

Gender Equality in the
Military

Strengthening of Regional
Cooperation on Gender
Mainstreaming in SSR in
Western Balkans

The importance of Gender
Equality in the Military

Current Work on Gender
Equality in the Military

Previous Achievements of
Our Work

Gender Equality in the
Military and Agenda 2030

Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender
Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western
Balkans (II phase)



Strengthening of Regional
Cooperation on Gender
Mainstreaming in Security
Sector Reform in the
Western Balkans
(II phase)



Working with the Ministries of Defence and the Armed
Forces in the Western Balkans to **advance gender
equality in the military through regional cooperation.**

"We need a global response that addresses the
root causes of conflict, and integrates peace,
sustainable development and human rights in a
holistic way from conception to execution."

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres at the UN
General Assembly high-level dialogue, on 'Building Sustainable
Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development',
24 January 2017

THE INTERNATIONAL
POLICY FRAMEWORK

The **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of
Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** adopted
in 1979, stresses the need of women's
participation and leadership in all contexts.
**General Recommendation No. 30 on "Women in
Conflict Prevention, Conflict and Post-Conflict
situation"** [2013] stresses the applicability of the
CEDAW to a diverse range of settings affected by
conflict and political crises and affirms the
CEDAW's linkages with the UN Security Council's
Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

In addition, the Beijing Platform for Action,
adopted in 1995, draws attention to the "Women in
Armed Conflict" as one of twelve critical areas of
concern and emphasizes the participation of
women in conflict resolution.

The **Women, Peace and Security agenda**, through
several UN Security Council resolutions (1325
[2000]; 1820 [2009]; 1888 [2009]; 1889 [2010]; 1960
[2011]; 2106 [2013]; 2122 [2013]; 2242 [2015]; 2467
[2019], and 2493 [2019]) has been positioning
**conflict-prevention, women's meaningful and
equitable participation and sustaining peace at its
core.**

The CEDAW and WPS agenda offer a substantive
framework to ensure that **gender equality
becomes integral to conflict prevention,
peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction
and accountability.**

PROGRESS TO DATE

To ensure safety and security for all citizens, the security sector must be responsive to the needs of women and men and promote and pursue gender equality.

Significant progress in mainstreaming gender in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans has been achieved by four **Ministries of Defence (MoDs) and Armed Forces (AFs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia**, with the support of UNDP SEESAC through the first phase of the regional initiative Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans, implemented from 2012 to 2016:

- Strengthened regional cooperation on gender equality between the MoDs and AFs in the Western Balkans;
- Raised gender awareness of over 4,700 military and civilian staff in the MoDs and AFs;
- Increased capacities of Human Resources Departments in the MoDs and AFs to develop gender responsive policies based on the recommendations of the first regional survey **The Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans**.

The project thus brings the Western Balkans closer to fulfilling their global commitments for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by directly contributing to achieving SDGs 5 and 16 and implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

REMAINING CHALLENGES

Low representation of women in the Armed Forces at all levels in the Western Balkans, particularly in commanding and decision-making positions;

Persistence of gender stereotypes in AFs policies and practices;

Gender awareness improved, however lack of understanding on how to integrate gender perspective in the overall military curricula and training in order to prevent perpetuating gender stereotypes;

Limited capacities for gender-sensitive analysis and evidence-based policymaking, which should provide opportunities for equal career development of both men and women;

Low reporting rates related to gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in AFs, coupled with limited capacities to prevent and address the reported cases.



FOCUS OF THE PROJECT

- Facilitating the regional platform on mainstreaming gender equality in the policies and practices of the MoDs and AFs in the Western Balkans;
- Strengthening the capacities of Gender Equality Mechanisms in the MoDs and AFs to achieve improved results through information exchange and knowledge sharing across the region, technical advice and expert support for small-scale projects;

- Working with Human Resources Departments in the MoDs and AFs to collect and analyse sex disaggregated data to develop and implement gender responsive policies based on evidence and to provide advisory services;
- Support to the AFs to prevent and respond to gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment through training, identification of gaps in policies and procedures, review of gaps in policies and procedures, development of guidelines, and toolkits;

- Strengthening the Regional Network of Gender Trainers by providing support for further capacity building of the network and knowledge sharing;
- Ensuring the next generation of AFs staff understands why gender equality is key to fulfilling their mission by developing gender-sensitive military curricula;
- Enhancing the knowledge of AFs commanders and MoD decision makers through the tailor-made "Gender Coach Programme".

Gender equality is key for advancing peace and security agenda, and achieving sustainable development goals

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:



Goal 5 – Achieve gender equality & empower all women and girls.



Goal 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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