

# Global talk – Local walk

Sustainable Development Goal 5  
on Gender Equality

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“What's the matter?  
It's the same distance!”



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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to understand the processes of implementing Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality into policies and practices at the municipal level in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH). Our research answers the following research questions: 1) What supportive policy frameworks exist at the federal, entity, canton and municipal level in BiH to support the translation of the SDG 5 into local practices at the municipal level? 2) What are the actors involved in these processes at the municipal level? 3) What are the tools available and used to engaging with SDG 5 at the municipal level?

BiH is one of the most advanced countries in the region to institutionalize gender equity and equality. Its efforts have been replicated in other Western Balkan countries (Montenegro, Serbia). The institutionalisation has taken place in the last 17 years through the development of legal and policy frameworks, establishment of government gender mainstreaming mechanisms, engendering government statistical institutions. Despite the advanced institutionalisation of gender issues, the lives of women and girls have not significantly improved during this period. To investigate the role of SDG 5 in BiH we have selected three diagnostic sites. The local government of Visoko Municipality, East Iličić Municipality and Žepče Municipality have all demonstrated political will to empower women and girls and mainstream gender issues through their participation in local, regional, and national campaigns, policy development processes and other activities.

Our research shows that the overarching obstacle to the implementation of SDG 5 on gender equality at level of local authorities in BIH is that the concept of SDGs has not been translated from state and entity levels to the level of local governance. A survey on the extent to which gender equity tools are utilised in the municipalities revealed that the most prominent tools are **Local Gender Action Plans, disaggregating municipal data by gender, and establishment of Municipal Council Committees for Gender Equality**. A research-based, policy relevant toolbox is developed, in which instruments and strategies for how to implement SDG 5 can be found.



## Preface

The mandate of the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) is to contribute to poverty reduction by promoting local democracy in low and middle-income countries. In order to fulfil this mandate, we offer decentralized cooperation through our municipal partnership programme, capacity building programmes through our international training programmes and exchange of knowledge through our Knowledge Centre. ICLD documents and publishes key lessons learned from our ongoing activities, initiates and funds relevant research and engages in scholarly networks and organizes conferences and workshops. We also maintain a publications series.

Global talk – Local Walk: Sustainable Development Goal #5 on Gender Equality, by Annika Björkdahl and Leila Somun-Krupalija, is the twelfth report to be published in ICLD's Research Reports series.

This report investigates efforts to integrate this global goal into local policies and practices using the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The report provides a tool box for local governments to implement SDG 5 on Gender Equality. It integrates knowledge, strategies and inspiration on how to operationalise gender equality at the local level.

I hope this study provides the reader with an increased understanding of the role of local government to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically goal No. 5 on Gender Equality.

Visby, Sweden, October 2018



Christer Åkesson  
Acting Secretary General, ICLD

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## Abbreviations

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEDAW	UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women
EU	European Union
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GC	Gender Centre
GDD	Gender disaggregated data
GEA	Gender Equality Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICLD	International Centre for Local Democracy
ICT	information and communication technologies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITP	International Training Programme
LGAP	Local Gender Action Plan
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual/Transgender
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAPs	National Action Plans
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RAZ	Razvojna agencija Žepče (Žepče Development Agency)
RS	Republika Srpska
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Aid for International Development

## Introduction

In September 2015, the 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aiming to eradicate poverty, reduce multiple and intersecting inequalities, address climate change, end conflict and sustain peace. Gender equality is relevant to the entire agenda and all the 17 goals, but one goal in particular, Sustainable Development Goal 5, aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. Against this background, this report investigates the SDG 5 and the efforts to turn this global goal into local policies and practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This report can be read as part of the worldwide assessment of a gender-sensitive monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In our view, the implementation of SDG 5 is about turning promises into action.

Although adopting the 2030 Agenda is a state responsibility, its implementation rests on all levels of governance. In this report we focus on local government, which we suggest is key to the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

The aim of this study is to understand the processes of implementing SDG 5 into policies and practices at the municipal level in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To approach this comprehensive question, this study answers the following research questions:

- What supportive policy frameworks exist at the federal, entity, canton and municipal levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina to support the translation of the SDG 5 into local practices at the municipal level?
- What are the actors involved in these processes at the municipal level?
- What are the tools available and used for engaging with SDG 5 at the municipal level?

Thus, in this study we 1) investigate existing laws, institutions and policies that are relevant for implementing SDG 5 in Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>1</sup>, 2) map the various responses to SDG 5 in three selected municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Visoko Municipality, East Ilidža Municipality and Žepče Municipality, and 3) map the actors and tools involved in implementing SDG 5 at the municipal level. At this point in time it is premature to attempt to assess the outcomes of the municipalities' engagement with SDG 5, as it is a cumbersome process for such an extensive agenda to be made operational and implemented at all levels of governance, but we monitor the progress and the tools available to do so.

The policy aims of the report are to develop lessons learned, identify best practices, map obstacles and provide good examples of gender mainstreaming outcomes such as how gender equality impacts sustainability, peace and democracy. A research-based, policy relevant toolbox is developed, in which instruments and strategies to implement SDG 5 can be found.

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1. The administrative set up of Bosnia and Herzegovina is made up of the state level: Bosnia and Herzegovina, and two administrative entities: 1. Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and 2. Republika Srpska (RS), as well as 3. The Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Brčko District). FBiH is further divided into ten administrative areas, cantons, that also have their own legislative framework, but usually just enforced with elements already present at the entity level. Republika Srpska is also referred to as Serb Republic, which is the Serb entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For ease of communication, this report will use the English form of the name.

## Sustainable Development Goal 5

The 2030 Global Agenda sets out a vision for the sustainable development of the world for the period 2015-2030. The SDGs encompass the unfinished business of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to eradicate poverty, but the SDGs move beyond to break new ground in terms of linking peace, development and human rights (UN 2015, Güney-Frahm 2018). In contrast to the Millennium Goals, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is a multi-dimensional process that goes beyond outcomes. It incorporates targets related to gender-based violence, harmful practices, unpaid care work, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and legislative changes (Bradshaw et al., 2017).

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and consequently half of its potential. Furthermore, women's rights are human rights. While the world made progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment under the Millennium Development Goals, gender inequality persists and stagnates social progress (Razavi, 2016; Esquivel and Sweetman, 2016). SDG 5 is worded more strongly than its predecessor: to 'eliminate gender inequality' is better than to 'promote gender equality'. Yet, its targets are not time-bound. Big promises are made, but there is no obligation to achieve the goal by a given date. In addition, Agenda 2030 is silent about the tools and policies needed to attain the SDG 5 (Esquivel and Sweetman, 2016).

To provide an in-depth overview of these documents is beyond the scope of this report but we can conclude that there is an increasing number of international institutional and legal frameworks in support of empowering women and the move towards gender equality, that aim to guide the development of national mechanisms, tools and institutions to further implement gender equality through SDG 5.

### Why does SDG 5 matter to local government?

From the global to the local level, gender inequality is the most persistent and entrenched challenge to development. In focusing on the local level, this study

attempts to describe in detail, practical steps toward the localisation and realisation of SDG 5. It does this by mapping how to improve, from a gender perspective, the analysis and monitoring of participation, decision-making and services to citizens at the local level.

### SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

- ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- recognition and valuing of unpaid care and domestic work
- ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
- reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources
- enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls

There are four important arguments for why SDG 5 matters to local government (cf. Lucci, 2015; Öjendal and Dellnäs, 2013).

1. It is a matter of justice. Women account for half the population and therefore have the right to be represented as such. Only by having more locally elected women, will women feel truly represented and recognised in the democratic process. A society in which women are not part of the political system is an unjust society.

Getting more women into elected offices at local level is a top priority in terms of empowering women, as a goal on its own right and because local politics is a first step to regional and national office. Female leaders in local government can challenge gender stereotypes and set an example to younger girls.

