



Contribution of the Gender Equality Platform to the Periodical Review of the IPA 2 Indicative Strategic Document 2014 – 2020

INTRODUCTION

We welcome the treatment of gender equality as one of the key strategic priorities and a horizontal issue that needs to be addressed in all sectors. Nevertheless, gender equality and women empowerment are not sufficiently elaborated in the strategic document and are completely missing in certain sectors. Upon making certain consultations, the Platform for Gender Equality hereby proposes in this document the following recommendations for improvement.

1. Democracy and Governance

1.1. Needs and capacities in the sector - There is no systematic approach to ensuring constructive, efficient and effective interaction in promoting gender equality between the government and the local authorities and the organizations specialized in gender relevant research, advocacy and provision of services for women.

1.2. Objectives, results, actions and indicators – The potential of the Council for cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society to influence the establishment of a favorable legal and financial framework for this segment of civil society is limited. The non-democratic and non-transparent process of establishing this body, broadly criticized and largely boycotted by the active civil society, prevented the participation of women's organizations. The support should be directed towards establishing and formalizing comprehensive functional mechanisms for inclusion and cooperation, support to the strengthening of the capacities and provision of a sustainable system for financing such organizations on the central and local level, particularly considering their role hitherto in the development and accomplishment of the goals of the legal and political framework of gender equality.

2. Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights

2.1. Needs and capacities in the sector – The issue of the existence of structural discrimination that women are facing due to the absence of institutional capacities, effective policies and mechanisms for monitoring, prevention and protection against different forms and areas of discrimination against women is insufficiently addressed¹. The limited access to justice is especially visible on the local level. The efforts for promotion and protection of the fundamental rights are necessary not only for the marginalized

¹ Shadow Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women ESE and Akcija Združenska 2012.
[http://esem.org.mk/pdf/Voved/Monitoring%20na%20chovekovi%20prava/lzveshtai%20vo%20senka/CEDAW/5.%20Shadow%20Report%20CEDAW.%202013%20\(ENG\).pdf](http://esem.org.mk/pdf/Voved/Monitoring%20na%20chovekovi%20prava/lzveshtai%20vo%20senka/CEDAW/5.%20Shadow%20Report%20CEDAW.%202013%20(ENG).pdf)

groups, but also for women as well. In addition, the afore stated vulnerable groups should include the women victims of domestic violence, as a specific group that is faced with a limited access to justice manifested by the inapplicability of the Law on Free Legal Aid to Women DV Victims; lack of effective investigation by the police and the public prosecution authorities for criminal offences related to violence against women; non-compliance with the legal timelines for protection of women DV victims², rendering more lenient court sentences to the offenders and a discrepancy between the number of pressed criminal charges and indictments in criminal cases related to violence against women³. There is no reference of the Strategy for Prevention and Protection Against Domestic Violence and the Strategy for Elimination of Human Trafficking in the strategic documents as documents of relevance.

2.2. Objectives, results, actions and indicators – The results and actions should include an increased access to justice by women victims of gender based violence by providing appropriate legal aid, improving the legal framework for protection, establishing a compensation system and improving the efficiency of the criminal and court proceedings for protection of women victims of gender based violence.

5. Competitiveness and innovations

5.1. Needs and capacities in the sector – This area does not address the problems and needs related to encouraging and developing women’s entrepreneurship, such as an absence of a system for recognizing and valuing businesses that are dominantly owned by women, a restricted access to information, resources and opportunities for encouraging the development of women’s businesses that largely belong to the group of micro or small enterprises.

5.2. Objectives, results, actions and indicators – In view of ensuring the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, as well as increasing the effects of the planned goals and results, it is necessary to support gender relevant research that is currently lacking and to create active measures for supporting the development of women’s businesses, especially in the sectors with greatest growth potential. Moreover, it is necessary to enhance the planning capacities of the institutions based on the assessment of the specific needs of women for running a business, to establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of their effects from the aspect of the potential for growth and development of women’s businesses, in parallel with increasing the scope, type and support in accordance with the specific needs of women’s businesses⁴.

6. Education, employment and social policies

6.1. Needs and capacities in the sector – The priority problem in this area is the insufficient involvement and participation of women in public life. Hence, in addition to improving their educational, health and economic status, women’s empowerment for active involvement in the decision making processes, especially on the local level, should be one of the priorities for prevention of any further social exclusion

² Analysis of court proceedings in rendering temporary measures for protection against domestic violence, Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women ESE 2014. <http://esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikaciji/2014/Analiza%20na%20postapuvanje%20na%20sudovite.pdf>

³ Findings based on the data on protection of victims of violence under the Criminal code, collected by the USAID’s Women’s Legal Protection Project, Association ESE

⁴ <http://www.mrfp.org.mk/images/docs/publikacij/pretpriemnistvo-vo-makedonija-gem2012.pdf>

of women. The document identifies gender selective abortions as a priority, whereas the general downtrend of women's sexual and reproductive rights is not appropriately addressed.⁵ The different forms of discrimination on the labor market, especially mobbing and sexual harassment⁶ as factors that affect the insufficient economic activity, the employment opportunities and the promotions and earnings should be prioritized. The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020 should be included in the list of key national strategic documents as the foundation for programming in this sector.

6.2. Objectives, results, actions and indicators – With respect to the results, in addition to number, it is also necessary to expand the scope of the indicators for the policy creators. This is especially relevant for the gender distinctive statistics on municipal level which is currently inaccessible to the local authorities. The priority for supporting the reforms of the social and health care system must be in function of expanding the scope and type of publicly funded social and health care services, including the development of capacities for decentralization of these services on the local level. Modernization should mean equal distribution of accessible and available publicly funded social and health care services, through their decentralization, based on mapping the needs on the local level.

7. Agriculture and Rural Development

7.1. Needs and capacities in the sector – Gender equality is completely lacking in this sector, which is of outstanding importance considering the political, social and economic constraints of the women from the rural areas⁷. The discrepancy between the complex needs of rural women and the measures planned within the current policies is insufficiently addressed.

7.2. Objectives, results, actions and indicators – In view of accomplishing the planned results, it is necessary to include gender equality as an objective in the policies for agriculture and rural development, enhancement of the administrative capacities and coordination for development and financing of the action plans that are in function of improving the quality of life and the economic possibilities of rural women.

⁵Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the combined second to fourth periodic reports of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, 2016, Human rights Committee, Concluding observations on the third periodic report of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 2015

⁶ Violence against women at the workplace (psychological harassment and sexual harassment), Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women ESE, 2011

<http://esem.org.mk/pdf/Publikacii/Ostanati/2011/%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%BB%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE%20%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B7%20%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BD%D0%BE%20%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE.pdf>

⁷ http://www.crpm.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/AboutUS/Perspectives%20of%20women%20in%20rural%20areas_MKD.pdf