

GENDER EQUALITY AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE



Tiranë 2012



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United Nations
ALBANIA

Austrian
Development Cooperation

Tirana, 2012

This publication is based on the activities supported and implemented in Albania by UN Women, in the context of UN Joint Program on Gender Equality, and the “Equity in Governance” (EiG) project, financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation in Albania. It also draws on the presentations, discussions and results of the first national conference on “Gender equality and local governance”, held in Tirana on 15 & 16 March 2011, organized by UN Women and the EiG project and supported by the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

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Layout and Design: Publishing & Printing House “PEGI”

ISBN: 978-9928-162-06-9

Photographs: Jutta Benzenberg and “Equity in Governance” project © Austrian Development Cooperation

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAM	Albanian Association of Municipalities
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
BoG	Basics of Gender
CaDV	Council against Domestic Violence
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCR-DV	Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
CEDAW	UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CS	Civil Society
CSC	Citizen Score Card
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEOFP	Directorate of Equal Opportunities and Family Policies
DV	Domestic Violence
EA	Economic Aid
EC	European Commission
EiG	Equity in Governance
EU	European Union
G&LG	Gender and Local Government
GADC	Gender Alliance for Development Center
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GAPD	Gender Action Plan Development
GEL	Law on Gender Equality in Society
GE&DV	Gender Equality and Domestic Violence
GEE	Gender Equality Employee
GEM	Gender Equality Mechanism
GID	Gender Input Document
GoA	Government of Albania
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GWG	Gender Working Group
HH	Household
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSTAT	National Institute for Statistics

IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (European Commission)
LAA	Local Authority Association
LGU	Local Government Unit
LMVFR	Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
METE	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy
mGEE	Ministerial Gender Equality Employee
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MP	Member of Parliament
NAP	National Action Plan
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPO	Non-profit Organization
NSGE-GBV-DV	National Strategy for Gender Equality and the Eradication of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PB	Participatory Budgeting
rGEE	Regional Gender Equality Employees
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN JPGE	United Nation Joint Program on Gender Equality
UN INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCU	Women's Centre Užice

Preface

Equality of women and men constitutes a fundamental right for all and is an essential value for Albania's democracy and integration into the EU. In order to be truly achieved, equality between women and men needs not only to be legally recognized but to be effectively applied to all aspects of life: political, economic, social and cultural. Despite various efforts addressing gender equality, and progress made in its formal recognition, equality of women and men in daily life is still not a reality: in practice, women and men do not enjoy the same rights, and social, political, economic and cultural inequalities persist. These inequalities are a result of social constructs based on numerous gender stereotypes present in the family, in political processes, public life, administrative procedures, and the organization of society. At the same time, these are also domains in which it is possible to act, to adopt new approaches, and to initiate structural change.

Over the past three years, efforts of UN Women, in the frame of Joint Program on Gender Equality and the "Equity in Governance" (EiG) project have been geared towards piloting and supporting initiatives and projects that explicitly promote and foster equality in Albania - particularly equality between women and men, girls and boys. Supporting the implementation of Albania's international gender equality commitments and national gender equality policy, several of these interventions specifically focused on mainstreaming gender equality goals at the level of local government.

Local and regional authorities represent the levels closest to the people, and are therefore best placed to directly address the persistence of inequality and to promote models of governance that strive for a truly egalitarian society. In fact, Albania's legal and policy frameworks on gender equality have significant implications for local government in relation to the practical implementation of respective laws and policies in its daily work. On the part of local government, this requires foremost the embracing of the concept of equality as a distinguished marker of good governance, a commitment to the implementation of national gender law and policy, and the building of capacities and skills required for taking action.

Even when these preconditions are in place, one of the frequently asked questions is "And now – what's next? What needs to be done at local level? And how do we do it?" The publication "Gender Equality and Local Governance" aims at providing concrete answers to these questions. It is a joint undertaking by UN Women and the recently completed EiG project of the Austrian Development Cooperation and contains a collection of what local government units can do in concrete terms in order to translate international commitments and national policy on gender equality to the local level.

The material presented in this publication is proof and evidence that change can be initiated at the local (municipality) level in Albania; it also shows how gender equality can be integrated into and addressed in the procedures and processes of local governance. The authors hope that the collection of presented methods, experiences, strategies and cases will support primarily LGUs, but also inspire non-state actors and central government in their efforts to safeguard women's and men's equal rights, and increasingly engage in modes of governance which result in equitable development outcomes for all.

Acknowledgements

The EiG project would like to express its deep appreciation and respect for the trainers, experts and consultants, and in particular for the coaches who guided the EiG project's pilot municipalities through their first and dynamic steps towards gender-responsive ways of governing. The EiG project would like to thank leadership and staff of Municipalities of Berat, Gramsh, Kamza, Laç and Lushnjë for their collaboration. The openness and engagement of each of the municipalities' local Gender Working Group is highly valued. Particular thanks go to the Gender Equality Employees in EiG pilot Municipalities as well as in other Albanian cities and towns whose commitment and perseverance have been a major asset. Dynamic progress would not have been possible without the collaboration with Refleksione Association and the continuous cooperation with the Gender Alliance for Development Center.

The EiG project expresses its gratitude to its donors, the Austrian Development Agency, HORIZONT3000 and Welthaus Graz for their sustained support and the willingness to engage in the piloting of much-needed, innovative approaches in this region in order to establish gender equality as a governance issue. The EiG project also thanks all UN Women staff for fruitful collaboration, open communication, exchange of information, and for continuously engaging in the identification of synergies.

The valuable contributions by the Ministry of Interior, particularly the Deputy Minister Mr. Ferdinand Poni and his staff, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, particularly the staff of the Department of Equal Opportunities and Family Policies are highly acknowledged, as is the input of speakers, contributors and all participants of the Conference on "Gender Equality and Local Governance" held in Tirana in 2011.

Foreword

Gender equality and local governance are inextricably interlinked. They are essential for socio-economic development and democratization. Often governance reforms are not gender-responsive, consequently special attention to promote gender equality is required.

Partly this is due to the fact that the majority of governance objectives, systems, and services at all levels have been defined, designed and managed under male-dominated terms and therefore reflect men's priorities and perspectives. As a consequence, common governance reforms risk undervaluing, omitting, and excluding women's and girls' realities and needs. At the same time, gender-sensitive governance reforms often tend to primarily increase women's access to public offices. However, while achieving numerical balance in women's and men's representation is important in itself, it is not enough. What ultimately count are the *processes* of governance - the quality and type of decision-making, and the outcomes and impact of such decision-making on women's and men's, boys' and girls' lives.

The Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) follows an international gender approach according to which gender equality in the economic, social and private sphere is an underlying guiding principle in its collaboration with partners and in all interventions. In concrete terms, ADC envisages a society in which all human beings, women and men, girls and boys, are free to develop their personal abilities and to make choices without limitations defined by strict gender roles.

Albania has made remarkable progress in setting a legal and policy framework to ensure and promote gender equality. However, like in many other countries, more efforts need to be undertaken in applying those laws and policies at all levels. Together with its partners, ADC has supported Albania on its path towards ensuring gender equality through financing and supporting a range of projects and interventions in various fields. It is a contribution to common efforts to establish a society in which all women and men girls and boys in Albania benefit equally from development, decision-making, service delivery and thereby governance at large.

The publication "Gender Equality and Local Governance" is a joint collaboration between ADC and UN Women. It summarizes the learning's that have emerged from several gender-sensitive interventions at local level. The publication brings together concrete experiences obtained in activities implemented by UN Women and the Austrian-funded "Equity in Governance" project (2007-2011). These interventions aimed to address two main questions: How can national gender legislation, national gender policy, and national gender indicators be applied at the local level? And what respective processes do mean in concrete terms for local government units as well as for their citizens?

The methodologies and experiences presented here advocate for local ownership of governance processes, which are inclusive, pro-poor, and gender-sensitive. "**Gender Equality and Local Governance**" provides vivid evidence for the existence of best practice on engendering local governance in Albania and encouraging replication.

The publication should be seen as a generic and basic reference presenting tools how to analyze, monitor, and improve local decision-making and service delivery through a gender lens.

We hope that this publication will serve as a useful and inspirational tool for the wide range of stakeholders and actors involved in local governance in Albania, both at national and sub-national levels.

Astrid Wein

Head of Austrian Development Cooperation Office, Tirana



INTRODUCTION

What is *gender-responsive local governance*? Well, there is not just one definition. Gender-responsive local governance is rather a form of governance, and a fundamental aspect of good governance. Local governance that is gender-responsive takes into account the different needs, interests, priorities and concerns of women and men, girls and boys as citizens. It uses these different needs to inform all local governance processes - policymaking, planning, budget allocation, programme development, local service delivery and performance monitoring - in order to directly address existing gender inequalities.

Gender-responsive local governance is also about making sure that all local governance processes, procedures and systems are developed and implemented in ways that take into account the different needs of women and men. So, it is not just about including more women in local governance processes - although achieving gender balance at all levels of local governance is an important first step. It is about making sure that in all its activities, local governments take into account gender inequalities, and address as well as reduce these through their policies, programmes and activities.

In Albania, the process of decentralization has placed Local Government Units (LGUs) in a powerful position to directly influence the well-being of women and men, girls and boys. LGUs play a key role in local policymaking, raising and allocating budgetary resources, and providing public services to communities. When LGUs prioritize gender equality as a policy objective, and when LGUs directly involve women and men in local governance processes, communities and citizens - both women and men - clearly benefit.

What is this publication about?

This publication is the result of concrete activities supported by UN Women and the “Equity in Governance” (EiG) project which aimed at translating international commitments and national gender equality policy to the realities of local governance in Albania. Key insights, experiences and lessons learned were discussed and presented to a wider public during the conference on “Gender Equality and Local Governance”, organized by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO) in cooperation with UN Women and the EiG project in Tirana in March 2011. The conference gathered over one hundred representatives from central and local governments and civil society, experts, as well as donors, embassies, and partners, to share best practices on how local governments can better respond to the needs of women and men, and make governance systems, processes and structures more gender-sensitive.

The publication also draws on the successes and lessons learned from concrete gender-responsive local government initiatives implemented in five municipalities in Albania, as well as in Serbia. All examples were financially and technically supported by either UN Women or the EiG project. **Case studies** describe in a concrete manner how these initiatives were developed and implemented, and highlight their impact on women and men. The emphasis is always placed on the **process**: what was done? How was it done? How can we replicate the activity in other municipalities?

The case studies contained in this publication describe the following aspects of gender-responsive local governance:

- Local Gender Action Plan Development in the Municipality of Berat

- Engendering Statistics in the Municipality of Kamza
- Participatory Budgeting in the Municipality of Elbasan
- Domestic Violence: Coordinated Community Response in the Municipality of Gramsh
- Citizen Score Card in the Municipality of Lushnje
- Gender Analysis of the Budget in the Municipality of Užice, Serbia

● Who are the publication's target groups?

There is a lot of information packed into this publication. This means that a number of different actors, within government, among donors, and in civil society, will find this publication useful:

- ✓ Local Government Units: The leadership and management of LGUs, and departments involved in policymaking, planning, programme implementation and budgeting decisions at local level.
- ✓ Gender Equality Employees and Gender Equality and Domestic Violence Offices at local level, as well as the gender equality machinery at central level.
- ✓ Non-Profit Organizations & Gender Advocates: NPOs working on gender issues and monitoring gender equality commitments of the Government of Albania at national and local levels
- ✓ Central Government: Particularly the Ministry of Interior (decentralization & local government); Ministry of Finance (resource allocation to LGUs); Ministry of Labour (flow of information on gender equality from local to central level);
- ✓ International Partners and Donors: A number of entry points for further support to local government regarding gender equality efforts are offered, in order to replicate good practices and multiply outcomes.
- ✓ Experts and consultants working on local governance, gender equality, women's rights, and social issues.

Structure of the Publication

The publication is organized into five chapters. Chapter One provides an overview on the current legal and policy framework on gender equality in Albania and thereby describes the overarching context in which local government is operating in respect to official gender equality commitments and goals. Chapter Two investigates two inter-related aspects: it explains why local governments matter so much in promoting gender equality, and why gender equality is - in fact - so significant for them. Sharing of good practices is the focus of Chapter Three; this chapter summarizes key issues presented and developed at the first national conference on "Gender Equality and Local Governance" in Albania in March 2011 and thereby highlights the key ingredients of gender-responsive local governance. How gender equality commitments on paper can be translated into concrete action at local level is explained in Chapter Four. This chapter describes in detail how gender-responsive local governance is being done by presenting the hands-on experiences in five municipalities: Berat, Kamza, Elbasan, Gramsh and Lushnjë (Albania) and one municipality in Užice (Serbia). Chapter Five pulls it all together by summarizing lessons learned. This chapter has an explicit forward-looking perspective and proposes six strategies for enhancing gender-responsive local governance in the future. A glossary provides explanations and definitions of the terminology used. Finally, Annexes present materials generated in the framework of the "Gender Equality and Local Governance"

conference: they include the detailed Recommendations resulting from the four Technical Working Groups of this event. These recommendations may serve as input for any work focusing on e.g. local development, local governance, policy implementation, domestic violence, decentralization, budgeting, monitoring of service delivery, rural women, and gender mainstreaming in Albania.



Orjeta Nishtaku / Selenicë

I know
something better, exist

Gender Equality Frameworks in Albania: The Basics

The Albanian government has developed a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights. This is critical: any initiative to create a system of local governance that responds better to the needs of women and men must be supported by a comprehensive framework at both national and local levels. In this Chapter, we briefly explore the legal, policy and institutional frameworks in place in Albania.

Gender Equality Frameworks in Albania

● The Legal Framework for Gender Equality in Albania

The equal rights of women and men are enshrined in Albania's highest legal act, the **Constitution**, adopted in 1998; Article 18 guarantees equality of women and men before the law. The country ratified the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** in 1993 and its Optional Protocol in 2003. Albania regularly reports to the CEDAW Committee on its progress in complying with and implementing CEDAW provisions. Albania's gender legislation and policy also reflect the country's continuing process of accession to and integration into the European Union, officially initiated by the signing of the **Stabilization and Association Agreement** in 2006. Since equality is one of the guiding principles of the EU, Albania's gender mainstreaming obligations are contained in the five policy areas spelled out in the **EU Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015**.

Equality between women and men in all spheres of private and public life is further delineated in legislation such as Law No. 9970 "**On Gender Equality in Society**" which entered into force in 2008. The aim of this law is to: a) ensure effective protection against gender-based discrimination; b) define measures to guarantee equal opportunities for men and women in order to eliminate gender-related discrimination; and c) specify the responsibilities of state authorities at all levels for drafting and implementing normative acts and policies that support gender equality. The GEL envisages gender mainstreaming as the strategy for achieving gender equality to integrate a gender perspective in all legislative, policymaking, planning, and implementation and monitoring processes. The law also addresses discrimination and gender harassment, and introduces specific temporary measures in political and public decision making positions (to guarantee at least 30% participation of the under-represented sex) as well as special measures in the sectors of education and employment; unpaid labour; and the obligation to collect gender statistics.

Two other laws explicitly regulate gender equality in Albania: Law No. 10221, "**On Protection against Discrimination**", adopted in 2010, and Law No. 9669 "**On Measures against Violence in Family Relations**" (LMVFR), adopted in 2007 (with amendments in 2007 and 2010). The anti-discrimination law has been hailed internationally for its comprehensiveness; it prohibits discrimination in political, economic and social spheres not only on the grounds of race, ethnicity, disability or religion, but also on the grounds of sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. The LMVFR is designed to prevent and reduce domestic violence, and prescribes the adequate response to as well as services

for victims. Domestic violence can be prosecuted under the general crime of assault in the Criminal Code.¹ Section VI, entitled “Sexual Crimes” addresses rape, while article 110a explicitly penalizes trafficking in persons. Furthermore, the Family Code² as well as Labour Code³ specifically refers to various aspects of women’s rights and entitlements in the private sphere as well as in economic life.

● Albania’s Gender Equality Policy Framework

As a cross-cutting strategy, the **National Strategy for Gender Equality and Eradication of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence 2011-2015** (NSGE-GBV-DV) outlines the institutional strategies and mechanisms to guide the inclusion of gender equality in public policy, reduce gender discrimination, as well as prevent and counter gender based violence. Revised and updated in 2010 by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO), actions taken within the framework of this Strategy aim at contributing towards the achievement of four strategic outcomes:

- Strategic Outcome 1: All Albanian citizens (women and men) enjoy freedom from violence and rights in practice and take on responsibilities in society;
- Strategic Outcome 2: All Albanian citizens (women and men) have employment and economic, social and political activity aligned with and appropriate to their abilities and experiences;
- Strategic Outcome 3: State institutions and practices protect all citizens (women and men) from violence and support them to facilitate their full participation in society irrespective of gender;
- Strategic Outcome 4: All Albanian citizens (women and men) contribute to the economic, social and political development of Albania and the integration processes to the EU.

The NSGE-GBV-DV is guided by four priority areas and is accompanied by Action Plans with interventions and indicators specified for each of them. The priority areas are:

- Strengthening Institutional and Legal Mechanisms (National Gender Machinery): Activities are aimed at (i) improving the National Gender Machinery at the central and local level to fulfill their duties as foreseen in the GEL; (ii) reviewing Albanian legislation to determine compliance with international and national gender equality standards; and (iii) increasing the capacity of central and local government to implement and monitor the legal framework for gender equality in Albania.
- Increasing Women’s Participation in Decision-Making: This goal is to be achieved by (i) taking measures which ensure full access of women to politics; (ii) increasing representation and participation of women in decision making to 30% at all levels through temporary special measures; (iii) increasing participation of women in peacekeeping and police structures; and (iv) increasing capability of women as citizens to participate in decision making and leadership.
- Empowering Girls and Women Economically: Activities will include (i) increasing women’s economic independence by improving access to loans, support programs, and social care and protection services; (ii) professional training of women through measures to support

1 See <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/6683>.

2 See http://www.mpcs.gov.al/dpshb/images/stories/files/kodet/3.3.2_Albanian_Family_Code.pdf.

3 See <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/SERIAL/41344/63433/F1167646799/ALB41344.PDF>.

participation of women in the labour market; and (iii) expanding employment programs for women and girls.

- **Reducing Gender Based Violence:** This goal will be achieved by: (i) toughening punishment of GBV through legislation; (ii) preventing GBV through awareness raising; (iii) protecting and supporting victims of violence and abusers through services that rehabilitate and re-integrate victims; and (iv) building capacities of the public administration at all levels to respond to GBV.

The **National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators**, adopted by the Government of Albania in 2010, is the official tool for monitoring progress in the implementation of the country's gender equality policy. Periodical National Reports on Gender Equality and the Situation of Women in Albania are envisaged to shed light on the question whether and to which degree the abovementioned goals and outcomes are being achieved.

● The Institutional Framework: Gender Equality Mechanisms

The GEL identifies the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities as the authority responsible for issues of gender equality. The Ministry's main function is to monitor the implementation of relevant laws and the application of the principles of nondiscrimination and equality between men and women. The Minister carries out these functions with the assistance of specialized structures, namely the **Directorate for Equal Opportunities and Family Policies (DEOFP)**. Operating since 2006, DEOFP's mission is to promote gender equality and the participation of women in economic, political and cultural spheres and to formulate policies for the prevention and reduction of gender based violence. DEOFP is composed of two sectors: the Sector for Gender Equality & Measures against Violence, and the Sector for Children's Rights and Protection.

The duty to propose gender equality policies rests with the **National Council for Gender Equality**.⁴ This Council advises the government in setting the direction of state policies on gender mainstreaming and gender equality, and ensures gender mainstreaming is all areas. It is headed by the Minister of MoLSAEO, and the Council is composed of nine deputy ministers and three civil society members. The National Council for Gender Equality is also envisaged to play a significant role in promoting gender policy implementation, for example gender-responsive budgeting, establishment of the Gender Equality Employee structure and the collection of gender data.

At the parliamentary level, the **Committee on Labour, Social Affairs and Health**⁵ is responsible for women and family issues, in addition to labour relations, social affairs, social insurance and health. This Commission examines draft laws, undertakes legal initiatives in the areas of its expertise, and establishes cooperation with MoLSAEO on issues of gender equality and children.

With the entry into force of the Law "On Protection against Discrimination", the **Commissioner** institution was set up in 2010. The Office of the Commissioner examines complaints of discrimination by individuals, groups of individuals or organizations on issues of discrimination, including gender, but also gender identity, pregnancy, sexual orientation, family or marriage status, and parental responsibility. It is also foreseen to conduct investigations, monitor the implementation of this law, and impose sanctions, and to offer an effective mechanism through which particularly women citizens can redress the wide range of prevalent gender discrimination.

Gender Equality Employees at central (ministries) and local government unit level are mandated to guide gender mainstreaming efforts and are foreseen to assume the role of promoters and monitors of the implementation of the national gender policy.

4 Exempted are issues discussed by the National Labour Council.

5 See http://www.parlament.al/web/Perberja_10065_1.php

Applying Gender Equality Frameworks at Local Level: Decentralization in Albania

Political decentralization in Albania began in 1992, with the adoption of the “Local Government Act” and the holding of local elections. The introduction of local self-government began in earnest only in 1998, however, when Albania subscribed to the Council of Europe’s Charter of Local Self-Government and included the principles of local self-government in the Constitution. The Constitution states that local government is based on the “principle of decentralization” an exercised through the “principle of local autonomy”.