2. It is a matter of democracy. The equal representation of women and men enhances democratisation. Women's experiences are different from men's and need to be represented in discussions. These different experiences imply that women 'do politics' differently from men, which can enrich politics. Furthermore, local government is a space where democracy can be learned, and where women are present in critical numbers and are able to participate effectively in local government, the result is more socially responsive governance outcomes and a more transparent way of working.
3. It is a matter of interest. Decisions by municipalities about development priorities, services and regulation affect the quality of life of both women and men, but not necessarily in the same way. In most countries there are significant differences between women and men in the resources they command, the work they do, and in the responsibilities and the decision-making power they have.
4. It is a matter of obligation of the local government to take up the responsibility it has towards protecting women's and girl's rights and mainstreaming gender issues. Recent legal and policy frameworks that aim to end violence against women and girls, promote women's political participation and create programmes that will economically empower women, place a significant responsibility on local governments to implement those legal instruments and policies.

## *Why study SDG 5 in Bosnia-Herzegovina?*

Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the countries in the region to have successfully institutionalised gender equity and equality. Its efforts have been replicated in other Western Balkan countries such as Montenegro and Serbia. The institutionalisation has occurred in the last seventeen years through the development of legal and policy frameworks, establishment of gender mainstreaming mechanisms, and the engendering of government statistical institutions. Despite the advanced institutionalisation of gender issues, the lives of women and girls have not significantly improved during this period.

### **Selection of cases**

The local governments of Visoko Municipality, East Iliča Municipality and Žepče Municipality have demonstrated political will to empower women and girls, and mainstream gender issues through their participation in local, regional, and national campaigns, policy development processes and other activities.

Visoko Municipality participated in ICLD Women Politician's leadership trainings, as it was one of the rare municipalities in BiH (and in the FBiH the only one) led by a female mayor. Given that the mayor won her second term, it was a good argument to include this municipality in the research

East Iliča Municipality has been at the forefront of developing and implementing gender mainstreaming policies in local governance and has an active political party association of women, as well as prominent and active members of the Municipal Assembly (Youth Policy of East Iliča 2013).

Žepče Municipality was one of the first municipalities that developed a Gender Equality Local Gender Action Plan (LGAP), which was used as a model of best practice in BiH (OSCE 2015).



### *Multi-method approach*

We employed a multi-method, comparative case study research design that combines qualitative text analysis with qualitative fieldwork with interviews and focus groups (Gingrich & Fox, 2002; Georg & Bennett, 2005; Höglund & Öberg, 2011).

We analysed national, entity, canton and municipality documents relating to SDG 5 to analyse aims, strategies and outcomes of strategies to assess the gender impact of these strategies. In our mapping of the gender equality documents we were unable to find any references to implementation plans for adopting SDG 5 at the local level of governance.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with municipal decision- and policy-makers, civil servants, women organisations, advocates and other stakeholders in each municipality. These interviews were used to analyse awareness of the sustainable development

goals, to explore the understanding of SDG 5 and to investigate changing policies and practices at the local level.

Furthermore, we conducted surveys in each of the three municipalities to map the existence and use of tools to implement and mainstream gender equality into decision-making processes, policies and practices at the local level. The survey was conducted with 34 participants, included 20 questions and the response rate was 100 per cent.

Focus group discussions were held during two ICLD-led programmes – an International Training Programme in Belgrade, September 2017, and the Municipal Partnership Programme in Belgrade October 2017. The participants included local authority representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Lithuania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine. The data we captured provided both context and insights to the notion of SDG 5 and gender issues.

## Towards a theoretical framework: translating global ideas into local practices

The diffusion of global ideas and their effects on national and local policy, political practices and everyday behaviour are central research questions in international relations (Krook and True, 2010). The general assumption has been that “good norms” travel and change practices for the better (cf. Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, 2000; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1999) and “gender” norms are among those thought to lead to better behaviour. For instance, gender balance in state decision-making, women’s participation in public life and women empowerment are seen as “good things”. Levitt and Merry (2007) refer to such a process of appropriation and local adoption as vernacularisation, as global ‘ideas connect with locality, they take on some of the ideological and social attributes of the place, but also retain some of their original formulation’.

We apply the notion of translation to describe the complex, conflictual and frictional processes through which global ideas are translated into local practices. Recent research has conceptualised translation as a process of interaction between global ideas and local practices, and reveals that translation takes place through patterns of power-laden, frictional interaction and feedback loops (Björkdahl and Höglund, 2013; Sandholtz, 2008). It has also become increasingly clear that national and local normative contexts affect norm translation. Björkdahl (2012) argues that translation is a frictional process when global norms become local practices where the local practice may dissolve, unmake, and remake the global ideas and how they work. Furthermore, norm diffusion and adaptation do not occur in a normative vacuum. Successful norm translation requires the displacement or silencing of competing, clashing and inconsistent norms to construct a normative match. Given that global ideas are constantly being contested and negotiated, gender norms are particularly elusive in this sense because they consist “of two parts, ‘gender’ and ‘equality,’ that are each highly contested” (Krook and True, 2010).

Our theoretical framework brings to the fore theoretical global ideas: the process of translation, normative fit between global ideas and existing local normative framework in terms of legal and institutional framework and local actors involved in translating the global ideas into local practices as described through the tools to mainstream gender equality.



## The global talk of gender equality

The development of Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals builds on decades of norm advocacy work to promote gender equality and eliminate gender inequality and to change the global normative context. A fundamental point of departure for this development is the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime. Development of Agenda 2030 is also guided by international landmark documents in the field of women’s rights and status such as the Rome Statute of the ICC, which for the first time in an international criminal law treaty, defined and used the term “gender” in 1998; the declarations and action plans of the UN Conference on Women in Beijing; and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and subsequent resolutions.

Several conventions and agreements have been adopted at the regional level, such as the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the Istanbul Convention on combating violence against women. These are also key background documents guiding the national institutional and legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although not yet a EU candidate country, Bosnia and Herzegovina laws on gender equality will have to harmonise with, EU gender policy documents, such as the EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU external relations 2016–2020; the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015–2019; the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security; the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010–2015 and its successor; relevant guidelines, and other documents. In addition, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) was adopted in 2000 as a landmark document for the inclusion of women in peace and security. The resolution has had an important impact on Bosnia and Herzegovina which was one of the first states to adopt a national action plan for implementing UNSCR 1325. Women's organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina attempted to use the moral and political authority of international acceptance of the resolution to exert pressure on local power-holders (Cockburn, 2013).

### **Gender mainstreaming**

To ensure the implementation of the global policies on gender equality and the empowerment of women, the strategy of gender mainstreaming has been advocated. Gender mainstreaming refers to applying “a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively” (United Nations, 1995). It is a means to promote a gender perspective in all legislation and policies. Yet, the meaning of “gender” and “gender equality” is not well defined in these global policies or in the strategy of gender mainstreaming. This becomes a challenge when all the different levels of governance are to implement gender equality. Progress in mainstreaming

gender can be monitored through three stages according to Moser and Moser (2005). A first step is the adoption of the language of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The second stage is to put a gender mainstreaming policy in place. The third and final stage is the implementation of gender equality.

Formulating policies to respond to SDG 5 and funding it will be the point at which the goal is ‘translated’ into concrete action in states. The SDGs which contain most potential for transformation risk being ‘neglected in implementation through selectivity, simplification, and national adaptation’ (Fukuda-Parr, 2016). Localisation of SDGs can thus lead to a dilution of the ambitions of the SDG 5, which is why it is so significant that state level institutions develop policies for SDG 5 implementation, as well as guidelines for local authorities. Bosnia and Herzegovina, as many other countries, already has gender equality policies and legislation that can be used to ensure SDG 5 is translated with all its ambitions and potential.

## **Normative match between the SDG 5 and Bosnia and Herzegovina's gender equality frameworks**

The following is an overview of existing legal and policy frameworks for gender equality of relevance to the SDG 5 targets in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We can see that there is a normative coherence between the global ideas inherent in SDG 5 and the existing Bosnia and Herzegovina normative framework for gender equality.

The legal frameworks and mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina that address SDG 5 target **5.1. “ending all forms of discrimination** against all women and girls everywhere (see recap of SDG 5 above) include the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, specialised laws and policies on gender equality, protection from violence and anti-discrimination. The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina ensures and protects equal representation of women and men before the law, regardless of their marital status or sex.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina Agency for Gender Equality (GEA) is the government body established by the Gender Equality Law to monitor gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina. GEA, as well as its two entity counterparts - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska (RS) Gender Centres (GC) - receives and resolves complaints on discrimination, and monitors compliance of national laws and policies with international human rights standards that focus on gender equity and equality.

