drought, earthquake, epidemics, economic crisis, security crisis, refugee crisis...), distribute all available funds from the budget and engage all available human resources in a timely manner. Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, their specific needs are not seen, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, work on the front lines of defense and are more likely to be unemployed and feel less safe. They believe that what Jegunovce lacks most is work, cultural programs, better organized healthcare and public transportation, a higher standard of living and education, environmental care and participation in decision-making. In order to gain the image of an ideal place to live, the municipality needs to listen to what citizens say, attract new investments, finance retraining and employment programs, but also invest in education, culture, healthcare, agriculture, rural development, support for small entrepreneurs and foster coexistence.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



10. Според Вас, дали општината доволно го поддржува зајакнувањето на жените?



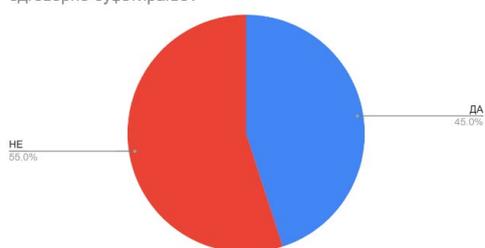
## MUNICIPALITY OF KRATOVO (Northeast planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA

-total of 7,545 inhabitants (3,901 men, 3,644 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Roma, Serbian, Vlach and other population. Budget for 2024 – 4,112,384 euros

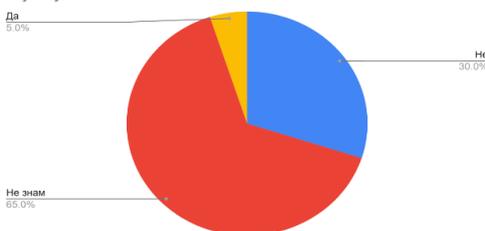
The municipality is still feeling the economic crisis that affects women the most, mostly in the textile industry, while men go abroad, but the problem is the records and data separated by gender. Insufficient funds are allocated for the most vulnerable, especially in times of crisis, such as social cases, farmers and women. Greater cooperation with CSOs is needed and increased interest of citizens in participating in budget discussions. There is a need for a nursing home, local media, an environmental inspector and greater transparency in the work of CSOs. For CSOs, consultation and adaptation are crucial when facing crises, such as the energy crisis, which in a poor municipality first affects the most vulnerable, the rural and the elderly. Gender-responsive budgeting is not visible, women's participation is unsatisfactory, and CSO funding is weak. Awareness-raising is needed, and in a crisis, mapping of those at risk, activating volunteerism, with a vision of a well-managed municipality with proper use of potential, a tourist and cultural center.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Kratovo, out of 20 respondents from an urban area, 60% are not satisfied, and 40% are not at all satisfied with the opportunities they have in the municipality to lead the life they want. They believe that women in Kratovo have worse -70% or much worse opportunities -10% compared to women in other municipalities, only 20% of respondents believe that women in Kratovo have the same opportunities as women in other municipalities. Almost 90% of them believe that the crises they are going through have affected all citizens equally, and 10% also young people. The three biggest problems of women in Kratovo are unemployment, lack of information and unequal valuation of work compared to men. None of the twenty respondents know what the municipal budget is, and two had the opportunity to participate in discussions about the municipal budget. As many as 40% believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups of citizens (people with disabilities, pensioners, single parents, the unemployed, young people), and the rest are not sure. All but one of the respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. The largest number, 13 out of 20, believe that CSOs represent the interests of their target groups, and the rest their own, the interests of all citizens or authorities. Almost half have heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would advocate most for young people, people with disabilities and social cases, to prevent emigration, improve financial stability and improve conditions for a normal life. As many as 65% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 30% think they do not know, and 5% do. In crisis situations, it is crucial to inform citizens well, have an emergency response plan, coordinate services well, allocate funds from the budget in a timely manner, manage municipal governance well, engage all available resources and seek help at the national level or from other municipalities. Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children and are more likely to lose their jobs and feel less safe. They believe that Kratovo lacks jobs, cultural programs, better organized healthcare, a higher standard of living, and education, including lifelong learning. To achieve the image of an ideal place to live, the municipality needs to design and implement a well-designed development plan, attract new investments, finance retraining and employment programs, and also invest in education, culture, and healthcare.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушнале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