The process of decentralization leading to local self-government has been guided by the adoption of a range of policies and laws, as well as the establishment of institutional structures at both central and local levels. In 1999, the government created the inter-ministerial National Committee on Decentralization (NCD), which adopted the “National strategy for decentralization and local autonomy”. This was followed by the development of a package of laws to guide the administration of local self-government. These include Law No. 8652/00 on the “Organization and Functioning of the Local Governments” and Law No. 8653/00 on the “Administrative-Territorial Division”.

Importantly, laws and structures were also developed to regulate the fiscal aspects of local self-government, including the Law on Immovable State Properties, the Law on the Transfer of State Properties to the Local Authorities, and the creation of the Agency for Inventory and Transfer of Public Properties. The legal framework created formulas for transferring central budget funds to Local Government Units (LGUs), and empowered LGUs to formulate their own independent budgets. Fiscal reforms in 2002 saw the introduction of new local taxes, including the local small business tax, the simplified profit tax, property taxes, and a system of local fees and charges. The decentralization process has also clarified areas of responsibility of Local Government Units in terms of local service provision, including local authority over important issues such as local development, urban planning, infrastructure, land management, and water and sanitation.

The decentralization process in Albania has been conceptualized in **gender-neutral terms**. That is, there has been very little discussion on how decentralization might affect women and men, girls and boys differently. This issue has only recently begun to be addressed through legal and policy frameworks for gender equality, which highlight the obligations of Local Government Units in the sphere of gender equality. These legal and policy documents have also created an obligation for LGUs to create institutional mechanisms to support the implementation of gender equality policy at local level, as outlined below.

The Legal and Policy Framework for Gender Equality at Local Level

Albania's gender-related legislation creates legal obligations for local governments. The Law **"On Gender Equality in Society"** of 2008, for example, requires Local Government Units to:

- ✓ Collaborate with central government institutions to implement gender legislation and national policies on gender equality;
- ✓ Collaborate with non-profit organizations that operate within their territory to achieve gender equality in different areas;
- ✓ Collect and analyze data disaggregated by sex;
- ✓ Appoint one or several local Gender Equality Employees to deal with gender equity issues;
- ✓ Undertake temporary special measures for increasing women's representation in decision-making positions (30% quota).

Law No. 9669 **"On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations"** obliges local authorities to:

- ✓ Engage in setting up of social service structures for domestic violence cases;
- ✓ Install regional 24-hour toll free telephone lines, establishing links to local units, police, medical emergency units and NGOs, thereby coordinating their actions;
- ✓ Establish social and rehabilitation centers for victims and perpetrators and coordinate efforts with existing ones, giving priority to specialized centers in respective fields

The **National Strategy for Gender Equality and Eradication of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence** (NSGE-GBV-DV), revised in 2011, requires that Local Government Units:

- ✓ Contribute to the implementation of the Strategy at local level and that coordination should happen through Gender Equality Employees (GEEs);
- ✓ Contribute to the improvement of the National Gender Machinery through the appointment of GEEs at local level;
- ✓ Provide adequate services that rehabilitate and re-integrate victims/survivors of GBV;
- ✓ Focus on building capacities of local administration to respond to gender based violence.

● The Institutional Framework for Gender Equality at Local Level:

Gender Equality Employees

Article 13/3 of the GEL stipulates the appointment of **Gender Equality Employees (GEE)** in every line ministry; Article 14 obliges the appointment of GELs in all local governing bodies. In principle, this includes municipalities, communes, prefectures and qarks. The GEEs replaces the more informal system of Gender Focal Points established at LGU level who often performed this role on top of their official work portfolios.

GEEs are envisaged to support the mainstreaming of gender equality issues into policies, programs, and plans, and to monitor the implementation of central and local government gender equality commitments. GEEs are also foreseen to play a key role in collecting and analyzing data, particularly sex-disaggregated data, conducting gender analysis to inform local policy development, and developing partnerships with other gender actors and advocates. Some GEEs also play a role in fundraising, as the funds located to gender initiatives by LGUs are often limited.

Local Government Units are also foreseen to recruit a domestic violence specialist. However, prior to the May 2011 local elections, only 14 municipalities had appointed GEEs (out of 65 municipalities). Given the low percentage of GEEs in place, these two positions - GEE and domestic violence expert - have often been merged and filled by the same individual - for example, in pilot municipalities supported through actors such as the “Equity in Governance” project and UN entities. Such GEEs are often known as “Gender Equality and Domestic Violence Employees” (GEE/DV), and play a key role in coordinating the response to domestic violence cases at local level.

Despite the diversity of tasks accorded to GEEs by law and through practice, their contributions have not always been fully recognized by LGUs. As the publication will demonstrate, it is of utmost importance that GEEs are established, formalized, validated and institutionalized at all local levels across Albania, if gender-responsive local governance is to be introduced in a sustainable way.

The importance of GEEs as a gender equality structure is explored in greater detail in the Chapter 5 Case Study on the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence in Gramsh Municipality.

● Financing Gender Equality at Local Level

Legal and policy frameworks, as well as institutional structures, do require resources for effective functioning. It costs money to develop effective gender equality policies, as well as effectively implement them, monitor their implementation, and provide informed guidance on how to improve them.

Once LGUs commit to implementing gender-related programmes or introducing gender-responsive processes, where can they obtain appropriate resources? Currently, there are roughly five sources for funding local government programmes, projects and initiatives in general, outlined in the Table below. In principle, gender equality initiatives at local level can be financed through these sources.

Type of Financial Source	Description
1) Local government budget	These include <i>transfers</i> from the national state budget (the “conditional budget” for functions delegated by central level to LGUs) as well as own revenues collected through local taxes and local fees (the “independent budget”).
2) Public funding through competitive grants	The <i>Regional Development Fund</i> is used to fund on a competitive basis initiatives of Local Government Units in the areas of infrastructure, education, healthcare, culture and art, water and sanitation and rural development.
3) Bilateral/multilateral donor funding	These include bilateral donor government programmes, programs financed by UN entities such as UNDP, as well as European Commission financing instruments, such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).
4) Partnership with non-profit organizations	Local governments can partner with non-profit organizations (NPOs) at local and central level, in order to access funds channeled directly to NPOs by donors.
5) Loans	LGUs can implement projects by negotiating loans from government sources.

Source: *Access to Local/National Funds for the Implementation of Gender-Sensitive Projects - An Analysis. Study prepared by Raimonda Duka in the framework of the EiG project (2011).*

So what are LGU responsibilities regarding financing of gender equality? LGUs are obliged to take into account the local government's Economic Development Strategy, as well as sector strategies and cross-cutting strategies that contain LGU responsibilities related to gender equality (such as the National Strategy for Gender Equality and Eradication of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence, which contains responsibilities at LGU level). As specific funds for implementation of the NSGE-GBV-DV are set aside only at national budget level, LGUs are faced with the challenge to ensure on their own initiative that local government responsibilities under the NSGE-GBV-DV and other national gender equality policies and laws, are properly budgeted for in the local budget.

LGUs can be further constrained by limited revenue-raising abilities at local level, especially in poor and structurally-weak municipalities. Municipalities that have undergone socio-economic upheaval during transitions to a more market-based system often have to deal with high levels of unemployment, a significant mismatch between labour opportunities and skill sets among citizens, and the need for pressing structural adjustments that require additional finances.

With few resources and many competing needs and interests, it is up to Local Government Units to prioritize gender equality initiatives when deciding local budgets. This is in line with the principle of "independent budgets" accorded to LGUs as part of the decentralization process. Through this publication, we demonstrate that an investment in gender equality at local level IS an investment in local development that will benefit women and men, girls and boys – as will be shown; it is a comparably low-cost investment with long-term rewards for communities in general.

It is important to keep in mind that even with limited resources; local governments can undertake a number of activities to make governance processes more responsive to women and men, girls and boys. For example, as we shall see, local governments can work with GEEs and civil society organizations to undertake gender analyses of different policy areas, including budget allocations – for example, an analysis of the impact of agricultural assistance programs on women and men specifically, access to healthcare, or primary school programmes. Often, to a certain degree, resources can be found if there is a commitment and understanding that gender equality will benefit the local population in general.



Jeta Xhabiaj / Shkodër

Changes
requires devotion and energy

Why Gender-Responsive Local Governance?

It is evident that Albania has established a comprehensive legal and policy framework for gender equality at both central and local levels. However, despite the presence of such guiding frameworks for local government, decentralization and local governance processes are not automatically gender-sensitive, nor inclusive of women and men, girls and boys. In this chapter, we explore in greater detail why local governments matter in promoting gender equality on the one hand, and, on the other, why it should matter to local governments to promote gender equality.

● Just what is “Gender-Responsive Local Governance” Anyway?

Local governments are key actors in making governance processes more equitable, inclusive and accountable. And governance that is more equitable, inclusive and accountable is ultimately more effective and efficient!

Before we explore why local governments matter, however, we should first make clear what we mean by “gender-responsive local governance”. We know that **gender mainstreaming** - the official tool for achieving equality between women and men - requires that all policies, programmes and processes take into consideration their potentially different impact on men and women, boys and girls. This is because our ideas about the different roles, responsibilities and attributes of women and men that are specific to each and every culture, mean that women and men have different – and unequal - access to and control over decision-making, resources, information, services, and programmes within families and communities.

So, local governance that is gender-responsive means considering HOW and WHY local governance structures, processes, policies, programmes and activities affect women and men, girls and boys and girls differently.

The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, developed by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and its partners, states that local governments are not only obliged to make sure that their governance systems respond to the different needs, interests and priorities of women and men, girls and boys, but that gender-responsive local governance is actually the key to social and economic development at local, regional and national levels:

If we are to create a society based on equality, it is essential that local and regional government take the gender dimension fully into account, in their policies, their organization and their practices. And in today's and tomorrow's world, the real equality of women and men is also key to our economic and social success – not just at European or national levels, but also in our regions, towns and local communities.

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The European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, 2001

● Why do Local Governments Matter in Promoting Gender Equality?... and Why should Gender Equality Matter to Local Governments?

In what ways are local governments uniquely placed to promote gender equality? Well, local

governments are key actors in the process of making governance more equitable, inclusive, effective and efficient:

- Local governments know community needs and contexts best
- Local governments are best placed to respond to gender inequalities
- Local governments are the main vehicle for delivering services to citizens
- Local governments play a key role in socio-economic development

We see that local governments are key actors in promoting gender equality in Albania, given their particular role and mandate, as well as their direct link to citizens. The Table below captures some of the reasons why local governments matter in promoting gender equality, and especially why gender equality is critical for effective and good local governance.

Why Local Governments Matter in Promoting Gender Equality... and why it Matters to Local Government

• Local governments know community needs and contexts best

National policies provide the framework for guiding governance and development in each country. However, it is up to local governments to translate national policies – including gender equality policies - into *locally-relevant* policies, strategies, and concrete programmes. Women and girls have different public service needs and priorities. This is due to gender-based ideas about their roles and responsibilities, and the division of labour that these ideas support. Translating national objectives into locally-relevant ones gives local governments an opportunity to identify the different needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys in their communities, and to develop local policies that best respond to these differences.

• Local governments are best placed to respond to gender inequalities

The European Charter states that “as the spheres of governance closest to the people, local and regional authorities represent the levels best placed to combat the persistence and the reproduction of inequalities”. Because local governments interact with citizens on a daily basis, they are in the best position to identify and address inequalities that persist between men and women, and to dedicate resources to gender-specific programmes, policies and interventions that can best address and eliminate these inequalities.

Furthermore, LGUs stand a better chance of obtaining external funds if they include a gender perspective in their funding applications. For example, the European Commission’s Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), includes specific criteria for assessing how projects seek to address gender inequalities. Project proposals that explicitly describe how interventions will include both women and men, and aim at addressing existing gender inequalities, will obtain additional marks by fulfilling these specific criteria.

• Local governments are the main vehicle for delivering services to citizens

Local governments have the duty to provide public services to citizens. In decentralized governance systems such as Albania, local governments actually exercise a great deal of control over the types of public services that the government offers, how much money is allocated for these services, and who has access to these services. This means that LGUs also have the authority to prioritize gender equality as a local government objective, and to allocate resources to services that respond to the needs of both women and men.

When service provision policies and interventions actually take into account the needs, situations and priorities of (different groups of) women and girls, public services can be better planned - making service delivery and budgets more effective. For example, local governments that survey women and girls’ labour patterns would likely find that by engaging in unpaid care, productive and reproductive work, women assume the role of “service providers” in their own homes and communities. Prioritizing basic service provision in the area of child and healthcare (e.g. afterschool extracurricular programs for children, respite care for the elderly, homecare services) can greatly decrease the unpaid labour burden placed on women.

• Local governments play a key role in socio-economic development

When women are less occupied by unpaid care, they are freer to engage in training and further-on in income-generating work, creating new markets for services and goods in the private sphere. An investment in women and girls is ultimately an investment in local economic growth – both in the private and public sectors.

LGUs have the authority to draft local development strategies that reflect the local socio-economic situation, and address local needs and interests of citizens. When local governments take into consideration how men and women, boys and girls may be differently affected by economic trends and opportunities, local development strategies are better able to use the talents, resources and skills of all members of the community.

As is demonstrated above, an investment in women and girls does not just benefit the female population. Educated and skilled women are more likely to break the cycle of poverty, thereby creating new opportunities for society as well as their children - both girls and boys. And economically and politically empowered women are more likely to positively influence public decision-making but also private issues like the education of their children - again, both girls and boys. In this way, traditional and societal stereotypes about the unequal roles, responsibilities and capacities of girls and boys are being challenged and gradually replaced by more equitable and just concepts.

● Creating the Conditions for Gender-Responsive Local Governance in Albania

So can any LGU initiate a process to make its governance system more gender-responsive? The short answer is: Yes! There are, however, certain conditions that, when put into place, facilitate the introduction of local government processes, programmes and policies that are more responsive to the needs and priorities of both women and men. In general, these conditions are required in order to introduce gender-responsive local governance, since they create a strong foundation for gender equality efforts.

Creating the Conditions for Gender-Responsive Local Governance

Gender Knowledge and Skills: Often, a local government's willingness to prioritize gender equality on the political agenda is directly and strongly related to its knowledge of what gender equality is, and why striving for equality between women and men benefits communities politically, socially and economically. Municipal GEEs should strive to demonstrate the link between gender equality, socio-economic development and good governance. However, it is necessary that the municipal leadership drives the process of knowledge and skill building.

Gender Sensitization and Awareness: Knowledge must be matched by capacity, to put into action effective projects and programmes that aim at addressing gender-based inequalities. The first step of capacity building should be *sensitization*: making local officials at all levels, in all offices, aware of how our institutions, systems, processes, relations and policies are based on ideas and (often) stereotypes about the different and unequal roles, responsibilities of women and men – and why this matters. Without this basic sensitization, gender-related capacity building efforts may be easily dismissed, de-prioritized, resisted or actively undermined.

Systems and Processes: Human capacity must also be matched by financial resources. It takes resources to develop technical systems that allow for an accurate evidence base to be collected for local policymaking. From a gender perspective, the most important systems to put into place at local government level are data systems that allow for the collection, processing and analysis of sex-disaggregated data. Sex-disaggregated data - collected in a way that includes both men and women, and analyzed by experts with a solid knowledge of gender relations - is critical for developing respective policies and public services that respond to the needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys.

Political Will: It is always difficult to decide where to place "political will" as a pre-condition! Indeed, without it, gender-responsive governance easily becomes a means of pleasing international donors or fulfilling technical requirements. Political will means that political leaders make gender equality a priority on political agendas. It is worthwhile to distinguish between *political will* and *bureaucratic will*. Both require leadership, but *political will* means that leadership prioritizes gender equality in political processes, while *bureaucratic will* means that leadership commits the resources necessary to ensure gender mainstreaming is applied in all government processes, policies and programmes.

A Local Approach: One of the most important findings emerging from gender equality work in Albania is the necessity of tailoring national gender equality frameworks to local realities. This is not only as a result of decentralization. It's about better understanding the specific needs, priorities and interests of women and men, boys and girls that are shaped by local practices, as well as local socio-economic and political realities.

Incentives: We know that gender equality is a human right that the Albanian government is obliged to respect and protect. But good governance is also about understanding formal and informal governance practices and how power relations work. *Incentives* can encourage Local Government Units to go beyond its legal obligation to gender equality, and demonstrate why it is in their interest to do so. Incentives might include additional state budget transfers to municipalities that provide evidence of prioritizing gender equality initiatives, offers of support by NPOs with access to alternative sources of revenue, or improved access to international funds, such as the EC's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

Institutionalizing Gender-Responsive Local Governance

In Chapter 2, we explored WHY local governments should introduce gender-responsive governance practices and why they are best placed to do so. In Chapters 3 and 4, we look in more detail at HOW to create a gender-responsive local government. Let's first look at some of the ongoing initiatives to promote local governance that is sensitive to gender-based needs and interests in municipalities across Albania.

● Gender Equality Initiatives at Local Level

There are a number of large-scale initiatives aimed at enhancing local governance in Albania, funded through bilateral and multilateral donors. These include the Decentralization and Local Development Programs in the Regions of Shkodra and Lezha as well as the Regional Development Program for Northern Albania, funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; the Local Governance Program in Albania, funded by USAID; as well as the Integrated Support for Decentralization Project, funded by the European Commission and UNDP.

There are, however, few large-scale programmes and projects specifically focused on gender equality and local governance. Therefore, the gender equality initiatives supported by UN Women and the Austrian-funded "Equity in Governance" (EiG) project fill an important gap in strengthening local governance frameworks in Albania. These initiatives are implemented with and by a number of Albanian NPOs active at municipal level. The efforts by donors to support local governance that is gender-responsive reflects growing recognition of the significant roles local governments play in contributing to gender equality.

Through its support to gender-responsive budgeting, for example, UN Women is strengthening the capacity of government and civil society at both national and local level to include a gender perspective in all aspects of the budget process. These efforts are greatly strengthened by the introduction of *gender-sensitive participatory budgeting processes* that empower both men and women citizens to articulate their budgetary priorities and influence the budget process. Empowering men and women to articulate their needs and assess local governance performance through activities such as the "Citizen Score Card" approach has also helped local governments to better tailor service provision to the needs and priorities of their community. UN Women has pioneered work on gender-sensitive "Citizen Score Card" initiatives in Albania, ensuring that both men and

Promoting Women's Political Participation: Selected Albanian Initiatives

One aspect of gender-responsive local governance is ensuring that women are present and empowered to influence governance processes. This means promoting women's equal political participation in elected office, and their general involvement in public life.

In this sphere, a number of initiatives have recently been implemented, including:

1. **OSCE's Women in Governance Project**, focused on promoting women candidates.
2. **UN Women initiatives** focused on empowering women as voters.
3. **National Democratic Institute (NDI) efforts** in training women as candidates and voters.
4. **NGO Kvinna till Kvinna's** work on women's political empowerment.
5. **Albanian NPO** activities in advocating for women's increased political participation.

It should be noted that, once in elected or public office, women too, must be made aware of their role in contributing to gender-responsive governance!

women are actively engaged in assessing service delivery by local authorities.

Working together with NPOs such as Refleksione, UN Women and the EiG project have strengthened the response to domestic violence, creating a lasting impact on citizens - both women and men - in pilot municipalities across Albania. These efforts are also complemented by the work of UN Women, the EiG project, and collaborating NPOs in integrating a gender perspective into policymaking processes at local level. By supporting local governments to develop gender action plans that reflect local realities and needs, officials are able to enhance their service provision to both men and women as well as enhance local development efforts.

These actors have also supported the strengthening of the *institutional framework* for gender equality at local level. For example, the EiG project has prioritized the establishment and formalization of the Gender Equality Employee structure at local level, as foreseen by the Law on Gender Equality in Society. With EiG support, a database of GEEs was developed and updated every three months to better keep track of municipalities that appoint GEEs, as well as of GEE turnover. For the past three years, the EiG project enabled all GEEs to participate in an annually held national GEE meeting in Tirana, to share experiences, challenges and good practices. As many GEEs are not equipped with office space or IT equipment, such meetings also offer an opportunity to make GEEs' voices heard and to disseminate materials and resources. In EiG pilot municipalities, the project lobbied for the formalization of the GEE structure, including access to office space and equipment as well as creation of official job descriptions.

GEEs have been further supported in their work through mentoring and training. This is particularly important, as the GEEs also serve as main contact points and local coordinators for EiG (and other gender equality-related) interventions at local level. Such GEEs, for example, guide the operation of the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence mechanism, facilitate the formulation of local gender action plans, promote the use of local gender statistics, ensure that a gender perspective is included in other local policies, and coordinate gender sensitization efforts. More generally, GEEs have often proven to also serve as a focal point for women citizens seeking assistance in accessing their rights and services, dealing with domestic violence, and addressing issues of poverty, housing and unemployment.

Equity is a challenge where the European Union, its members states as well as South East European countries work hand in hand under the umbrella of UN Women's worldwide agenda [...]. The "Equity in Governance" project successfully opened the issue of gender inequality as a critical governance problem in municipalities, a public rather than a private issue. For local government, this was done for the first time.