The National Action Plans (NAPs) that implement UNSCR 1325 agenda at national level function as blueprints for which actors and areas are prioritised and deemed important by state governments. The third Bosnia and Herzegovina NAP 2018-22, lays emphasis on the security sector, co-operation with civil society actors, addressing conflict-related and trafficking-related sexual violence, and includes the concept of human security. Its monitoring mechanism is the plan for monitoring and evaluation of the NAP, a special checklist to follow the implementation for Resolution 1325, which is an instrumental approach to gender equality (NAP, 2017). From our fieldwork and interviews, NAP seems to have been an effective tool for translating UNSCR 1325 into national policies and subsequently, into local action plans as it is frequently referred to in field work.

In addition to the UNSCR 1325 NAP, Bosnia and Herzegovina has a Gender Action Plan (GAP), first adopted in 2006, for the period 2013-17, that suggests all institutions adopt two complementary approaches to strive for gender equality: the inclusion of a gender perspective in programmes and policies, and the development of programmes that lead to the empowerment of women. GAP contains three objectives which are very much in line with SDG 5 objectives and targets:

1. Preparation, implementation and monitoring of programmes of measures for the promotion of gender equality in government institutions, by priority areas;
2. Building and strengthening the system, mechanisms and instruments for achieving gender equality; and
3. Establishment and strengthening of cooperation and partnership.

Gender equal citizenship rights (Bosnia and Herzegovina Law on Citizenship) provide married women with the same rights as married men to acquire, change, and retain their nationality. Women and men have the same right to initiate divorce and the same legal obligations towards their children after divorce. Married women have the same rights as married men, guaranteed by entity family laws, however no specific legal provisions prohibit forced marriage nor is there a definition of forced marriage, and marriage is recognised only as a heterosexual, i.e. between woman and man.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was among the first to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. The *lex specialis*<sup>2</sup> relating to SDG 5 target **5.2. elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation** are the FBiH and RS Laws on the Protection from Domestic Violence have existed since 2005 (revised 2012 and 2013). Domestic violence is also a criminal offence and FBiH and RS Criminal Codes include provisions for investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of domestic violence and rape. Policies and action plans for prevention of domestic violence exist at Bosnia and Herzegovina and entity levels and include services for women and girl survivors of violence: emergency shelters; health services; and hotlines. Funding is provided through gender mainstreaming mechanisms and NGOs. The Bosnia and Herzegovina Law on Gender Equality is the core legal framework that provides legal protection from sexual harassment, which includes civil remedies and criminal penalties.

2. Lex specialis – law governing a specific subject matter.

The Bosnian Constitution also provides provisions that refer to SDG 5 target **5.3 eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation**. Women are protected by laws from early marriage, and the legal age for marriage of women and men is 18 years, but courts may exceptionally allow marriage at the age of 16. However, early marriage is a common practice within the Roma community which practices custom-law marriages. There is no evidence to suggest that female genital mutilation is practiced in Bosnia and Herzegovina. “Criminal codes in Bosnia and Herzegovina...do not include specific legal provisions that would incriminate stalking, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation ...which is an indication that in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no adequate legal mechanism to protect victims from these forms of violence” (Petrić and Radonićić, 2014).

Although the legal framework makes no distinction between men and women, traditional gender roles, particularly in rural areas, suggest that the national legal/policy framework could be further developed to respond to SDG 5 target **5.4 recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate**. Domestic work is not calculated as part of the country's GDP, and women tend to have more obligations towards caring for family members for whom the state does not provide adequate social services or medical care (Somun-Krupalija, 2010).

The Election Law and the Law on Gender Equality promote and protect gender equality in the participation of women in all forms of political participation, but there is room for improvement in addressing SDG 5 target **5.5 ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life**. The Election Law prescribes a 40 per cent quota of women (or the least represented sex) to appear equally distributed on election voting lists while the Law on Gender Equality obliges all political parties to ensure gender equality is enforced in statutes

and political programmes, and election campaigns. Apart from the judicial government, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still underrepresented in public and political life, particularly in high level executive and legislative government positions (Sarajevo Open Centre, 2016). Women - as well as men - with disabilities, can in practice be discriminated against in voting procedures as most voting locations are not accessible.

SDG 5 target **5.6 ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights** is guaranteed by the health legislation which does not discriminate between women and men. Pregnant women have legally guaranteed free health services but cannot always access it in practice. Reproductive health and rights are not part of the education system, and only some NGOs in a few urban areas provide free services, advice and treatment for youth. Abortion is legal in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but sexual and reproductive health is not always accessible to Roma, women with disabilities and unemployed women.

SDG 5 target **5.7 reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources** are provided by Bosnia and Herzegovina's ratification of ILO Conventions 100, 111 and 156. The Law on Gender Equality mandates non-discrimination in employment based on sex, mandates equal remuneration for work of equal value, and protects women's employment security when they are on maternity leave. The right to paid maternity leave in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated on entity level through labour laws. However, there are gender gaps in economy and employment: more men are employed in salaried employment and in self-employment; fewer men are unemployed; and more men can find and retain a job. Factors contributing to this situation include insufficient child care facilities, an education system which reinforces the stereotypical professions of men and women, and a lack of resources and information on employment or self-employment opportunities (Lejla Somun-Krupalija, 2011). The Labour Force Survey (2010) showed that almost one third of women stay at home and care for the family, while virtually no men do.

Though Bosnia and Herzegovina has not ratified the ILO convention 169, access to land and assets are protected for land rights, as married women have the same rights as married men to own, use, make decisions and use land and assets as collateral. The legal framework on inheritance is gender-neutral. However, despite endeavours of gender mainstreaming mechanisms of Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>3</sup> and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), it is still customary that only sons inherit land and non-land assets.

SDG 5 target **5.8 enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology (ICT), to promote the empowerment of women**, is promoted and supported through the GAP and employment strategies at all levels. These tools provide measures to increase female employment (including within ICT), keep gender-based statistics, and establish indicators following the implementation of strategic documents for both genders. Although the ICT sector has been expanding in recent years, globally women make up only 25 per cent of the ICT labour force, and they are even less represented in the Bosnia and Herzegovina workforce (Kolektiv, 2016).



SDG 5 target **5.9 adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels** is met through Bosnia and Herzegovina's ratification of all existing international and regional gender equality instruments. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also adopted specific laws to prevent discrimination, domestic violence and ensure gender equality as described in the previous seven SDG 5 targets. Gender mainstreaming institutions have been established at multiple levels: executive government at state level through the Gender Equality Agency (GEA); and entity level, through Gender Centres (GC) in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serb Republic, and ministries at all levels and other public institutions have been encouraged to nominate gender focal points. The legislative government has also set up boards and committees at all levels of parliaments, assemblies and councils.

3. GEA, GC FBiH and GC RS, primarily, as well as other mechanisms established at local authority level (municipal committees, gender advisors, etc.)

## Analysis of local institutions, policies and tools of gender equality

The following instruments and strategies were recognised as existing or potential tools to mainstream gender in general, and to implement SDG 5. Most of the tools are already recognised by the legal and policy frameworks and are grounded in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Gender Equality Law or Bosnia and Herzegovina GAP. The indicators are developed in consultation with existing literature (Danida, 2006; Asian Development Bank, 2013), given that the SDG 5 indicators developed for Bosnia and Herzegovina include only one on prevalence of violence against women

### 1. Committee on gender equality

The Committees on Gender Equality are permanent bodies of the municipal council i.e. a Municipal Committee on Gender Equality, present also at all other levels of the government.<sup>4</sup> The purpose and mandate of these committees is to monitor, report and cooperate on gender equality issues at local level and it stems from the Bosnia and Herzegovina Gender Equality Law. Over 95 per cent of the municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have established gender equality committees (Babic-Svetlin, 2009), however not all are “functional and their capacities need to be strengthened so that they will be able to implement the activities within their mandates” (Babic-Svetlin, 2009). Some committees are active in the implementation of the gender equality policy and legal framework, while others include members who do not have basic knowledge of this framework (OSCE, 2009 and Miftari, 2015).