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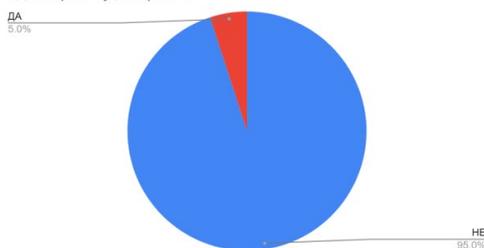
## MUNICIPALITY OF RESEN (Pelagonija planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA

-total population of 14,373 (7,190 men, 7,183 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Vlach, Serbian, Bosniak and other populations. Budget for 2024 7,625,895 euros

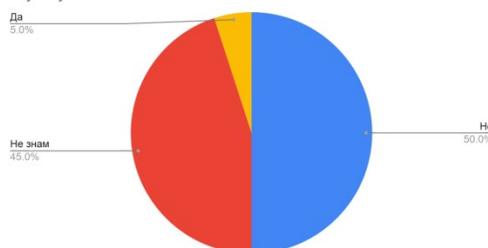
The municipality has had general support during crises such as Covid and energy, and funds are allocated from the budget for emergency aid, fires, the unemployed, social cases, children with disabilities and the elderly (measures). Challenges include unemployment, infrastructure (sewerage, access to water, treatment plants), equipment for firefighters, potential for rural tourism development, lack of training and more CSOs. The consequences of the crisis, according to CSOs, are the lack of preventive medicine, increased unemployment due to the closure of small businesses, and the municipality, although poor, has tourism potential (health, religious, cultural), but no strategy. There are no rights for women farmers, there is a lack of activism, increased participation of women and CSOs in decision-making, and economic freedom for women.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Resen, out of 20 respondents (16 from the city, 4 from the village), 35% are satisfied, and 75% are not or not at all satisfied with the opportunities they have in the municipality to lead the life they want. They believe that women in Resen have equal opportunities – 55%, 5% - better, 35% - worse and 15% - much worse compared to women in other municipalities. For 65%, the crisis they are going through has affected all citizens equally, and the rest mostly the elderly, poor, unemployed and women. The three biggest problems for women in Resen are unemployment, stereotypes and health services. Only one in twenty respondents knows what the municipal budget is, and three have had the opportunity to participate in discussions on the municipal budget. As many as 50% believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups of citizens (socially vulnerable, farmers, elderly, young), and the rest are not sure, while 10% believe that they are sufficient. 85% of respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. Half believe that CSOs represent the interests of their target groups, 45% of all citizens, while 10% believe that they represent their own. Only 5% have heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would advocate mostly for young people, but also for farmers, women, the unemployed, social cases, to prevent migration, to have development strategies, employment, progress. 45% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 50% believe that this is insufficient, and 5% believe that it is sufficient. In crisis situations, good information of citizens, good coordination of services and a response plan in emergency situations are key (fires, floods, hail, drought, earthquake, epidemics, economic crisis, security crisis, refugee crisis...). Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children and are more likely to be unemployed, and their specific needs are not seen. They believe that what Resen lacks most is jobs, a higher standard of living, better organized healthcare and public transport, environmental care and incentives for the development of agriculture. To achieve the image of an ideal place to live, it is necessary to attract new investments, support small entrepreneurs, innovation and retraining.

2. Дали некогаш сте слушнале за терминот родово одговорно буџетирање?



10. Според Вас, дали општината доволно го поддржува зајакнувањето на жените?

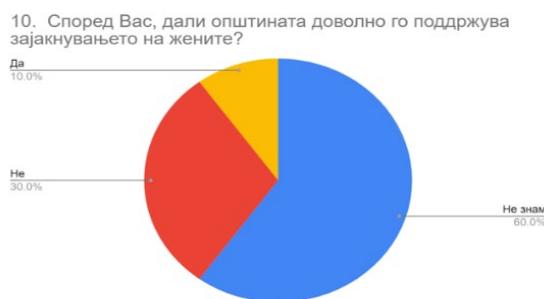
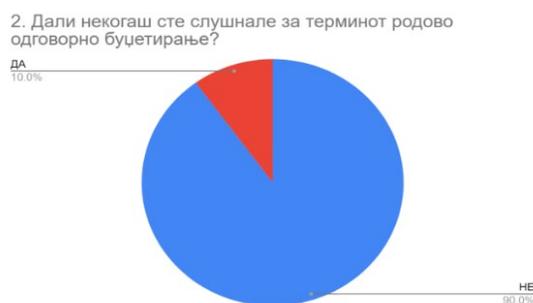