Austrian Ambassador Raunig, keynote speech

● **Good Governance IS about Gender Equality: Sharing Good Practices in Albania**

The efforts of international, national and local actors at both government and non-government levels to enhance gender-responsive local governance gave rise to the idea of a national conference, to facilitate exchange of good practices and lessons learned, and identify opportunities for replication.

Accordingly, on 15 and 16 March 2011, the Albanian Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, in co-operation with the Austrian Development Cooperation's "Equity in Governance" project and UN Women, held a conference in Tirana on "Gender Equality and Local Governance", to share

practical strategies, programmes and processes for mainstreaming gender equality goals into governance at the local level.

The initiative was a timely one. As stated by **Deputy Minister of Interior, Mr. Ferdinand Poni**, in his keynote speech, the conference was a significant event in order to "lobby for a very important issue,

that should not be considered only as a woman's issue, but an issue that affects, empowers and determines in an essential way good and effective governance, while at the same time restructuring public participation in decision-making processes at the local level."

Over one hundred representatives of central and local government institutions, civil society, international organizations, donors, embassies, and partners gathered to discuss and share best practices on how local governance can more effectively address the needs, rights and interests of women and men, girls and boys.

In his keynote speech, **Austrian Ambassador Raunig** highlighted that "equity is a challenge where the European Union, its member states as well as South Eastern European countries work hand in hand under the umbrella of UN Women's worldwide agenda [...]. The "Equity in Governance" project successfully opened the issue of gender inequality as a critical governance problem in municipalities, a public rather than a private issue. For local government, this was done for the first time."

The conference provided an opportunity to showcase good practices in cooperation between government, civil society and international actors to strengthen equitable local governance. **Head of UN Women Heba El Kholy** remarked that:

As part of its work under the UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality in Albania, UN Women has been supporting the incorporation of women's voices and needs into local policy making and budgetary processes in selected municipalities. In this work, UN Women has developed broad partnerships with national and local government institutions and civil society organizations, and provided them with support to ensure the promotion of gender equality and the needs and priorities of women in policy and budgetary processes.

The keynote speeches provided an important framework for the interactive discussions that followed. During the conference, participants discussed the different dimensions of local governance where a gender perspective can and should be integrated, in order to better serve citizens. Importantly, participants were encouraged to present good practices of successful gender equality programmes and projects at local level.

"Gender equality issues are at the heart of good governance," stated Ms. Elisabeth Klatzer, a well-respected Austrian economist and gender expert. "In order to increase responsiveness to all citizens, we need to engage in gender-sensitive analysis, planning, budgeting, service delivery and monitoring."

So what does "gender-responsive local governance" look like, and how can local authorities, decision-makers and citizens work together to achieve it? Through professionally-facilitated Technical Working Groups, conference participants discussed the different dimensions of gender-responsive local governance. Participants explored how to mainstream a gender perspective into the different structures, processes and activities of local government. It was agreed that gender mainstreaming requires paying attention to different aspects of governance, including:

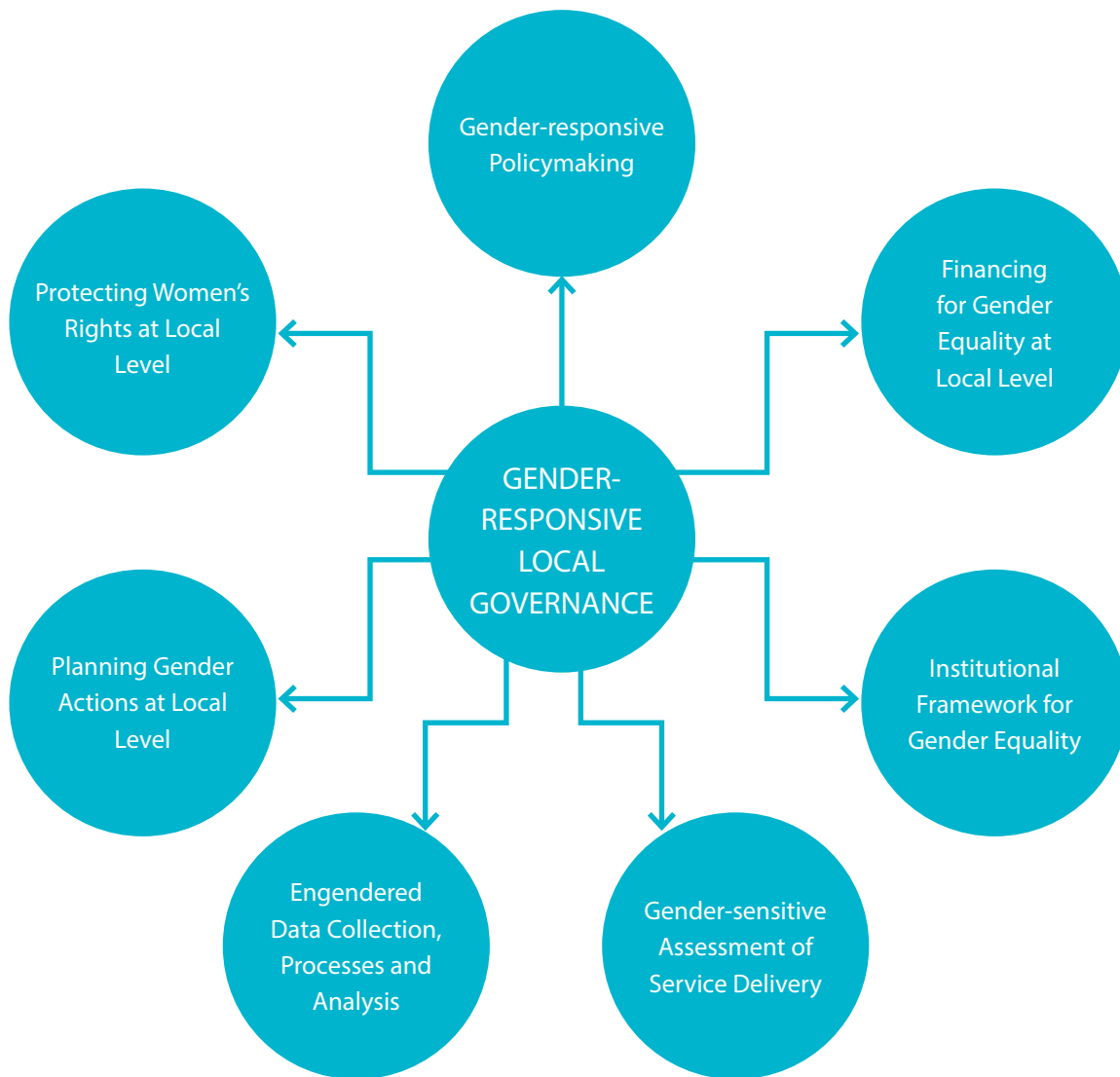
- **Gender-inclusive participatory policymaking:** This means ensuring that both women and men are included in all stages of policymaking, from the formulation of policy to its implementation and evaluation, and that policies at local level - particularly local development policies - explicitly include gender equality as a policy objective. This requires analysis of different policy issues - from infrastructure, water and sanitation, to public safety, economic development and education - to determine the different needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys. "Gender

Gender equality issues are at the heart of good governance. In order to increase responsiveness to all citizens, we need to engage in gender-sensitive analysis, planning, budgeting, service delivery and monitoring.

Elisabeth Klatzer, gender expert

analysis” is the key tool for determining these different needs, as well as the differential impact of policies on women and men due to gendered relations, attitudes and ideas.

- **Financing for gender equality at local level:** Effective implementation of gender-related legislation and policies requires financial resources, to cover the costs of interventions themselves, as well as the professional staff to coordinate these. Participatory initiatives that are gender inclusive, such as gender-sensitive participatory budgeting, are important initiatives for determining what local government budget priorities should be.
- **Institutional framework for gender-responsive local governance:** Local Government Units require professional staff members with gender knowledge and expertise to guide development of gender policies and programmes that reflect specific local needs, concerns and realities. Gender Equality Employees (GEEs) are an essential component of the gender equality machinery at local level in Albania, as they are mandated to guide gender mainstreaming efforts at local government level.
- **Engendering data collection, processing and analysis procedures:** All policymaking starts with the collection and analysis of data to identify policy priorities and revise policies and strategies in line with current needs of citizens and communities. If the statistics collected are not broken down by sex, it is extremely difficult to identify the specific needs, concerns and realities of women and girl citizens, and develop effective policies in response.
- **Gender-sensitive community assessment of local government service provision:** Engaging citizens in assessing and monitoring service delivery by local government is one of the most effective means of ensuring that services offered match citizen needs. As the needs of men and women differ due to their roles and responsibilities, women too, need to be actively engaged in these initiatives.
- **Planning gender actions at local level:** National policies provide important guidance for socio-economic development and growth. But they cannot include all the specific realities and circumstances of citizens in different municipalities. Decentralized governance gives LGUs the mandate to develop local policies that reflect specific socio-economic situations. Local gender action plans – supported by fact-based evidence and validated through consultation with women and men citizens - should be used to develop interventions to address gender-specific inequalities in communities.
- **Protecting women’s rights at local level:** The above efforts to introduce gender-responsive governance will be undermined if women’s rights are not first and foremost respected, protected and fulfilled both in the home as well as in the community. Special mechanisms and activities are needed to combat issues such as gender based violence, one of the most widespread human rights violations persisting in the country.



Gender Equality & Local Governance Conference: Technical Working Groups (TWGs)

TWG 1: Strengthening Evidence-based Governance: Gender Statistics at Local Level

This Working Group gathered representatives of the Ministry of Interior, two MoLSAEO specialists, the Deputy Mayor of Poliçan Municipality, and international experts, including a statistical consultant.

Participants discussed the importance of gender statistics, not only at local level, but also feeding data to the national level in order to better comply with, and report on compliance with, international conventions. The data collection system is not yet harmonized or unified across municipalities in Albania, and participants noted the challenges in collecting sex-disaggregated data in the areas of private employment, agriculture, and domestic violence.

Next Steps: Participants highlighted the need to formalize the responsibilities of the Gender Equality Employee, so that she/he can coordinate the collection of gender statistics, and to hire a qualified individual to fill this position. In addition, it is important to agree on methods for data-sharing between LGUs and national institutions (MoLSAEO, INSTAT), as well as develop a clear methodology to streamline data collection.

TWG 2: Setting Priorities: Citizen Score Cards (CSC)

Representatives from the municipalities of Tirana and Laç, NPOs from Tirana, Kukës, Shkodra and Serbia, as well as donor and international organizations participated in this Working Group.

In this WG, participants discussed the application of the Citizen Score Card (CSC) process in Albania, which explicitly links community priorities with gender justice and local development goals. NPO representatives related their experiences in implementing the CSC, many of which were linked to the issues elaborated in the “Women’s Manifesto”. The “Women’s Manifesto” was developed with UN Women support in time for the 2009 elections, and also used in the run up to the 2011 local elections. The initiatives empowered women to articulate their needs, assess current service provision by local governments, as well as demand accountability from those elected.

Next Steps: While the process itself empowered citizens and women in particular, to express their needs, the success of the CSC process depends on how municipalities react; whether articulated needs and priorities are included concretely in local policies and budgets. Before institutionalization of this process can occur, it is important to enact CSC agreements between local authorities and NPOs, share results of initiatives, as well as focus on empowering citizens to actively engage with and properly feed results to the central government.

TWG 3: Accessing Services: Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to Domestic Violence (DV)

Thirty-five representatives participated in this Working Group, including local government representatives at qark and prefecture level from 19 municipalities, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Interior, NPOs and international organizations.

Participants discussed the necessary conditions for replicating CCR across municipalities. This includes raising awareness about recent amendments to the law on domestic violence; capacity building of professionals to facilitate the law’s implementation; political will at local level; human and financial resources; common understanding of CCR by different institutions at local and central level; and finally, a clear hierarchy and less bureaucracy to make case management more efficient.

Next Steps: Institutionalization of CCR at local level demands the appointment of a local coordinator in each municipality and adoption of relevant laws, regulations and MoUs. It also requires the allocation of resources to hire DV experts, run services such as hotlines, shelters and rehabilitation centers; the formalization of information sharing, including the establishment of a database and developing awareness raising campaigns; and improvement of service provision, especially in relation to emergency and rehabilitation shelters and prevention initiatives.

TWG 4: Increasing Citizen Voice: Gender-sensitive Participatory Budgeting

Many of the participants in this Working Group were economists, representing NPOs and local government mainly located in Central and Northern Albania.

Representatives from different municipalities presented their experiences in implementing participatory budgeting. Opportunities for replication are many, because the process helps identify the proper needs of women and men, because it increases trust and transparency of local

government, because it is inclusive, and because it makes budget formulation and distribution more efficient. However, challenges exist in making citizens understand the process, building community trust in local government, and ensuring that women are fully included in the process and empowered to articulate their needs.

Next Steps: Institutionalization of the gender-sensitive participatory budgeting process requires formal approval of the process by municipalities, development of a regulation detailing the process, time frames, key actors and their responsibilities, as well as agreement on principles to guide the process, in addition to political will.

TWG 5: Financing Gender Equality at Local Level

Representatives of Local Government Units from Berat, Çorovoda, Lezha, Tepelena and Memaliaj, line ministries and NPOs, as well as local and international experts participated in this Working Group.

In this group, participants discussed how to finance initiatives to implement the National Strategy for Gender Equality and the Eradication of Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence at local level, as well as local gender action plans. Participants noted that as a result of reforms, fewer resources will be transferred to LGU level from the state budget. In addition, in poorer and more structurally-weak municipalities, revenue-raising is very challenging, especially when there are high levels of unemployment and limited business opportunities. The challenges LGUs face are limited capacities to develop gender action plans and concrete initiatives that can be used to access alternate sources of funding (e.g. donor, EU funds)

Next Steps: LGUs need to improve their lobbying skills in order to successfully compete for limited state funds, as well as access EU and other donor funds. A key actor is the Gender Equality Employee, who could develop fund-raising and project development skills to secure funding for gender-specific projects at local level. The GEE must also co-ordinate with other gender equality mechanisms, to fully integrate gender equality initiatives into existing local development priorities. Gender-sensitive participatory budgeting is an effective tool for this.

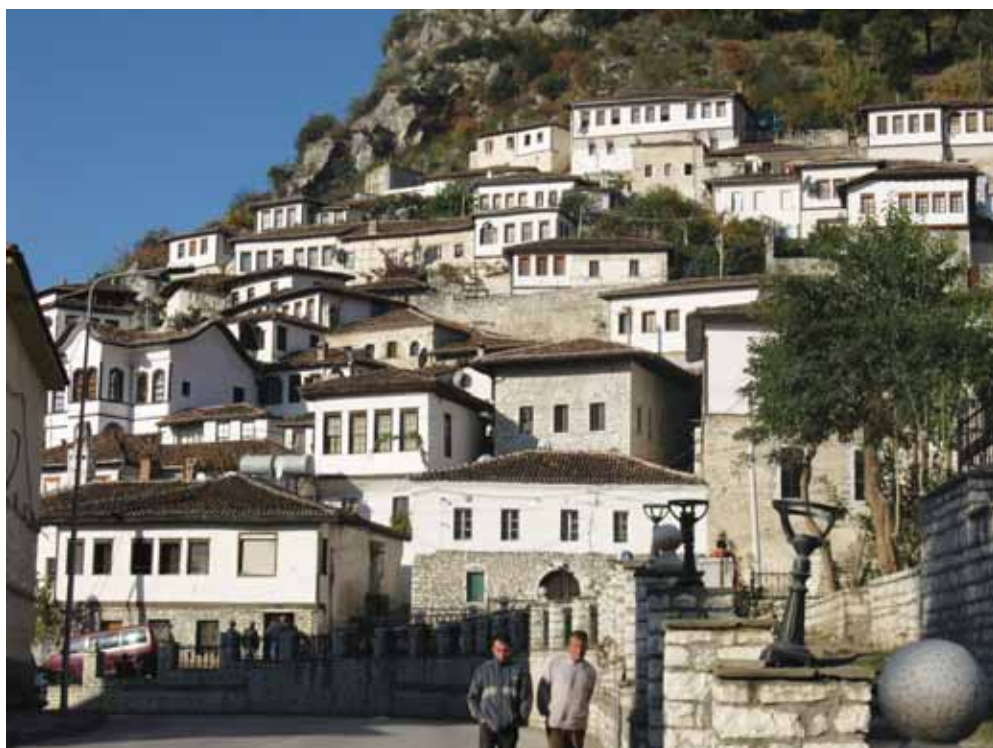
So how do we DO Gender-Responsive Local Governance?

Above, we explored the different facets of gender-responsive local governance – from inclusive policymaking and development of local gender action plans, to establishing the institutional framework for gender equality and ensuring adequate financing. So what can local governments practically do to introduce these gender-responsive processes and activities? In this section, we will see how these different components can be implemented in practice.

We will look in detail at specific initiatives to implement gender-responsive local governance in five selected municipalities across Albania, and one municipality in Serbia. Six case studies are presented, which capture different aspects of the gender mainstreaming process at local governance level:

- Local Gender Action Plan Development in the Municipality of Berat
 - *Supported by the EiG project*
- Engendering Statistics in the Municipality of Kamza
 - *Supported by the EiG project*
- Participatory Budgeting in the Municipality of Elbasan
 - *Supported by UN Women*
- Domestic Violence: Coordinated Community Response in the Municipality of Gramsh
 - *Supported by EiG, based on UN Women initiatives*
- Citizen Score Card in the Municipality Lushnjë
 - *Supported by EiG, based on UN Women initiatives*
- Gender Analysis of the Budget in the Municipality of Užice, Serbia
 - *Supported by UN Women*

Each case study presents a brief overview of the gender equality situation. This is followed by a detailed description of the process of introducing a specific aspect of gender-responsive local governance, as well as of the resulting achievements. Each case study concludes with Next Steps.



■ Case Study 1: Local Gender Action Plan Development in the Municipality of Berat

Berat lies in south-central Albania, 120 km south of Tirana. It is called the “city of one thousand and one windows”, thanks to its old town and a history which dates back 2500 years. Since July 2008, Berat has been featured on UNESCO’s World Heritage List.

It is a challenge to push gender onto the city’s agenda, it is hard for me as a new Gender Equality Employee to work with senior administration and have the gender action plan implemented.

Recently-appointed Gender Equality Employee, Municipality of Berat

Until the early 1990s, the city was home to a number of state-owned companies which provided employment for a high number of Berat citizens, especially women. Over the years, the closure of state-owned companies led to an increase in unemployment, which has affected women particularly hard.

Due to its cultural heritage and popularity as a tourist destination, the Municipality focused on tourism as a means of reviving Berat’s economic situation following the closure of state firms. Accordingly, tourism forms the heart of the local development strategy: “Ancient Berat, World Cultural Heritage city, with a community rejoicing in harmonic developments and equal opportunities, a center of international tourism, with a dynamic economy based on consolidated agro-business and handicraft”.

Local tourist businesses in Berat are primarily owned and operated by women. Yet despite the importance of tourism to women, especially in the face of rising female unemployment rates, women have by and large been left out of local development planning, programming and budgeting processes. As a result, the specific needs, interests and perspectives of women engaged in tourism have not been taken into

account in the drafting of Berat’s Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

Women’s low participation in the local development planning process has resulted in a plan that does not contain specific interventions to address women’s limited decision-making influence in policy processes and to ensure that both women and men benefit from tourism revenues. Albania has adopted a national gender policy which contains gender equality objectives and initiatives. However, the national plan does not reflect specific local socio-economic realities, and does not provide guidance for translating national objectives into concrete, local-level gender interventions. Therefore, with the exception of a few trainings, there have been no gender-related programmes implemented by the Municipality. Local officials lack capacities to translate national gender objectives into locally-relevant objectives that inform local planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring processes.

“It is a challenge to push gender onto the city’s agenda, it is hard for me as a new Gender Equality Employee to work with senior administration and have the gender action plan implemented”, says the recently appointed GEE in the Municipality of Berat.

● Gender Action Plan Development Cycle: Translating National Gender Priorities into Local Ones

Prompted by gender trainings, the Municipality was inspired to develop a local gender action plan (GAP), in order to include women - as well as women’s needs and strategic interests - in local

development policymaking. The purpose was two-fold: to engage in a gender analysis of how local economic and development processes impact men and women differently, and to identify specific gender-related priorities and activities that could be included into the local development strategy as a means of better realizing equal opportunities for both women and men.

To support the development of a local gender action plan, the “Equity in Governance” (EiG) project initiated a “Gender Action Plan Development Cycle” project in Berat. The main objective of the project was to strengthen the capacities of local officials to include a gender perspective in local development processes. Specifically, the project aimed at building local government capacity to translate national gender equality policy objectives into objectives that reflect local needs, interests, priorities and development processes.

Once the need for a local gender action plan was recognized, the next step of the intervention was to establish partnerships with key institutional officials in the Municipality committed to driving this process forward. Beginning in 2009, the EiG project team established contacts with the city administration and leaders interested in developing a Gender Action Plan for Berat. A Memorandum of Understanding between the EiG project and Municipality of Berat was signed in February 2010. The immediate output was the establishment of the Gender Working Group (GWG), composed of nine high representatives of the city administration and chaired by the Deputy Mayor, a woman with strong management skills and knowledge of the city’s issues and problems, including those affecting women in particular. The GWG was later institutionalized through the Mayor’s Decision No. 85/1.