The findings of this research came to similar conclusions, in that there is a discrepancy between the capacity and ability of the Committees on Gender Equality to mainstream gender at the local level. According to its current chair at the time of writing, the East Ilička Committee was established almost twenty years ago in 1999 and was one of the first to be established in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The strength of their committee was in the coordinated efforts of

all women working in decision-making or operational positions, as well as men, such as the mayor, who supported them. However, they are aware that the committee does sometimes get engulfed in “humanitarian actions” of helping the needy, ill and impoverished members of society, which leaves little time for concrete gender mainstreaming of local governance.

***“We are one of the rare municipal committees who are going on and doing our best to make a change [to empower women] ...we try to support women [in need], when there were floods we were actively included, [fund-raise] for kids' books for school, support the local hospital, etc.”***

(East Ilička, 27.12.17)

The committees in other municipalities have been less active, although their members were distinguished women who, in addition to being elected municipal councillors, had decision-making positions in local governance. The Committees in Žepče and Visoko rarely met, and only in situations when there were items on the agenda that were specifically related to gender issues.

***“[The] committee [for gender equality] is not doing anything... I also think that none of the committee members even read the [Žepče Local] GAP, they do not organise anything... Do these political parties just pay lip service to gender issues?”*** (Žepče, 18.01.18)

Although the original idea of gender equality committees’ monitoring role was that they would act as a “gender sieve” and have access and comment on all materials discussed at the municipal council sessions, this is not the case. The committees that are less active are those that include additional topics of one single committee, such as youth or human rights, which further reduces the emphasis on gender issues.

4. The Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, as well as the Parliament of FBiH are bicameral and one of them, the House of Representatives have a Committee on Gender Equality since 2000; National Assembly of RS has a Board for Equal Opportunities; at FBiH cantonal level each cantonal assembly has a Committee for Gender Equality.

For municipal gender equality committees to have an impact on gender mainstreaming and the implementation of SDG 5, they will need further support from entity GCs, as well as women's organisations that have experience in supporting institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms.

### Committee on gender equality indicators:

- percentage of gender equality issues on the agenda per year;
- percentage of gender equality issues on municipal council agenda per year;
- number and type of policy and legal reforms and budget initiatives that address gender-based discrimination in access to basic services, resources, assets, or employment.

## 2. Appoint a gender focal point with responsibility for SDG 5

The gender mainstreaming tool of appointing gender focal points was one of the first to be utilised when the larger scale gender institutionalisation began in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2000. At local level these positions were usually placed within the cabinet of the mayor, particularly in the first two pilot municipalities of Prijedor and Travnik. The idea was to ensure the gender focal point position within executive local authority was close to the decision-making level, and aware of all municipal projects and events. The next step was gender mainstreaming throughout the municipal departments. The result of these processes is that some municipalities do have some form of gender focal point, usually assigned to an existing position within a municipal department such as the case in East Ilička Municipality.

***"There is no person appointed as a gender focal point, but one person, usually in the department for social affairs, economy and education, in addition to their job description, gets the responsibility for gender equality... most often the one with education portfolio."***

(Validation meeting, East Ilička, 16.05.18)

The Žepče Municipality is an example of how an entire department within the municipality has been nominated as a gender focal point, namely the Žepče Development Agency. In addition to being the key person, the mayor delegates all incoming gender-related external contacts and cooperation, the RAZ is also in charge of preparing the Local GAP, implementing, monitoring and reporting on it. Although the Žepče Development Agency has adequate human resources, with experienced and gender sensitised staff and director, gender is just one in a myriad of tasks in their work, such as municipal development strategy, tourism development, rural development, investments, long-life learning, etc.

***"... what we do [on gender equality at the Žepče Development Agency] is not being brought down to all other staff in the municipality or to local communes... For instance, one person asked me whether gender issues are linked to [lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual/transgender] LGBT issues, and he is one of the decision-makers. So, what do we do to make them to be informed and make a change?"***

(Žepče, 18.01.2018)

SDG 5 as a tool has not yet been used at local level to mainstream gender, and so although there are focal points at state level for all UN SDGs, instructions and guidelines have not reached local authorities. However, the idea to use SDG 5 as a tool and ensure the existing gender focal point within the municipality is also the focal person for SDG 5 was positively received by study participants.

***"We still do not tag gender mainstreaming activities with the SDG 5 label, because there are no instructions from the higher levels of governance. However, now, before the forthcoming parliamentary elections [in October 2018] it could be used."***

(Validation meeting, East Ilička, 16.05.18)

The gender focal point tool, as well as any other gender mainstreaming instrument or strategy can have an effect once it is adequately supported by decision-makers, and when funding for their work and proposals is made available, such as in the example of mayors of three municipalities in this study.

***“We had sincere and concrete support from our former Mayor Kovač in all his 12 years of mandate, and this support is continued through the new mayor, as well.”***

(Validation Meeting East Iliča, 16.05.18)

***“Had the mayor not been a woman no one would have talked about gender equality in Visoko.”***

(Visoko, 28.01.18)

***“The mayor is very responsive... women entrepreneurs are getting a positive response.”***

(Žepče Validation Meeting, 15.05.18)

For municipalities that have regular cooperation with the entity GCs in RS or FBiH, the role of the gender focal point is also to liaise between the local and entity authorities.

### Gender focal point indicators:

- percentage of workload dedicated to gender issues;
- level of decision-making power of the gender focal point;
- level of cooperation with state SDG 5 focal point institutions.

### 3. Develop Local Gender Action Plan that includes SDG 5 targets

Gender Action Plans (GAP) are used to track and monitor gender mainstreaming of municipal processes and policies to design outcomes for gender equality. The Local GAP is modelled on the Gender Action Plan used at state level in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Municipal authorities are expected to assess the gender equality situation and propose concrete actions to reduce gender-based discrimination and improve gender equality. Information on the number of municipalities that have LGAPs is not available, but as some research participants said, perhaps the more significant information would be to know how many LGAPs have funding and are being implemented.

Development of the LGAPs for East Iliča and Žepče was done in a relatively participatory manner and included gender aware representatives of local authorities. The LGAP preparation process was led by the Žepče Development Agency, and they believe that the introduction of SDG 5 “can help ... improve the mechanism of coordination and monitoring of gender issues.”

There is a plan to ensure that municipal budgets automatically have a budget line earmarked for the implementation of LGAP to ensure it is implemented.

### Local Gender Action Plan indicators:

- percentage of municipal budget dedicated to GAP implementation;
- evidence that service standards are established and regularly monitored, and reflect women’s and men’s different needs, responsibilities, and access to services.

#### 4. Ensure gender responsive budgeting to address SDG 5 targets

“A gender-responsive budget is a budget that works for everyone – women and men, girls and boys – by ensuring gender-equitable distribution of resources and by contributing to equal opportunities for all” (Oxfam, 2018). The initiatives for gender responsive budgeting aim to create a direct link between social and economic policies by applying the tool of gender analysis to the way government budgets are formulated and implemented. A gender budget analysis was first introduced as a new tool by the Beijing Platform for Action, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina it has been introduced through different programmes since 2001. Bosnia and Herzegovina used the budgeting reform processes to introduce gender responsive budgeting and a strategy to advance gender equality (Avdagic and Hujic, 2010). Although it seems the regular budgeting procedure and practice were gender mainstreamed at entity level, this process has not reached local authorities (apart from a few pilot municipalities that have failed to maintain gender responsive budgeting despite pioneering efforts).

Gender responsive budgeting is not an instrument applied in any of the studied municipalities, but in Žepče there is hope that it will be part of the future budgeting process reforms related to the introduction of “programme budgeting.”

#### Gender responsible budgeting indicators:

- number of trainings held with the Ministry of Finance and other resource institutions on gender-responsive budgeting; and the number and percentage of women and men trained;
- number of municipalities that undertake a gender-responsive budget analysis, or have mechanisms for tracking budget allocations and expenditures for programmes targeted at women;
- percentage of government funds allocated to services that meet the needs of women and girls;
- number of women’s organisations and networks and other civil society organisations that undertake a gender budget analysis of government spending and advocate for increased spending to respond to the needs of women and girls.