**MUNICIPALITY OF ČUČER – SANDEVO (Skopje planning region), NORTH MACEDONIA**

-total of 9,200 inhabitants (4,731 men, 4,469 women), majority Macedonian, but also Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Serbian, Vlach, Bosniak and other population. Budget for 2024 – 4,578,618 euros

The municipality deals with crises such as Covid with assistance in treatment through conversion and with requests for compensation and assistance at the national level. The potential for tourism development has been improved with improved infrastructure, cultural activities, there is potential for social entrepreneurship, but there is no courage among women, there is no gender budgeting, a new way of informing citizens via an application is being worked on. It is necessary to improve cooperation with CSOs, there is a lack of finances and human resources, an urban plan for the ideal image of the municipality. According to the CSOs, there is volunteerism in crises, and the headquarters is functioning. There is potential for rural tourism, sports and recreation, and priority is given to water supply and cleaning up waste from illegal dumps and tackling illegal logging, as well as infrastructure.

According to the results of a survey conducted in Čučer-Sandevo, out of 20 respondents from rural areas, 55% are not satisfied, and 45% are satisfied with the opportunities they have in the municipality to lead the life they want. According to 45% of respondents, women in Čučer-Sandevo have the same opportunities as women in other municipalities, 50% say they have worse opportunities, and 5% that they have much better opportunities. 65% of them believe that the crises they are going through have affected all citizens equally, and 35% also the unemployed, poor, old and young. The three biggest problems for women in Čučer-Sandevo are unemployment, health services, stereotypes and insufficient conditions for progress. Only two out of twenty respondents know what the municipal budget is, and four have had the opportunity to participate in discussions on the municipal budget. 35% believe that the municipality does not finance enough programs for the most vulnerable groups of citizens (people with disabilities, pensioners, farmers, unemployed, young people), and 40% are not sure. As many as 75% of respondents do not believe that local associations have an influence on local municipal policies. According to 40%, CSOs represent the interests of their target groups, 20% their own, 35% think of all citizens, and 5% government interests. As many as 90% have not heard of the term gender-responsive budgeting. If they had the opportunity to influence policies, they would most advocate for youth, the elderly, farmers, social cases, for more employment opportunities and a future and prosperity in the countryside. As many as 60% do not know whether the municipality sufficiently supports women's empowerment, 30% think they do not know, and 10% do. In crisis situations, it is crucial to inform citizens well, have an emergency response plan, coordinate services well, allocate funds from the budget in a timely manner, manage municipal governance well, engage all available resources, and seek assistance at the national level or from other municipalities. Crises particularly affect women because no one asks them what to do in such situations, they traditionally take care of the elderly, the sick and children, work on the front lines of defense and are more likely to be unemployed and feel less safe. They believe that what Čučer-Sandevo lacks most is work, cultural programs, better organized health care and public transportation, a higher standard of living and education, and care for the environment. In order to achieve the image of an ideal place to live, the municipality needs to design a well-designed development plan and implement it, attract new investments, finance retraining and employment programs, but also invest in education, culture, health, agriculture, rural development and support for small entrepreneurs.



## CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of all municipalities points to several common problems and challenges in the process of gender-responsive budgeting: insufficient participation in local governments, vulnerability of women and lack of support for vulnerable groups, and in most municipalities the lack of social and economic opportunities, as well as programs for the empowerment and support of women from vulnerable groups and lack of gender awareness. Lack of infrastructure and social services, which further worsens the position of women and vulnerable groups. Problems with crisis situations in which women are particularly affected and the coordination of local governments, as well as the inclusion of gender aspects and the promotion of gender equality, slow down the implementation of gender policy. Overall, the conclusions emphasize the need for inclusive and gender-responsive budget policies, with greater awareness, participation of women and CSOs, as well as social investments that will improve the position of women and vulnerable groups in these municipalities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve GRB in the **municipality of Vinica**, it is necessary to increase the participation of women in decision-making processes, improve transparency and information about budget processes, and provide financial resources to support the most vulnerable groups. Improving infrastructure and social services, as well as creating gender-sensitive crisis management strategies, will contribute to better inclusion and a higher quality of life for all citizens, especially women in rural areas.

**The Municipality of Debar** faces significant challenges in areas such as economic and social support for women, as well as in the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting practices. In order to improve gender-responsive budgeting, it is necessary to increase women's participation in decision-making, improve awareness of budget processes and develop specific support programs for women, especially in rural areas. Supporting economic development, social integration and improved health infrastructure are key to creating equal opportunities for all citizens of the municipality.