An external expert, supported through the EiG project, guided the GWG in drafting the GAP between February and July 2010. The GWG’s main task was the drafting of a GAP that draws and builds on the Strategic Plan for Economic Development. In this way, the GAP not only included an analysis of the gender dimensions of local economic development in Berat, but also identified concrete ways of revising the Strategic Plan in order to include a gender perspective and gender-specific interventions.

In drafting the Gender Action Plan, GWG members walked through a seven-step development cycle which included the following phases:

1. Building understanding of the benefits of a gender action plan among different government actors;
2. Establishing institutional cooperation;
3. Establishing a coordinating mechanism (e.g. the Gender Working Group) and defining its main duties and responsibilities;
4. Conducting training on “How to improve policy and budgetary monitoring processes from a gender perspective”;
5. Mainstreaming a gender perspective into the Berat local development strategy using gender analysis skills developed during the training;
6. Finalizing the GAP; and

The Gender Action Plan Development Cycle: Key Steps

The EiG methodology and intervention consists of several key phases:

- i) Analyze existing local gender data and statistics
- ii) Prioritize key development issues and develop a narrative gender policy document tailored to the local context
- iii) Draft a local gender action plan that responds to development priorities and context
- iv) Communicate the gender action plan to citizens – both women and men
- v) Implement gender action plan activities
- vi) Monitor action plan implementation using participatory methods, such as citizen score cards or social auditing processes.

7. Developing and implementing a communication plan to present the gender mainstreamed Strategic Plan for Economic Development as well as contents of the local Gender Action Plan to all citizens.

The first and immediate proposal of the GWG was the amendment of the city's strategic vision, to add the principle of "equal opportunities". The second recommendation was to include a fourth strategic goal in Berat's Strategic Plan for Economic Development, aimed at identifying entry points to introduce more concrete activities on gender equality.

The main output of this process - the GAP - was formulated based on the following priorities:

- Establishment of a Commission on Equal Opportunities as part of the Municipality Council;
- Gender sensitive participatory budgeting;
- Establishment and use of gender statistics;
- Integration of the GAP in the strategy for local development of the Municipality;
- Implementation of the Gender Input Document (the narrative gender policy document of the Municipality of Berat); and
- Empowerment of responsive structures on domestic violence.

● Outcomes and multiplying the intervention's effects:

Thanks to this process, the City's administration and Council are equipped with respective structures - the GWG and Commission of Equal Opportunities (one of the seven commissions of the Council) - capable of advocating for the allocation of adequate resources to the implementation of the GAP. *"Now, we look at the City's issues in-depth, from an engendered perspective. It is the time, that each project and initiative of the City must be looked from a gender perspective. It is a necessity for ensuring better services to the community in Berat",* says the former GEE.

The development of the GAP triggered other actions. Two ongoing projects - the construction of an industrial market and the creation of a 'green area' in one of the City's borough - were reviewed from a gender perspective. Since mainly women run businesses in the City's tourist area, the Directorate of Taxation now applies a temporary tax break of 50 percent to those businesses. Moreover, women in the handicraft business do not pay any tax to the City. There is an internal effort in each directorate within the City to collect and maintain a database of sex-disaggregated data, which in the end helps the City to base its actions and policies on a wide and in-depth social needs assessment. Interest in gender-related policy and budgeting has increased in the Municipality.

● Moving Forward: Lessons Learned and Next Steps

The success of the GAPDC intervention in Berat depended on several factors: political will among municipal officials, the decision to institutionalize coordination mechanisms such as the Gender Working Group, the willingness of officials to include a gender perspective into its local development vision and to allocate resources for specific gender initiatives, and strong municipal leadership to lead efforts at collecting sex-disaggregated data as a means to better inform local policymaking processes.

Lessons learned include the need to build skills and capacity of gender staff at LGU level to conduct gender analysis, before a Gender Action Plan Development Cycle intervention is implemented. Through the intervention, it also became clear that some gender statistics and data do exist at local

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Former Gender Equality Employee, Berat

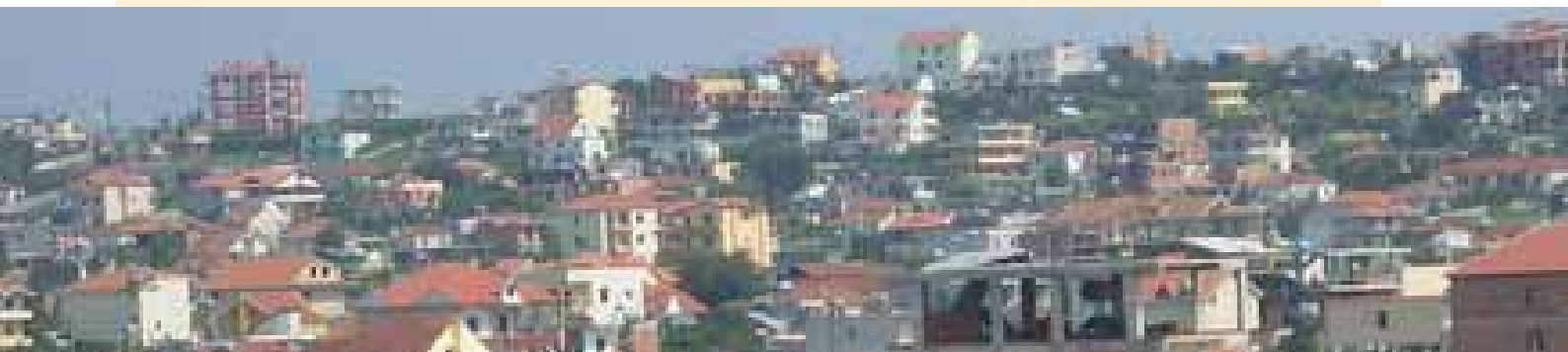
level, but these are not necessarily collected or analyzed in a systematic fashion. Furthermore, continuous support to staff to produce gender-sensitive indicators, as well as ongoing technical assistance for gender mainstreaming in two or three concrete Municipality programs, will be very important in the future.

One of the key lessons learned is the importance of engaging local councilors in the GAP process. *“Looking back at the process, I would prefer more councilors as members of the GWG”* says the GEE. Involving councilors in the GAP helps raise their awareness of and responsiveness towards gender issues. It provides them with skills, knowledge and the right attitude to do a more responsive analysis of the Municipality’s service provision from a gender perspective. In the end, it is up to councilors to approve policies, actions and budgets for gender-related programs and services of the municipality; therefore, working with councilors is one of the preconditions for the achievement of gender equality in the Municipality.



Enkelejda Hajrullaj / Berat

I like
to work with you



■ Case Study 2: Engendering Statistics in the Municipality of Kamza

● The Challenges of Data Collection in a Changing Municipality

Kamza held the administrative status of “commune” until 1996, when social-economic, demographic and urban development transformed it into a Local Administrative Unit composed of Kamza Urban Centre and five other rural administrative units. The political and demographic developments of this period contributed to a massive displacement (migration) of people from rural areas towards major cities such as Kamza. In fact, from 1992 to 1996, the population of Kamza doubled, reaching 91,000 inhabitants in 2010, with about 20,000 families. Such demographic changes in the last decade resulted in the establishment of informal municipal practices and processes related to housing, registration and business development. Nowadays, the Municipality of Kamza still confronts challenges arising from these informal procedures, particularly in the spheres of employment, housing, property, land use, trade, education, health and social care.

There are mainly men who show up and pay business tax, although many businesses are run by women. It is a cultural trait: men consider themselves managers of their family finance, although the women secure revenues.

Business tax specialist, One Stop Shop, Kamza

Kamza Municipality consists of directorates and offices that plan and deliver public services. Accordingly, public relations, water and sewage, city planning, public service, cleaning and greening, local tax and tariffs, and coordination and development comprise the main directorates and development sectors. Each directorate is responsible for drafting and customizing services. As a result, the process of data collection is organized on the basis of practical needs that each directory encounters in its daily work, rather than in a systematic way based on uniform data collection procedures.

Currently, the Municipality possesses neither data collection specialists nor a methodology for systematized data collection. Instead, each directorate collects data directly at the source (e.g. schools) or is itself the source of data. The Coordination and Development Directorate collects data from other directorates, but only on a project basis. This way of collecting and processing data makes it impossible to measure and compare results of municipal projects/programs over the years. The circulation of data inside the municipality from one directorate to another on an ad hoc basis also increases the risk that the same data is processed more than once, even when the source is the same. Furthermore, evidence-based policymaking at the local level is made more difficult by the fact that statistics collected and processed by the national statistics bureau, INSTAT, are aggregates, and do not always reflect local realities.

Much of the data collected is not disaggregated by sex. “*There are mainly men who show up and pay business tax, although many businesses are run by women. It is a cultural trait: men consider themselves managers of their family finance, although the women secure revenues*”, said one business tax specialist. Importantly, however, evidence suggests that data that can be easily disaggregated by sex does in fact exist at source level, for example within schools, health and education services, but that disaggregation is not systematically applied during the collection and processing stages. The absence of sex-disaggregated data and statistics makes it much more difficult to formulate local policies that respond to the different needs of women and men, girls and boys.

● Enhancing Gender-sensitive Data Collection and Processing in Kamza

Following the approval of the Local Development Strategy 2008-2015, the municipality flagged the need to improve its data collection and processing system in order to effectively implement the Strategy. The recent approval of the Gender Action Plan, developed through the assistance of the EiG project in 2010, urges the Municipality to establish a data collection system that includes sex-disaggregated data; this provided further impetus for the Municipality to move towards formalization of data collection. To this end, the EiG project engaged a local expert who worked for months with the administration of Kamza Municipality to engender statistics in the Municipality. Together, they developed a uniform methodology for data collection at the source for every unit within the Municipality, thus making it possible to collect sex-disaggregated data.

The expert supported concrete actions to engender statistics in the Municipality of Kamza, beginning with the development of a **statistical mapping report**, which identified the gaps in data collection and further proposed intervention measures for the Municipality. Interestingly, the statistical mapping report found that data disaggregated by sex does exist at source level. However, disaggregation is not applied during all collection and processing stages, data is sometimes re-aggregated, or it is not passed on to the municipal directorates involved in development planning.

The next step involved developing sex-disaggregation criteria that would be applied to all data collection systems of all units within the municipality; IT personnel were put in charge of upgrading the internal information system. Memorandums of Understanding were then signed between the Municipality of Kamza and other state institutions (such as the Health Clinic and the Education Directorate), to formalize the exchange of collected data twice a year, including sex-disaggregated statistics.

The expert and the municipal administration defined a methodology for sex-disaggregated data collection at the source. For instance, disaggregating by sex data regarding full-time and part-time employees was considered an absolute requirement for drafting gender-sensitive policies on local employment, including access to benefits; disaggregation of this data by sex was therefore prioritized. Likewise, the Social Services Directorate provides incentives for families receiving social welfare and people with disabilities. While the Directorate identifies the sex of the head of family (the person who receives the welfare), family members are identified by age but not by sex. In the education sector, there is now an improved system of collecting sex-disaggregated and age-group data on enrolment and attendance (twice per year). *“We analyzed data and assessed different needs and desires of girls and boys as they enrolled in the new professional high school. Then we enriched the school’s courses equally so boys and girls would choose the profession they liked the most”*, said the former Director of the Coordination and Development Directorate.

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Former Director of Coordination and Development Directorate, Kamza

● Measuring for Policy Results: Gender-sensitive Indicators

Indicators are critical tools for measuring the impact of any policy intervention; together, data collection and measurement processes provide the framework for identifying and formulating policy responses, and subsequently assessing the effectiveness of policy responses. It is essential that measurement tools that track policy implementation and impact are also gender sensitive. Therefore, a key step in the EiG project initiative was to develop indicators that would reflect the local development requirements of Kamza, but would also further compel authorities to collect and process data that is disaggregated by sex.

Based on the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators, i.e. the document that reflects the national gender policy (NSGE-GBV-DV) and all other important international documents on gender equality (CEDAW, EU Roadmap, MDGs), the expert and administration defined a list of indicators relevant for the local level, identified their source, and developed a calculation formula that would apply to local level, for each of the main objectives of the local development strategy. This was indeed a progressive step forward for the Municipality of Kamza in its efforts to comply with national policy and strategy (including gender equality priorities), whilst at the same time making national policies relevant, applicable and measurable at local level. This process would also make it possible in the future to monitor the implementation of the NSGE-GBV at the local level. An example of gender-sensitive indicators included under NSGE-GBV-DV regarding women's economic empowerment, their increased employment opportunities and participation in vocational training is presented below.

Indicators	Formula calculation	Source
% female/% male business owners registered in the commune office (16-65 years old/eligible to work)	Number of female business owners/ total number of businesses. Number of male owners/ total number of businesses (16-65 years old/eligible to work for male and 16-60 years old for female)	Sector of tax/business Municipality of Kamza
% female employees in the business register	Number of female employees divided by total number of employees registered	Sector of tax/business Municipality of Kamza
Number of businesses by economic activity	Number of businesses by economic activity registered in the commune office	Sector of tax/business Municipality of Kamza
Number of HH paying local tax by sex of head of households	Number of HH paying local tax by sex of head of households	Sector of tax/business and Civil Register Municipality of Kamza

● Improving Access to Data: The One Stop Shop

Last, but not least, the outputs of the intervention were introduced and applied to the One Stop Shop. The **One Stop Shop** processes and provides a vast number of services, requests, complaints, application responses, certifications and licenses to citizens of Kamza on a daily basis. Therefore, it was deemed essential to improve the data sharing system employed by the One Stop Shop. With the assistance of the EiG project, all 23 service sectors covered by the One Stop Shop now provide data broken down by sex for any request, complaint or application. At the same time, the One Stop Shop forwards all sex-disaggregated data received to relevant municipal sectors, such as taxation, licensing, employment, education and social welfare. This data is then used by municipal sectors to develop gender-sensitive indicators that measure how Kamza Municipality is actually responding to the needs of women and men.

● Assessing the Impact: Engendering Data Collection and Processing in Kamza

Through the support of the EiG project, the Municipality of Kamza and its directorates now possess a uniform methodology for collecting sex-disaggregated data at the source. As a result, Kamza's local development strategy has been revised to include gender-sensitive indicators, which will serve to

better track how the strategy differently affects women and men in Kamza. Furthermore, the 2010 Annual Statistical Bulletin of Kamza now contains sex-disaggregated data for the first time. More broadly, engendering local statistics at municipality level has been one of the priority areas of the EiG project and UN Women in at least seven other pilot municipalities, including Berat, Elbasan, Gramsh, Kukës, Laç, Lushnjë and Lezha.

Engendering local statistics provides the above municipalities with a solid and diverse collection of local data to support local authority policy interventions. In addition, engendered local statistics in the format of the Annual Statistical Bulletin has increased access to information for partner agencies and collaborators of Kamza Municipality, including both state and non-state institutions, which could be used to customize and introduce new praxis according to sectoral development needs in Kamza. Looking ahead, this intervention will also be used as a basis for including sex-disaggregated data and developing gender-sensitive indicators for the Status of Women Report in Elbasan and the social audit process in Lushnjë, activities which require records of sex-disaggregated data.

As a result of the EiG intervention, it now takes little effort by the municipal staff to make sex-disaggregated data collection routine in day-to-day operations. So, the system has changed, but has the municipality changed? *“I was a little stressed when I presented the Gender Action Plan and the Statistical Mapping Report to the Municipal Council, not because of the Council, but because I was presenting very gender sensitive documents to a male dominated Council”*, said a specialist of the Coordination and Development Directorate. The fact that the Gender Action Plan was presented to the Municipality in combination with significant other evidence-based documents such as the Integrated Gender Document, Annual Statistical Bulletin, and Statistical Mapping Report which supplement the Gender Action Plan’s contents, increases the likelihood that local officials will now include gender dimensions and priorities in local policymaking processes.

● Moving Forward: Making a Sustainable Impact through Engendered Statistics

Engendering statistics not only creates tangible benefits for citizens - both men and women - through improved policymaking; it may also reap financial rewards. Donors are increasingly paying attention to government capacities to collect, process and use sex-disaggregated data in policymaking processes, creating an added incentive for municipalities such as Kamza to prioritize sex-disaggregated data collection.

In order to make engendered statistics a sustainable enterprise, however, Kamza Municipality must ensure that structures tasked with coordinating and monitoring the collection of sex-disaggregated data are properly financed, empowered and supported to fulfill these functions. At local level, Gender Equality Employees (GEEs) are tasked with the ensuring that sex-disaggregated data is collected and utilized by all directorates in the Municipality. However, for GEEs to function effectively, continuous capacity development support is required and the GEE mandate needs to be legitimized. Both require dedication of financial resources as well as political will and commitment among local government leaders.

Further, the institutionalization of gender-sensitive data collection and processes in Kamza requires that all relevant local structures i) receive continuous technical support; ii) are aware of the benefits of these processes and are clearly incentivized to support these; and iii) acknowledge that they are ultimately accountable to women and men citizens of Kamza. With concrete initiatives in place to engender data collection processes, Kamza is well-positioned to address these challenges.

I was a little stressed when I presented the Gender Action Plan and the Statistical Mapping Report to the Municipal Council, not because of the Council, but because I was presenting very gender sensitive documents to a male dominated Council.

Specialist, Coordination and Development Directorate

► **Sample: Sex-Disaggregated Indicators in the Kamza Local Development Strategy**

The list of general indicators for the local development strategy's implementation and monitoring, which can be disaggregated by sex, based on the local strategic document, includes the following indicators:

	Definition of indicator	Calculation formula	Source of data
1	Number of inhabitants, disaggregated by sex	number	Civil Registry Office, Kamza Municipality Civil Registry Office, Kamza Municipality
2	Number of families, by sex of family head	number	Civil Registry Office, Kamza Municipality
3	Number of newcomer families, by sex of family head	number	Civil Registry Office, Kamza Municipality
4	Number of departed families, by sex of the family head	number	Civil Registry Office, Kamza Municipality
5	Number of families receiving SW, by sex of family head	number	Social welfare sector
6	Number of over-18 emigrants, by sex	number	Civil Registry Office, Kamza Municipality
7	Number of students, disaggregated by sex	number	Municipal education sector
8	Number of students attending high school, by sex and age-group	number	Municipal education sector
9	Number of children under 6, disaggregated by sex	number	Civil Registry Office
10	Number of cars by sex of the owner	number	One Stop Shop sector
11	Number of teachers by sex/age-group and education level they teach in	number	Education sector
12	Number of doctors, by sex and age-group	number	May be collected by education sector or Coordination and Development Directorate
13	Number of nurses, by sex and age-group	number	May be collected by education sector or Coordination and Development Directorate
14	Annual per capita income, by sex and age	number	This data is collected through surveys
15	Number of businesses, by sex of the owner	number	Business tax office
16	Number of pensioners, by sex and age-group	number	Civil register
17	Number of counselors, by sex	number	Mayor's cabinet
18	Number of business associations and number of their members, by sex and age	number	Coordination and Development Directorate
19	Average per capita consumption, by sex and age	number	This data is collected through surveys

20	Number of students not attending compulsory education, by sex and age	number	Education sector
21	Number of crafts businesses, by owner's sex and age	number	Coordination and Development Directorate or the employment office at the One Stop Shop



■ Case Study 3: Participatory Budgeting in the Municipality of Elbasan

● The Context: Introducing Participatory Budgeting in Elbasan

For several years the Municipality of Elbasan has worked to better address citizens' needs and interests. Numerous positive changes have been achieved, especially in recent years, thanks to the willingness and openness of municipal officials to work together with the community in Elbasan. The Municipality follows one simple principle: to serve all citizens equally, regardless of socio-economic, gender, religious or political differences.

Participatory budgeting (PB) is one initiative introduced by the Municipality in 2004, which aimed at strengthening the participatory local governance approach in Elbasan. Participatory budgeting is a method through which women and men influence local decision-making and allocation of public resources in order to better reflect the needs and priorities of the community. By doing so, the Municipality of Elbasan complies with Law No. 8652 "On Organization and Functioning of the Local Governments", which obliges local government units and respective councils to hold public consultations before passing the local budget.

Participatory budgeting has been implemented in two major phases in Elbasan. The initial phase, implemented between 2004 and 2007, was aimed at involving the community and defining priority issues to be included in the annual municipal budget. During this phase, the Municipality introduced the participatory budgeting concept, and engaged different government and civil society actors to support its implementation.

● Where are the women? Applying a Gender Lens to the Participatory Budgeting Process

During the implementation of the first phase, different stakeholders noted that women participated in meetings at an average rate of between 15 and 20 percent. This resulted in the definition of priority issues that often did not reflect women's specific needs and concerns. *"There were neighborhoods where women brought up some issues during the meeting, however their issues were not defined as priorities because of the low numbers of women who were able to vote for their priorities"*, said one of the participants at a meeting held in the "Haxhia" neighborhood of Elbasan.

The equal participation of women and men in local decision-making is a requirement for good governance. Yet rates of women's participation in political and public processes vary greatly in Elbasan. For example, women constitute about 47 percent of the municipal administration, and 36 percent currently hold leadership positions, including as department directors. However, the number of women elected to the Municipal Council is much lower – women represent only 15.5 percent of the Council, and no woman holds a leadership position. Women often do not participate in public socio-economic policymaking processes; when they do, their needs are often not prioritized.