#### 5. Women representation in decision-making

Gender balanced representation in decision-making institutions, bodies, public companies and other structures established and maintained by government, is guaranteed by the Gender Equality Law and the Election Law, both of which call for 40 per cent representation of the less represented sex. Some local authorities have, like Visoko Municipality, harmonised their legal frameworks with these laws, to guarantee gender-equal representation.

***“[The] Statute [of Visoko Municipality] specifies it ‘will ensure equal rights...including gender equality’ and ‘ensure there is an equal partaking of both sexes’ [so that] ‘when suggesting membership... sexes are equally respected.’”***

(Visoko, 26.12.17)

The current legally prescribed quota tools are recognised as a positive measure, and most research participants had knowledge of the quotas, but many of them found that these were not functioning in practice nor enabling the prescribed participation of women in decision making.

***“... However, the law does not say how many women must be among the 23 elected [councillors]...and we end up having men councillors.”*** (East Ildža, 25.12.17)

***“...in our canton, all ministers who were nominated were men. One NGO reacted and complained government is legally bound to include 40 per cent of women in all executive government but were ignored.”*** (Žepče, 10.01.18)

Women’s participation in decision making is also dependent on the way they perceive politics in general, or the socially constructed expectation of who can and should be a politician and how s/he should behave. Women perceive politics as “dirty and don’t see it worthwhile to enter politics.” (East Ildža, 24.01.17) Obstacles mentioned to women’s political participation include lack of awareness and support in political parties and having to fight the “male mafia” because “We can have trainings or awareness raising for ages, but there is no willingness [on behalf of men] that women can be supported.” (East Ildža, 27.12.17); lack

of solidarity as “women do not support women and do not vote for women... we [women] rather ask our male colleagues for advice, as if there is a prejudice that men know things better than women...” (Žepče, 10.01.18); lack of capacity building for female politicians as “...when women are put on election lists, they appear out of nowhere, parachute from the skies...they are on election lists only in order to fulfil quotas.” (Žepče, 10.01.18) which results in “women don’t take too many initiatives and mainly follow party line.” (East Ilič, 24.01.17).

### Women representation in decision-making indicators:

- percentage of women politicians’ initiatives, questions and discussions dedicated to gender issues;
- percentage of women politicians who cooperate with women’s organisations in preparation for municipal council sessions;
- number and percentage of women in civil service;
- percentage of senior civil servants who are women, by sector;
- percentage of public sector board members who are women;
- changes in the percentage of women in management, technical, and professional positions.

Women’s representation in decision-making is one of the key instruments for gender equality as it provides the critical mass of women’s presence, provides them with access to resources and decision-making processes that have traditionally been reserved only for men. Although the quota mechanism does not always manage to create gender equality on its own, when paired with support by management and political will, it is a useful reference tool for gender mainstreaming.

## Tools to change perceptions and behaviour

### 1. Gender awareness raising

Awareness raising aims to show how existing values and norms influence our picture of reality, perpetuate stereotypes and support mechanisms (re)producing inequality. It challenges values and gender norms by explaining how they influence and limit the opinions taken into consideration and decision-making. Besides that, awareness-raising aims at stimulating a general sensitivity to gender issues.

Research participants recognised that awareness raising activities created a palpable and visible change in society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

***“The public first called ‘gender’ - ‘jandarme’ police constable [in French], and needed time to understand what gender means... Now we have RAZ [in charge of gender equality]... and political will to support gender equality and we will pursue that course.”*** (Žepče, 10.01.18)

***“[Although] parties implement gender issues only because of the Election Law, ...but still, women are being elected, the general public has also changed to some extent.”*** (Visoko, 26.12.17)

An important result of awareness raising is that violence against women is no longer taboo and that more cases are reported than before. Citizens are recognising that violence against women and girls is not a private issue, but rather a problem with which the entire society needs to get involved.

***“Has something changed? Yes, before we did not have the case of people reporting domestic violence, because both women and men thought that this violence was part of married life. People have become significantly aware and have access to information and knowledge [on domestic violence].”*** (East Ilič, 25.12.17)

The triple role women are expected to have in society: reproductive, productive and political is clearly recognised as an obstacle, in particular from the perspective that women need support in the reproductive role from the men in their families.

***“Definition of 21st century women: she does everything her grandmother used to do, but in addition to that also works 9 to 5 and is a politician.”*** (East Ilidža, 27.12.17)

Although awareness raising on gender equality issues had impact during the last twenty years of intensive gender institutionalisation processes, it has not reached all the different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in an equal way. Similarly, stereotypes about women's role in society have not been addressed, and although women are becoming directors, elected officials and even mayors, it is the reproductive role where it is most difficult to achieve gender equality.

### Gender awareness raising indicators:

- evidence of changes in attitudes of women and men (including youth) on appropriate roles for women and their right to participate in governance and public administration;
- women's and men's perceptions of legal and institutional responses to sexual harassment and discrimination complaints.

## 2. Gender training

Gender training is neither a purpose in and of itself nor a single tool to implement gender mainstreaming. It is often part of a set of other tools, instruments and strategies used to mainstream gender. Gender training should be a continuous long-term process and adapted to specific sectors and needs of the institution or organisation which it is targeting.

Research participants were familiar with gender equality training and had participated in various workshops and recognise its importance.

***“I believe change is taking place through all those workshops, projects that were the result of the LGAP...and women's self-realisation that in addition to the washing and cooking, they can do something more.”*** (Žepče, 10.01.18)

Workshops on gender equality issues were also appreciated as an important tool in gaining access specific skills and knowledge that are used for harmonisation of local authorities' policy framework with gender equality legislation, or for the development of Local GAPs. Gender training is also seen as one of the most important and effective tools for the future of gender mainstreaming and achieving gender equality.

### Gender training indicators:

- number of tailored gender-training courses developed and targeted to civil servants and local government employees; and number and percentage of women and men trained;
- evidence of awareness and training activities on social protection targeted at women and men, including those in the informal sector and other vulnerable occupations.

## 3. Gender sensitive language

Gender sensitive language is typical for languages that have a 'strong' male/female use of both nouns and verbs, such as the languages spoken in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although some countries are moving to introducing gender neutral titles for professions, in Slavic languages the use of male and female titles has been prominent and is part of the feminist and gender mainstreaming packages. Instructions for using gender sensitive language were drafted even for the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is one of the most frequently adopted decisions of municipal councils, together with gender disaggregated data and equal participation of women and men.

For some of the research participants, this tool is important and is one symbol of improved gender equality.

***“The key changes in the field of gender issues is that, for instance, we have adopted the gender sensitive language... In substance, not a huge change, but we can see the changes taking place in the mindsets of the male colleagues.”*** (Žepče, 10.01.18)

Although it might seem to be futile, or a trivial move in the ocean of gender inequality issues, the use of gender sensitive language is a crucial step in the array of gender equality instruments and strategies, that like the quota, cannot assure quality of change, but at least does provide some visibility of change.

### **Gender training indicators:**

- number of women in decision-making positions who use gender sensitive language for their titles;
- evidence of use of gender sensitive language in municipal official correspondence, strategies and other documents.

### **4. Visibility of gender equality issues**

The topic of visibility of gender equality issues was most evident in this research through the presentation of women in decision making positions as role models for society. The Mayor of Visoko, being one of the few female mayors in Bosnia and Herzegovina is most often seen as a role model and protagonist of an enabling environment for gender equality.

***“Promotion is going through Mayor. From the first mandate of the Mayor she is promoting the role of women, capacities of women and all organisations that were dealing with gender issues came to show support.”*** (Visoko, 14.12.17)

***“When our mayor was elected, as a woman mayor, this also brought many changes when it came to the election of female councillors. ...I think we are doing some things that is revolutionary”*** (Visoko, 06.10.17)

In comparison to 10-15 years ago, there are now more women participating in local communities, more employed women, and more women in politics. The impact of this change was aided by the institutionalisation of gender issues, through civil society organisations and their work of empowering women in every role, and awareness raising of the public.

### **Visibility of gender equality issues indicators:**

- gender analysis of municipal web page;
- gender analysis of media press clippings.