**The Municipality of Demir Kapija** has the potential to become a more inclusive and gender-sensitive place, but this requires systematic investment in education, transparency and the development of policies that will take into account the specific needs of women and other vulnerable groups. Key areas for improvement include women's economic empowerment, improving health and social infrastructure and increasing their participation in decision-making processes through more active participation in budget consultations and public debates.

To achieve better results in gender responsive budgeting, **the Municipality of Dojran** needs to include women and CSOs in all stages of budgeting, increase financial participation of all stakeholders, and focus on the specific needs of women, especially in the context of social services, health and education.

To achieve GRB in **the Municipality of Jegunovce**, it is necessary to increase the participation of women and CSOs in decision-making, improve health and social services for women and other vulnerable groups, and invest in infrastructure that will support their economic and social security. Special emphasis should be placed on the development of rural tourism and entrepreneurship for women, for new economic opportunities and stimulation of sustainable development of the municipality.

In order to achieve GRB in **the Municipality of Kratovo**, it is necessary to increase the participation of women and CSOs in decision-making, invest in economic and social programs that will support women and other vulnerable groups, as well as develop infrastructure that will enable improvement of the quality of life, especially in times of crisis. There is a need to integrate a gender perspective into all aspects of municipal planning and budgeting.

To improve GRB in **the Municipality of Resen**, it is important to create mechanisms for greater participation of women and CSOs in decision-making and budgeting processes, develop economic development strategies with a focus on women and rural areas, and ensure cooperation with CSOs in order to increase support for vulnerable groups. It is necessary to improve citizens' awareness of gender-responsive budgeting and activate resources to support women, especially in rural areas.

To improve GRB in **the Municipality of Čučer-Sandevo**, it is necessary to increase awareness of budget processes and introduce gender-sensitive policies that will take into account the specific needs of women and vulnerable groups. It is necessary to stimulate the active participation of women in local self-government and invest in programs that will enable economic development, health and social protection of women, especially in rural areas.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All municipalities covered by the project face very similar problems: Insufficient information of citizens and lack of trust in the authorities, insufficient participation of citizens in decision-making processes, through public debates and transparency in budget spending, insufficient support for women and youth, insufficiently developed mechanisms for gender equality, lack of support for vulnerable groups, and in most municipalities, lack of social and economic opportunities, as well as programs for the empowerment and support of women from vulnerable groups, and lack of gender awareness in general. The following problems relate to the lack of infrastructure, health infrastructure and social services, which further worsens the position of women and vulnerable groups, unemployment, increased poverty, inequality and economic inequality. In crisis situations, women and older people are particularly vulnerable. All these problems negatively affect the processes that contribute to government accountability and gender-sensitive responses of local authorities to crises, as well as the process of gender-responsive budgeting.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is necessary to increase the participation of women and citizens in decision-making processes, improve transparency and awareness of budget processes, and provide financial resources to support the most vulnerable groups.
- It is necessary to work on improving infrastructure, health infrastructure and social services, as well as creating gender-sensitive strategies for crisis management.
- It is necessary to improve awareness of budget processes and develop specific support programs for women, especially for the economic empowerment of women in rural areas.
- It is necessary to systematically invest in education, transparency and the development of policies that will take into account the specific needs of women and other vulnerable groups.
- It is necessary to integrate the gender perspective into all aspects of municipal planning and budgeting.
- It is necessary to introduce gender-responsive criteria for budget allocations and continue to work on sensitizing the budget of each municipality. A comprehensive information and educational campaign on the concept and importance of gender-responsive budgeting is needed
- More transparent work of municipal administration is needed (advertising public hearings and other mechanisms for citizen participation)
- It is necessary to plan funds for a transparent and adequate response of local administration to crises.
- It is necessary to work on partnerships between municipalities and CSOs operating in them, in order to more efficiently and effectively solve the problems of citizens.
- It is necessary to work on adopting or amending local policies in accordance with the needs of women and men in the local community
- It is necessary to work more on representing the interests of marginalized groups (youth, women, the elderly, people with disabilities, the unemployed, the socially vulnerable).
- It is necessary to conduct campaigns for the establishment and (or) more efficient and transparent work of institutions such as health institutions, social work centers, as well as employment bureaus