There were neighborhoods where women brought some issues during the meeting, however their issues were not defined as priorities because of the low number of women who were able to vote for their priorities.

Participatory budgeting participant, Elbasan

The low participation of women during the first phase of the PB process became a concern for municipal officials. *“Men and women need and use the environment around them in different ways. There are significant gender differences in priorities, with men naming local facilities and transport as important issues, whereas women often mention the local environment and education”*, said the General Director of Economic & Strategic Policies in the Municipality of Elbasan.

Municipal officials recognized that applying a gender lens to a participatory budgeting process would help reveal the socio-economic relations between gender, poverty and social inclusion, and the different needs and patterns of service use by women and men. The results would demonstrate the need for balanced participation of both women and men to develop local policies and services and allocate resources that better respond to the needs of both women and men. Consequently, the Municipality partnered with UN Women to increase women’s participation in participatory budgeting and introduce a gender perspective into the PB process.

● Gender-sensitive Participatory Budgeting in Practice

What does a gender-sensitive participatory budgeting process look like, and how can participatory budgeting be made more effective by applying a gender lens? During the second phase of the PB process, which began in 2008, the Municipality introduced a new dimension to the process by actively engaging women’s groups. With the support of UN Women, the City administration partnered with two local women’s organizations to conduct a gender analysis of participatory budgeting at the beginning of the process. This exercise helped to identify bottlenecks with regard to the participation of men and women, and also served to highlight how public expenditures have benefited women and men differently.

Following this analysis, PB activities began, with officials gaining a better understanding of how to make the process more inclusive of women. The participatory budgeting process itself usually lasts for 45 days and is managed by the Municipality. The city is divided into 23 neighborhoods where meetings with citizens take place. In order to enhance community participation in PB meetings, the Municipality invited the public by using local media. In addition, leaflets with information about the date, time, and venue for each neighborhood meeting were distributed widely, including venues frequented by women. Citizens were also invited through notices distributed door to door or by phone, by the staff of the Municipality. The facilitating organizations arranged preparatory meetings with women citizens, aimed at better preparing women to articulate their concerns during the official meetings. In addition, training was delivered to municipal administration officials tasked with managing the PB process, on how to encourage women and vulnerable groups’ active participation. Thanks to this preparatory effort by the local organizations, more women participated in PB in 2010 - 569 out of 1241 participants (45 percent), including from marginalized groups such as mothers with children with challenging disabilities, divorced women, widows, survivors of domestic violence and Roma women.

Each neighborhood discussed and decided on its own priority issues. A Commissioner - a representative from each of 23 neighborhoods was appointed to the Central Commission through a voting process. The PB in 2010 marked a high point in women’s representation as Commissioners - 11 out of 23, or 8 more compared to the year 2008. These 11 women Commissioners exercised their vote in the Central Commission, thus increasing the decision-making powers of women in determining priority issues to be presented to the Municipal Council. Such priority issues were then

Men and women need and use the environment around them in different ways. There are significant gender differences in priorities, with men naming local facilities and transport as important issues, whereas women often mention the local environment and education.

General Director of Economic & Strategic Policies, Municipality of Elbasan

With the support of UN Women, the Municipality of Elbasan has created a gender-sensitive model of PB.

Representative of the Municipality of Elbasan

passed to the Municipal Council when budget discussions took place; as the meetings were open, this was another opportunity for women and men of Elbasan to participate in and monitor the process.

The PB has served also to enhance the understanding of municipal administration officials of the socio-economic situation in the city and in each neighborhood, and their willingness to seek citizens' opinion and assessment of city services. It has turned into a practical approach for building direct contacts with the citizens of Elbasan.

With the support of UN Women, the Municipality of Elbasan has created a stable gender-sensitive model of PB which consists of:

- Capacity building and gender awareness raising of women and men, to enable their participation at all levels of the PB process (through local organization support);
- Mentoring and confidence building trainings to support women's participation at city-wide level (through local organization support);
- Capacity building of administration officials, elected councilors and the community around gender issues in participatory processes and service delivery (with experts);
- Ensuring gender balance at all stages of the PB process, and if there is imbalance, considering mechanisms such as gender quotas and targets to address this; and
- Monitoring whether the PB is enabling gender balanced participation and whether the process is meeting both men's and women's needs (local organizations and Municipality).

● **(Gender) Budgeting for Results: Increasing Women's Participation in Participatory Budgeting**

As a result of the cooperation between UN Women and local civil society organizations, women's participation rate reached between 40 and 50 percent. Women now see PB as an opportunity to influence municipal budgetary decisions. In 2009, the presence of women in the participatory budgeting process resulted in an increased number of gender-sensitive mini-projects financed, from 14 (2007) to 24. The available municipal resources to support gender equality were 4 times higher compared with the previous year.

With the support of UN Women, from year to year, there has been an increased number of active women in the PB process (from 10 to 30 percent in 2009, to 45 percent in 2011), as well as an increased number of elected women to the Central Commission (from 3 in 2009 and 2010 to 11 in 2011). The number of approved projects that take into consideration women's needs has also increased.

● **Moving Forward: Lessons Learned and Next Steps**

"From year to year we look back at the process and there are definitely things that need to be done differently", said one of the facilitators of the PB process. Increasing the share of the municipal budget for proposed projects will increase community interest, and more women and men will participate in PB; this may in turn create unrealistic expectations of the Municipality and of their budgets. Therefore, an analysis to what extent a priority project has been completed should be provided and shared with citizens each year before the PB process begins. Women and men must be given the opportunity to decide whether any pending projects should remain on the priority list or not. This has a direct impact on women and local women's groups, as a few projects identified by them,

such as restoration of green areas, were not implemented due to the shifting of municipal budget resources to road construction.

The municipal administration should find a way to bring municipal councilors closer to the PB process, especially by participating in direct meetings with the community. This would provide councilors with a broader picture of issues and needs of the community. In return, it is hoped that councilors will be more sensitive and attentive towards the community in Elbasan.

What are the next steps? The monitoring of projects implemented by the Municipality in the framework of participatory budgeting is a necessity to be carried out not only by the City's administration but primarily by women and men participants. For this purpose, the introduction of social auditing, a tool for monitoring and assessing local service delivery by the community is likely an option in the near future. So far, in collaboration by the NPO "Gender Alliance for Development Center" (GADC), the EiG project has assisted communities by building their capacities for undertaking social auditing in Gramsh, Berat, Kamza and Lushnjë. This is only the first phase, which saw the establishment of a framework basis and the definition of targets and responsibilities of participants in social auditing, and this initial phase must be followed by concrete monitoring activities in these municipalities.



■ Case Study 4: Only together can we fight domestic violence: The case of Gramsh

■ Domestic Violence in Gramsh

Fighting this phenomenon is a big challenge and no one can do it alone. But together, we can do a lot and we can contribute to managing and reducing this phenomenon in our city.

Inspector Zhupani, Gramsh Municipality

Effectively responding to and addressing domestic violence is an issue of concern for local level institutions in Gramsh as in many other municipalities across Albania. In fact, despite the adoption of the law on domestic violence in June 2007, until 2008, no protocol existed for responding to and recording cases of domestic violence at local level in the country⁶. Lacking information and a specialized institution of response, many family members who suffered

There have been many cases in which women and girls were without any alternative, so they had to return to their homes, where violence incidents often increased in severity and in frequency.

Inspector Zhupani, Gramsh Municipality

from violence addressed themselves to the police station of Gramsh city, as the only institution that victims and their supporters knew. The police station was expected to deliver the various services necessary for comprehensively responding to domestic violence cases: psychological support, legal support, shelter, and other services that help create a life free from violence. However, “the police station itself and its officers were not prepared to provide victims with the variety of services they needed, although the officers tried to support them in line with the new requirements introduced through the amended law on domestic violence” - says Inspector Zhupani, the police inspector responsible for dealing with DV cases. “There have been many cases in which women and girls were without any alternative, so they had to return to their homes, where violence incidents often increased in severity and in frequency.”

● Building on Strong Foundations: The Importance of Coordinated Action

Taking into consideration this reality and at the request of the Municipality, the “Equity in Governance” project decided to address the Gramsh case to “Refleksione” Association, an NGO dedicated to supporting victims of domestic violence and advocating on domestic violence issues. Together, EiG and Refleksione developed a project intervention for Gramsh Municipality and in December 2010, started implementation of the six-month project “Building a sustainable system for addressing domestic violence at local level”. “Fighting this phenomenon is a big challenge and no one can do it alone. But together, we can do a lot and we can contribute to managing and reducing this phenomenon in our city” says Inspector Zhupani.

Importantly, this initiative complemented and built on previous efforts by national and international actors to improve implementation of the law on domestic violence. For example, between 2007 and

⁶ Establishment of a cross-referral system is obligatory by law for all local government units. In early 2011, a Council of Ministers’ Decision (Decision No.344) was signed, confirming the mandatory character of the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence (CCR) at local level.

2009, the Network Against Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking (NAGaT) implemented the project “Making it Real: Implementing the Law against Domestic Violence in Albania”, with the support of the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women (UNTF).

In the framework of this project, the overall concept of the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence (CCR) was refined and tested: First, a Council against Domestic Violence (CaDV) is established in a municipality. The CaDV serves as an overarching reference mechanism to coordinate response to domestic violence among different government and non-government actors. The Council gathers representatives of local government institutions, women’s NGOs, social service agencies, health and education departments, law enforcement and the judiciary. Through targeted trainings, the capacity of different institutions is then built to better implement aspects of the DV law, including procedures for responding to cases and issuing Protection Orders.

Gramsh Municipality is one of currently eighteen municipalities in Albania that have piloted the “coordinated community response (CCR) to domestic violence” (DV) model, technically supported by Refleksione, the Network against Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking, and the Center for Evaluation, Management and Training (CEMT). Efforts have been financially supported by international donors such as UN Trust Fund, UNDP, the EiG project, Welthaus Graz, and USAID. The CCR system is a means of mapping the different mandates and activities of, as well as services provided by, different actors active in the area of responding to and combating domestic violence. By doing so, authorities identify gaps in the existing system, and develop a more effective and coordinated response to domestic violence cases. Building on this strong foundation, the EiG-Refleksione project aimed at establishing the CCR as an effective model for dealing with cases of domestic violence in Gramsh Municipality.

● How does the “Coordinated Community Response” Mechanism Work?

The effectiveness of the CCR depends upon the active participation of representatives of different government and non-government stakeholders responsible for and involved in responding to domestic violence as mandated by law. In Gramsh, the CCR project brought together institutional representatives from both Gramsh and Elbasan municipalities, who are responsible for

The Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence Mechanism in Action

The effectiveness of the CCR mechanism depends upon a number of inter-related factors:

1. Institutional Structure and

Support: A dedicated Gender Equality and Domestic Violence office properly equipped to support the CCR system.

2. Professional Gender Skills: A GE & DV office staffed with gender equality experts properly mandated and empowered to coordinate the CCR and gender equality initiatives more generally.

3. Regular Coordination Meetings:

Regular meetings of representatives responsible for implementing the law on DV, to ensure coordination, effective response and address emerging challenges and gaps.

4. Awareness Raising: Continuous efforts to raise awareness among both the public and local authorities that domestic violence is a human rights violation.

5. Capacity Building: Intensive and tailored capacity building for actors mandated to implement the law on domestic violence, such as law enforcement, the judiciary, and health and social services.

6. Data Collection Systems: Systems to properly gather, process and record information about domestic violence cases.

7. Support Services for Victims: Tailored services offering legal, psychological, rehabilitative and other types of support to victims and their families, safe accommodation as well as mechanisms such as 24-hour telephone lines and professional operators, to properly respond to cases.

implementing domestic violence legislation as well as referring and managing domestic violence cases. Specifically, this multi-disciplinary system is composed of representatives of the Municipality, police department, health institutions, educational department, forensic science departments, as well as courts (of Elbasan).

The Municipality also opened an office for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence (GE & DV) in the Municipality, and appointed a GE & DV specialist as coordinator. The GE & DV specialist was supported financially for the first six months by the EiG project, and subsequently integrated into the Municipality structure (and budget).

The GE & DV specialist in Gramsh, as in other pilot CCR municipalities, actually covers two main portfolios. Firstly, the specialist fulfills the position of “Gender Equality Employee” (GEE), the gender structure mandated to be established at municipal level through the adoption of the law on gender equality. Secondly, the specialist serves as municipal focal point for the CCR mechanism specifically.

More generally, in many respects, this dual function of the GE & DV specialist has guided different facets of gender mainstreaming that are the responsibility of Local Government Units. Activities include, for example, collecting sex-disaggregated data and statistics, conducting gender analysis to support gender policy development at local level, implementing gender-related interventions, responding to women’s specific needs and concerns at community level, and facilitating coordination with gender mechanisms at different government levels as well as with civil society.

It is important to note that in Gramsh, the EiG project actually linked the establishment of an office for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence and implementation of the CCR-DV on the one hand, to the formalization of the GEE position within the municipality. In other words, in the Memorandum of Understanding between Gramsh Municipality and the EiG project to establish the CCR mechanism, EiG assistance was made conditional on the formalization of the GEE as an official municipal structure. This step helped create and formalize the *institutional structure* for both gender equality and domestic violence in Gramsh, thereby ensuring sustainability of the intervention beyond the project.

Through the EiG-Refleksione intervention, a number of capacity building and awareness raising activities were developed and implemented, which aimed at building awareness of different institutions of their responsibilities under the domestic violence law. In addition, five meetings were organized which brought together the leaders of the CCR member institutions. These meetings allowed representatives to assess the functioning of the CCR, discuss emerging challenges, and share their ideas for making the system more effective. Extensive awareness raising campaigns were designed and implemented to sensitize citizens about the issue of domestic violence, and to inform

them both about the CCR mechanism and the existence of the Gender Equality and Domestic Violence office within the Municipality.

Furthermore, a telephone help-line for the CCR mechanism is now operational, with staff based in the Municipality that support citizens in reporting domestic violence cases, and ensure that the right actors are deployed to respond properly. In collaboration with the NPO “Center for Evaluation, Management and Training” (CEMT), a database system was installed in the office for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence,

through which the GE & DV specialist periodically records DV cases as well as manages response to such cases by different relevant government and non-governmental actors.

Now I am very clear and I know very well who to call and where to seek help as well as support if I were to experience domestic violence.

Citizen of Gramsh Municipality

● Designing Success: Effectively Coordinating Response

The collaboration and commitment of citizens, police, the GE & DV specialist, as well as of other institutions, are key to the successful long-term functioning of the CCR in Gramsh. Only through coordinated action can institutions properly and effectively respond to domestic violence.

“Now I am very clear and I know very well who to call and where to seek help as well as support if I were to experience domestic violence”, says one of the participants invited to the awareness raising activities.

Another important factor which contributed to the successful introduction of the CCR in Gramsh Municipality was linking the establishment of the CCR-DV system to the formalization of the GEE office. Though by law all municipalities are required to appoint GEEs, in reality this has not been the case in Albania. Without institutional support in the form of a professional gender office (with access to sufficient budgetary and technical resources), the CCR will not function effectively. As a result of this project, Gramsh Municipality has now included the GEE in the official organigrama of the LGU, and has taken financial responsibility for funding this position.

Establishment of the CCR has also influenced the way how representatives of different local institutions consider and address a problem. While previously working in a rather isolated manner in and for separate entities, the establishment of the CCR has clearly shown them that gender equality is a cross cutting issue and that evident problems, like domestic violence, require joint action, taking on board a variety of government actors and institutional sites.

“I feel I have really grown professionally, now that I have many of my colleagues from other institutions committed to working together and to supporting proper responses to cases of domestic violence”, said Inspector Zhupani.

Lastly, the establishment of the CCR system was directly linked to broader policymaking processes at local level. The local gender action plan (GAP), developed in 2010 through the support of the EiG project, identified domestic violence as a priority concern. The CCR was subsequently deemed an effective model for addressing this policy priority. Linking the CCR system to, and embedding it in, the local policy framework, rather than keeping it as a stand-alone intervention, makes the CCR an integral part of the broader local development strategy of Gramsh Municipality.

● Moving Forward: Empowering Gender Equality Employees for Sustainable CCR Success

The establishment of the CCR-DV system in Albanian municipalities is a significant step towards the safeguarding of women’s rights through the coordination of different government and non-government entities at all levels.

Challenges remain, however, in raising awareness among both the population and local officials themselves that domestic violence is first and foremost a human rights violation, and therefore the responsibility of local governance institutions to prevent, combat and address. Awareness raising efforts must be further expanded and sustained, in order to reach the entire population in Gramsh Municipality. Efforts are under way to also reach out to the communes and rural areas near Gramsh where access to proper help and support remains highly limited.

“I feel I have really grown professionally, now that I have many of my colleagues from other institutions committed to working together and to supporting proper responses to cases of domestic violence”.

Inspector Zhupani, Gramsh Municipality

Most importantly, the value of the GEE remains contested in Gramsh, despite the variety of tasks that the GEE performs – not only in coordinating the CCR mechanism but also in leading gender mainstreaming efforts more generally. Local Government Units across Albania, including Gramsh, need to recognize that the Gender Equality Employee is an essential component of the municipal structure, and plays a key role in ensuring gender equality goals are developed, implemented and monitored at the local level.



Ernida Taga / Krujë

Woman
her word, her life.

■ Case Study 5: Citizen Score Card in the Municipality of Lushnjë

● Service Provision in the Municipality of Lushnjë

The Municipality of Lushnjë provides services and care for more than 16,000 families. Technically, the design of services and programmes for citizens is carried out by the specialists and senior staff of twelve directorates, who are also involved in drafting and approving the mid-term budget. However, by 2010/11, service provision had been affected by political developments at municipal level.

As a result, for a period, the effectiveness of planning, coordination, and policymaking processes in the Municipality significantly decreased. By mid-2011, the consequences were strongly felt: the local development strategy had yet to be approved. The only official document guiding policymaking and public service provision was the mid-term budget for 2011-2013. Further, sector directorates were responsible for planning and formulating service policies, as the Municipality had not established a directorate mandated to coordinate local policymaking and service provision processes. A high turnover rate in the municipal administration over the past two years had also resulted in the loss of institutional memory, and insufficient capability among local officials to design services, policies and actions in response to the community's needs. In this climate, women's needs and gender commitments in terms of service delivery were not prioritized.

We all have equal rights, and the community stands above all. The government must serve the community.

Participant of CSC process, Lushnjë

● What is the Citizen Score Card Approach?

Given the difficult governance situation, the Municipality of Lushnjë sought interventions that would facilitate communication between the municipality and the community, to better assess service provision satisfaction and identify service delivery priorities. One possible solution identified was the introduction of the *citizen score card approach*, a process recently applied in Albania by UN Women.

The **Citizen Score Card** (CSC) is a methodology first introduced by the World Bank and UNDP⁷ to enhance *community-based monitoring* of public service delivery. The CSC process encourages citizens to directly assess service provision by local authorities, based on existing municipal policy documents, such as budgets, local development strategies, and programmes. As such, it is an important tool for building municipal accountability for service provision, and enhancing its responsiveness to citizen needs. Furthermore, because the CSC introduces public forums to facilitate direct contact with service providers, citizens are empowered to articulate their needs, concerns and feedback in the public sphere.

It is important to note that the CSC approach is not automatically gender-sensitive. In introducing the CSC process in Albania, therefore, UN Women explicitly used the score card as a means to empower women as well as men to identify their public service needs, and assess response to these needs by local authorities. In this regard, the starting point for the introduction of the CSC was the

⁷ The original approach developed by the World Bank and UNDP was termed the "community score card".

“**Women’s Manifesto**” developed in 2009 with the support of UN Women, in the run-up to the 2009 elections. Signed by more than 20 local non-profit organizations, the Women’s Manifesto outlines four thematic priorities for empowering women in Albania:

- Equal political and decision-making participation and representation;
- Ending violence against women;
- Improving women’s economic status; and
- Enhancing social services, health care and education.

The “Equity in Governance” project deemed this gender-sensitive CSC process relevant for Lushnjë both because it aimed at revitalizing community action and because it explicitly intended to empower less represented groups, particularly women, through the process. *“We all have equal rights, and the community stands above all. The government must serve the community”*, said one of the participants while discussing the effectiveness of Municipality’s service delivery. Accordingly, Lushnjë became a pilot municipality in the application of the CSC approach in Albania in 2011.

The Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC), a national non-profit organization based in Tirana, was selected to facilitate the CSC process in Lushnje on behalf of EiG. The selection was based on the experience GADC had gained thanks to application of CSC in other Local Government Units in the framework of UN Women and UNDP projects.

GADC intended that the score card process in Lushnje take into consideration the Municipality’s particular governance situation, as well as its socio-economic context and priorities. In cooperation with EiG, therefore, GADC modified the score card process to address the following issues:

- The need for citizens to assess and monitor service delivery not only in reference to the Women’s Manifesto priorities, but also in reference to objectives, priorities and activities outlined in **local gender equality policy documents**. These included the recently developed Gender Action Plan of the Municipality of Lushnjë, and those indicators of the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators that had been identified to be relevant for and applicable to the local level.
- The need for a **comprehensive capacity building approach** to ensure citizens were prepared to properly monitor score card implementation by authorities.