### **5. Promotion of equal rights and opportunities for men and women**

Municipalities promote gender equality most often by introducing quotas for women in municipal-funded projects and adopting affirmative measures to create equal opportunities for women. Some municipalities monitor the participation of women and men in their entrepreneurship and agriculture self-employment programmes.

***“Our municipal department for economy, including agriculture, gender monitors distribution of greenhouses. Although not a project targeting women, criteria are that at least 50 per cent of greenhouses are given to women.”***

(Visoko, 14.12.17)

Promotion of equal opportunities looks beyond the group of “women”, but also employs an intersecting approach in identifying the needs of women who are facing multiple discrimination.

Women’s access to ownership is still obstructed by customary practice of only sons inheriting property, and husbands being sole property owners. This practice hinders women from accessing municipal grants, bank loans or participation in international development projects because they do not have property for bank guarantees.

***“We educate people that there are laws, and that they can exercise their rights and then they go to enjoy their rights and they are rejected.”*** (Visoko, 26.12.17)

East Ilidža Municipality overcame this obstacle through an affirmative measure by recognising family ownership of property as a guarantee for grants.

### Promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men indicators:

- evidence that service standards are established and regularly monitored, and reflect women's and men's different needs, responsibilities, and access to services;
- evidence that procedures for responding to complaints are publicly available and accessible to women; and that standards for responding to complaints are implemented and monitored;
- equal employment opportunity policy and practices are in place and monitored for public–private partnerships (including core labor standards, equal pay for work of equal value, occupational health and safety, policy and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment, and separate sanitation facilities);
- number and percentage of poor women and men with increased income
- changes in income disparities between women and men;
- evidence of the type of measures taken to ensure poor women benefit equitably from social insurance and welfare programmes.

## Tools to mainstream processes

### 1. Gender disaggregated data to map challenges to gender equality

Gender disaggregated data or gender statistics “are defined as statistics that adequately reflect differences and inequalities in the situation of women and men in all areas of life”.<sup>5</sup> Having access to information on women and men is one of the first steps that can provide information on whether there are gender gaps. The Beijing Platform for Action was the first to identify the need

for good quality data on women's access to resources and political participation. Without gender disaggregated data it is difficult to assess the different needs of women and men, lobby for gender equality and plan adequate policies for gender equality.

The concept of disaggregating data by gender is a familiar gender mainstreaming tool to the municipalities, as it is a relatable and relatively simple concept of ensuring all data compiled by the authorities are divided into information about women and men, or girls and boys. It is also one of the few tools that is readily and most frequently introduced into the mechanisms adopted by local authorities in the form of binding decisions (*zaključak*) adopted by municipal councils.

Legal decisions have been introduced by local authorities that oblige them to provide gender disaggregated data, such as the decision adopted by the Municipal Council of Žepče Municipality that “statistical data and official data are collected, kept, and analysed in a gender sensitive manner, i.e. disaggregated by sex.”<sup>6</sup> This decision follows the wording of the first paragraph of the Gender Equality Law, but it does not include the second paragraph that requires such data to be part of the official records and to be available as public information.

The Development Agency of Žepče compiles data on women and men in the municipality but does not always receive data disaggregated by gender. It is also conducting its own survey with 200 participants on gender issues which it wants to use for their new Local Gender Action Plan. The Centre for Social Work disaggregates social protection data by gender, but it does not share it with the local authorities, as they are bound by Federal statistical and social protection legislation. “We do have gender disaggregated data, also disaggregated by age, and we have annual and semi-annual reports that we send to the statistical institute of FBIH.” (Majida Puric 11.01.18)

5. UN Stat - Gender Statistics Manual, <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/genderstat-manual/What-are-gender-stats.ashx>

6. Official Gazette of Žepče Municipality, March 2012, No. 2, page 10.

Gender disaggregated data was also criticised for being inadequate as a measure of concrete and relevant reduction of discrimination against women.

***“Significant statistics [for gender equality] should be the number of educated women in political parties and number of women who have made substantial changes in their careers...Indicators of women in political participation will never be relevant [as true indicators of change in gender equality] because many women are not aware [of gender issues] and because women’s participation in executive government [in comparison to total number of employees] does not reflect their decision-making power.”***

(Vinka Berjan, 28.12.17.)

Gender disaggregated data, as one of the tools for gender mainstreaming, is still a significant tool for policy development and assessment of women's access to resources and decision-making. Although it is frequently embraced by local authorities, it is not one easily put into practice.

### Gender disaggregated data indicators:

- sex-disaggregated data routinely collected, analysed and applied to improve equality between women and men, boys and girls in delivery of public services.

## 2. Analysis of state of gender equality in municipality and propose measures

Ongoing analysis of state of gender equality in municipalities is not taking place. The only regular reporting on an annual basis is on domestic violence, and some municipalities prepare an annual report which is submitted to their respective ministries and entity Gender Centres.

The measures employed include developing new criteria that will be more inclusive of women applicants for municipal grants.

***“In the future for support for entrepreneurship and agriculture we will continue with the criteria of gender equality.*** (Suada Koljenovic, Visoko, 14.12.17)

Iliča municipality did monitor and notice the lack of female applications for municipal grants. Their solution, an example of best practice, was developed to overcome the obstacle of not having bank guarantees (usually property) as all the assets are owned by men. The municipality then decided the applicant does not have to be the owner, but only needs to be on the list of inhabitants living in the commonly owned property, which enabled women to apply for loans.

***“The municipal support to entrepreneurs and self-employed farm workers was given out to men mostly because 99 per cent of them were property owners. Once the mayor proposed the new decision, adopted by Municipal Council...we had 80 per cent of women receiving these support packages from the municipality. The contracts are signed by the women, they are the recipients of funds.”***

(Natasa Golubovic, 25.12.17.)

This decision, which led to an increase in the number of women applicants to municipal grants shows how simple and effective solutions for gender equality are possible with adequate gender analysis.

### Analysis of state of gender equality & measures indicators:

- description of affirmative action and supportive measures to reduce discrimination and foster recruitment, training, and promotion of women, by sector or department;
- evidence that anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, and sexual harassment laws and policies are implemented.

### 3. Monitoring and periodical assessments of progress towards gender equality

Monitoring and periodical assessments of progress towards gender equality do not take place on a regular basis. These are most often compiled upon receiving a questionnaire or invitation to participate in a public event that would promote gender equality at municipal level.

***“Let us not be too strict, we first had to create legislation for local self-governance., to make documents that mainstream gender issues, and we completed that. We are not going so quickly in terms of what we planned...we have 6 women among 25 councilors and in Executive boards we have many women, among 7 public companies we have 4 women (kindergarten, library, CSW, Centre for culture), also head of TV Visoko is a woman. In comparison when we had all men directors, we can see a change of things. Women were not so much present. I think the role has changed significantly, but it is not strictly being monitored. I don't know whether it has happened by itself, or whether it is something that we are intending to do, but there are more women in decision making positions”.*** (Zekija Omerbegovic, Visoko, 26.12.17)

#### Monitoring & periodical assessment of progress towards gender equality indicators:

- percentage of municipal council's agenda points dedicated to periodical assessments of progress towards gender equality issues;
- percentage of municipal budget funding for periodical assessments allocated to gender equality assessments.

### 4. Drafts and proposals passed by the municipal council reviewed from a gender equality perspective

There are no guidelines or instructions on how to review municipal decisions, plans and other documents from a gender perspective. Gender analysis is not used on a regular basis, but it seems that some gender aware citizens notice occasions of inequality, which then sets the ball rolling. As mentioned in the Committee for Gender Equality above, these committees do not have the original purpose of “screening” all municipal documents and data.

***“[Gender mainstreaming was done] partially... We have instructions - Foundation CURE – who will provide us guidelines on how to include gender equality in all our documents.”***

(Visoko, 14.12.17)

There are also situations when even with the absence of gender analysis or gender checklists, some departments, using common sense and some incidental gender knowledge, tend to promote gender equality values in municipal work.

***“We do not have specific gender mainstreaming guidelines or checklists, as we mainly deal with technical issues, infrastructure projects and water works. However, for instance when planning the next step in the repair and reconstruction of water works, we decided to include the location of Čekrčići, because it is mostly occupied by internally displaced women (from Srebrenica) who have started some entrepreneurship that highly relies on access to water...”*** (Visoko, 06.10.17)

#### Drafts and proposals passed by the municipal council reviewed from a gender equality perspective indicators:

- percentage of municipal council's agenda points reviewed from gender equality perspective.

## 5. Consideration of citizens' initiatives for the promotion of gender equality

Our research did not provide much information on this point and if there are requests to promote gender equality, they tend not to come from individual citizens but from NGOs and businesses.

### Consideration of citizens' initiatives for the promotion of gender equality indicators:

- percentage of citizens' initiatives that promote gender equality received by municipality or Committee for Gender Equality.

***"In 2008 it [gender equality] was more popular: entire gender movement was having an effect on the municipality, Committee for Gender Equality was established, we had a visit by the Gender Center of FBiH, Ane Jakšić, they were pleased that a local Committee invited them to come to let us know what do to and how to go on."***

(Visoko, 26.12.17)

***"We have no cooperation whatsoever with other levels of government on gender equality issues, such as the GC of FBiH. We had some support from them through FIGAP.<sup>7</sup> We were funded by SNV as one of 7 municipalities who were first to do the LGAP. [But, today,] we do not have cooperation, I do not see that they are very active. They have not been inviting us, ... GC is now dead."*** (Žepče, 18.01.18)

## Cooperation for gender equality

### 1. Cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina and RS institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms at all government levels

In the Serb Republic, cooperation with the Gender Centre and local authorities is direct, and there is a contact person with whom the GC usually corresponds. East Ilička Municipality believes they have a concrete and good cooperation with the Serb Republic Gender Centre, although apart from UN Women-Sida/Sweden funded GBV projects, they could not come up with any other examples.

***"... the Centre for Social Work has worked with Gender Centre [of RS] on preventing violence against women [through the UN Women/Sweden GBV programme] and linked to peer violence."***

(Validation Meeting, East Ilička, 16.05.18)

In FBiH the cooperation between local authorities and the GC FBiH takes place via the cantonal authorities, and sometimes directly between municipalities and the GC.

### Cooperation with institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms at all levels of government indicators:

- number of joint programmes or events organised and implemented with institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms;
- number of requests to institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms for guidance on gender equality tool implementation.

7. FIGAP is the basket funding that the GEA receives funding from mainly Sida, Austrian Development Agency, etc. for the implementation of the BiH GAP. Please see further <http://arsbih.gov.ba/oblasti/figap-program/>

## 2. Cooperation with other government institutions on gender equality

There is infrequent and irregular cooperation with other levels of government on gender equality, except for ministries that have the mandate to follow up on domestic violence.

***“We never had any further interest or contact from any other level of institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we have never been invited to any gender institutions nor have we ever been told what they would expect from us.”*** (Visoko, 26.12.17)

Local authorities are sometimes invited to contribute to state or entity-level strategy development processes, as in the case of East Ilidža Municipality, when their Gender Equality Committee was invited to participate in the RS National Assembly Gender Equality Board on how to include domestic violence into the criminal code of RS.

The lack of cooperation with higher levels of government has resulted in a lack of knowledge on SDG 5 among local authorities. There is also more significance given to cooperation with higher levels of government, which are not gender mainstreaming mechanisms. Thus, for instance, the Centre for Social Work will take the request of their Ministry for Social Affairs more seriously than if the same request was being sent by GCs or GEA. Local authorities can propose meetings, visits, and invite higher levels of government to local events. However, the long-term means of cooperation with local authorities on gender issues needs to become part of the system of state and entity governments.

### Cooperation with other government institutions on gender equality indicators:

- number of joint programmes or events on gender equality organised and implemented in cooperation with other government institutions.

## 3. Cooperation with local NGOs on gender equality

Cooperation with local NGOs on gender equality issues takes place either through the municipal grants for NGOs, or as participants of NGO workshops or other events. NGOs receiving municipal support for women's issues are usually streamlined into traditional women's role of cooking, handicrafts and heritage, agriculture for household. Some participants of the research believe that municipal grants do provide opportunities for women activists as well.

***“We have - in my personal view - women activists, who are there, they are participating in our projects and have brought together many women and they are appearing as a significant element as they bring together many women.”***

(Visoko, 26.12.17)

Žene ženama from Sarajevo and Foundation CURE have been mentioned as women's NGOs providing support. Both organisations are working on supporting the municipality in raising awareness about gender issues, and the Association of Youth Kult Sarajevo project supporting young women leaders, mentioned by some study participants.

The funding mechanism for NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not based on projects, but the desire to ensure each registered NGO gets at least a little bit of support. The municipalities need to examine which NGOs can be their partners in the implementation of the GAP, or as service providers, while supporting youth women's organisations in activist projects.

### Cooperation with local NGOs on gender issues indicators:

- number of women's organisations involved in policy formulation, monitoring, and advocacy on public sector services and women's rights;
- number of women's organisations financially supported by municipal budgets and per cent of total budget of funding received by women's organisations;
- number of other civil society organizations supported to achieve gender equality goals, including women with a disability;
- description of work undertaken through civil society to establish an enabling environment for women to participate in decision making.

#### 4. Cooperation with international donors, INGOs, and other partners

Municipalities have received support from several donors for specific gender equality programmes or have participated in national programmes funded by international donors.

***"We are implementing a project with USAID to support marginalised women (single headed female households, women victims of violence, young women up to 35 years, rural women, women with disabilities, unemployed young women with disabled child) we are supporting 4 clients. We will monitor and if we see that the women can continue this business successfully maybe this will be something we will do with USAID or on our own.*** (Visoko, 14.12.17)

Municipalities also expressed an interest in cooperating with international NGOs and sought recommendations and contacts for Swedish NGOs working on gender equality issues.

#### Cooperation with international donors, INGOs and other partners indicators:

- number of gender equality international funded programmes that the municipality is participating in;
- number of local women's organisations financially supported by international donors or INGOs;
- percentage of municipal requests for support from international donors and INGOs that are on gender equality issues.

#### Globally, gender inequalities persist.<sup>3</sup>



In case of food shortages, women are often the first to go hungry.



Girls do better in school and university than boys, yet the gender pay gap stands at 23 % globally. It will take another 68 years to achieve equal pay.



Women's representation in national parliaments is at 23.7 %, which is still far from parity.



49 countries have no laws that specifically protect women from such domestic violence.



Women continue to do 2.6 times the unpaid care and domestic work that men do.

<sup>3</sup> See data from UNWOMEN.

## Conclusion: obstacles and gender equality tools in practice

### Obstacles to implementing SDG 5

The overarching obstacle to local level implementation of SDG 5 in Bosnia and Herzegovina is that the concept of SDGs has not been translated from state and entity levels to the level of local governance. Only a few research participants had heard of the SDGs, or had some experience of them, while for the vast majority, the interviews served as an awareness raising event on the topic. Although the responsibility for passing on information and guidelines to local authorities rests with the higher levels of government, impediments to mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equality are frequently recognised in the stereotypes about the role of women in society.

***“Men are the biggest obstacle, men do not consider women worthy of those [higher] levels of government...this is part of their bringing up and their own personality...but not all men have the same views.”*** (East Ilič, 22.12.17)

***“The obstacles for implementing SDG 5 are ... the biggest impact is by the house-upbringing and school - in the end it is the mistake of the way mothers bring up their children.”*** (Žepče, 10.01.18)

There was a strong presence in all three municipalities of male voices from East Ilič and Žepče, as well as the woman from Visoko, identifying women as the key obstacle to gender equality. They thought that women need to be more active themselves (Žepče), and that there are not enough women making themselves available “to do the job” (East Ilič), saying that women are not discriminated, but that they rather

***“have to seize the opportunities that are all already available and accessible to them”*** (Visoko).

***“I think women are given that space [to work and be active in society], but then it depends to what extent women themselves are prepared to impose themselves.”*** (Žepče, 10.01.18)

***“...we end up having men councillors, although women are given the same conditions [to participate as candidates], but they withdraw...”***

(East Ilič, 25.12.17)

***“When it comes to gender equality, it depends on the women, rather than the political situation... There is not a lack of equality, but there is passivity of women to take part in decision making.”*** (Visoko, 14.05.18)

To summarise, the key obstacles encountered by local authorities in advocating for gender equality include the lack of specific instruments and strategies for gender mainstreaming or inadequate political will, including funding to implement them:

- Lack of awareness of the sustainable development goals and the 2030 Global Agenda
- Limited understanding of what gender equality entails
- Patriarchal structures, values and norms in society (particularly in rural areas)
- Lack of readiness and capacity of political parties to implement principles of gender equality
- Lack of political will of elected officials and those in executive functions
- Lack of funding and there is no separate budget line for gender equality
- Non-functioning committees for gender equality
- No gender focal point
- Lack of Local Gender Action Plans
- Lack of implementation of election law
- Lack of cooperation with GCs at entity level and GEA at the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina

A survey on the extent to which these tools are utilised in the municipalities revealed that the three most prominent tools are **Local Gender Action Plans, disaggregating municipal data by gender**, and establishment of **Municipal Council Committees for Gender Equality**.