In this way, the score card process as adapted to Lushnjë addressed fundamental local governance issues, and explicitly assessed the Municipality’s capacities to address national policy commitments related to gender equality through its service provision.

● **The CSC Process in Lushnjë: Empowering Women and Men to Assess Service Delivery**

The score card process was used to assess community’s perceptions, judgments and priorities in a participatory manner; women were identified as the main target group of the activity. The process lasted four months and was designed in six steps:

1) Preparatory meetings: Initial meetings with authorities and specialists of the Municipality were organized. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the process and its benefit to local authorities, and seek their commitment throughout its implementation. Emphasis was placed on the importance of the CSC process for improving local governance, by bringing the community closer to local government.

2) Community-based meetings between local authorities and citizens: GADC organized three focus groups meetings, each with 15 participants. Invitations were extended to vulnerable groups of women and girls in the City of Lushnjë, resulting in a 70 percent female participation rate. Focus group discussions with citizens, government and non-government actors helped in defining key gender priorities among the four thematic areas outlined in the Women's Manifesto.

Further, the meetings also took into account local policy documents on gender equality, including those output documents developed as part of the Gender Action Plan Development Cycle, facilitated by the EiG project in the Municipality of Lushnje in 2010. This step was important for ensuring that the gender equality priorities which focus group participants identified were harmonized and in line with local gender needs and realities, in addition to those identified at national level through the Women's Manifesto and contained in the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators.

3) Developing score cards based on focus group input: Based on the meetings, GADC facilitated the formulation of an "input tracking score card" and a "community generated performance score card". These documents contained the gender equality priorities identified by focus group participants, and a score card for subsequently evaluating local government service provision in regard to the priorities identified. Focus group participants scored service provision in reference to the priorities contained in the score card.

During the *first phase* of the process, the score card served not only to assess local service delivery to women and men as well as capture local-level gender equality service provision priorities, but also to act as an advocacy tool, to remind local authorities of their gender equality commitments. The *second phase* of the process focused on using the score cards as a tool for evaluating the Municipality's delivery of services and programmes, as well as developing a plan for introducing regular community monitoring of service provision.

4) Identification of statistical evidence and data: Municipal data about employment, population, budgets, social services, education, health care centers and other topics was compiled, in order to create a socio-economic baseline for assessing service delivery. A list of indicators was developed in order to guide an audit of municipal services and programs. During this step, GADC emphasized the importance of using the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators as a point of reference, and in particular using specific indicators relevant to the local level. These had been previously identified, compiled and listed in the Statistical Mapping Report produced for the Municipality of Lushnjë in the framework of the EiG project. At the same time, focus group participants developed a work plan for future auditing of service provision from a gender perspective, which included timelines, the baseline data collected by the Municipality, and local Gender Action Plan priorities.

5) Semi-structured interviews: Interviews with municipal staff, directors, councilors, the mayor and deputy, Gender Working Group and the Gender Equality Employee were organized, to enable local officials to self-evaluate their service provision. The self-evaluation was based on the gender

Using Citizen Score Cards to Identify Gender Priorities in Lushnjë

- 1. Preparatory meetings** held with municipal officials, staff, community leaders and SC facilitators.
- 2. Community-based meetings** with citizens to identify priority issues from four pillars of Women's Manifesto, in line with local Gender Action Plan.
- 3. Development of performance score cards** based on focus group input from both men and women.
- 4. Development of indicators and statistical data base**, based on local Gender Action Plan and Statistical Mapping Report, to use score card as monitoring tool.
- 5. Semi-structured interviews with officials**, where officials conduct self-evaluation of public service provision.
- 6. Finalization of score cards**, with recommendations for enhancing service delivery in priority areas; final forum to present findings to Municipality and public.

priorities already scored by the community (in turn, based on priorities identified in reference to the four main thematic areas of the Women's Manifesto and local Gender Action Plan objectives). This step allowed for a comparison between the community's assessment of local government service provision, and local authorities' self-assessment of service provision.

As the Local Official Self-Evaluation Results Table indicates, it is interesting to note that on two occasions, officials actually gave themselves a lower grade than the community did, and on two occasions, local officials and the community gave the same grade.

Looking Ahead: Finalizing the Score Card Process in Lushnjë

Local Official Self-Evaluation Results

1) Equal participation and representation in politics

(Self-evaluation: SCORE 1; Community: SCORE 3)

Authorities noted that Council meetings are open for the community to attend, but women's groups and community show limited interest in participating.

2) Gender-based violence:

(Self-evaluation: SCORE 2; Community: SCORE 2)

While municipal structures are being established to address violence, the municipal budget is limited, there is no (emergency) shelter in the city, and a coordinated response by all state institutions is needed. [Note: the CCR was subsequently established].

3) Economic state of women and men:

(Self-evaluation: SCORE 1; Community: SCORE 2)

The Municipality is eager to tackle this issue; the lack of municipal budget due to a political budget blockade in the City Council that reduced investments.

4) Social, health care, education services:

(Self-evaluation: SCORE 2; Community: SCORE 3)

The lack of municipal budget approval and lack of central government's budget for services that require central interventions, such as health care and education systems, results in limited local social services.

6) Finalizing the score cards: The last step of the process focuses on updating the score cards to include the results of the local government self-evaluation, as well as the specific issues, timeline, indicators, budget developed as part of the compilation of statistical data. **A final forum** was held, gathering key actors such as the members of focus group teams, local government representatives, and citizens - both men and women. The forum brought together local authorities and citizens - particularly women - to discuss their respective scoring of municipal service delivery. A set of recommendations were presented at the forum, focusing on how local authorities and councilors can use the score cards to develop concrete actions for improving service delivery to both women and men in Lushnjë.

● **Evaluating the Impact of the CSC Process in Lushnjë**

The application of the CSC approach to Lushnjë resulted in the creation of a tool to mobilize the community around gender equality issues. Indeed, the process empowered them to prioritize their different gender needs and issues in relation to local service provision and service decision-making.

In addition, it raised awareness of local government, including municipal councilors, of the importance of considering gender-related issues in the design of policies, actions and services, to better respond to the diverse needs of women and men in the Municipality. The self-evaluation process encouraged local officials themselves to assess the quality of service delivery, and to identify gaps in services to women and men. Routine assessment and evaluation applied by sector directorates in the Municipality has now been enacted, both from an internal (directorate) basis and an external community-based approach - which ensures a community perspective is included in local decision-making.

Further, through the process, GADC was able to identify gaps in community capacity to effectively *monitor* local service provision. As a result, project staff proposed the introduction of "social auditing" - an empowering process which helps the beneficiary

community to express their opinions on the performance of local government - as a means to build community capacity to not only temporarily assess service delivery, but to monitor service delivery on a regular basis over time.

To this end, about fifteen participants from the municipal administration, community, civil society, business and academia, attended a two-day training on social auditing in September 2011. The training provided participants not only with information on social auditing and its role, but also trained community members to become social auditors. Social auditors are then prepared to monitor and assess public services based on legal requirements and other obligations deriving from national and international gender frameworks.

● Moving Forward: Enhancing Gender-sensitive Community Monitoring of Service Delivery

Social auditing is an important tool for enabling community monitoring of local service provision. With social auditing the Municipality gains a comprehensive methodology to identify how effective its policies, services and programmes are, and how they can be customized to address concerns of the men and women in Lushnjë. However, community monitoring is extremely difficult to **institutionalize** if local authorities do not support and, indeed, drive the process.

“Building the capacities of about 15 persons as social auditors, in a city where the community lacks activism and participation in municipal decision-making, is a good thing to do. But, it is imperative to train and work with the City’s Councilors on social auditing – they should acknowledge the power of CSC and social auditing”, said one of the participants. In the future, GADC is planning to focus on developing social auditing as a community monitoring tool.

Lastly, empowering men and women citizens to identify gaps in local service delivery, and encouraging local authorities to evaluate their own performance, is a key outcome in itself. However, the impact of this outcome will be limited if local authorities do not act on the gaps identified, and commit finances to address service delivery gaps to both women and men. *“Financing gender-related activities is now understood by the Finance and Budgeting Directorate and by the municipal administration, but we need to take on board the Mayor and the Local Council to approve such financing”* said one specialist of the Finance and Budgeting Directorate.

● Annex: Sample Scorecard Lushnjë

a) Equal participation and representation in politics and decision-making: According to participants, gender quotas are not respected by political parties at local level. Most local decisions are taken only by political leaders, based on their political viewpoint, therefore women do not have a say in decision-making. In addition, local women’s political forums are too weak to pursue local issues through their political leadership. However, the Municipality has taken progressive steps by nominating women as directors of local services. Based on the above, the community scored local authority service delivery in this sphere with a “3” on average, a moderate score, meaning that there is progress, but further actions are required to improve women’s participation in politics and decision-making.

Building the capacities of about 15 persons as social auditors, in a city where community lacks activism and participation in municipal decision-making, is a good thing to do. But, it is imperative to train and work with the City’s Councilors on social auditing – they should acknowledge the power of CSC and social auditing.

Participant of CSC process, Lushnjë

b) Gender based violence: According to participants, there is a lack of information and awareness on this issue. The community is not aware of legal protective measures, or of local structures that can help and protect survivors of gender based violence, such as a social center, a 24h help-line to report violence and a local shelter. The lack of specialized structure/persons in the Municipality was considered one of the main reasons that women do not report gender based violence. Further, none of the local political party candidates addressed this issue during the electoral campaign in May 2011. The community gave the Municipality a score of "2" on average, indicating that the local government needs to improve its response to gender based violence⁸.

c) Economic state of women and men: In Lushnjë, local policies that promote employment are weak. In the past, some projects aimed at promoting employment have been implemented, but no major impact has been achieved. Women noted that men are the main beneficiary of economic aid, a legal weakness which needs to be amended. According to participants, the bureaucratic procedure for granting economic aid to families in need is challenging. Medium and long term policies are needed to increase employment of women in Lushnjë. On average, this issue was scored as "2" by the community, meaning that the overall employment and women's employment situation in particular should be urgently addressed by municipal decision makers and central government.

d) Social, health and education services: The Municipality offers few services in these spheres according to participants, and they are not provided in time and with the quality needed. This is particularly noticeable in regards to water supply, urban waste collection, street lighting, schools and kindergartens. However, further maintenance and improvement of such services is critical to local socio-economic growth - especially the provision of sufficient public schools and kindergartens- so that women would have more time to engage in income-generating work. Other services such as health care clinics are in a bad state. On average, the community gave local authorities a score of "3", a moderate score, which should encourage local government to implement further actions to improve social, health, reproductive health, and education services.

8 In collaboration with "Refleksione" Association, the EiG project subsequently supported the establishment of the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence in Lushnjë. The activity was completed in late 2011. As in the Municipality of Gramsh, simultaneous establishment and formalization of the Municipality's Gender Equality/Domestic Violence Employee was intricately linked to the intervention.

■ Case Study 6: Gender Analysis of the Agricultural Policy in the Municipality of Užice, Serbia

● Introduction: Developing Agricultural Potential in Municipality Užice

The Municipality of Užice lies on the banks of the Đetinja river in western Serbia. Agricultural production is a core component of the Municipality's economy; Užice has developed strong export-oriented agricultural industries, particularly of fresh fruits and vegetables. To support agriculture production in the Municipality, the local government has developed an agricultural assistance program. Such programs provide small grants to agricultural households to support cattle breeding, fruit and vegetable production, and beekeeping industries.

While both women and men are eligible to apply for and receive grants through the assistance program, women are rarely recipients of such funds. In order to find out why women are not benefitting equally from the programme, civil society organization "Women's Center Užice" (WCU) decided to undertake a *gender analysis* of the programme, the first such gender analysis of a municipal budget line for agriculture undertaken in Serbia.

● What is Gender Analysis?

Gender analysis is a process of learning about the different roles, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys in a given society, how these differences can create inequalities, and whether these inequalities are taken into account in policies, legislation, programmes and budgets.

Gender analysis can be applied to all policy spheres, as well as different policy processes, including budgeting. In fact, gender analysis of the budget process – often referred to as a component of "gender budgeting" – is a very concrete way of identifying inequalities in how budgetary resources are allocated to women and men, girls and boys.

Both civil society and government actors (including at local level) can undertake gender analyses of policies and budgets. When the findings of such analyses are included in the policymaking process, policies at both local and national levels often better reflect the actual needs, situations and priorities of men and women citizens.

Gender Analysis is a systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development, policies, programs and legislation on women and men that entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned.

UN INSTRAW

● Gender Budget Analysis in Practice: Analyzing Agricultural Assistance to Women and Men in Užice

How did the Women's Center initiate the gender analysis process? Well, the WCU decided that conducting a gender analysis of a budget sector was one concrete way to apply skills learned during a gender-responsive budgeting training organized by the local women's organization Autonomous

Implementing the Gender Budget Analysis Initiative in Užice

1. Planning the initiative
2. Selecting and developing a gender analysis methodology
3. Collecting data from the municipal financial department and from the national treasury
4. Meeting with key stakeholders in the municipality
5. Meeting women involved in agriculture to find out if they knew for the grant program
6. Targeted capacity development

Women's Center.⁹ The training formed part of their project which aimed at increasing the capacities of local NGOs to monitor government spending and analyze expenditure from a gender perspective.

Therefore, in 2010, Women's Center Užice (WCU) decided to conduct a "gender-responsive budget analysis" of aspects of the municipal budget. WCU is a well-established and experienced local women's organization that focuses its work on women's economic empowerment, especially rural women's empowerment. The Center developed a clear plan for conducting the gender analysis of the municipal budget, broadly consisting of six steps.¹⁰

1. Planning a Gender Analysis Initiative

The most important step in the gender budget analysis was to define the goal of the initiative. This required intensive *planning*. Planning included the following activities: defining the subject and objectives of the gender analysis - what would be analyzed and why? Once these were defined, it was important to identify what data was needed and how it would be collected, as well as who would be the key stakeholders.

Women's Center Užice chose to analyze the municipal agricultural budget. In addition to the fact that agricultural policies are important for Užice Municipality, this also allowed WCU to focus its efforts on one specific policy area, and produce specific and concrete recommendations in this sphere. The WCU focused on the budget allocations for agricultural grants in the 2009 municipal budget, which essentially comprised one specific budget line. Then, the WCU defined the objectives of its initiative as follows:

- To analyze the funded program of agriculture grants and to find out if women agricultural producers (holders of agricultural households) have benefited from the program and, if yes, how;
- To find out if the programme responded to needs of women and men in agriculture; and
- To provide recommendations for improvements/changes, if any.

2. Choosing a Methodology

In order to conduct a gender budget analysis, it is important to identify and/or develop an appropriate methodology. The WCU researched different gender analysis methodologies in order to find the most appropriate model for the agricultural sector at local level in Serbia. The WCU identified the Swedish "3R" methodology¹¹ for gender mainstreaming as a relevant gender analysis tool. The 3R method analyzes gender equality as relates to representation, resources and institutions, so as to uncover built-in or systemic discriminatory perspectives and processes. The method was adapted in order to conduct a gender analysis of the agricultural assistance programme budget line of the municipal agricultural budget.

9 Autonomous Women's Center, <http://www.womenngo.org.rs/content/view/345/98/>

10 The WCU was assisted by consultant Aleksandra Vladislavljevic, who also contributed to the development of this case study.

11 Gender Mainstreaming Manual, Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee, Stockholm, 2007.

This methodology was chosen because it allows for an analysis of a programme after it has been implemented, so the timeframe is more flexible. The methodology also encourages direct consultation with programme beneficiaries. Lastly, it allows enough time to prepare recommendations for the next fiscal year.

The choice of methodology is important; a comprehensive gender analysis will not only reveal how many women and men benefit from a specific programme, but also underlying gender dynamics, such as the gendered division of labour, access to and control over resources, and power relations between women and men. Accordingly, the WCU developed a methodology which would allow for:

- An analysis of spending (how the budget was spent in general);
- An analysis of how many women and men participated/were represented in the program; and
- An analysis of how budgetary resources were disbursed to women and men specifically.

3. Collecting Data and Conducting the Gender Analysis

In order to conduct the gender budget analysis, the WCU collected key budget documents, including the line budget for the agricultural assistance programme, policy documents, and statistics from local and national sources. The WCU highlighted the breakdown of grants by sex, and analyzed these. The findings are represented in the tables below.

Table 1 – Representation of women and men applicants in different program components within the analyzed budget line

Number of Applicants in each program component	Total	Men	% M	Female	% F
Number of registered agricultural households per holder	3781	2805	74%	976	26%
Applicants for grants for cattle breeding	700	700	100%	0	0%
Applicants for grants in fruit growing	14	14	100%	0	0%
Applicants for grants in vegetable growing	100	82	82%	18	18%
Applicants for grants in beekeeping	122	120	98%	2	2%
TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	936	916	98%	20	2%

Table 1 reveals that women are holders of agricultural households in 26 percent of cases, compared to 74 percent of men. Women comprised only 2 percent of grant applicants, and women applied in only two out of five program categories.

Table 2 - Representation of women and men among grant receivers in different program components within the analyzed budget line

Number and percentage of women and men grant Receivers in each program component	Total	Male	% M	Female	% F
Receivers of subsidies in cattle breeding	700	700	100%	0	0%
Receivers of subsidies in fruit growing	14	14	100%	0	0%
Receivers of subsidies in vegetables growing	100	82	82%	18	18%
Receivers of grants in beekeeping	122	120	98%	2	2%
TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	936	916	98%	20	2%

Only 2 percent women applied for and received grants through the agriculture programme as compared to 98 percent of men.

Table 3 – Distribution of total funds for three major program components

SPENT VS. ALLOCATED	Allocated	Spent	% spent
Cattle breeding	50.057,98 €	20.273,46 €	40,50%
Fruit growing	21.900,37 €	21.796,00 €	99,52%
Vegetable growing	19.814,62 €	18.584,03 €	93,79%
TOTAL	91.772,97 €	60.653,57 €	66,09%

Table 3 shows that only 66 percent of the planned funds were used. It also shows that in the sector of fruit and vegetable growing (primarily the occupation of women), all planned funds were used, while for cattle breeding - to which the majority of funds were allocated - only 40.50 percent of the funds were absorbed.

Table 4- Distribution of funds per program and men versus women

Distribution of funds in EURO	Total	Men	% M	Female	% F
Amounts given for cattle breeding	20.283,00 €	20.283,00 €	100%	- €	0%
Amounts given for fruit growing	21.796,00 €	21.796,00 €	100%	- €	0%
Amounts given for vegetable growing	18.584,00 €	15.238,00 €	82%	3.346,00 €	18%
TOTAL AMOUNT DISBURSED	60.663,00 €	57.317,00 €	94%	3.346,00 €	6%

Table 4 shows that money has been distributed in the following way: 94 percent or €57,317 was given to men, and only 6 percent or €3346 to women.

4. Consultations with Women and Men Programme Beneficiaries and other Stakeholders

The WCU held consultations with different stakeholders in order to collect as well as verify the findings above. This included interviews with programme beneficiaries - both women and men - programme managers, municipal officials, as well as men and women involved in agricultural production more generally, to determine whether they knew about the assistance programme.

5. Developing Key Recommendations Based on Gender Analysis Findings

Once a gender budget analysis is conducted, which includes both analysis of relevant policy documents as well as consultation with key stakeholders, it is important to develop recommendations based on the findings. The Women's Centre Užice developed these in cooperation with local women's CSOs. The recommendations were based on the key findings emerging from the gender analysis.

For example, the gender budget analysis revealed that the budget for different components of the agricultural assistance programme is not well allocated, as the distribution per program component showed that in the best-funded component, the least amount of money was spent. The analysis also found that in general, women were much less represented among the applicants and grant receivers and, specifically, that the subsectors in which women are primarily engaged – such as vegetable growing and milk processing - were less-well funded or not funded at all. Lastly, the analysis revealed that there was a lack of transparency in accessing information about the programme; 56 women agriculture producers were asked about the program and none of them were aware of the programme grants.

6. Targeted Capacity Development

The WCU found that many of the key stakeholders were not aware of gender budget analysis as a tool, including local gender equality mechanisms (GEMs). Therefore, the WCU engaged in capacity

development at the same time as conducting the gender analysis. Specifically, the WCU focused on a) institution building of local GEMs; and b) training and mentoring of local GEMs, government employees and CSOs. In addition, the WCU also highlighted the need to develop data collection models that allow for sex-disaggregation, a process that is still under development.

● Overcoming Complex Challenges: A Multi-Dimensional Approach

Undertaking a gender budget analysis is a complex task; it requires a great deal of data - not only in the form of statistics and policy documents, but also from beneficiaries and stakeholders; cooperation with different institutions; and an ability to adapt to institutional processes and procedures. The WCU encountered several challenges, including:

- Identifying and modifying a gender analysis methodology applicable for the local context;
- Understanding the limitations and opportunities within local policy development practices and the budgetary system (particularly line item budgets);
- Collecting sex-disaggregated data at the local level and quality data more generally.

The programme was analyzed in 2010, but recommendations were only developed in 2011 - too late to influence the 2011 budget planning process for the agricultural sector. Therefore, conducting a gender budget analysis of a programme that has already been implemented means that it can take some time to introduce reforms; at this moment (at the end of 2011) the agricultural programme is still in implementation in the same form as it was in 2009 and 2010. Furthermore, the gender budget analysis may also be limited in value if the programme it is analyzing is not funded in new budget cycles.