The characteristics of these tools are that they tend to satisfy the de jure of gender equality, without making de facto changes in the everyday lives of women and girls. There is a lack of regular monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Action Plan, committees sometimes go through the whole four-year mandate without meeting, and although some gender disaggregated data is available, it rarely contributes to the municipal development planning processes.

The tools least utilised or effective are women representation in decision-making, SDG 5 and gender responsive budgeting. Although quota systems for 40 per cent of women's representation exist in the gender legal framework, women's political participation remains below 20 per cent in municipal councils, and there are no mechanisms to ensure that at least 40 per cent of women are nominated to decision-making positions in executive government. Another obstacle is that political parties do not invest in empowering women in politics, and politics remains the bastion of male politicians. SDG 5 and gender responsive budgeting are tools that have not been introduced to local authorities.



■ n/a ■ low ■ moderate ■ high

## Toolbox for adopting and implementing SDG 5

There is a need for awareness raising concerning the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals at all levels of governance. The local levels are waiting for directives from the national level before taking initiatives on SDGs including SDG 5. Today there is limited cooperation between different levels of governance, limited cooperation with GCs and the GEA within the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Political parties follow the election law providing electoral lists with 40 per cent women, expecting few to be elected. In general, there is a sense among the interviewees that political parties pay lip-service to gender equality. SDG 5 can be helpful to make visible and promote gender equality, to create political will to implement gender equality

laws, to fund gender equality work and to improve mechanisms and instruments for monitoring progress on gender equality.

Summarising the main policy-relevant findings, we conclude that gender sensitive policies and gender equality are key elements of democratic governance, necessary for stable development and security in any community. The gender toolbox developed in this report provides knowledge, tools and inspiration on how to operationalise gender equality at the local level. The toolbox includes four different kinds of tools 1) institutional mechanisms, 2) tools to change perceptions and behaviour, 3) tools to mainstream processes, 4) cooperation for gender equality.



## Annex - List of indicators for SDG 5 toolbox

### Institutional mechanisms

#### 1. Committee on gender equality to meet regularly

- percentage of committee's agenda points dedicated to gender equality issues
- percentage of municipal council's agenda points dedicated to gender equality issues
- number and type of policy and legal reforms and budget initiatives that address gender-based discrimination in access to basic services, resources, assets, or employment

#### 2. Appoint a gender focal point with responsibilities for SDG 5

- percentage of workload dedicated to gender issues
- level of decision-making power of the GFP
- level of cooperation with state SDG 5 focal point institutions

#### 3. Develop Local GAP that includes SDG 5 targets

- percentage of municipal budget dedicated to GAP implementation
- evidence that service standards are established and regularly monitored, and reflect women's and men's different needs, responsibilities, and access to services

#### 4. Ensure gender responsive budgeting to address SDG 5 targets

- number of trainings held with the Ministry of Finance and other resource institutions on gender-responsive budgeting; and the number and percentage of women and men trained
- number of municipalities that undertake a gender-responsive budget analysis, or have mechanisms for tracking budget allocations and expenditures for programs targeted at women

- percentage of government funds allocated to services that meet the needs of women and girls
- number of women's organisations, networks and other civil society organisations that undertake a gender budget analysis of government spending and advocate for increased spending to respond to the needs of women and girls

#### 5. Women representation in decision-making

- percentage of women politicians' initiatives, questions and discussions dedicated to gender issues
- percentage of women politicians who cooperate with women's organisations in preparation for municipal council sessions
- number and percentage of women in civil service
- percentage of senior civil servants who are women, by sector
- percentage of public sector board members who are women
- changes in the percentage of women in management, technical, and professional positions

### Tools to change perceptions and behaviour

#### 1. Gender awareness raising

- evidence of changes in attitudes of women and men (including youth) on appropriate roles for women and their right to participate in governance and public administration
- women's and men's perceptions of legal and institutional responses to sexual harassment and discrimination complaints

#### 2. Gender training

- number of tailored gender training courses developed and targeted to civil servants and local government employees; and number and percent age of women and men trained
- evidence of awareness and training activities on social protection targeted at women and men, including those in the informal sector and other vulnerable occupations

#### 3. Gender sensitive language

- number of women in decision-making positions who use gender sensitive language for their titles;
- evidence of use of gender sensitive language in municipal official correspondence, strategies and other documents.

#### 4. Visibility of gender equality issues

- gender analysis of municipal web page;
- gender analysis of media press clippings.

#### 5. Promotion of equal rights and opportunities for men and women

- evidence that service standards are established and regularly monitored, and reflect women's and men's different needs, responsibilities, and access to services
- evidence that procedures for responding to complaints are publicly available and accessible to women; and that standards for responding to complaints are implemented and monitored
- equal employment opportunity policy and practices are in place and monitored for public-private partnerships (including core labour standards, equal pay for work of equal value, occupational health and safety, policy and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment, and separate sanitation facilities)
- number and percentage of poor women and men with increased income
- changes in income disparities between women and men
- evidence of the type of measures taken to ensure poor women benefit equitably from social insurance and welfare programmes

## Tools to mainstream processes

### Institutional mechanisms

#### 1. Gender disaggregated data to map challenges to gender equality

- sex-disaggregated data routinely collected, analysed and applied to improve equality between women and men, boys and girls in delivery of public services

#### 2. Analysis of state of gender equality in municipality and propose measures

- description of affirmative action and supportive measures to reduce discrimination and foster recruitment, training, and promotion of women, by sector or department
- evidence that anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, and sexual harassment laws and policies are implemented

#### 3. Monitoring and periodical assessments of progress towards gender equality

- percentage of municipal council's agenda points dedicated to periodical assessments of progress towards gender equality issues;
- percentage of municipal budget funding for periodical assessments allocated to gender equality assessments.

#### 4. Drafts and proposals passed by municipal council reviewed from gender equality perspective

- percentage of municipal council's agenda points reviewed from gender equality perspective.

#### 5. Consideration of citizens' initiatives for the promotion of gender equality

- percentage of citizens' initiatives that promote gender equality received by municipality or Committee for Gender Equality

### Cooperation for gender equality

#### 1. Cooperation with institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms at all levels of government

- number of joint programmes or events organised and implemented with institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms;
- number of requests to institutional gender mainstreaming mechanisms for guidance on gender equality tool implementation.

#### 2. Cooperation with other government institutions on gender equality

- number of joint programmes or events on gender equality organised and implemented in cooperation with other government institutions.

#### 3. Cooperation with NGOs on gender equality

- number of women's organisations involved in policy formulation, monitoring, and advocacy on public sector services and women's rights
- number of women's organisations financially supported by municipal budgets and per cent of total budget of funding received by women's organisations
- number of other civil society organisations supported to achieve gender equality goals, including women with a disability
- description of work undertaken through civil society to establish an enabling environment for women to participate in decision making

#### 4. Cooperation with international donors, INGOs and other partners

- number of gender equality international funded programmes that the municipality is participating in;
- number of local women's organisations financially supported by international donors or INGOs;
- percentage of municipal requests for support from international donors and INGOs that are on gender equality issues.

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# THE GLOBAL GOALS

For Sustainable Development