Furthermore, the WCU had to take into account local government budgetary processes, where fiscal discipline and procedural reforms are still being introduced. Likewise, gender equality mechanisms which would support gender budget analysis by providing sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive documentation are not fully functional, which can impact access to data and policy information. In the majority of cases, gender equality mechanisms exist formally, but institutional framework and procedures are not yet fully established and operational.

How did the WCU address these challenges? The WCU learned a number of lessons during the process, which have allowed it to develop a strategic approach to planning and implementing a gender budget analysis process. For example, it found that a gender analysis will have a greater impact on policymakers and local government institutions if:

- ✓ The gender budget analysis is applied to a *policy priority* of the local (or national) government;
- ✓ The gender budget analysis findings identify areas for *policy improvement that have demonstrable benefits for beneficiaries* (women and/or men);
- ✓ The gender budget analysis is applied to a *program that is likely to be continuously financed* by the government under new budget cycles.

Furthermore, gender analysis of budgets is a powerful tool for making links between CSO work and improvement of women's daily lives. Therefore, gender analysis can and should involve a coalition of CSO experts where possible. Because such an initiative takes more than one year, CSOs should be strategically oriented for policy analysis, monitoring and lobbying activities.

● Moving Forward: Planning Gender Budget Analysis Follow Up and Expanding the Scope

So, what happens after a gender budget analysis has been undertaken? In Užice, once the process was completed, local women's CSO wrote recommendations on changes to 2011 budget allocations for agricultural programmes, and submitted these to the Council for Agriculture in January 2011. The Council responded at the beginning of March that it was very interested in financing women agri-businesses; however, it later noted that the proposals came too late to adjust the agriculture budget accordingly.

Local CSOs modified their approach to focus on monitoring of budget spending in 2011 by the local government, through UN Women support, and have since prepared a proposal for improvements to the agricultural assistance programme in 2012.

Furthermore, to fully understand the findings emerging from the analysis, it is important to undertake further research, to find out:

- What are the specific activities and responsibilities of women in the agriculture sector?
- Why did women apply for and use the program less than men?
- Are women needs related to agriculture recognized? If not, why not?
- What did the application process look like?
- Why do women and men have different levels of access to information?

The answers to these questions will reveal underlying gender inequalities in the development and implementation of agricultural programmes in the Municipality which future budgetary programmes and local policies should address.



Luljeta Fejzo / Memaliaj

It is
never impossible

Putting it All Together: Enhancing Gender Equality in Local Governance

● Learning Lessons in Supporting Gender-Responsive Local Governance in Albania

Both the case studies and the Technical Working Group discussions during the conference highlight good practices in gender-responsive local governance, but also, importantly, lessons learned by civil society, international organizations and local governments in making local governance more gender-sensitive.

Some of the challenges confronted by different international and national actors, at both government and civil society level, are primarily technical and concern the structures and mandates of local governance institutions. Others have more to do with building knowledge and capacity of staff, as well as building interest of men and women citizens to engage in local governance processes. International organizations and donors have also learned a number of lessons from their engagement with local authorities through different programmes and projects, which can be useful for improving allocation and absorption of donor funds. Lessons learned are summarized in the Table below.

Challenge	Findings and Lessons Learned	Corresponding Recommendation
Defining the role of the Qark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of regional qark in local governance processes remains unclear in legislation and regulations. - The qark's "coordination" role could be useful in monitoring local government's development and implementation of gender equality and local development policies/strategies. - Qark could also facilitate gathering, analysis and transfer of gender data between local agencies and between local and central levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Institutions Matter! Governing by Gender-Sensitive Design;</i> 3) <i>When National meets Local: Tailoring Policy Frameworks to Local Needs and Realities</i>

<p>Financing gender equality at local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific funds for implementing the NSGE-GBV are allocated at national level only (MoLSAEO) for operational costs; no funds are allocated specifically for gender initiatives at LGU level. - Local governance programmes do not allocate funds specifically for gender initiatives at local level; project appraisal criteria are gender-blind, and do not distinguish between sex of beneficiaries. - Funding instruments such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession do include criteria relating to gender as a cross-cutting issue, but application process is time-consuming, strict and very advanced. - Municipalities do not have access to funds reserved for civil society; however, they can access these funds by partnering with civil society to implement gender initiatives. - Nonetheless, through decentralization, LGUs are accorded wide powers of revenue-raising and developing local budgets; though resources are limited, LGUs are ultimately responsible for determining policy and budget priorities, including whether gender initiatives are financed or not. 	<p>1) Institutions Matter! Governing by Gender-Sensitive Design;</p> <p>4) Now Show us the Money for Gender Equality!</p>
<p>Existence of Data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As expected, gender assessments revealed that data is rarely disaggregated by sex at local and national levels, during the collection, processing and analysis stages. - However! Sex-disaggregated data <i>exists at the source in the case of education and health systems</i> BUT it is often not fully used, not shared with statistical institutions or government agencies collecting data, or is sometimes even re-aggregated. - Data collection is not institutionalized at municipal level; it is collected on an ad hoc basis according to local processes and needs. This means data is not regularly or systematically analyzed and cannot be used in a comparative manner. - It also does not allow for a systematic transfer of gender-sensitive data from local to central levels in order to influence centralized policymaking and fine-tuned local and regional responses. 	<p>2) <i>Processes Matter! Or, Show us the Gender Data!</i></p> <p>3) When National meets Local: Tailoring Policy Frameworks to Local Needs and Realities;</p> <p>5) Maintaining Momentum: What have YOU done for Gender Equality Today?</p>
<p>Refining/ Recognizing institutional mandate of Gender Equality Employee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not all LGUs are yet convinced of the 'added value' of GEEs. - Gender Equality Law not clear regarding the role of MoLSAEO/ national institutions in ensuring that GEEs at municipal (and LGU) level are established in compliance with the law. - GEEs play a critical role in driving the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence initiatives in addition to other mandated responsibilities such as coordinating development and implementation of local gender action plans and collecting sex-disaggregated data. - GEEs are also starting to play a local coordinating role for citizen score card, social auditing and participatory budgeting activities. 	<p>1) <i>Institutions Matter! Governing by Gender-Sensitive Design;</i></p> <p>4) Now Show us the Money for Gender Equality!</p> <p>5) <i>Maintaining Momentum: What have YOU done for Gender Equality Today?</i></p>

<p>Capacity assumptions/ expectations of local authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender sensitization efforts are needed BEFORE LGUs embark on gender equality initiatives, in order to build awareness of why gender equality is necessary for good local governance. - Gender Training needs to be rolled out to ALL LGUs, especially after the local elections in 2011. - LGU capacity is strongly affected by political dynamics; high staff turnover and changes in leadership which affect the effectiveness of policymaking and programming processes, as well as the commitment of local authorities to prioritize gender equality. 	<p><i>1) Institutions Matter! Governing by Gender-Sensitive Design;</i></p> <p><i>4) Now Show us the Money for Gender Equality!</i></p>
<p>Translating national policy priorities to local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LGUs must adjust national policy frameworks to local realities; this includes national gender equality objectives. Such objectives are a guide only; LGUs are empowered by law to shape these to local contexts – political and socio-economic. - Developing policies at local level that reflect needs and interests of men AND women require systems of (formalized) data collection that include disaggregation of data by sex. - Such policies also require processes that empower citizens - men and women - to become actively involved in policymaking. 	<p><i>2) Processes Matter! Or, Show us the Gender Data!</i></p> <p><i>3) When National meets Local: Tailoring Policy Frameworks to Local Needs and Realities</i></p>
<p>Engaging and raising awareness of citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging citizens in participatory processes (participatory budgeting, citizen score card and social auditing) require community capacity development, as citizens may not be used to articulating their needs in policy-oriented ways. - Women are often taught not to speak out, or may put the needs/interests of their husbands/children before their own. - Both men and women may be reluctant to engage in participatory processes due to lack of trust and feelings of apathy and disillusionment (that the government will not really listen to them or include their views in policies in the end). 	<p><i>5) Maintaining Momentum: What have YOU done for Gender Equality Today?</i></p> <p><i>6) Meaningful Representation: Engaging Local Elected Representatives</i></p>
<p>Engaging Local Councilors in Gender Initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interventions targeting LGU structures do not always include local councilors as a target group, despite the role of local councilors in policy and budgeting processes, as well as representing constituent needs. - Initiatives such as participatory budgeting would benefit from engaging local councilors, so they learn better citizen needs and can influence local government budgeting processes accordingly. 	<p><i>6) Meaningful Representation: Engaging Local Elected Representatives</i></p>

● Where do we go from here? Six Strategies for Enhancing Gender-Responsive Governance

These recommendations build on the recommendations developed by Technical Working Group participants at the Gender Equality & Local Governance conference (see Annex 1), as well as the findings from the case studies.

1) Institutions Matter! Governing by Gender-Sensitive Design

Integrating a gender perspective into local governance means recognizing that gender equality IS first and foremost a governance issue. So what have we learned about the **institutional governance framework for gender equality** at local level?

Well, Local Government Units are required by law to establish a position of Gender Equality Employee (GEE). We have seen the positive impact of the work of GEEs as coordinators of concrete initiatives, such as the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence mechanism in **Gramsh Municipality**; the Citizen Score Card activity in **Lushnjë Municipality**; and the mainstreaming of gender equality goals in development policies, prioritization and decision-making in **Berat Municipality**. However, we have also seen that GEEs can function effectively only if broader institutional systems and processes are in place. For example, GEEs are mandated to coordinate the collection of sex-disaggregated data, and to channel this data to different institutions at regional and national level. Where data collection processes are not formalized and sex-disaggregated data is not collected, as the **Kamza Municipality** case study revealed, GEEs cannot process and analyze data in a way that helps to identify the gender dimensions of different policy issues of concern at local level.

So what can local governments do to move forward? Well, a number of concrete things!

- JOB DESCRIPTION:
 - ✓ Create **Terms of Reference** and a clear **Job Description** for GEEs, including skill sets:
 - Experience in coordination, data analysis, policy development, gender awareness and skills
 - ✓ Clearly define how the GEE will interact with and **report to** different LGU, regional and national institutions.
 - ✓ Set clear priority/focus areas, relevant in the specific local context, in which the GEE will be active.

- RECRUITMENT:
 - ✓ Prioritize recruitment of GEEs, to ensure that qualified candidates apply.
 - ✓ Include LGU employees with gender knowledge on the recruitment board, to best identify the most capable candidates for the position.

- JOB INDUCTION:
 - ✓ LGUs should arrange an in-depth job induction training for incoming GEEs on their job responsibilities, as well as the LGU structure, activities, and working procedures.

- PROPER RESOURCES AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT/ON-JOB TRAINING:
 - ✓ LGUs should ensure that GEEs have access to proper office space and equipment – computers, telephones, and internet - in order to perform their job effectively.
 - ✓ GEEs also need access to professional job training in order to perform functions effectively, and grow within a position. Job training can include policy analysis, coordination and project management, public speaking, budgeting, etc. On the job training and coaching is an additional highly rewarding option.

- SENSITIZATION FOR ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF:
 - ✓ Ensure LGU leadership and staff undergo gender sensitization training, both to raise awareness of gender issues and the basics of gender-responsive local governance, as well as to ensure that the GEE is fully supported by all municipal staff.

2) Processes Matter! Or, Show us the Gender Data!

Effective policy development - a core function of local government - all comes down to *information*, i.e. concrete data about the situation of women and men, girls and boys in a given context. Such information is used to develop policies to guide public service delivery and socio-economic development, as well as address inequalities, local issues, and unforeseen or unintended developments.

Collecting information and data requires formal processes. One of the major challenges LGUs face in Albania (and elsewhere) is systematizing data collection processes. The current, informal system of collecting data means that data cannot be compared across municipalities, that it is not systematically channeled to national institutions to inform national policymaking, and that sex-disaggregated data is not regularly collected, processed, analyzed and interpreted.

In the case of **Kamza Municipality**, we have also seen that ad hoc data collection processes also undermine the ability of Gender Equality Employees to perform their functions. GEEs require data to input into local policymaking processes and to develop specific gender interventions and activities that reflect local needs and priorities of women and men. Access to data, particularly sex-disaggregated data, is also critical to performing a gender analysis, as demonstrated by the budget gender analysis undertaken in **Municipality Užice in Serbia**.

So what can LGUs do to improve data collection processes and institutionalize the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data? Concretely, LGUs could:

- FORMALIZE A STANDARD SYSTEM OF DATA COLLECTION:
 - ✓ Develop a regulation, directive, or memorandum specifying mechanisms for channeling information from municipalities to national institutions such as INSTAT.¹²
 - ✓ Ensure that statistical institutions at local and national level are aware of the GEE's data collection mandate and establish direct contact between these offices.
 - ✓ Establish a Working Group at regional (qark) or national level to develop a streamlined system of data collection that can be applied across all municipalities (and subsequently communes).
 - ✓ Clarify the role of the qark in data collection and explore the possibility of making the qark a regional repository of data (including for sex-disaggregated data).

12 Towards this end, the roles of line ministries, INSTAT, MoLSAEO and the Ministry of Interior in the collection, processing and channeling of gender data from local level need to be defined as an initial precondition.

- FORMALIZE COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA:
 - ✓ Use municipalities piloting the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence and its data-base as models for collecting data on domestic violence, using the GEE/GE & DV specialist as coordinator.
 - ✓ Make both local statistics institutions and GEEs aware of the need to identify specific indicators within the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators, which are relevant for and applicable to the local level.
 - ✓ Establish Working Groups made up of local statistical institutions and GEEs at municipal level in order to identify and agree on data sources for sex-disaggregated data.
 - ✓ Use “One Stop Shops” such as the one established in Kamza as a repository of sex-disaggregated data once collected and analyzed by GEEs.
 - ✓ Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between local/national statistical institutions and gender equality institutions (MoLSAEO and GEEs), to facilitate channeling of sex-disaggregated data from local to national level for policy and reporting purposes.

3) When National meets Local: Tailoring Policy Frameworks to Local Needs and Realities

One of the benefits of formalizing systems of data collection at municipal level is that more realistic and comprehensive data can be channeled to the national level. This means that national policy development processes should better take into consideration local realities and situations. All the same time, in the end, national policies – whether for socio-economic development, gender equality, health or education – remain general frameworks. Policies become meaningful only when translated at local level, that is, when policies are further refined, adjusted and developed to reflect the local needs and circumstances of women and men, girls and boys within communities.

The development of a local gender action plan in **Berat Municipality** demonstrated very clearly why local development policies need to take into consideration the different needs of women and men, girls and boys. Berat’s plans to stimulate local development and the local economy very much depended on understanding women’s role in the economic sphere and the specific challenges they face due to cultural norms, gender roles and responsibilities.

So tailoring national policies to local circumstances is only the first step. For local policies to be effective, they also need to take into consideration the different gender roles and responsibilities of men and women at local level. As demonstrated by the budget gender analysis undertaken by the Women’s Centre in **Municipality Užice**, there are a variety of gender analysis tools available, such as the Swedish 3R method, which can be adapted to reflect local capacities and needs.

Taking these points into consideration, what can LGUs do to enhance local policymaking in a gender-responsive way?

- LOCAL POLICYMAKING: INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES:
 - ✓ Include gender expertise and women in all phases of the policymaking process; for example, the GEE should be involved at all stages, so that all policies - whether gender-specific or not - are analyzed from a gender perspective.
 - ✓ Build the capacity of the GEE to engage in policy formulation. This can include training in the policy process, conducting gender analysis, and/or budgeting policy interventions.

- POLICYMAKING TOOLS AND PROCESSES:
 - ✓ Identify and adapt gender analysis tools that can be used to determine the different needs and priorities of women and men regarding key policy issues as well as local development priorities.
 - ✓ Engage in consultations with both men and women through participatory methods as part of the gender analysis process.
 - ✓ Integrate gender-specific priorities into all local policies based on gender analysis (including gender equality as a specific objective of relevant policies).
 - ✓ Develop a local Gender Action Plan that directly addresses locally-identified and prioritized gender inequalities and respective concrete actions to be taken.
 - ✓ Mainstream gender equality goals into all local development strategies and plans, and ensure the provision of respective indicators for gender-sensitive monitoring of adherence to national gender commitments and obligations.

- BUDGETING FOR POLICY OBJECTIVES:
 - ✓ Ensure adequate resources are allocated for achieving gender-specific interventions identified in local development strategies and local gender action plans.



Anita Shembi / Pogradec

Even
a smile brings out change

- MONITORING POLICY IMPACT FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE:
 - ✓ Closely monitor the impact of local policies (including programmes, strategies and activities) on women and men, girls and boys, using tools such as impact assessments that include criteria for assessing policy impact from a gender perspective.
 - ✓ Use impact assessment information to inform new policy initiatives.

4) Now Show us the Money! Financing Gender Equality at Local Level

a) Accessing and Allocating Funds for Gender Equality at Local Level

Albania has established a fiscal system which gives local governments a wide degree of autonomy in raising and spending revenues. This also means that local governments are given a great deal of power to determine their own policy priorities. Many municipalities, however, do not take into account gender equality policy objectives determined at national level, or prioritize these in their local budgets.

The first step, as the case study in **Berat Municipality** demonstrated, is translating national gender equality priorities into local gender action plans; it is easier to allocate resources to policy interventions that are rooted in local realities and when gender inequalities are shown to have a concrete impact on local socio-economic development.

Then what? Given competing budget priorities, how do LGUs find resources to finance gender equality initiatives at local level? Concrete activities might include:

- ✓ Building partnerships with local NPOs to jointly implement gender-specific projects, in this way increasing access to funds allocated by Local Authorities Associations (LAA) to civil society;
- ✓ Investing in building the capacity of specific LGU staff – GEEs and project specialists – to develop project proposals for international or regional funding competitions.
- ✓ Investing in the advocacy capacity of GEEs to lobby national government ministries such as (i) the Ministry of Interior to earmark funds for gender-sensitive projects in the framework of decentralization; (ii) the Ministry of Economy to earmark funds targeted towards women's economic empowerment; and (iii) the MoLSAEO to earmark funds in the NSGE-GBV-DV for implementation by LGUs of initiatives to prevent/combat domestic violence.
- ✓ Lobbying the Regional Development Fund to include gender-specific criteria into their project assessment frameworks, so that LGUs that submit proposals that explicitly include gender equality as an objective are rewarded.
- ✓ Raising awareness among local elected councilors, who play a key role in local budget approval, about the importance of allocating resources for gender equality initiatives.

Importantly, certain gender mainstreaming activities require minimal resources – such as conducting a gender analysis of a specific policy sector and corresponding budget lines and programmes. As demonstrated in **Municipality Užice**, gender analysis requires access to existing policy documents (such as the agriculture policy) and budgets (such as agricultural assistance programmes), and can be conducted by local NPOs, the Municipality, or by the GEE him- or herself.

b) Processes to Determine Budgetary Priorities

The gender-sensitive participatory budgeting activity implemented in **Elbasan Municipality** empowered women to articulate their needs in ways that influence both municipal policymaking and budget allocation.

Participatory budgeting initiatives can also be combined with and strengthened by activities aimed at empowering men and women citizens to articulate their local service delivery needs and priorities. This was demonstrated by the Citizen Score Card process initiated by UN Women and implemented in collaboration with GADC in **Lushnjë Municipality**. In this way, local governments can be motivated to allocate budgetary resources to improve public services that benefit both women and men, and prioritize budget allocations to services that specifically address gender inequalities.

So what can LGUs do to increase the effectiveness of gender-sensitive, participatory processes?

- ✓ Partner with local NPOs to raise awareness among women and men about participatory initiatives such as participatory budgeting and the citizen score card BEFORE activities are implemented: this could take the form of town hall meetings, awareness raising campaigns in the newspaper, television or radio, and in public spaces frequented by women or men (local markets, parks, playgrounds, schools, sports facilities, pubs).
- ✓ Work with the GEE, NPOs and budgeting staff to develop a framework for monitoring the degree to which the public service priorities of both women and men citizens are taken into account in LGU policymaking and budgeting processes.
- ✓ Introduce specific training for budgeting, finance and auditing staff of LGUs on gender-sensitive participatory budgeting initiatives, and engage them actively in these activities.
- ✓ Expand activities such as the citizen score card to move from citizen *assessment* of service delivery priorities to citizen *monitoring* of service delivery, through tools such as **social auditing**, which empowers women and men citizens to monitor local service provision on a regular and official basis.

5) Maintaining Momentum: What have YOU done for Gender Equality Today?

The case studies demonstrate that the sustainability of the above initiatives not only depends on further follow-up action by local authorities, but also on the *institutionalization* of systems and processes to support these initiatives in a comprehensive manner. A long-term perspective is therefore needed - institutionalization takes time, resources and capacity. **It is through institutionalization, however, that local government that responds to gender inequalities becomes a fully gender-responsive local government.** Processes that LGUs may wish to prioritize might include:

- ✓ Introduction of streamlined data collection processes that also collect sex-disaggregated data.
- ✓ Establishment of monitoring systems within LGUs to calculate budgetary allocations to women and men as well as to gender-specific programmes and interventions.
- ✓ Development of community-based monitoring systems that empower women and men citizens to monitor local service delivery on a regular basis, through initiatives such as social auditing.
- ✓ Full and meaningful integration of the Gender Equality Employee into municipal structures – complete with human, technical, and financial resources and access to capacity development.
- ✓ Regular gender-sensitization training and discussions for all LGU staff, including leadership.

In addition, to make initiatives effective in the long-term means a long-term approach to awareness raising and capacity development. It is only in this way that a gender-sensitive, participatory CULTURE can be developed and nurtured. The introduction of participatory processes such as participatory budgeting and citizen score cards in municipalities where citizens – especially women – are not used

to articulating their needs and priorities can be overwhelming. Furthermore, in municipalities where a culture of mistrust of government institutions persists, women and men may fear voicing their concerns or appearing critical of local government actions. Therefore:

- ✓ All efforts to introduce new processes to increase women's participation and improve communication between local government institutions and women and men citizens must **first** be supported by extensive awareness-raising, sensitization and trust-building processes.

6) Meaningful Representation: Engaging Local Elected Representatives

Several case studies discuss the role of elected local councilors in instituting gender-responsive local governance, including the development of a local gender action plan in **Berat Municipality**. As representatives, local councilors constitute a direct link between citizens and local government institutions. The case study on gender-sensitive participatory budgeting in **Elbasan Municipality** identified several ways of getting local councilors more involved in local government gender equality initiatives:

- ✓ Invite local councilors to community meetings organized within the framework of participatory budgeting initiatives; local councilors are elected to represent the needs of constituents - both women and men. As local councilors also play a role in approving the budget, allowing them to hear the needs and concerns of both women and men will better prepare councilors to lobby for their constituents' interests during policy and budget approval processes.
- ✓ Similarly, local councilors can channel the service provision priorities of women and men; where women's specific service provision needs are unmet, local councilors can be mobilized to lobby on this issue, to pressure LGUs to place such issues higher on their policy and budget agendas.
- ✓ This links directly to the role of local councilors in approving policies; councilors can be lobbied to approve local policies only if they include a comprehensive gender analysis, or be encouraged to conduct their own gender analysis, to identify the potential policy impact on women and men. Here, the availability, provision and use of fact-based evidence, resting on gender analysis and/or gender statistics will be critical.
- ✓ Local councilors can also work together to put issues on the national agenda. GEEs should therefore identify local councilors who will advocate for gender equality, and use such councilors to place pressure on national government bodies and national-level parliamentarians. Here, the significance of women's increased political representation becomes evident, not just in numerical terms, but particularly for the highlighting of and lobbying for particular development issues once in office and for future gender-responsive agenda-setting.



Elida Karamuçá / Vorë

It is needed
a lot of work and determination

Glossary of Terms and Concepts

De facto and de jure gender equality: *De jure* equality (sometimes called formal equality or “paper governance”) refers to equality under the law. *De facto* equality refers to equality in practice.

Empowerment implies people - both women and men - taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognized), increasing self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome. Empowerment implied an expansion in women’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. (UN INSTRAW)

Gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Whereas biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them. (UN INSTRAW)

Gender Analysis is a systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development, policies, programs and legislation on women and men that entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned. Gender analysis can also include the examination of the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others. (UN INSTRAW)

Gender Audit is the analysis and evaluation of policies, programmes, and institutions in terms of how they apply gender-related criteria. (European Commission)

Gender and Development: The GAD approach was developed as a response to the failure of WID projects to effect qualitative and long-lasting changes in women’s social status. GAD focuses on social, economic, political and cultural forces that determine how men and women participate in, benefit from, and control project resources and activities differently. This approach shifts the focus from women as a group to the socially determined relations between women and men. (UN INSTRAW)

Gender-based Discrimination means that girls and women do not have the same opportunities as boys and men for education, meaningful careers, political influence, and economic advancement. Also, when women and men perform the same tasks for pay, women are often paid less and receive fewer benefits from their work than men. (CIDA)

Gender Blind: A person, policy, or an institution that does not recognize that gender is an essential determinant of the life choices and opportunities available to us in society.¹³

Gender Budgeting, an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. Gender budgeting involves examination of the gender distributional outcomes of budgetary allocations, that is, how these allocations affect the social and economic opportunities

13 Based on Parker 1993, Available at <http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary/index.php?term=Gender%20Blind>

of men and women. Reallocations in revenue and expenditure and restructuring of the budgetary process may be necessary in order to promote gender equality. (ILO, 2004)

Gender Equality describes the concept that all human beings, both women and men, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender Equity means that women and men are treated fairly according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender Mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between women and men is not perpetuated. (UN Women, 2011)

(Practical) Gender Needs:

Practical Gender Needs (PGNs) are identified by women within their socially defined roles, as a response to an immediate perceived necessity. PGNs usually relate to inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment, and they do not challenge gender divisions of labour and women's subordinate position in society.¹⁴

(Strategic) Gender Interests:

Strategic Gender Interests (SGIs) are identified by women as a result of their subordinate social status, and tend to challenge gender divisions of labour power and control, and traditionally defined norms and roles. SGIs vary according to particular contexts and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages, and women's control over their bodies.¹⁵

Gender-Neutral, Gender-Sensitive, and Gender Transformative

The primary objective behind gender mainstreaming is to design and implement development projects, programmes and policies that:

1. Do not reinforce existing gender inequalities
2. Attempt to redress existing gender inequalities
3. Attempt to re-define women and men's gender roles and relations

14 Vainio-Mattila, A. *Navigating Gender: A framework and a tool for participatory development*. Helsinki: Finland Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1999. http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav_gender/glossary.htm

15 Ibid.

The degree of integration of a gender perspective in any given project can be seen as a continuum:

Gender Neutral	Gender Sensitive	Gender Transformative
Gender is not considered relevant to development outcome	Gender is a means to reach set development goals	Gender is central to promoting equality and achieving positive development outcomes
Gender norms, roles and relations are not affected (neither worsened nor improved)	Addressing gender norms, roles and access to resources in so far as needed to reach project goals	Transforming unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment

Gender Oppression means the undervaluing of what is seen as feminine. Gender oppression can be experienced by women and men. However, since patriarchal norms dominate our society all women experience gender oppression to a greater or lesser degree.¹⁶

Gender Perspective: A gender perspective or “gender lens” can be defined as a focus that brings a framework of analysis in order to assess how women and men affect and are affected differently by policies, programmes, projects and activities. It enables recognition that relationships between women and men can vary depending on the context. A gender perspective takes into account gender roles, social and economic relationships and needs, access to resources, and other constraints and opportunities imposed by society or culture, age, religion, and/or ethnicity on both women and men. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. Gender responsive budgeting involves examination of the gender distributional outcomes of budgetary allocations, that is, how these allocations affect the social and economic opportunities of men and women. Reallocations in revenue and expenditure and restructuring of the budgetary process may be necessary in order to promote gender equality. (ILO, 2004)

Gender-Sensitive Indicator, can be a measurement, a number, a fact, an opinion or a perception that focuses on a specific condition or situation, and measures changes in that condition or situation over time. The difference between an indicator and a statistic is that indicators should involve comparison with a norm. Gender-sensitive indicators measure gender-related changes in society over time; they provide a close look at the results of targeted gender-based initiatives and actions. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender stereotypes arise from (often outdated) presumptions about the roles, abilities and attributes of women, men, girls and boys. While in some specific situations, such stereotypes can be found to have a basis in reality; stereotypes become problematic when they are then assumed to universally and obligatorily apply to all men or all women. This can lead to both material and psychological barriers that prevent women and men from making choices and fully enjoying their rights.¹⁷

Gender roles are the roles assigned to women, men, girls and boys respectively according to cultural norms and traditions. They vary among different societies and cultures, classes, ages and during different periods in history. Most often, gender roles are not based on biological or physical

¹⁶ Available at AWID website <http://www.awid.org/ywl/glossary/index.php?term=Gender%20oppression>

¹⁷ Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Handbook. UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and the CIS (UNDP RBEC), 2005.

imperatives, but rather result from stereotypes and presumptions about what women, men, girls and boys can and should do. Gender roles become problematic when a society assigns greater value to the roles of one gender – usually men's.¹⁸

Good Governance is the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable and sustainable development, in the context of a political and institutional environment that upholds human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law (ACP-EC, Cotonou Agreement, 2002)

Men and Masculinities, refers to better understanding the “male side” of the gender equation. It involves questioning the masculine values and norms that society places on men's behaviour, identifying and addressing issues confronting men and boys in the world of work, and promoting the positive roles that men and boys can play in attaining gender equality. (ILO, 2004)

Sex refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics generally differentiate humans as females and males (UN Women 2011).

Sex-Disaggregated Data can be defined as data that is collected and presented separately on women and men. It is quantitative statistical information on the differences and inequalities between women and men. There is widespread confusion over, and misuse of, the terms “gender-disaggregated data” and “sex-disaggregated data”. Data should necessarily be sex-disaggregated but not gender-disaggregated since females and males are counted according to their biological difference and not according to their social behaviours. The term gender-disaggregated data is frequently used, but it should be understood as sex-disaggregated data. (UN Women, 2011)

Unpaid Care Work includes caring for children, elderly and sick people. It also includes washing, cooking, shopping cleaning and helping other families with their chores. (SIDA)

Violence Against Women is defined in Article 1 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993). The term refers to “any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether in public or in private life”.

Women's Empowerment A 'bottom-up' process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it.¹⁹

Women's rights. The rights of women and the girl child as inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights. (European Commission)

Women's triple role Women's triple role refers to the reproductive, productive and community managing role. The way these forms are valued affects the way women and men set priorities in planning programs or projects. The taking or not taking into consideration of these forms can make or brake women's chances of taking advantage of development opportunities. (Moser, C. O., 1993)

18 Ibid.

19 Bridge Institute of Development Studies Available online: <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/re55.pdf>

Annex 1: Recommendations Prepared by the Participants of the Technical Working Groups of the National Conference “Gender Equality & Local Governance”

1. **Strengthening evidence-based governance: Engendering Statistics at Local Level**
 - 1.1. Within the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators, identify the concrete subset of indicators that are of direct and immediate relevance for the local level;
 - 1.2. Define the role of local government in applying the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators;
 - 1.3. Clarify and harmonize the mode of data collection in order to practically respond to and apply the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators at local level;
 - 1.4. Define the proper way how gender data is to be channeled from local level to central level institutions, in particular the vertical line between local government units to MoLSAEO;
 - 1.5. Build local government units’ capacities to use sex-disaggregated data in policy making and planning, and to apply the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators;
 - 1.6. Define the role of the local government unit’s Gender Equality Employee in regard to applying the National Set of Harmonized Gender Indicators at local level; and specify her/his role in assembling, channeling, and sharing gender data with local and regional government structures;
 - 1.7. Build the respectively required skills of the local government unit’s Gender Equality Employee;
 - 1.8. Define the role of Qark regarding gender data collection and the use of sex-disaggregated statistics for regional policy making and planning;
 - 1.9. In the revised Law on Statistics, include a clause that makes the periodical sharing of data obligatory for all local institutions, i.e. horizontally among local institutions as well as with Qarks.

2. **Setting priorities: Citizen Score Cards (CSC)**
 - 2.1. Encourage municipalities to use the method in order to
 - (i) identify problems and needs of the community in general, and of subgroups within the community in particular (such specific needs in a particular location are not necessarily reflected in statistical data/aggregates);
 - (ii) increase citizen voice and particularly empower women, girls, and disenfranchised groups;
 - (iii) set development priorities that are genuinely gender-responsive;
 - 2.2. Incorporate the results and priorities of the CSC approach in decision on the municipality’s budget allocation using gender-responsive budgeting tools;
 - 2.3. Use the CSC approach for monitoring gender-responsive service provision over time;

- 2.4. Officially publish the results of CSC activities in the municipality and local representative offices of governmental institutions;
 - 2.5. Share the results of CSC activities with the media, and use them for lobbying and advocacy;
 - 2.6. Train local experts from community-based and civil society organizations to undertake CSC activities and engage in monitoring of particular issues over time;
3. **Accessing services: The Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence**
- 3.1. Disseminate information on recent legislative/administrative changes regarding DV (re: changes of September 2010), as well as on the content of the Council of Ministers' Decision among all local government units (administration and citizens);
 - 3.2. Build capacity and raise awareness among professionals, Municipality Council members, public administration officers and other professionals who are foreseen to be in charge of implementing the DV Law;
 - 3.3. Allocate sufficient financial resources for establishing the CCR at local level (in municipalities and communes);
 - 3.4. Support the creation of human resources and skills for implementing the CCR at local level (municipalities and communes);
 - 3.5. Clarify and unify the CCR approach nationally, and set standards and practical rules on procedures; avoid bureaucracy that reduces efficiency of case-management;
 - 3.6. Appoint a local coordinator in each local government unit of Albania. This specialist may deal with Gender Equality and Domestic Violence, but should then not have additional responsibilities and/or be in charge of any additional issues (such as economic aid, finance, or other types of responsibilities). In Communes, this role may be played by the Social Administrators, who are in close contact with community members at that administrative level (since administratively, the Municipality cannot cover the Communes);
 - 3.7. Sign the needed memorandum of understanding in order to define the number of actors involved in CCR as well as their duties and responsibilities. This process is to be initiated by the Municipalities, taking into consideration their specific obligations according to the DV Law;
 - 3.8. Prepare the still needed additional protocols/regulations. The memorandum of understanding should be followed by detailed rules/protocols in order to have a clear picture of how CCR actors will be dealing with case management in practice (i.e. details related to persons who should be contacted, their respective numbers/contact details, the required collaborating institutions and the type of services they are in charge of offering to DV cases, etc);
 - 3.9. Strengthen collaboration and turn the sharing of information between institutions into a routine of daily work; this includes the information flow between CCR members, but also between Commune-Municipality-Qark-Prefecture and other responsible authorities;
 - 3.10. Ensure the budgeting of required human resources such as the local coordinator and required professionals in other institutions/structures (i.e. social workers/psychologists attached to police departments or health care services, etc);
 - 3.11. Ensure the budgeting of required services like hot lines, shelters, rehabilitation centers/programs for DV survivors as well as for DV perpetrators;
 - 3.12. Ensure the budgeting of a DV-related Emergency Fund – in a Municipality, there should be a fund similar to the emergency fund, to be used in a very quick, practical and operational way for all emergent DV cases that need it.

- 3.13. Establish the existing data base system for case registering and case management in all local government units throughout Albania; (the data base was produced by The Network against Gender Based Violence and Trafficking of the UN Trust Fund and is currently in use in ten municipalities);
 - 3.14. Provide needs-oriented high-quality services:
 - 3.14.1. Sheltering – the shelter for emergent cases (shelter/emergency centers) should be available and in disposition of DV survivors 24/7. This should not be tied to the condition of whether or not the DV survivor has an Emergent Protection Order/Protection Order. This kind of service should be offered according to the specific rules but independently from issuing of Emergent Protection Order/Protection Order;
 - 3.14.2. Awareness-raising –awareness-rising is needed not only for the Law itself but also for the concrete steps undertaken at Municipality/Commune level. When the CCR is well-functioning in practice, this awareness raising becomes even more important, in order to manage DV cases in an effective way;
 - 3.14.3. Use general public awareness raising also a prevention measure;
 - 3.14.4. Increase investments and activities on prevention, in order to reduce overall costs of DV and to open up opportunities for solving DV cases prior to the emergency stage. In this, a significant role is being played by all educational institutions (kindergarten and schools at different levels);
 - 3.15. Monitor the quality of CCR functioning, as well as of the specific services offered to DV survivors/perpetrators. Complete a full monitoring process based on the cost-effectiveness philosophy;
 - 3.16. MoLSAEO: As soon as possible, finalize the respective procedure related to the Council of Ministers Decision for CCR establishment at local level.
 - 3.17. Ministry of Finance: In close collaboration with MoLSAEO, budget the respective actions for DV Law implementation, such as clear budget lines for the local level in order to create the needed space for CCR establishment; or budget for implementation of NSGE/DV, etc. Budgeting is key factor in terms of CCR establishment and sustainability;
 - 3.18. Local level institutions – increase clarity on their duties and responsibilities in relation to DV as well as on the way how they can effectively combine their efforts; ;
 - 3.19. Establish clear-cut and fair relations and procedures on DV between Municipality/Communes, Qarku, and Prefecture;
 - 3.20. Establish clear-cut and fair relations and procedures between local government units and NGOs sub-contracted for DV-related social service delivery.
4. **Increasing women's participation and citizen voice: Participatory Budgeting**
- According to the actual legislation, referring to the law nr: 8652, the participation of citizens in the design of the budget is required. It is the responsibility of the Local Government to decide the way they want to have this as a process, and the respective decision is taken by the Local Government leader.

The aim is to (i) undertake participatory budgeting in a gender-sensitive and genuinely participatory way; and to (ii) institutionalize this process.

- 4.1. Increase women's active voice during the process;
- 4.2. Adhere to gender equality goals in procedure, aims and outcomes;
- 4.3. Ensure inclusive participation of NGOs and CBOs;

- 4.4. Design an internal “regulation of action” for the process of gender-sensitive participatory budgeting. In this regulation, the entire process, actions, and the indicators for monitoring the process need to be explained in detail;
 - 4.5. Formally approve of the process of gender-sensitive and inclusive participatory budgeting;
 - 4.6. Approval of the new regulation by the Municipality Council;
 - 4.7. Follow-up of gender-sensitive and inclusive participatory budgeting by specific gender-responsive budgeting initiatives on the agreed municipality budget.
5. **Financing Gender Equality at local level**
- 5.1. In the State budget, define a budgeting program for local government units devoted to the implementation of gender equality projects;
 - 5.2. Build capacities of all local government units to mainstream gender equality goals into their local policy-making, planning, budgeting and monitoring;
 - 5.3. Pilot, replicate and roll-out gender-sensitive performance budgeting in all LGUs;
 - 5.4. Establish and include obligatory gender equality criteria in the grant systems of line ministries and the Regional Development Fund (including METE and Ministry of Agriculture);
 - 5.5. Introduce the development of local gender action plans in all local government units, followed by costing;
 - 5.6. Local government units to undertake a gender-sensitive revision of their local development strategies;
 - 5.7. Increase capacities of Gender Equality Employees to write gender-sensitive project proposals and engage in respective fund raising;
 - 5.8. Strengthen the Municipality Council’s role in monitoring achievements on gender equality at local government unit level, and build required capacities;
 - 5.9. Provide gender and gender-responsive budgeting training for City Councils;
 - 5.10. Establish and operationalise the Local Gender Commission/Gender Working Group in all LGU;
 - 5.11. Support and provide coaching and capacity building to the local Gender Commission/Gender Working Group in all local government units (gender training & training on gender-responsive budgeting).

Annex 2: Agenda

National Conference

“Gender Equality & Local Governance”

Tirana, 15 & 16 March 2011

Hotel Sheraton, Room Iliria 1

DAY I, 15TH MARCH 2011

09.30 – 10:00	Registration & Coffee
10:00 - 10:10	Welcome; moderation: Alba Dakoli Wilson
10.10 – 11.00	Opening Speeches: Ms Alma Marku , DEOFP Director, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Mr. Ferdinand Poni , Deputy Minister of Interior Ms Heba El Kholy , Officer-in-Charge, UN Women H.E. Ambassador Florian Raunig , Austrian Embassy
11:00 – 11:15	Testimonies from the Local Level Gender Equality Employees and Ms Jutta Benzenberg
11:15 – 12:45	Keynote Speeches Gender equality as a corner stone towards prosperous development Ms Elisabeth Klatzer , Economist and Gender & Public Finance specialist
11:45 – 12:00	Discussion
12:00 – 12:30	Case Studies from the SEE Region: Gender Responsive Budgeting initiative in the Municipality of Bitola, Macedonia Ms Vesna Jovanova , GRB expert, Macedonia
12:30 – 13:00	Developing a Local Gender Action Plan - Municipality of Gramsh Mr. Kastriot Zëra , Mayor of the Municipality of Gramsh, Albania
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 14:30	Engendering Policy - Economic Aid Ms Diamanta Vito , Municipality of Elbasan, Albania
14:30 – 15:00	Case Studies from the SEE Region: Reallocating Budgets – Women, Men, and Flow of Funds in Agriculture Ms Aleksandra Vladisavljevic , UN Women Belgrade Office, Republic of Serbia
15:00 – 15:45	Discussion
15:45 – 16:00	Wrap-up and Preview on Programme for Day II

DAY II, 16TH MARCH 2011

09:00 – 09:15	Registration
09:15 – 09:30	Welcome & Summary of Day I
09:30 – 09:40	Orientation of Technical Working Groups

Parallel Technical Working Groups (TWGs): Pathways to Institutionalization

09:40 – 11:00	TWG 1: Strengthening evidence-based governance: Gender Statistics at Local Level
09:40 – 11:00	TWG 2: Setting priorities: Citizen Score Cards
09:40 – 11:00	TWG 3: Accessing services: Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
09:40 – 11:00	TWG 4: Increasing citizen voice: Participatory Budgeting
09:40 – 11:00	TWG 5: Financing Gender Equality at local level
11:00 – 12:00	Plenary Presentation of Technical Working Groups' Recommendations <i>TWGs & Panelists: Representatives of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Finance; and Council of Ministers; UN Women; EiG project</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Discussion
12:30 – 12:50	Conclusions and Next Steps
12:50 – 13:00	Closure
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch