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ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ADS | Automated Directives System |
| AOR | Agreement Officer's Representative |
| AP | Autonomous Province |
| CBGE | Coordination Body for Gender Equality |
| CDCS | Country Development Cooperation Strategy |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| COR | Contracting Officer's Representative |
| CRTA | Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability |
| CSO | Civil-society organization |
| DO | Development objective |
| GBV | Gender-based violence |
| GEWE | Gender equality and women's empowerment |
| GORS | Government of the Republic Serbia |
| GRB | Gender responsive budgeting |
| ICT | Information and communications technology |
| IP | Implementing partner |
| J2SR | Journey to Self-Reliance |
| KII | Key informant interview |
| LGBTI | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex |
| MP | Member of parliament |
| MSME | Micro, small, and medium enterprises |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| SORS | Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia |
| STCM | Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WE3 | Women's economic empowerment and equality |
| WEEE | Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Serbia contracted Banyan Global to undertake a countrywide gender analysis to inform the USAID/Serbia 2020–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). This analysis identifies gender advances, issues, inequalities, constraints, and opportunities in Serbia along two mission development objectives (DOs): (1) Accountability of key democratic institutions strengthened, and (2) Conditions for broad-based inclusive economic growth improved. This report also addresses crosscutting themes and key populations, including ethnic minorities, youth, and persons with disabilities; gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response; women's economic empowerment and equality (WE3); and self-reliance. The findings and recommendations in this report support USAID/Serbia in the development of its 2020–2025 CDCS and guide gender integration in the mission's programs, projects, and activities, as well as all aspects of the program cycle.

Methodology

This report was prepared at the culmination of a multistage process that included a literature review of secondary data from more than 100 documents (see Annex C for the complete list). In addition, primary data collection was conducted in the research sites of Belgrade, Novi Pazar, Presevo, Bujanovac, Novi Sad, Leskovac, Vranje, and Nis. The research team consisted of three consultants (Angela Oliver-Burgess, Marija Babović, and Ana Popovicki) whom the home-office team at Banyan Global supported. The main data-collection methods included semi-structured key informant interviews and focus group discussions with USAID staff and partners; government representatives; stakeholders from international organizations; civil-society organizations (CSOs); and individual experts, entrepreneurs, and activists. The team consulted with 136 stakeholders in total. Annex F lists interviewees. See Annex B for a complete description of the methodology.

Key Findings and Recommendations

DO 1: Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions Strengthened

Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR) Sub-dimensions: *Open and Accountable Government, Government Capacity, Civil-Society Capacity, Citizen Capacity, Inclusive Development*

Political Processes

Findings

- The proportion of women among members of the National Assembly (37.6 percent) has increased, attributed largely to the rollout of legislative participation quotas.
- The last round of local elections produced an increase in the percentage of women in parliament due to the quotas enshrined in the Election Law.¹
- Despite the increase in women's participation in government, it remains low in the executive branch, and women have minimal influence on policies and decision-making authority. Women's participation in the central government is just 22.7 percent,² and only 6.6 percent of presidents of municipalities and mayors are women.³

¹ SORS. Statistical Yearbook of Serbia, 2017.

² Government of the Republic of Serbia. Government Composition, n.d.

³ SORS. Women and Men in Serbia, 2017.

- Women are less equipped with the resources to be competitive within political parties, including access to capital and information, and voting tends to be on party lines influenced by male decision-makers.
- Women are reluctant to enter politics due to issues linked to corruption, sexism, harassment, and violence in the public sphere.
- Women from marginalized groups (Roma; ethnic minorities; women with disabilities; rural women; and persons who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI)) have limited direct political representation.
- There is little confidence and interest in politics among youth.

Recommendations

- Equip women with the tools, skills, and knowledge to advance within political parties. Provide training on the electoral process, campaigning, branding, fundraising, networking, and presentation skills for new women leaders and those entering the political sphere.
- Support networking opportunities among women from different political parties concerning gender policies and issues at the national and local levels.
- Support role modeling among women political leaders, and prioritize initiatives that connect and foster collaboration between women allies.
- Target young women and male and female youth to increase engagement and mobilization around issues pertaining to political processes.
- Integrate programming that targets eliminating violence and harassment against women and gender minorities in politics and public life.

Good Governance and Transparency/Anticorruption

Findings

- Despite legal frameworks and capacity building for gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), government agencies still lack the skills to carry out the steps to apply GRB.
- Gender-equality action plans at the municipal level are not implemented fully, and resource allocation for gender-specific initiatives are not prioritized.
- Despite investments in research studies and surveys on combatting corruption in Serbia, there is insufficient analysis (lack of gender disaggregated data and determination of any gender-specific patterns that exist in corruption processes) and consideration of gender-specific perceptions and experiences around this issue.
- Social and cultural norms as well as factors related to political power influence the degree to which women feel empowered to speak out as whistleblowers against corruption.

Recommendations

- Support programs targeting local governance to prioritize increasing capacity for municipalities to carry out GRB in forthcoming integrated development plans, leveraging the training that UN Women and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities have provided. **(WE3)**
- Collaborate with the Anti-Corruption Agency and the State Audit Institution to strengthen gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation of public officials and government performance, assisting anticorruption court units to manage cases. **(WE3)**
- Work with anticorruption bodies and in the implementation of anticorruption plans to include local and marginalized communities, such as ethnic minorities, gender minorities, persons with disabilities, young women, and rural women. **(WE3)**

- Strengthen partnerships between the national gender machinery and local mechanisms for tracking gender-disaggregated data and indicators to identify any gender-specific patterns in corruption processes (who takes part in corruption and what are their roles). Then develop programming based on such evidence. In addition, improve the coordination of gender-equality policies and synchronization of gender-equality measures. **(WE3)**

Rule of Law

Findings

- Recent legislative amendments generally have reduced barriers in access to justice, including the new Law on Free Legal Aid, the Law Prohibiting Discrimination, the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the Law on National Minorities, and the Law on Equality of Sexes.
- A Law on Free Legal Aid (2017) to expand the provision of services has been enacted. But it has not been implemented in a manner that reaches the citizens most in need of improved access to justice, including in cases of GBV, divorce, property rights, and other social-protection issues.
- Despite increased reporting of domestic violence, there is still a need to strengthen capacities beyond law enforcement, reaching all stakeholders involved in protection efforts to enhance awareness of the laws and ensure their consistent application, including among legal professionals.
- The Law on National Minorities allows for the creation of minority councils through which ethnic groups can exercise their rights of self-government regarding the use of language, education, information, and culture. In practice, linguistic and physical barriers, as well as the inadequate geographical distribution of courts, create difficulties for women from rural areas and minority women to access justice services.
- The Law on Equality of Sexes, introduced by parliament in 2009, stipulates that all local self-governments establish gender equality mechanisms. But local governance bodies are without the resources to implement activities, lack sufficient knowledge on gender equality, are unable to report on progress, and have minimal collaboration with civil society.⁴ In 2016, a new version of the law was drafted, entitled the Law on Gender Equality; but today, it is still not on the parliamentary agenda and there has been little transparency on the process for its review and adoption.

Recommendations

- Support CSOs to improve their issue-based advocacy skills to lobby for implementation of laws related to gender equality, discrimination, and protection against GBV (such as the Free Legal Aid Law, Anti-Discrimination Law, and Prevention of Domestic Violence Law).
- Support public campaigns, in collaboration with national women's organizations, to raise awareness on legal rights and access to legal information to address the needs of vulnerable groups, including less-educated court users, Roma, gender minorities, and ethnic minorities.
- Collaborate with national organizations to disseminate information to the public about the availability of legal aid and GBV response services, particularly with respect to rural areas with ethnic minority populations and gender minorities.
- Support research on the obstacles women face from different social groups with respect to access to justice and rule of law. Advocate based on this research to restructure court networks toward improving access to justice.

⁴ Protector of Citizens. Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on Representation of Women on Decision-Making Positions and Activities of Local Mechanisms for Gender Equality in the Local Self-Governments in Serbia, 2018.

- Identify pathways for funding to support women’s organizations, in particular GBV service providers, to expand delivery of response services to GBV survivors.

Civil-Society Influence/Citizen Engagement

Findings

- The political environment and corresponding limitations on funding have impacted women’s civil-society networks and further widened the gap between civil society and the government.
- Withdrawal of donor agencies has reduced the funding landscape for all CSOs—but CSOs working on gender equality and women’s empowerment especially have been impacted, particularly in less-developed regions of the country.
- The absence of a unified umbrella network of women’s organizations has hampered networking opportunities, consensus building, and grassroots collaboration.
- Organizations working on measures related to GBV prevention and response have experienced challenges due to the restrictive funding environment, which limits engagement with the communities they traditionally have served.
- Youth activists and organizations represent tremendous potential in mobilizing youth for engagement and outreach, but those influencers must be empowered.
- LGBTI persons face high levels of discrimination and harassment in Serbia, in particular regarding health, employment, housing, and the occurrence of hate crimes. Other challenges include the government’s unwillingness to address LGBTI rights. There is a need to face these challenges through more-inclusive programming, particularly in sectors and regions in which USAID is investing.⁵

Recommendations

- Expand networking opportunities for women’s rights organizations and CSOs to strengthen civil society’s influence, engagement, and coordination to engage on issues related to women’s political participation, women’s economic empowerment, GBV, and the unpaid care burden.
- Support training for grassroots organizations on networking, proposal writing, and fundraising strategies that focus on self-reliance and sustainability measures. Encourage networking among grassroots organizations to enhance the effectiveness of impact and sustainable development.
- Support targeted campaigns and programming to shift the narrative around gender norms, attitudes, and perceptions with respect to GBV, targeting men and boys, to raise awareness to eliminate violence against women.
- Design programming that introduces concepts related to civic engagement and women’s leadership in governance, targeting girls at the primary and secondary school levels.
- Promote networking of youth-led organizations to improve their knowledge and access to opportunities in political processes and economic-empowerment initiatives, employing more gender-equitable approaches.
- Carry out an analysis to identify challenges and opportunities for more-inclusive measures of LGBTI persons, particularly in sectors and geographic regions in which USAID is investing. Support initiatives that work with youth-based advocacy efforts to include people who are LGBTI or organizations that support them to reflect greater inclusion and diversity.

⁵ This area was not a part of the scope of work for this gender analysis; therefore the team did not collect data and information in this area. Reflections gathered were cited in interviews with other CSOs.

Media Professionalism and Independence

Findings

- In the media, women tend to be journalists. There are also low numbers of women serving on boards of directors, as CEOs, and as editors of media outlets.
- Female journalists are exposed to higher risks of in-person and cyber violence and of aggressive harassment (including by local politicians), which discourages free speech. Media outlets can play a critical role in raising awareness of harassment and violence against women.
- Serbian mass media (such as newspapers, online news sources, television, and tabloid magazines) tend to perpetuate gender-based stereotypes that dictate roles and responsibilities of men and women.
- There is also discrimination and negative representation of marginalized groups (Roma, migrants, gender minorities, persons with disabilities) in the media.
- Hate speech against LGBTI persons rooted in discriminatory social norms remains widespread in the media and on the internet. In addition, there is insufficient space in the media for reporting on LGBTI right's issues.

Recommendations

- Provide gender-sensitive training to increase media outlets' awareness to not reinforce negative stereotypes of women and vulnerable groups, including LGBTI persons, in content.
- Support the Network of Women Journalists against Violence to increase awareness and training to other media outlets on guidance and do-no-harm principles on measures to report on GBV.
- Encourage women-led media organizations to access business-development grants to apply in the development of digital-media business models (for example the Media Accelerator Program through Strengthening Media Systems Project).
- Support the startup of independent local media founded by women across the regions, and strengthen partnerships between media and women's organizations to address gender equality, human rights, and women's empowerment issues. **(WE3)**
- Use mass and social media to disseminate content that does not reinforce negative stereotypes about women and gender minorities, targeting marginalized persons (such as ethnic communities, persons with disabilities, youth, elderly, and LGBTI persons).

DO 2: Conditions for Broad-Based Inclusive Economic Growth Improved

Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR) Sub-dimensions: *Citizen Capacity, Government Capacity, Civil-Society Capacity, Open and Accountable Government, Inclusive Development, Economic Policy, Capacity of the Economy*

Business-Enabling Environment and Women's Economic Empowerment

Findings

- Despite increases in economic growth, there is still high gender inequality in access to employment and resources, including property, land, financial markets, transport, jobs, support programs for businesses, and agricultural loans.
- Despite the attention given to gender equality in national employment strategies, persistent gender gaps within the labor market exist.
- The 2019 employment rate of the working-age population (15–64) was 65.6 percent for men and 52.0 percent for women.⁶

⁶ SORS, Labor Force Survey 2018, 2019.

- Different populations of women face comparatively higher barriers to employment. For example, among young women (15–24 years), the unemployment rate is 32 percent, compared to 28.3 percent for young men. Among young women in rural areas, the unemployment rate is 31.7 percent, compared to 22.6 for young men in those locations.⁷
- Significant gaps exist in women's ownership of land and housing. Women own only 23.4 percent of all land plots and 24.7 percent of buildings.⁸ This chasm is more pronounced in rural areas, where strong patriarchal norms guide property inheritance. Such patterns include predominantly passing assets to male descendants.⁹
- Prevailing patriarchal norms constrain women's participation in the labor market and limit their growth potential. There are also high levels of discrimination against LGBTI persons, which is most pronounced for transgender persons, in the labor market. A World Bank survey revealed that 10 percent of LGBTI were forced to quit their job due to discrimination.¹⁰
- Despite the existence of a Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, there is widespread discrimination against persons with disabilities, in particular for women and persons from ethnic minority communities.¹¹
- For women entrepreneurs, lack of access to assets plays a critical role in their participation and productivity.
- Women comprised 34 percent of all entrepreneurs in 2014, an increase from 26 percent in 2011.¹² A major factor contributing to this rise is related to obstacles that women face finding wage employment.
- The share of women among registered business owners in 2017 was 34 percent.¹³
- Women with disabilities, Roma women, and rural women are at a greater disadvantage with respect to access to economic participation, property, and decision-making.

Recommendations

- Support women's business and entrepreneur networks to enhance mentoring, networking, and business-growth initiatives for remote rural women producers and entrepreneurs to bring more of them into formal-sector high value chains and markets (including organic agriculture). Particular attention should be paid to young women in rural areas to attract new and innovative forms of businesses. **(WE3)**
- Support economic empowerment and entrepreneurship programs targeting marginalized groups of women including ethnic minorities, rural women, women with disabilities, and single mothers. Support skills building to increase employability and digital literacy, and strengthen technical training linked to local markets and job opportunities for rural women. Promote networking among marginalized women businesses to enhance access to markets and increase competitive business opportunities. **(WE3)**
- Support vocational orientation programs in occupations from which girls traditionally are excluded (construction, engineering, and information and communications technology). Collaborate with private-sector partners to mentor young women in developing career goals and pathways towards

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ SOS Vojvodina Network. Priorities and Recommendations for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Serbia, Annex to the Shadow Report Submitted to CEDAW Committee, 2019.

⁹ Babović, M, Vuković, O. Rural Women in the Status of Family Helpers: Position, Roles and Welfare Rights, UNDP Belgrade, 2009.

¹⁰ World Bank. A Comparative Analysis of the Socioeconomic Dimensions of LGBTI Exclusion in Serbia, 2019.

¹¹ Đan, Aurelija and Sofija Vrbaski. Gender-Based Discrimination and Labour In Serbia, 2019.

¹² Babovic, M. Baseline Study on Women's Entrepreneurship in Serbia, 2011; Babovic, M. The Position of Women in the Business Sector in Serbia, 2014.

¹³ Ibid.

achieving them. Help businesses to provide incentives for young women to enter the information and communications technology, engineering, and business sectors. **(WE3)**

- Collaborate with companies that adopted codes of conduct against harassment and have mechanisms to address instances of it. This requirement can stimulate partners to develop sexual-harassment policies. Encourage development of a monitoring plan and implementation of sexual-harassment policies and procedures. **(WE3)**
- Support public- and private-sector initiatives that bolster awareness and capacity to combat discrimination against LGBTI persons in the labor market.

Private-Sector Networks Strengthened to Enhance Competitiveness

Findings

- Despite sustained economic growth, the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum indicates that the global position of Serbia has decreased from 65 out of 140 countries in 2018 to 72 out of 141 in 2019.¹⁴
- Wage inequality contributes to lower levels of competitiveness in the Serbian economy. Women are more likely to pursue careers in the public sector than in the private one because of more pronounced wage gaps in the private sector. Employers' discrimination also prevents women from pursuing jobs in the private sector.
- Gender segregation in the labor market is prominent. Women mainly are employed in the services and care economy while men tend to pursue educational opportunities related to business, engineering, and technical sciences.¹⁵
- Women's businesses are more focused on local markets and lack experience with and access to export markets.¹⁶
- Opportunities in more-advanced segments of agricultural value chains are available to increase women's economic empowerment. Organic farming and production offer tremendous growth potential for women farmers.
- Access to finance is a major challenge for women, as loans often are tied to real-estate collateral. Women own less property and real estate, hindering their access to financing.¹⁷
- Venture capitalists and angel investors in Serbia tend to be predominantly male. There is a need for women investors and support for associations of them, such as the Women Angels (Andjelke) program. Empowering women and their digital literacy have the potential to decrease gender gaps in the labor market in Serbia.¹⁸

Recommendations

- Develop strategic partnerships with female investor networks and business associations (such as the Angel Investor Network and the Association of Businesswomen in Serbia) to address challenges women face in networking and accessing capital. Support the mentorship of women angel investors with new women entrepreneurs to enhance productivity, access to finance, product design, and links to market. Include banks as partners in the networking initiatives and increasing access to finance. **(WE3)**

¹⁴ World Economic Forum. The Global Competitiveness Report 2019, 2019.

¹⁵ SORS. Number of Pupils at the Beginning of the School Year by Fields of Education and Sex, 2019.

¹⁶ CARDNO. Competitive Economy Annual Survey, 2019.

¹⁷ Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Economy. SME Development Strategy and Action Plan, 2015.

¹⁸ Bradic-Martinovic, Aleksandra and Banovic, Jelena. Assessment of Digital Skills in Serbia with a Focus on Gender Gap, 2018.

- Increase women's visibility and presence at higher levels of value chains by expanding existing women-run businesses and building capacity on the exportation of products and services. Increase export capabilities for larger women-run businesses. Increase supply networks for smaller ones. **(WE3)**
- Build the capacity and desire of youth and women from an early age to enter nontraditional occupations. Foster collaboration between businesses (particularly in the higher value-added service industry) and secondary schools, technical institutions, and universities to match female graduates with internships, apprenticeships, and eventually employment. **(WE3)**
- Incentivize companies to provide female staff with on-the-job training and mentoring, as well as instruction for women in nontraditional occupations. **(WE3)**
- Strengthen the capacity of women entrepreneurial and business networks, including gender minorities, to advocate for legal labor rights, such as access to finance, maternity leave, childcare, and addressing sexual harassment in workplaces. **(WE3)**
- Strengthen the digital-literacy capacity of women to decrease gender gaps in the labor market. **(WE3)**
- If USAID plans to continue and expand in the energy sector, it is recommended to build upon existing gender analyses of the sector to identify constraints and opportunities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment within the sector, and apply the findings to future programming.

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 Background

In line with requirements in the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Automated Directives System (ADS) 201.3.2.9 and 205, USAID/Serbia contracted Banyan Global to undertake a countrywide gender analysis to inform its 2020–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). The gender analysis aligns with the 2012 USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, the 2016 updated U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, 2019 USAID Policy Framework, USAID Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR), and 2018 Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act.

Table 1. Key Elements of the Gender Analysis

| ELEMENTS | SPECIFICATIONS |
|--|---|
| USAID sectors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development objective (DO) 1: Accountability of key democratic institutions strengthened—Includes the capacity of government bodies to engage citizenry, judicial institutions, and oversight institutions.• DO 2: Conditions for Broad-Based Inclusive Economic Growth Improved—Includes key components on the business-enabling environment, women's economic empowerment, and private-sector networks strengthening to enhance competitiveness. |
| USAID ADS 205 gender analysis domains | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices• Cultural norms and beliefs• Gender roles, responsibilities, and time use• Access to and control over assets and resources• Patterns of power and decision-making |
| Crosscutting themes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response• Digital development• Decentralization• Women's economic empowerment (WE3)• Self-reliance• Youth• Ethnic minorities• Persons with disabilities |

I.2 Purpose of the USAID/Serbia Gender Analysis

The USAID/Serbia gender analysis provides data to enhance the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) in the mission's 2020–2025 CDCS. It uses secondary and primary data—collected through key informant interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders at the national level in Belgrade, as well as from Vojvodina, Southwest, and Southern regions—to provide concrete findings and recommendations to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in its two DOs. It also addresses crosscutting themes (such as GBV prevention and response, digital development, and decentralization) and focuses on several key populations, including youth, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Section 2 of the report provides a general overview of the Serbian context. Section 3 includes an overview of gender equality by USAID ADS 205 gender analysis domain, which includes laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; cultural norms and beliefs; gender roles, responsibilities, and time use; access to and control over assets and resources; and patterns of power and decision-making in Serbia. Section 4 presents the gender analysis findings and recommendations by USAID/Serbia DO. There it shows linkages by DO with [J2SR](#) sub-dimensions (see the graphic). It also points to opportunities for the mission to consider related to the 2018 WEEE Act and the [White House's Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative](#) (using a **WE3** tag).



Section 5 presents general recommendations for the mission to strengthen GEWE integration at the institutional level. Annex A includes the gender analysis's scope of work, Annex B provides the methodology, Annex C lists key documents consulted, Annex D provides the research matrix, Annex E includes the interview guides, and Annex F lists interviewees.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Republic of Serbia is a middle-income country located in the Western Balkans of southeast Europe. At the end of 2019, the Serbian population was 6,963,764 with 51.3 percent women. The Balkan region is a mosaic of ethnic diversity, and Serbia is one of the most ethnically diverse nations in southeastern Europe. According to the most-recent Population Census (2011), there are 21 ethnic communities in Serbia: 83.3 percent of the population are Serbs, 3.5 percent are Hungarians, 2.0 percent Bosniaks, 2.1 percent Roma, and 0.5 percent Montenegrins. Other groups account for less than 0.5 percent of the population. The Roma are the most-marginalized minority group in Serbia.¹⁹

Serbia has ratified the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) commitments, many of which relate to the rights and protection of national minorities. Serbia also has signed onto several international treaties governing the protection of minority rights, including the Constitutional Charter on Human and Minority Rights and Civil Liberties in 2003, which was a precondition for the Serbia's acceptance into the Council of Europe. Additionally, Article 14 of the Serbian Constitution (2006) affirms the protection of national minorities as one of the state's constitutional principles.²⁰ The Government of the Republic of Serbia (GoRS), however, has not fully implemented these treaties and national-level policies.

Several reforms—including ones closely aligned with the EU accession process and the UN 2030 Development Agenda—have ushered in improvements in Serbia's development trajectory. In November 2007, Serbia signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, and in March 2012, the European Union granted Serbia candidate status. In June 2013, the European Council (EC) decided to open accession negotiations with Serbia, and in December 2013, the EC adopted the accession negotiating framework. In January 2014, the first Intergovernmental Conference took place, signaling the formal launch of Serbia's accession negotiations, which have resulted in the opening of 18 out of 34 negotiation chapters.²¹ Unfortunately, relations with Kosovo remain fragile and continue to pose a challenge for progress in EU accession.

The political system in Serbia faces many obstacles. The ruling Serbian Progressive Party dominates this system in both in the executive and legislative branches. Various global indicators for democracy, freedom, and good governance indicate a decline in accountability and democratic performance within the country's political system. The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2019 Democracy Index Report



¹⁹ Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (SORS). Religion, Mother Tongue and Ethnicity. Population Census 2011, 2013.

²⁰ OSCE Mission in Serbia. Ethnic Minorities in Serbia: An Overview, February 2008,

²¹ Ministry of European Integration of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Serbia and EU History, n.d.

classified Serbia as a “flawed democracy,”²² and Freedom House’s Freedom Index classified it as “partly free.”²³

There are four regions in Serbia: Belgrade, Vojvodina, Sumadija and Western Serbia, and South and Eastern Serbia. The Law on the Territorial Organization of the Republic of Serbia defines the administrative division of the republic, which consists of the main administrative units, municipalities, cities, Belgrade, and the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.²⁴ Regional differences are prominent, with Belgrade being the most developed and the South and Eastern regions being the least.²⁵

Serbia faces a host of demographic challenges, in large part due to issues such as migration, decreasing population in rural areas, and an ageing citizenry. Life expectancy at birth is 71.9 years for men and 77.1 for women. In 2018, the average age of the Serbian population was 41.4 years with a higher average age for women than men (42.7 versus 40.0). A total of 65.5 percent of the population is of working age. The ageing index (the ratio of the population that’s 60 years and greater to the population that’s 0 to 19 years) in 2018 was 142.92, meaning that there is a greater population of persons 60 years and older than of persons 0 to 19 years. Significant gender differences exist in ageing, with the index for men at 122.09 and for women at 165.03. The total fertility rate (women age 15–49) was 1.48 in 2018. The index of functional population (the ratio of the population aged 0–14 and 65 and greater to the economically active population of 15–64 years old) increased from 46.3 in 2011 to 52.7 in 2018.²⁶ According to estimates based on 2011 Population Census data, the total percent of the population that emigrated from Serbia was 4.2 percent, less than the 5.3 percent of 2002.²⁷ Internal migration flows are from rural to urban areas. Between two population censuses (2002 and 2011), the rural population decreased by 10.9 percent, with a larger decline among females than males (11.6 percent versus 10.2). Between 2011 and 2018, the rural population declined further by 6.2 percent (6.8 percent for females and 5.6 for males).²⁸

The Serbian economy has witnessed some improvements, given recent increases in employment. Between 2017 and 2018, the employment rate rose from 57.3 to 58.8 percent, while the unemployment rate decreased from 14.1 to 13.3 percent.²⁹ Since the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, the economic forecast has changed dramatically. Serbia’s economy is expected to contract by 2.5 percent in 2020, provided that containment measures introduced to fight the pandemic are lifted by the end of June 2020.³⁰

Despite moderately high economic growth and small increases in employment rates, there is significant gender-based segregation of the labor market. Some segments of the population—in particular youth, Roma, and persons with disabilities—face hurdles in accessing employment. For example, the unemployment rate for Roma hovers at just greater than 60 percent whereas the unemployment rate for the overall population is approximately 25 percent. Today in Serbia, almost all Roma women are unemployed and 80 percent are functionally illiterate.³¹

²² Economist Intelligence Unit. Democracy Index 2019, 2019.

²³ Freedom House. Freedom in the World 2019, 2019.

²⁴ “Official Gazette RS,” no. 129/2007, 18/2016, 47/2018, 9/2020.

²⁵ SORS. Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2018, 2018.

²⁶ SORS. Demographic Yearbook of Serbia 2018, 2018.

²⁷ Stankovic, V. Serbia in the Processes of Emigration. Population Census in Republic of Serbia 2011, SORS, 2014.

²⁸ Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. Estimate of Population by Age, Gender and Type of Settlement, 2020.

²⁹ SORS. Labor Force Survey in Serbia 2018, 2019.

³⁰ World Bank. Serbian Economy Shrinks as Country Responds to COVID-19, April 29, 2020.

³¹ Bingulac, Marija. The Hard Life of Roma People in Serbia, Race & Ethnicity/SSN Basic Facts, September 24, 2015.

There are also advances in human development. From 2015 to 2019, the Human Development Index rose from 0.785 to 0.799.³² During the same period, poverty and social-exclusion risks decreased as well. The population at risk of poverty³³ was 26.7 percent in 2015, while in 2018 it was 24.3 percent. The population at risk of poverty or social exclusion³⁴ dropped from 41.7 to 34.3 percent during the same period.³⁵

GBV in Serbia is of significant concern—both in the private and public spheres—for the country’s economic, political, and social development. One of the most-comprehensive studies of GBV in Serbia, conducted by the OSCE,³⁶ found that more than 45 percent of women surveyed who have or had an intimate partner said they experienced violence at the hands of a partner since the age of 15. Twenty-five percent of women surveyed knew someone personally among their family and friends who had been subjected to intimate-partner violence, and a similar proportion knew someone in their neighborhood whom intimate-partner violence had affected.³⁷ For the most part, this violence has been psychological (44 percent of women surveyed), but 17 percent of women said they experienced physical violence and 5 percent said they endured sexual violence. Women who said that their main activities were fulfilling domestic and care responsibilities were more likely to have experienced physical violence at the hands of their current partner (15 percent) than women who were in paid employment (6 percent).³⁸ Women who have children or had children also were more likely to have experienced physical violence (18 percent compared to 13 percent of those who had not had children) at the hands of an intimate partner. GBV takes place against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons in the form of discrimination and physical violence in family, community, workplace, school, and health care settings.³⁹ Astraea Lesbian Foundation reports that 20 percent of people in Serbia believe that violence towards same-sex couples is justified, and calls for violence often accompany negative public opinions of LGBTI persons.⁴⁰

³² UNDP. Human Development Report 2019, 2019.

³³ Share of people with an equivalized disposable income (after social transfer) less than 60 percent of the national median equivalized disposable income after social transfers.

³⁴ Sum of persons who are either at risk of poverty or severely materially deprived or living in a household with a very low work intensity.

³⁵ SORS. Poverty and Social Inequality 2018, 2018.

³⁶ OSCE. OSCE-Led Survey on Violence Against Women: Well-Being and Safety of Women: Serbia Report, 2019.

³⁷ This report presents the findings from the OSCE’s qualitative and quantitative study in Serbia on violence against women. The study carried out a survey of a representative sample of 2,023 women aged 18–74 living in Serbia to establish the prevalence and consequence of violence using a multistage, stratified, random probability sample design. It included focus groups with women from various backgrounds—such as from rural or urban areas, from minorities (Bosniak, Hungarian, Roma), or who experienced armed conflict—about their attitudes towards violence against women.

³⁸ OSCE. OSCE-Led Survey on Violence Against Women: Well-Being and Safety of Women: Serbia Report, 2019.

³⁹ UNDP. Being LGBTI In Eastern Europe: Serbia Country Report: A Participatory Review and Analysis of the Legal, Institutional, Policy and Socio-economic Environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people, and Civil Society, 2017.

⁴⁰ Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice. Western Balkans LGBTI. Landscape Analysis of Political, Economic and Social Conditions, 2015

3. COUNTRY OVERVIEW, BY ADS 205 DOMAIN

3.1 Laws, Policies, Strategies, and Institutional Practices

Serbia has ratified and accepted international conventions that guide its national framework for gender equality. They include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979) and the Optional Protocol to CEDAW (2000); the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1953); the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (2000); and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (2011). In the national legislative framework, gender equality is included in the Constitution (Article 15) and further addressed in the Law on Equality of Sexes (2009) and the Law Prohibiting Discrimination (2009). The Law Prohibiting Discrimination in particular bars discrimination based on sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation (Article 2). In 2017, the GoRS also passed the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, prioritizing the elimination of violence against women. A Law on Gender Equality was drafted in 2016, but it has not been adopted yet. In addition to these overarching legal frameworks, sectoral laws on employment, work, social protection, education, health care, access to justice, and other areas include regulations supporting gender equality.

The Budget System Law mandates the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), which entails gender mainstreaming of the budget process, including a gender-based assessment of budgets and restructuring revenues and expenditures to promote gender equality (Article 2). The law also mandates that the budget system allocate resources to promote gender equality (Article 4), and it obliges municipalities to publish their annual budget on their websites (Article 45). UN Women and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities have supported GRB at the national and local levels, respectively. While GRB at the national level largely has taken place, there are many challenges related to its implementation locally.⁴¹

The National Strategy for Gender Equality (2016–2020) is an overarching framework to support the implementation of the aforementioned laws with a focus on three strategic goals: improved behavior patterns and gender-equality culture; increased equality of women and men by implementing equal-opportunity policies and measures; and system-wide gender mainstreaming in the policy adoption, implementation, and monitoring processes. The strategy's 2016–2018 Action Plan provides an overarching framework to operationalize Serbia's commitment to gender equality. A 2018 midterm evaluation of the strategy's implementation found that the GoRS has implemented measures and policies related to gender mainstreaming, GRB, and combating violence against women. It also established that its implementation of measures related to the economic empowerment of women were sporadic, on a small scale, and limited in their effectiveness.⁴² The GoRS since has developed a draft 2019–2020 Action Plan, which it has not adopted yet due to conflicts between the Ministry of Labor and the Office of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality.

There are also several national-level strategies that address specific population groups, such as the National Strategy for Youth (2015–2025), the Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of Persons

⁴¹ The Evaluation of Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Gender Equality Strategy of Serbia 2016–2020, UN Women, 2018.

⁴² Ibid.

with Disabilities in the Republic of Serbia 2020–2024, and the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma 2016–2025. In 2013, the GoRS adopted an Antidiscrimination Strategy and 2014–2018 Action Plan that defines measures for the prevention and protection from discrimination based on gender. The strategy recognizes the LGBTI community as one of the most vulnerable to discrimination in Serbia.⁴³

Governance mechanisms for gender equality exist at the national, provincial, and local levels. Nationally, the primary institution tasked with promoting gender equality is the Coordination Body for Gender Equality (CBGE), established under the purview of the Deputy Prime Minister. Within the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans, and Social Affairs, there is also an established

“The implementation of laws is diluted in gaps found between central and local institutions. We, as a society, have been promising a lot, but doing so little.”

Female Key Informant, Local Government/Coordination Unit for Gender Equality, Novi Pazar

antidiscrimination and gender equality task force. Furthermore, there are two independent oversight institutions tasked with protecting and promoting gender equality: the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the Protector of Citizens, with one deputy protector responsible for gender equality. At the provincial level in the Autonomous Province (AP) of Vojvodina, gender equality falls under the responsibility of the Secretariat for Social Policy, Demography, and Gender Equality. Provincial governments are obliged to establish local gender-equality mechanisms in accordance with the Law on the Equality of Sexes. Although almost all local governments have established gender-equality mechanisms in some form, many of them are not very active and those that are have minimal budgets. Furthermore, independent civil-society reports indicate that CBGE is restricted in scope and positioning due to its lack of legal statute and limited staffing structure and funding.⁴⁴

3.2 Cultural Norms and Beliefs

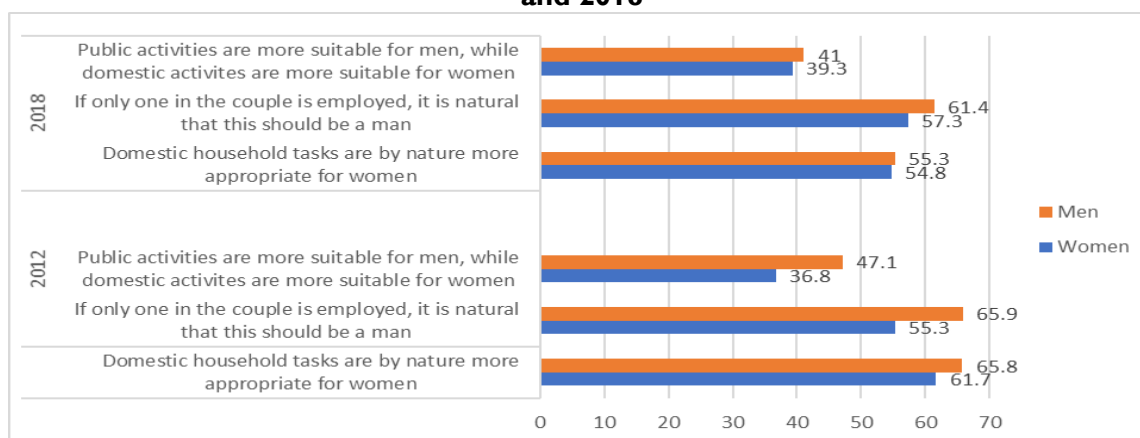
Gender-unequal norms and beliefs are dominant in Serbian society, including with respect to household division of labor, participation in public life, employment, control over economic resources at all levels, and access to public services. According to Institute for Sociological Research surveys conducted in 2012 and 2018, patriarchal attitudes are still widespread. In 2018, 61 percent of men and 57 percent of women in Serbia agreed with the statement, “If only one in the couple is employed, it is natural that this should be a man.”⁴⁵ Additionally, 55 percent of men and women agree with the statement, “Domestic household tasks are by nature more appropriate for women.” Furthermore, 41 percent of men and 40 percent of women agreed that public activities are more suitable for men, while domestic activities are more appropriate for women (see Figure 1).

⁴³ Government of Serbia. Antidiscrimination Strategy, 2013.

⁴⁴ SOS Vojvodina Network. Priorities and Recommendations for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in Serbia, Annex to the Shadow Report Submitted to CEDAW Committee, 2019.

⁴⁵ Data are calculated from a database produced by the survey implemented by Institute for Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade through project “Challenges of New Social Integration in Serbia: Concepts and Actors,” Financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (reg. no. 179035).

Figure 1: Attitudes towards gender roles by gender, population 18-74 years, Serbia 2012 and 2018



Source: Institute for Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy of University of Belgrade, 2012 and 2018

Key informant interviews highlighted the pervasive influence that cultural norms have on decision-making at multiple levels, especially in the rural context.⁴⁶ Gendered norms and expectations impact the level of men and women's participation in domestic work and unpaid caregiving responsibilities. This situation, in turn, curbs women's abilities to participate and advance in high-level value chains.⁴⁷ It also limits men's participation in family care and forces them to play traditional roles as breadwinners. An IMAGES survey revealed that nine out of ten men claim that they wished they could have spent more time with their children while they were young. More than one-third of men reported that they would have liked to focus on childcare if their partners would have been able to earn enough for the family.⁴⁸

Increasingly conservative cultural norms and beliefs among youth with respect to gender equality are impacting many sectors. For example, according to a survey, only 10 percent of Serbian youth agreed that homosexuality is acceptable in society.⁴⁹ The rising trend of conservatism among youth, despite two decades of educational reform, may be due to the lack of alignment of the education curricula with gender-equality principles. Textbooks still contain gender stereotypes that underpin patriarchal norms and influence opinions around gender roles and responsibilities. Within higher education, degree programs dedicated to gender studies are scant; those that exist suffer the risk of unsustainable funding.⁵⁰ Stronger conservatism among youth also could be the consequence of increasingly conservative public political discourse during last several years.⁵¹

"Women often do not value themselves. They think they cannot achieve what they want. They do not believe in themselves. So, they cannot fight that inequality."
-Youth Activist, Presevo

⁴⁶ Cited during interview with civil-society organization representatives, 2020.

⁴⁷ Cited during interview with USAID Implementing Partner, 2020.

⁴⁸ Hughson, Marina. Men in Serbia: Changes, Resistance, and Challenges. IMAGES Survey Results, 2018.

⁴⁹ Tomanović, S, Stanojević, D. Young People in Serbia 2015. Situation, Perceptions, Beliefs and Hopes, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: Belgrade, 2015.

⁵⁰ SeConS, Evaluation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Serbia National Strategy for Gender Equality, Belgrade, 2018.

⁵¹ SOS Vojvodina Network. Priorities and Recommendations for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in Serbia, Annex to the Shadow Report Submitted to CEDAW Committee, 2019.

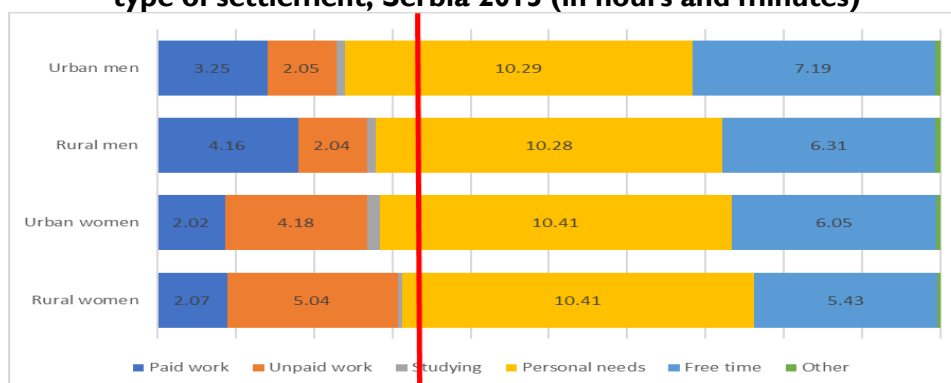
The media also promotes gender stereotypes and social norms. According to a 2017 survey of journalists on discrimination, one out of every ten believes women do not experience discrimination at all.⁵² And research shows significant misogyny, sexism, and a misrepresentation of violence against women within media content, particularly with respect to women who hold public office or senior positions in the labor market.⁵³ A United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) study also indicates that hate speech against LGBTI persons rooted in discriminatory social norms remains widespread in the media and on the internet.⁵⁴

3.3 Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Gender inequality in Serbia plays a significant role in the unequal division of household and caretaking responsibilities. The Gender Equality Index of Serbia reveals a gender gap in performing everyday household activities, such as cooking or cleaning: 67.9 percent of women—but just 11.5 percent of men—cook or perform housework every day. When it comes to taking care of the elderly, children, and family members with disabilities, the gender gap is smaller. The difference, however, is still pronounced among women aged 18 and older, as 41.2 percent perform these activities daily, while only 29.5 percent of men do likewise.⁵⁵

Data from a 2015 Time Use Survey reveals that women spend less time daily on paid work than men do (on average 42 minutes less) but much more time on unpaid work (on average 2 hours and 18 minutes more). Their total work hours are longer (12 hours and 27 minutes compared to 10 hours and 51 minutes for men), and women's time dedicated to leisure activities is shorter (women on average spend six hours on leisure activities, while men spend seven). There are differences between urban and rural areas, with rural women spending more time on unpaid household work⁵⁶ (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: The average hours spent in activities, population 15 years and older, by sex and type of settlement, Serbia 2015 (in hours and minutes)



Source: 2015 Time Use Survey

With respect to intrahousehold spending, studies indicate that decision-making is centralized under the authority of one, usually male, family member. While women have responsibility for decision-making on everyday expenditures related to household consumption, men have primary responsibility for strategic

⁵² Poverenik za Zaštitu Ravnopravnosti. Odnos Medija u Srbiji Prema Diskriminaciji, Beograd, 2018.

⁵³ Mršević, Z. Mediji u Srbiji o Rodno Zasnovanom Nasilju u 2015. i 2016. Godini, UNDP, Beograd, 2017; Lukic, M, Jovanovic, D, Slavkovic, B, Petrovic, B. Nijedna žena manje, AŽC, 2018.

⁵⁴ UNDP. Being LGBTI in Eastern Europe: Serbia Country Report, 2017.

⁵⁵ SIPRU. Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2018.

⁵⁶ SORS. Time Use Survey in the Republic of Serbia 2010 and 2015, 2017.

decision-making on household budgets.⁵⁷ Some groups face obstacles in accessing household funds, such as rural women who participate in unpaid work on family farms.⁵⁸

The Serbian Gender Equality Strategy (2016–2020) addresses gender gaps in time use related to household unpaid work, family care, and social and leisure activities. The strategy proposes measures to achieve gender-balanced caretaking, which include increasing parental leave afforded to fathers and expanding new services for the care of children and elderly. In addition to labor legislation reforms in line with EU directives regarding the right to parental leave, the strategy envisages awareness-raising campaigns focused on men's equal roles in parenting. The aforementioned 2018 midterm evaluation of the implementation of the strategy, however, revealed that the GoRS has not implemented such measures effectively and the government needs to address gender gaps in time use.⁵⁹

3.4 Access to and Control Over Assets and Resources

Gender inequality impacts access to assets and resources in Serbia, specifically with respect to women's ownership of land and housing. According to national surveys, women own just 23.4 percent of all land plots and 24.7 percent of buildings.⁶⁰ The gaps in land ownership are more pronounced in rural areas, where strong patriarchal norms—that prioritize ownership for male family members—guide property inheritance patterns.⁶¹

Prominent gender gaps also exist in access to the labor market. Employment and labor-market participation rates among women are lower, indicating a high level of gender-specific labor-market segregation. One reason for this division is gender differences in areas of study. Whereas young women participate largely in degree programs in the social sciences, humanities, and arts, young men engage more in technical and vocational schools and degree programs in engineering and information technology.⁶² These trends result in a higher concentration of women in the social-services (75 percent), trade (56 percent), and personal-services sectors (53 percent), with more men in the manufacturing (61 percent), construction (92 percent), and information-technology sectors (61 percent).⁶³ Additionally, men are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship or self-employment. Among employed men, 18.2 percent are entrepreneurs or self-employed, compared to 8 percent among employed women.⁶⁴ Women more often participate in the labor force via unpaid family work and in agriculture work on family farms.⁶⁵

Labor-market segregation impacts income and wage equality.⁶⁶ In Serbia, the gender pay gap is 8.7 percent, and it is higher in the private sector and in some industries, including manufacturing (18.6 percent), information and communications (14.9 percent), finance and insurance (12.9 percent), and

⁵⁷ Babović, M. Work Strategies and Intrahousehold Relations: Serbia 2003-2007, in Milic, A, Tomanovic, S. (eds.) Contemporary Families in Serbia in Comparative Perspective, ISIFF, Belgrade, 135–150, 2009.

⁵⁸ Babović, M, Vuković, O. Rural Women in the Status of Family Helpers: Position, Roles and Welfare Rights, UNDP Belgrade, 2009.

⁵⁹ SeConS, Evaluation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Serbia National Strategy for Gender Equality, Belgrade, 2018.

⁶⁰ SOS Vojvodina Network. Priorities and Recommendations for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Serbia, Annex to the Shadow Report Submitted to CEDAW Committee, 2019.

⁶¹ Babović, M, Vuković, O. Rural Women in the Status of Family Helpers: Position, Roles and Welfare Rights, UNDP Belgrade, 2009.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ SORS. Labor Force Survey in Republic of Serbia 2019.

⁶⁴ Government of the Republic of Serbia. SORS, Labor Force Survey 2018, 2018.

⁶⁵ SORS. Labor Force Survey in Republic of Serbia 2018, 2019.

⁶⁶ SIPRU. Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2018.

health care and social protection (12.6 percent).⁶⁷

As both a direct and indirect outcome to wage inequality, there are gender gaps in pensions. Among women, the share of pensioners is lower than among men, and on average women's pensions are lower than men's.⁶⁸ This pattern is a result of women's lower participation in the labor market and pay gaps that women experience throughout their professional lives. Unfortunately, no sex-disaggregated data exist on access to financial markets, personal bank accounts, debit and credit cards, or different types of credit.

There are also prominent gaps in access to information and communication technology (ICT), in particular in urban and rural areas. The EU's Digital Economy and Society Index—which measures progress in digitalization through indicators such as connectivity, human capital, internet use, and integration of digital technologies in public services—indicates that a significant digital divide exists: the 2017 index was 35.6 for Serbia but 50.8 for the European Union as a whole.⁶⁹ Broken down by gender and location, 83 percent of men and 76 percent of women living in urban areas used computers, while in rural areas only 67 percent of men and 60 percent of women did so (as of 2019).⁷⁰

Discrimination and hostile work environments are also issues, in particular for LGBTI persons. A World Bank survey on socioeconomic dimensions of LGBTI exclusion in Serbia shows that while the unemployment rate of the LGBTI population is lower than for general population (which is mainly due to on-average higher education), they report high levels of discrimination and a hostile work environment. In 10 percent of cases, workplace discrimination forced LGBTI people to quit their job.⁷¹ A USAID and UNDP survey found that LGBTI persons ranked the enjoyment of economic and social rights and the elimination of labor discrimination as their second highest priority for change.⁷²

3.5 Patterns of Power and Decision-Making

Across all five gender analysis domains, pronounced imbalances exist in power and decision-making in the public and private spheres. According to the Serbian Gender Equality Index, the country has made progress in the domain of political power (from 46.8 points in 2014 to 55.5 in 2016). This headway can be attributed to the 2016 introduction of quotas in electoral laws that stipulate at least one-third of electoral lists for national, provincial, and local parliaments consist of women (legislative power). This quota is only for the legislative branch though. For the executive branches, there are no quotas defined by law. With these branches, women occupy a limited number of positions in local self-governments, including as mayors and presidents of municipalities.⁷³ Serbia currently has a woman Prime Minister, but fewer than one-quarter of central government ministers are women. The lack of quotas, as well as other factors including social norms and violence against women candidates, play a role in women's low participation in the executive branch.

Participation of women in the private sphere is also low. According to the Serbian Gender Equality Index, there was a decline of 1.4 points in the subdomain of economic power between 2014 and 2016, from 31 percent to 28 percent, attributed largely to the decrease in women's participation in the executive board of the National Bank of Serbia. The share of women on the boards of large companies

⁶⁷ SORS. Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia, 2017.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ PC Press. Digital Gap: The threatening phenomenon. Belgrade, 2018.

⁷⁰ Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Use of ICT, Belgrade, 2019.

⁷¹ World Bank. A Comparative Analysis of the Socioeconomic Dimensions of LGBTI Exclusion in Serbia, 2019.

⁷² UNDP. Being LGBTI in Eastern Europe: Serbia Country Report, 2017.

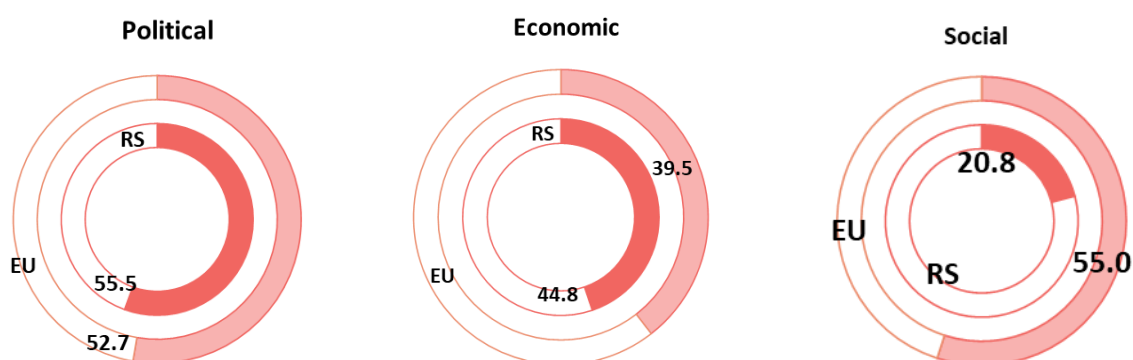
⁷³ Ibid.

on the stock exchange is also low. In 2016, women comprised only 19.3 percent of boards members.⁷⁴ The Gender Equality Index social-power sub-index also reports low participation rates for women. In Serbia, women are almost absent from institutions making decisions on financing research and science, along with media and top sports organizations⁷⁵ (see Figure 3).

According to the Gender Equality Index social-power domain, women on the boards of directors of broadcasting organizations increased from 11 percent in 2014 to 33 percent in 2016, but they still do not have influence on editorial policies. Women were also absent in leadership positions from research funding organizations. In 2016, there were no women in organizations making decisions on the distribution of funds to research facilities. The prominence of gender segregation in higher education and in research facilities' leadership positions may be one reason for the imbalance in the allocation of research funds focused on identifying and addressing gender gaps in the political, economic, and social realms.

Women's representation in sports organizations is marginal. In 2016, only 4 percent of members of the highest decision-making bodies of national Olympic sports organizations were women.⁷⁶

Figure 3: 2016 Serbian Gender Equality Index: political, economic, and social power domains data



Source: SIPRU. Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2018

⁷⁴ The Serbian Gender Equality Index defines social power as the share of board members of research funding organizations, share of publicly owned broadcasting organizations, and share of members of highest decision-making body in sports organizations.

⁷⁵ SIPRU. Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2018.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

4. GENDER ANALYSIS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, BY DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

4.1 DO 1: Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions Strengthened

Data and Statistics

Participation in political power at national level

- Participation in the legislature: 37.6 percent women (legally stipulated quotas exist)⁷⁷
- Participation in the executive branch: 22.7 percent women (five out of 22) and one woman Prime Minister⁷⁸

Participation in political power in Autonomous Province of Vojvodina

- Participation in the legislature: 35.8 percent women in the AP Vojvodina Assembly⁷⁹
- Participation in executive branch: 14.3 percent women (2 out of 14)⁸⁰

Participation of women in local governance structures

- Share of women among members in local assemblies: 31.3 percent
- Share of women among presidents of municipalities and mayors: 6.6 percent⁸¹

Participation of women in diplomatic missions

- Women among ambassadors: 23.2 percent (16 out of 69)
- Women heads of diplomatic missions: 57 percent (4 out of 7)
- Women among consuls: 44 percent (11 out of 25)⁸²

Judiciary

- In 2016, 40 percent of women and 60 percent of men held the position of public prosecutor. Women are least represented in high public prosecutors' offices (32 percent).
- Of the total number of deputy public prosecutors, 55 percent are women. Women deputy public prosecutors are represented in the lowest level in the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime (30 percent), while the proportion of men is lowest at the basic Public Prosecutors' Offices (42 percent).⁸³
- In 2016, at the courts of general jurisdiction, the proportion of women to men holding the position of judges was 68 to 32 percent. The largest proportion of women judges are in the basic courts (70 percent). In the courts of special jurisdiction, 75 percent of all judges are women.⁸⁴ The largest representation of women is at the Misdemeanor Court of Appeal (82 percent), while in the same court men have their lowest level of representation.

⁷⁷ National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. Gender Structure, n.d.

⁷⁸ Government of the Republic of Serbia. Government Composition, n.d.

⁷⁹ Republic of Serbia Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Statistics. List of deputies in the AP Vojvodina Assembly by gender, n.d.

⁸⁰ Republic of Serbia, Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Provincial Government. Government members, n.d.

⁸¹ SORS. Women and Men in Serbia, 2017.

⁸² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Embassies, 2020.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ During interviews, key respondents stated that there are more women judges compared to men as the position has less power and influence and lower salaries compared to other sectors of government.

- Number of women among heads of diplomatic and consular missions: 15⁸⁵
- Share of women in commanding positions in the security system: 19.7 percent⁸⁶

Civil society⁸⁷

- Share of women among employees in associations of citizens: 48.6 percent
- Share of women among volunteers in associations of citizens: 50.6 percent
- Share of women among employees of foundations: 40.6 percent
- Share of women among volunteers of foundations: 56.9 percent

Media

- Share of women among board members of broadcasting organizations in 2017: 42.9 percent⁸⁸

This section presents findings and recommendations in alignment with the strategic priorities and programming of USAID/Serbia's democracy and governance portfolio. Specifically, it addresses the following subthemes: political processes, good governance/transparency and anticorruption, rule of law, civil society/civic engagement, and media professionalism and independence. The findings and recommendations correspond to the J2SR sub-dimensions related to *open and accountable government*, *inclusive development*, *government capacity*, *civil-society capacity*, and *citizen capacity*.

4.1.1 DO 1: Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions Strengthened Findings

Political Processes. Serbia has made several landmark achievements on gender equality in political processes. The Women's Parliamentary Network of Serbia was established in the National Assembly in 2013 after the introduction of a quota system in the 2012 elections. Since then, there has been an increase in the proportion of women among National Assembly members of parliament in legislative branch (37.6 percent in 2019), attributed largely to the aforementioned gender quotas in the elections law⁸⁹ (see Figure 4). Despite this rise in the legislative branch, representation of women in the executive branch of government remains low at 22.7 percent.⁹⁰ Only 6.6 percent of presidents of municipalities and mayors are women.⁹¹ A Report of the Commissioner for Equality on the Participation of Women in Local Self-Governments reveals that there are systematic inequalities in women's participation in local-government sectors and bodies that legal quotas do not regulate.⁹²

⁸⁵ Government of Serbia, Fourth Periodic Report Submitted by Serbia under Article 18 of the Convention to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2017.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ SORS, Economic Impact of Social Enterprises in Serbia, 2014.

⁸⁸ SIPRU. Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2018.

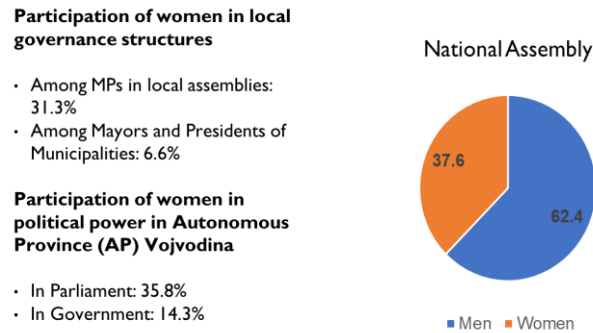
⁸⁹ National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Gender Structure, n.d.

⁹⁰ Government of the Republic of Serbia. Government Composition, n.d.

⁹¹ SORS. Women and Men in Serbia, 2017.

⁹² Commissioner for Equality of the Republic of Serbia. Gender Equality in Local Self-Government, 2017.

Figure 4: Representation of women in government



Source: National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, Government of the Republic of Serbia, Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Government of Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

Interviews with parliamentarians highlighted that women experience several challenges in getting on electoral lists and then winning elections once they are named. These difficulties include challenges in accessing capital, political networks (which serve as the basis for party-level recruitment), and information to enable them to be more competitive within political parties.^{93,94}

Interviews with parliamentarians and USAID implementing partners (IPs) who work with lawmakers cited that female legislators, once elected, have a tendency to vote with male leaders within their parties. They highlighted that women feel intimidated to vote on their own accord due to fears of backlash from male leadership. Another challenge is the exclusion of female parliamentarians from the negotiation processes and promotion within the party, where decisions often are based on loyalty and not merit. Finally, stakeholders highlighted that these loyalty patterns prevent women from different political parties from recognizing their gender-related joint interests and working together to advance gender equality.⁹⁵

In addition to the aforementioned constraints, women are reluctant to enter and remain in politics due to corruption, gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence in the public sphere. The alternative report to the Group of Experts on Action Against Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, submitted by the network of civil-society organizations (CSOs) the SOS Network Vojvodina coordinated,⁹⁶ highlights violence against women in politics and the public sphere as a key barrier. The report substantiated that there is widespread recognition that violence against women is not acceptable and highlighted that there are many policy initiatives dedicated to the issue. Nevertheless, there is still backlash and violence, including violent public discourse against women in high political positions. This factor drives women's generalized reluctance to enter politics and public office. As one of the respondents shared,

Today, reasons not to go to politics for women are completely different than 10 years ago. Before internal and external prejudice or stereotypes were preventing women from becoming candidates. Now women do not want to lose dignity or to be exposed to violence. The preconditions for free and fair

⁹³ KII.

⁹⁴ Cvejic, S. et al. Informal Power Networks, Political Patronage and Clientelism in Serbia and Kosovo, 2016.

⁹⁵ KII.

⁹⁶ SOS Network Vojvodina. NGO Report on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Serbia, 2018.

elections is not to have violence, harassment. Without that we cannot have more women in political parties.⁹⁷

Several respondents offered recommendations on how to support women who are considering entering politics. Many stakeholders expressed the need to address the lack of cooperation among women across party lines, while others emphasized the importance of supporting the Women's Parliamentary Network (which has not been successful in mitigating conflicts between political parties). Though a national CBGE⁹⁸ exists, it does not have the human resources and financial means needed to implement gender mainstreaming in all policy and legal reforms. The Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans, and Social Affairs also established an antidiscrimination policy and improvement of gender equality⁹⁹ to monitor antisexism measures, social inclusion, and gender equality. But its overlap with CBGE's mandate limits its effectiveness to advance gender-equality reforms, including the drafting and adoption of the Law on Gender Equality. Two other important institutions promoting gender equality and antidiscrimination include the Ombudsman, as the general protector of citizens' rights, and the Institution of Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, which was established in 2010. These entities are tasked with preventing all forms, types, and cases of discrimination, including those that are gender based.

Representation of women with disabilities, Roma, other minorities, and rural communities is low, as the aforementioned report by the Protector of Citizens indicates.¹⁰⁰ Though initiatives exist to establish quotas for persons with disabilities (particularly women) in the national legislative branch, they have not been codified. There is currently only one woman with a disability in the National Assembly.¹⁰¹ There is a need to accelerate equal representation for Roma and women with disabilities in all areas of political and public life.

Participation of youth in the political sphere is limited. A 2018 study that surveyed more than 1,000 youth aged 14–29 across 48 towns found widespread dissatisfaction with the state of democracy and democratic values in Serbia. Specifically, distrust in institutions and political parties is pronounced. Young people in Serbia are divided over the issue of whether the country should join the European Union. Almost 56 percent of young people surveyed are in favor of Serbia joining while 44 percent are against it, which roughly corresponds to the entire country's opinions. Serbia's accession evokes positive associations and a view that it would benefit the Serbian economy, political system, and cultural identity.

Good Governance and Transparency/Anti-Corruption. Serbian state-level governments encompass 145 municipalities. The average population per municipality is 45,000 people. Over the last two decades, decentralization has been key to Serbia's democratization process. It has included a focus on delegating more authority to municipalities to empower communities and to increase the accountability of local governments.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ The heads of this body are the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Construction, Transport, and Infrastructure. The CBGE submits proposals, opinions, and expert explanations to the government, ministries, special organizations, other authorities, and expert organizations that have gender equality within their mandate. The address of the official website of the CBGE is <https://www.rodnaravnopravnost.gov.rs/>.

⁹⁹ Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs. Sector for Antidiscrimination Policy and Promotion of Gender Equality, n.d.

¹⁰⁰ Protector of Citizens. Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on the Representation of Women on Decision-Making Positions and Activities of Local Mechanisms for Gender Equality in the Local Self-Governments in Serbia, 2018.

¹⁰¹ Popovic, A. Needed quotas for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Parliament, Danas, 2018.

The Strengthening Local Self-Government Project, a joint multiphased initiative between the European Commission and the Council of Europe, has focused on establishing a coordination mechanism and a full-fledged decentralization strategy to enhance citizens' participation at the local level and strengthen financial systems for local governments. Through engagement primarily with the Ministry of Public Administration, local self-governments, and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (STCM), the project has developed inclusive policies that reach vulnerable and marginalized groups at the local level. On one hand, this project has contributed to improvements from 2016 to 2018 in the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators for Serbia, which highlight advances in some aspects of government effectiveness and regulatory quality. On the other hand, however, indicators of performance regarding accountability, political stability, the reduction of violence, and control of corruption have declined.¹⁰²

The implementation of GRB in Serbia has experienced challenges, despite the existence of legal frameworks in this area. STCM (municipal-level) government agencies still lack the skills to apply GRB. Though the SCTM and UN Women have built the capacities of national and local stakeholders on GRB, interviews with representatives of local governments revealed that local officials responsible for budgeting still lack a full understanding about it and the capacity to present budgets in line with GRB standards. Also, local governments' lack of support for citizens to gain a better understanding of spending priorities or resource allocation poses a challenge.¹⁰³

In theory, all local self-governments are required to establish gender-equality mechanisms in line with the Law on Equality of Sexes, which could support the implementation of GRB and enhance the overall transparency of the local self-government's resource allocation. While these mechanisms are established in almost all municipalities, they are rarely active though, as the civil servants responsible for implementing them have other tasks to perform. As well, only a few municipalities had allocated funds for enacting these policies, and the average amount was low.¹⁰⁴

Forthcoming reforms of public administration and the new Law on Public Policy Planning will mandate the creation of one integral local development strategy, and gender will be mainstreamed throughout it (as opposed to having standalone gender-equality action plans). There are concerns that

"Accountability, the fight against corruption, how to embed that... We never integrated gender equality into our process. It was imposed by peer pressure or by donors."

Female Key Informant, Implementing Partner

given the limited capacities of local government officials to carry out systematic gender mainstreaming in policy design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, as well as weak local gender-equality mechanisms, those development plans will not adequately address or will marginalize gender equality.

Despite investments in research studies and surveys related to combatting corruption in Serbia, there is insufficient analysis of gender-specific considerations of perceptions and experiences surrounding

¹⁰² Serbia's ranking on government effectiveness increased from 56.23 to 56.73. Regulatory quality increased from 54.81 to 56.25, but it decreased according to the voice and accountability indicator (that reflects the extent to which citizens can participate in selecting government and freedom of expression, association, and the media) from 53.69 to 46.31. The political stability indicator fell from 50 to 49.52, and the control of corruption indicator from 45.19 to 41.83.

¹⁰³ SeCons. The Role of Community Development and Citizen Engagement Activities in Strengthening Civic Engagement and Government Responsiveness in Serbia. USAID, 2017.

¹⁰⁴ SCTM. Research at Local Level on Key Changes and Future Expectations Regarding Gender Equality, forthcoming 2020.

corruption. There are regular surveys on corruption in Serbia, some of which USAID partners have implemented. These inquiries provide evidence for planning and monitoring the effectiveness of anticorruption actions. The reports that present findings from these surveys, however, are not gender sensitive, and there are no data on potential gender-specific behaviors and practices related to corruption. For example, they do not address whether women are exposed to more requests for bribes than men, or if women are more prone to pay, reluctant to pay, or include to report bribes than men. The collection of such data is necessary to identify whether structural gender imbalances in power and men's occupation of positions that control economic and political resources result in corruption having a greater impact on women.¹⁰⁵

Social and cultural norms as well as factors related to political power influence the degree to which women feel empowered to speak out against corruption. In the absence of information from large-scale representative surveys on corruption, evidence points to weaker capacities or willingness of women to engage in anticorruption actions. Interviews with representatives of IPs engaged in this area, as well as local stakeholders, indicated that a limited number of women are active in anticorruption activities. Women's reluctance to act as whistleblowers is linked to cultural norms and their lower position with regard to power. These circumstances are particularly the case in more-traditional communities, where women face greater obstacles to play a role in the public sphere and to combat corruption (which many stakeholders pointed out).

Digital development is an important component to good governance and anticorruption, and it requires expansion to marginalized communities. The GoRS adopted the Strategy for Development of e-Government in 2018. Through adopting the approach, the GoRS committed to ensuring the digitization of public services to provide a one-stop shop at the National e-Government Portal so Serbians could gain a more-efficient, transparent government. The GoRS is committed to the implementation of this strategy, which will provide savings at all levels, primarily through the swift resolution of requests from citizens and businesses, the optimization of public administration, and savings due to eliminating red tape. This strategy, however, poses challenges as some population segments—including older members and other marginalized groups, such as Roma living in substandard settlements and people from remote rural areas—do not widely use ICT.¹⁰⁶

Rule of Law. According to the World Justice Project, Serbia is ranked 78 out of 126 countries, with a score of 0.50 on the scale of 0–1, with 0 indicating weakest adherence to the rule of law and 1 indicating full adherence. In comparison to the previous year, Serbia increased its ranking two places (see Figure 5). Recent legislative amendments generally have reduced barriers in access to justice, including the new Law on Free Legal Aid, the Law Prohibiting Discrimination, the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the Law on National Minorities, and the Law on Equality of Sexes.

¹⁰⁵ USAID funded two surveys on combatting corruption: Center for Research Transparency and Accountability (CRTA) and Ipsos. Public Opinion on Corruption, 2019; and Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CESID). Perception on Fight against Corruption in Serbia, 2019.

¹⁰⁶ Babovic, M. et al. Social Inclusion of Older Population in Serbia, Red Cross, Belgrade, 2018.

Figure 5: Serbia snapshot rule of law

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|------|-------|----|----|
|  | Portugal | 0.71 | -0.01 | 22 | ▼1 |
|  | Republic of Korea | 0.73 | 0.01 | 18 | ▲2 |
|  | Romania | 0.64 | -0.01 | 31 | ▼2 |
|  | Russia | 0.47 | 0.00 | 88 | ▲6 |
|  | Rwanda | 0.61 | | 40 | |
|  | Senegal | 0.55 | 0.00 | 52 | 0 |
|  | Serbia | 0.50 | 0.00 | 78 | ▲2 |
|  | Sierra Leone | 0.45 | 0.00 | 98 | 0 |
|  | Singapore | 0.80 | 0.00 | 13 | 0 |
|  | Slovenia | 0.67 | 0.00 | 26 | 0 |
|  | South Africa | 0.58 | -0.01 | 47 | 0 |

Source: World Justice Project

The new Law on Free Legal Aid was adopted in 2017 with a focus on ensuring that victims of all forms of gender-based discrimination, including members of disadvantaged groups, have access to legal aid at no cost.¹⁰⁷ Yet many women do not have access to information about those services. Although this law seeks to expand the provision of services, it has not been implemented in a manner that reaches the citizens most in need of improved access to justice. Furthermore, the law only permits CSOs to provide free legal aid in cases of asylum or discrimination. They are restricted from offering it regarding cases of violence against women, divorce, property rights, and other social-protection issues where they previously provided these critical services. Instead, the law upholds that only legal offices within local governments and private lawyers providing pro bono assistance can offer these critical services. This requirement presents a challenge because those offices often do not have expertise in human rights, antidiscrimination, and protection from GBV. For example, in Novi Pazar, the CSO Sandzak Committee for Human Rights was one of the only legal-assistance providers for ethnic minority women, but it no longer offers such services due to the aforementioned legal restrictions. Additionally, the procedures to prove eligibility for free legal aid are complex, further limiting access to justice.

Linguistic and physical barriers, as well as the inadequate geographical distribution of courts, creates difficulties for women from rural areas and minority women.¹⁰⁸ Women from minority groups often do not have access to information in their language, or if such information does exist, they cannot comprehend it because they are illiterate. Women with disabilities face even greater challenges as many judicial buildings are not handicap accessible.

The recent adoption of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence (2017) and amendments to the criminal code have protected GBV survivors and reduced barriers to accessing justice. CSOs, USAID IPs, and international organizations cited that measures to increase reporting to police and prosecutors have improved the trust and efficiency of law enforcement. Despite this progress, there is still a need to strengthen capacities beyond law enforcement, reaching all stakeholders involved in protection efforts to enhance awareness of the laws and ensure their consistent application, including among legal professionals.

Serbia also has ratified international treaties that in principle grant minorities comprehensive rights, including to preserve their language, culture, and national identity; receive education in their mother tongue until high school; and have representation in the public sector. These agreements include the

¹⁰⁷ United Nations Human Rights office of the High Commissioner. CEDAW 72 Session, General documentation, Serbia, 2020.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Constitutional Charter on Human and Minority Rights and Civil Liberties in 2003, which was a precondition for Serbia's acceptance into the Council of Europe. Additionally, Article 14 of the Serbian Constitution, enacted in 2006, protects national minorities.¹⁰⁹ The Law on National Minorities also allows for the creation of minority councils through which ethnic

groups can exercise their rights of self-government regarding the use of language, education, information, and culture. Furthermore, the GoRS designed an action plan in March 2016 to promote the rights of national minorities and also established a Fund for National Minorities to support projects on culture, education, information, and official use of the languages of national minorities.

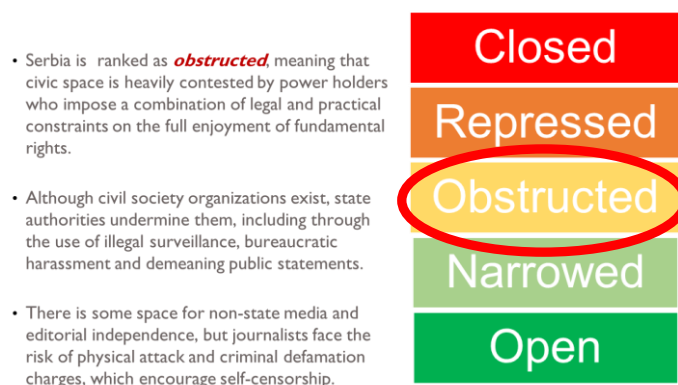
"The grassroots voices do not often translate to policies. The voices from the ground are oftentimes not heard."

Female Key Informant, Civil Society Organization

Despite the progress in providing a legal framework for gender equality and minority rights, gaps remain, particularly with respect to implementation and enforcement at decentralized levels. For example, the revision of the Law Prohibiting Discrimination (2009) that the CEDAW Committee recommended has not been completed yet. The Law on Equality of Sexes, introduced by parliament in 2009, stipulates that all local self-governments establish gender-equality mechanisms. But local governance bodies are without the resources to implement activities, lack sufficient knowledge on gender equality, are unable to report on progress, and rarely collaborates with civil society.¹¹⁰ In 2016, a new version of the law was drafted entitled the Law on Gender Equality, but today the law is still not on parliament's agenda and there has been little transparency on the process for its review and adoption.

Civil-Society Influence/Citizen Engagement. Civil society and citizen engagement is critical for democratic processes. Within this context, it is important to ensure that CSOs, including women's rights activists, are able to exercise freedom of expression, assembly, and association without intimidation or reprisals.¹¹¹ According to CIVICUS, Serbia's civic space rating was "obstructed" (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Snapshot Serbia civil-society influence/citizen engagement



Source: CIVICUS. Serbia, 2019.

¹⁰⁹ OSCE Mission in Serbia. Ethnic Minorities in Serbia: An Overview, February 2008.

¹¹⁰ Protector of Citizens. Special Report of the Protector of Citizens on Representation of Women on Decision-Making Positions and Activities of Local Mechanisms for Gender Equality in the Local Self-Governments in Serbia, 2018.

¹¹¹ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Concluding Observations on the Fourth Periodic Report of Serbia, 2019.

The political environment and corresponding funding limitations have impacted Serbian women's civil-society networks and further widened the gap between civil society and the GoRS. Stakeholders highlighted that funding began to decrease for women's CSOs in 2010 due to the GoRS's unfavorable view of CSO engagement and women's groups in service delivery.¹¹² This position has resulted in new CSOs, led by individuals with close ties to the government, receiving funding and filling the vacuum of service delivery—despite not having any prior expertise addressing the needs of targeted communities. These new organizations receive financial support from local and state budgets, circumventing established criteria for funding.

Interviews with Serbian CSOs highlighted multiple examples where the GoRS thwarted their efforts, including opposing their participation in drafting the Law on Gender Equality, excluding them from consultations on policy reforms, and restricting funding provided to women's organizations. This has had a large impact on the availability of services for women, men, girls, and boys. One specific example is the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans, and Social Affairs' establishment of a national helpline for GBV survivors. Women's organizations specialized in providing helpline services to GBV survivors from across Serbia applied for GoRS funds to manage the hotline. Instead, the ministry selected a public institution that did not have the human resources or capacity to do so. This result goes contrary to the Istanbul Convention, which requires a national, free, 24/7 helpline service—which is often the first point for case management and referrals—administered by an institution with specialized staff.

Organizations working on measures related to GBV prevention and response also have experienced challenges because of the restrictive funding environment, limiting further engagement with the communities they traditionally have served. Over the years, these organizations have expanded the range of services for women and children who suffered violence, developing a strong expertise in line with human rights-based approaches to service delivery. These organizations have years of experience advocating for legal and policy reforms, including independent monitoring, analysis, and shadow reporting of violence against women. Within the Women Against Violence Network and the European Women's Lobby Network in Serbia, there is an established observatory for monitoring prevention and response measures. Network members, in fact, have monitored the effects of policy and implementation since 2011.

The absence of a unified umbrella network of women's organizations also has hampered networking opportunities, consensus building, and grassroots collaboration among CSOs. Throughout Serbia there are smaller networks of women in different regions (such as the Women's Roma Network and the Women Against Violence Network); however, there is no umbrella network to enhance cross-community collaboration and maximize impact on policy reform. Several stakeholders indicated that a lack of solidarity and cooperation among organizations has generated a huge opportunity cost with respect to social capital and that there is a need for broader and more-effective mobilization. They pointed to the increasing gap between more-mainstream larger organizations and smaller grassroots ones that face obstacles in accessing funds.

The withdrawal of donor agencies from Serbia has reduced funding for all CSOs, although ones working on gender equality and women's empowerment have been impacted disproportionately. In particular, the withdrawal of donor agencies coupled with the reallocation of public funds from women's CSOs to new non-governmental organizations (NGOs) close to the government has hampered operations within these organizations. The situation is dire in rural areas. In interviews with women's empowerment

¹¹² Primary donors engaged in supporting women CSOs in Serbia include UN Women, SIDA, Kvina till Kvina, and OSCE.

CSOs, respondents regularly highlighted that greater funding opportunities are available for Belgrade-based CSOs than rural-based ones.

Youth play an important role in every society, but more prominently in ones in transition, such as Serbia. Serbian youth have the potential to play a greater part in the reconstruction and democratic development of the country. In interviews with youth activists and youth CSOs in Novi Pazar and Presevo, representatives spoke about the challenges of operating in an environment with limited funding opportunities. International donors are almost nonexistent in southern Serbia municipalities, including Presevo and Bujanovac, and when present, they dedicate little attention to youth engagement. Stakeholders emphasized the need for enhanced networking among youth organizations to increase their advocacy efforts and collaboration for sustainability. Emigration also poses a challenge for youth participation. A comprehensive study indicated that 75 percent of young people wanted or intended to emigrate, signaling high dissatisfaction with the country's development trajectory.¹¹³ One youth activist highlighted that youth want a better standard of living and have a pessimistic view of the future of Serbian society.

"I am not sure how much women are interested in media business, to be a leader. They lack motivation, ambition, and self-confidence. They like the other part of the work. They do actual work, they let men do the meetings."

Female Key Informant, Implementing Partner

"It is probably cultural, women are not interested in sitting in a kafana (restaurant) and smoking cigars and discussing how heroic they are, how they overthrew Milosevic. It is also generational, younger women do not like the old modus operandi."

Male Key Informant, Implementing Partner

LGBTI persons face high levels of discrimination and harassment in Serbia. The poor implementation of legislation and reform measures outlined in the National Action Plan to Strengthen Issues Pertaining to Eliminating Discrimination against LGBTI was identified as one of the largest challenges to combatting discrimination.¹¹⁴ Stakeholder interviews revealed discrimination in access to health, employment, and housing, as well as the occurrence of hate crimes. A survey UNDP conducted found that only one out of every ten LGBTI persons feel that medical institutions respond adequately to their physical and mental health needs.¹¹⁵ Other challenges include the government's lack of willingness to address LGBTI rights, as well as the lack of space in the media for reporting on issues that LGBTI persons face. Interviews also highlighted that women who are LGBTI are even more vulnerable to discrimination and are also at risk of GBV. Lastly, they highlighted that there is a need to address these challenges through more-inclusive programming, particularly in sectors and regions where USAID is investing.¹¹⁶

Media Professionalism/Independence. According to the World Press Freedom Index, Serbia is an unsafe country for media professionals:

Within five years of President Aleksandar Vucic governing the country, Serbia has become a place where practicing journalism is neither safe nor supported by the state. The number of attacks on media is on the rise, including death threats and inflammatory rhetoric targeting journalists coming from the governing officials. Many attempts on journalistic integrity have not been investigated, solved, or punished, and the

¹¹³ Popadic, Dragan; Pavlovic, Zoran; Mihailovic, Srecko. Youth Study Serbia 2018/2019, 2018.

¹¹⁴ LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey website, n.d.

¹¹⁵ UNDP. Being LGBTI in Eastern Europe: Serbia Country Report, 2017.

¹¹⁶ This area was not a part of the scope of work for this gender analysis; therefore the team did not collect data and information about it. Reflections gathered were cited in interviews with CSOs.

*aggressive smear campaigns that pro-government media orchestrate against investigative reporters are in the full swing.*¹¹⁷

Few women serve on boards of directors, as CEOs, or as editors in media outlets. Although there are no precise data on the gender structure of media leadership in Serbia, the Gender Equality Index's social-power subdomain reveals low levels of participation of women in the management structures of media institutions. Several USAID IPs working with the media also highlighted that while ethnic diversity exists in the media, few women are in leadership positions. IPs revealed that the heads of the main influential media are considered "older guys," men who have served in the industry for long periods and who conduct business in a "traditional manner" through existing social networks. They make decisions when they are gathered in restaurants discussing current affairs and editorial content. Key informants from the media sector (men and women) cited that women typically hold leadership positions in small local media outlets and the impression exists that young women are not interested in the old "modus operandi."

Stakeholders from the media sector, IPs, and CSOs highlighted that women-led media outlets need support to strengthen their abilities to sustain their activities, promote gender equality, and address gender stereotypes in the media. It also was cited there is a great need to break the dependency cycle and promote self-reliance across the sector. Important areas where media outlets could use help include financial sustainability, innovation, and partnerships. This outreach could include diversifying funding sources (such as consumer membership fees and crowdfunding), new approaches in advertising, and alternative businesses (such as cafes and translation services). According to stakeholders, this model is successful in certain areas that are more urban or have more resources. According to several representatives from local media, however, attempts to rely more on membership are challenging due to the control of the local government over financial transactions that include identifying citizens who support local independent media. Citizens are afraid to financially support local media, despite being likely to consume it. In addition, there are challenges in rural or impoverished areas where communities may not have the resources to pay membership fees. In these areas, other models should be explored.¹¹⁸

Female journalists are exposed to higher risks of in-person and cyber violence and are targets of aggressive harassment (such as by local politicians), all of which can discourage free speech. With respect to digital development, there has been a rise in cyber-bullying and stalking of female journalists in Serbia. Stakeholders highlighted that media outlets can play a critical role in raising awareness of harassment and violence against women. According to an OSCE survey, sexual harassment and all types of violence against women in public spaces are major issues in Serbia. Since they were 15 years old, 11 percent of women surveyed had experienced stalking. While this prevalence is lower than the EU average of 18 percent, it still represents a challenge as digital development continues to grow in Serbia. The most-common forms of stalking are offensive, threatening, or silent phone calls (6 percent) and sending emails, text messages, or instant messages that are offensive or threatening (4 percent).¹¹⁹

Serbian mass media (such as newspapers, online news sources, television, and tabloid magazines) tends to perpetuate gender-based stereotypes that dictate roles and responsibilities for men and women. There is also systematic discrimination and negative representation of marginalized groups (such as Roma, migrants, persons who are LGBTI, and persons with disabilities) in the media. UNDP research indicates that hate speech against LGBTI persons remains widespread in the media and on the

¹¹⁷ World Press Freedom Index, 2017.

¹¹⁸ Perspectives shared during interviews with IPs, media outlets, and CSOs during data collection, 2020.

¹¹⁹ OSCE. OSCE-Led Survey on Violence against Women: Well-Being and Safety of Women: Serbia Report, 2019.

internet.¹²⁰ In general there is a need for comprehensive research and data on the impact of media on gender stereotypes and the role of women and gender minorities within the sector.

4.1.2 DO 1: Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions Strengthened Recommendations

Recommendations: *The following recommendations align with USAID Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR) sub-dimensions on inclusive development, open and accountable government, and government capacity and are relevant to the subtheme political processes.*

- Equip women with the tools, skills, and knowledge to advance within political parties. Provide training on the electoral process, campaigning, branding, fundraising, networking, and presentation skills for new women leaders and those entering the political sphere.
- Expand networking opportunities among women from different political parties concerning specific gender policies and issues at national and local levels, such as convening to discuss how to improve employment for rural women or how to engage women and LGBTI persons from marginalized communities in political discourse and local decision-making.
- Support role modeling among women political leaders and prioritize assistance for initiatives to identify and collaborate with women allies. In addition, target young women and youth to increase engagement and mobilization around issues pertaining to political processes.
- Support initiatives that target the elimination of violence and harassment against women and gender minorities in politics and public life (including during campaigning activities), as well as mobilizing civil society to monitor these cases (like the Center for Research, Transparency, and Accountability's Istinomer campaign).

Recommendations: *The following recommendations align with the USAID J2SR sub-dimensions on inclusive development, open and accountable government, and government capacity, and they are relevant to the subtheme good governance and anticorruption.*

- Support programs targeting local governance to prioritize increasing capacity for municipalities to carry out GRB in forthcoming integrated development plans, leveraging the training that UN Women and STCM provided. **(WE3)**
- Strengthen the evidence for gender-responsive planning and budgeting through systematic data collection and analysis on gender, which is packaged and disseminated to governments as inputs into new local development plans. Partners can include SCTM, direct engagement with local governments, and NGOs working with local governments. **(WE3)**
- Collaborate with the Anti-Corruption Agency and the State Audit Institution to strengthen gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation of public officials and government performance, assisting anticorruption court units to manage cases. **(WE3)**
- Prioritize technical assistance to support local governments to integrate gender and social-inclusion considerations into anticorruption plans. Target programming to increase women leadership in local anticorruption bodies and in the implementation of anticorruption plans; ensure outreach in local and marginalized communities includes ethnic minorities, persons with

¹²⁰ UNDP. Being LGBTI in Eastern Europe: Serbia Country Report, 2017.

disabilities, young women, and rural women. Engage with local organizations and gender-equality mechanisms.

- Strengthen partnerships between the national gender machinery and local mechanisms for tracking sex-disaggregated data and indicators to identify any gender-specific patterns in corruption (who takes part in corruption and what are their roles). Then develop programming based on such evidence.

Recommendations: *The following recommendations align with USAID J2SR sub-dimensions on inclusive development, open and accountable government, and government capacity, and are relevant to the subtheme **rule of law**.*

- Support CSOs to improve their issue-based advocacy skills to lobby for implementation of laws related to gender equality, discrimination, and protection against GBV (such as the Free Legal Aid Law, the Anti-Discrimination Law, and the Prevention of Domestic Violence Law).
- Support public campaigns, in collaboration with national women's organizations, to raise awareness on legal rights and access to legal information (such as for obtaining court-appointed interpreters and materials in languages other than Serbian) to address needs of vulnerable groups, including less-educated court users, Roma, and ethnic and gender minorities.
- Collaborate with local organizations to disseminate information to the public about the availability of legal-aid and GBV-response services, particularly with respect to outreach in rural areas with ethnic minority and gender minority populations.
- Collaborate with groups with specialized legal expertise or research capabilities (for example, the Center for Legal Research) to analyze the obstacles women from different social groups face with respect to access to justice and rule of law (such as physical barriers, linguistic barriers, and the geographic distribution of courts). Findings can be used to advocate for restructuring and designing response measures.
- Identify pathways for funding to support women's organizations, in particular GBV service providers, to expand delivery to women in need.

Recommendations: *The following recommendations align with USAID J2SR sub-dimensions on civil-society capacity, citizen capacity, and inclusive development and are relevant to the subtheme **civil influence and civic engagement**.*

- Expand networking opportunities for women's rights organizations and CSOs to strengthen civil-society influence, engagement, and coordination to engage on issues related to women's political participation, economic empowerment, and unpaid care burden.
- Support training on networking, proposal writing, and fundraising strategies to grassroots organizations that focus on self-reliance and sustainability measures. Encourage networking among these groups to enhance their impact and sustainable development.
- Support targeted campaigns and programming to shift the narrative around gender norms, attitudes, and perceptions with respect to GBV, targeting men and boys, to raise awareness to eliminate violence against women.

- Design programming that introduces concepts related to civic engagement and women's leadership in governance, targeting girls at the primary and secondary school levels.
- Promote networking of youth-led organizations to improve their knowledge and access to opportunities in political processes and economic empowerment initiatives, employing gender-equitable approaches.
- Identify challenges and opportunities for more-inclusive measures for LGBTI persons, particularly in sectors and geographic regions where USAID is investing. Support initiatives that work with youth-based advocacy efforts to include people who are LGBTI or organizations that support them to reflect greater inclusion and diversity.

Recommendations: *The following recommendations align with USAID J2SR sub-dimensions on civil-society capacity, citizen capacity, and inclusive development and are relevant to the subtheme **media independence and professionalism**.*

- Provide gender-sensitive training that increases awareness for media outlets to not reinforce negative stereotypes of women and vulnerable groups, including LGBTI persons. For example, support Women Journalists Against Violence to train not only reporters but also editors and other leaders in the sector. Support that network to increase awareness and train media outlets on guidance and do-no-harm principles to report on GBV.
- Encourage women-led media organizations to access business-development grants to apply in developing digital-media business models (such as the Media Accelerator Program through Strengthening Media Systems Project).
- Support the start up of independent local media founded by women across the regions, and support partnerships between media and women's organizations to enhance the impact of awareness raising, campaigning on issues pertaining to gender equality, human rights, and female empowerment (such as the Befem organization).
- Use mass and social media to disseminate content that does not reinforce negative stereotypes about women and gender minorities (including ethnic communities, persons with disabilities, youth, elderly, and LGBTI persons).

4.2 DO 2: Broad-Based Inclusive Economic Growth

Data and Statistics

Education

- Net attendance ratio for primary school was 99.1 percent for boys and 97.9 percent for girls¹²¹
- Gender-parity index for secondary school is 1.08 in favor of girls¹²²
- Share of women among tertiary education students in 2018 was 56.5 percent
- Share of women among master of arts graduates was 60.7 percent, and it was 49.7 percent among PhD graduates¹²³
- Share of women among tertiary students of arts and humanities was 66.5 percent
- Share of women among ICT students was 27.4 percent¹²⁴

Access to assets and property

- Women own 23.4 percent of all land plots and 24.7 percent of buildings, and in 42.5 percent of cases they are owners of parts of buildings¹²⁵
- Young women (16–24) use computers more often than young men: 99.2 percent of women used computers during the last three months compared to 96.7 percent of men; in older generations (55–74) the gender gap is in favor of men (47.4 versus 34.9)¹²⁶

Employment gaps

- Activity rate of the working age population (15–64) was 75.1 percent for men and 60.6 percent for women in 2018¹²⁷
- Employment rate of working age population (15–64) was 65.6 percent for men and 52.0 percent for women in 2019
- Share of women among persons employed in health-care and social-protection sectors was 74.8 percent, in the information and communication sector it was 38.9 percent¹²⁸
- Share of women among managers and decision makers in companies and public enterprises was 38.4 percent in 2018¹²⁹
- The informal employment rate for men was 18.8 percent and 20.5 percent for women in 2018¹³⁰
- Among employed men, 18.2 percent are entrepreneurs and self-employed, while among women it's 8.0 percent¹³¹
- Share of women among registered business owners in 2017 was 34 percent¹³²
- Women head 19.34 percent of family farms and manage 12.5 percent of them, while at the same time they comprise the majority of unpaid family workers on farms (59.3 percent)¹³³

Income, poverty, and social protection

¹²¹ UNICEF. Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Serbia, 2014.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. Number of Graduated Students, by Sex-First Degree Studies, n.d.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ SOS Vojvodina. Annex to the Shadow report to the CEDAW Committee, 2018.

¹²⁶ SORS. Use of ICT in Republic of Serbia. 2019.

¹²⁷ Government of the Republic of Serbia. SORS, Labour Force Survey 2018, 2018.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² SORS. Women and Men in Serbia. 2017.

¹³³ Bogdanov, N, Babovic, M. Labour Force and Work on Farms in Serbia, SORS, 2019.

- Women were paid 8.7 percent less than men in 2014;¹³⁴ in 2018 the average monthly salary of formally employed men was 69,120 RSD (\$645.92), while for women it was 62,792 RSD (\$586.88)¹³⁵
- The average pension, based on employment records, for women is 84 percent of the average for men¹³⁶
- The at-risk-of-poverty rate in 2018 was 24.6 percent for men and 24.0 percent for women, but older (65+) women faced with much higher risks than older men (24.3 versus 16.9 percent) as were single-parent households, which are usually women, (36.5 percent)¹³⁷

This section presents findings and recommendations in alignment with the strategic priorities and programming of USAID/Serbia's economic-growth portfolio. Specifically, it addresses the following subthemes: business-enabling environment and women's economic empowerment, and private-sector networks and competitiveness. The findings and recommendations correspond to the J2SR sub-dimensions related to *inclusive development*, *economic policy*, and *economic capacity*.

4.2.1 DO 2: Conditions for Broad-Based Inclusive Economic Growth Findings

Business-Enabling Environment and Women's Economic Empowerment. Prior to 2015, Serbia experienced years of stalled economic growth and challenges to stimulating its domestic labor market. Since then, economic growth has rebounded, increasing to 4.3 percent in 2018.¹³⁸ According to the World Bank, consumption and investment have propelled this economic growth, in part due to a temporary stimulus from an increase in public-sector wages and pensions and the recovery of the energy sector.¹³⁹ The climate for conducting business also has contributed, with an increase in Serbia's score of 0.17 points between 2018 and 2019 in the World Bank's business rankings.¹⁴⁰

Since the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, the economic forecast has changed dramatically. The government declared a state of emergency and implemented measures to help control the spread of the virus. This response has impacted consumer spending and business investment projects,¹⁴¹ and it has disrupted global value chains and lowered demand for export-oriented manufacturing. As a result, Serbia's economy is expected to contract by 2.5 percent in 2020, provided that containment measures are lifted by the end of June 2020.¹⁴²

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic impact, the GoRS has restricted citizens' movement during curfew hours; canceled public transport and nonessential face-to-face public services; and temporarily closed schools, kindergartens, and service-sector businesses, such as cafes, restaurants, and personal services. The GoRS also has introduced measures to support employment, businesses, and living standard, including the basic one-off benefit for all citizens of €100, subsidies for employees, subsidies to agricultural producers, and relaxation of tax obligations.¹⁴³

In general, gender inequality remains high in access to employment and resources, including property, land, financial markets, transport, jobs, support programs for businesses, and agricultural loans. The GoRS has introduced policies and laws to address these inequalities, promoting gender equality in employment and access to assets. The 2016–2020 Gender Equality Strategy, for example, recognizes

¹³⁴ SORS. Women and Men in Serbia. 2017.

¹³⁵ Government of the Republic of Serbia. SORS, Earnings by Sector, Education and Gender, September 2018.

¹³⁶ SORS. Women and Men in Serbia. 2017.

¹³⁷ Government of the Republic of Serbia. SORS, Poverty and Social Inequality, 2018.

¹³⁸ Government of the Republic of Serbia Ministry of Finance. Macroeconomic Trends, n.d.

¹³⁹ World Bank Group. Western Balkans Regular Economic Report No. 15/Spring 2019, 2019.

¹⁴⁰ World Bank. Doing Business 2019, 2019.

¹⁴¹ Focus Economics. Serbia Economic Outlook, 2020

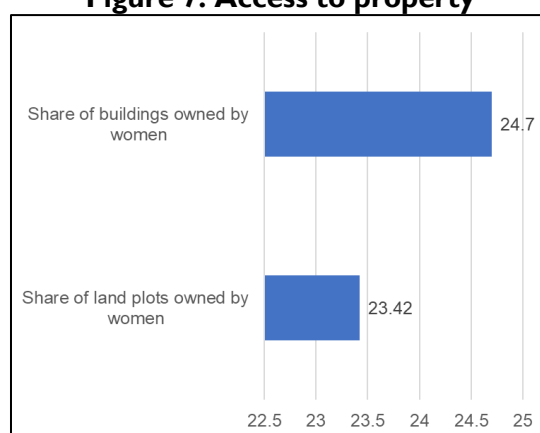
¹⁴² World Bank. Serbian Economy Shrinks as Country Responds to COVID-19, April 29, 2020.

¹⁴³ Government of Serbia. COVID-19 Regulations, 2020.

these issues as priorities. A 2018 midterm evaluation of the strategy, however, revealed that equality gaps remain because the GoRS has not implemented practical measures.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, despite attention given to gender equality in national employment strategies, gaps within the labor market persist. The 2019 employment rate for the working-age population (15–64) was 65.6 percent for men and 52.0 for women. Different populations of women face comparatively higher barriers to employment. For example, among young women (15–24 years), the unemployment rate was 32 percent compared to 28.3 for young men. In rural areas, the unemployment rate for young women was 31.7 percent compared to 22.6 for young men.¹⁴⁵ According to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index (2020), Serbia is ranked 80 for labor-force participation, with 59.3 percent of women and 72.9 of men in the labor force.¹⁴⁶

The Law on the Registration of Property¹⁴⁷ stipulates that all property acquired during marriage is automatically registered to both partners, unless there is written consent from one partner to refuse his or her share. And the Law on Republic Administrative Taxes¹⁴⁸ provides lower prices for registering shared property of partners. Still, there are significant gaps in women's ownership of land and housing. Women own just 23.4 percent of all land plots and 24.7 percent of buildings¹⁴⁹ (see Figure 7). Low levels of ownership are more pronounced in rural areas, where strong patriarchal norms guide property inheritance patterns. Such patterns include passing assets predominantly to male descendants.¹⁵⁰

Figure 7: Access to property



Source: SOS Vojvodina Network, 2019

Contributing factors to women's low levels of employment and high rates of unemployment include prevailing patriarchal norms that constrain women's participation in the labor market and limit growth potential once they are working. For example, stakeholders highlighted that norms limit access to employment and attaining senior leadership roles because they tend to prioritize women's primary roles in the family and household. Interviewees also emphasized the causal links between cultural norms and

¹⁴⁴ Babovic, M. et al. Evaluation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Serbia National Strategy for Gender Equality—Final Report, U.N. Women, Belgrade, 2018.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ World Economic Forum. Global Gender Gap Report, 2020.

¹⁴⁷ Republic of Serbia. 'Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia', no. 41/2018, 2018.

¹⁴⁸ Republic of Serbia. 'Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia', no. 43/2003, 51/2003, 61/2005, 101/2005, 5/2009, 54/2009, 50/2011, 70/2011, 55/2012, 93/2012, 47/2013, 65/2013, 57/2014, 45/2015, 83/2015, 112/2015, 50/2016, 61/2017, 113/2017, 3/2018, 50/2018.

¹⁴⁹ SOS Vojvodina Network. Priorities and Recommendations for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Serbia, Annex to the Shadow Report Submitted to CEDAW Committee, 2019.

¹⁵⁰ Babović, M, Vuković, O. Rural Women in the Status of Family Helpers: Position, Roles and Welfare Rights, UNDP Belgrade, 2009.

expectations related to gender responsibilities that indirectly discourage women from looking for employment, ultimately withdrawing from the labor market. Finally, they highlighted that when a woman is elected or appointed to a senior decision-making position, her competence and qualifications often are called into question, which may serve as a deterrent for other women to aspire to such roles.

The way in which women participate in the labor market correlates with the prevalence of traditional gender roles, especially in rural areas of Serbia. Women working on farms are largely invisible, and they are unpaid, do not have insurance, and work double shifts with limited social rights. In more-traditional regions, like Sandžak, women entrepreneurs often are limited to businesses that align with traditional gender roles. Female entrepreneurs, for example, highlighted that they established private kindergartens or choose to support family businesses through microenterprises that support a male family member (namely a husband, father, or brother). One consequence traditional social norms present is that when a woman succeeds in her business, she often transfers it to her husband or other male relatives.

Traditional roles also contribute to labor-market discrimination based on gender and other factors of exclusion. In a recent report the Commissioner for Equality prepared, almost one-third of the complaints related to discrimination were on the basis of sex (followed by age, then marital status), and there were reported cases of discrimination on appearance and health status. Furthermore, there has been a marked increase in the number of complaints filed based on discrimination that the Commission for Equality has received, likely due to women's increasing awareness of their rights.¹⁵¹

Despite the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, there is widespread discrimination against persons with disabilities, in particular for women and persons from ethnic minority communities.¹⁵² There are also high levels of discrimination against LGBTI persons, which is most pronounced for transgender persons, in the labor market.^{153,154} For example, a World Bank survey revealed that 10 percent of LGBTI persons had been forced to quit a job due to discrimination. This bias undermines the productive use of human resources in the labor market, in particular because LGBTI persons on average are more educated and have above-average attainment of post-graduate levels of education.

For women entrepreneurs, lack of access to assets plays a critical role in their levels of participation and productivity. Within Serbia, 34 percent of entrepreneurs in 2014 were women, which increased from 26 percent in 2011.¹⁵⁵ A major factor contributing to this rise is related to obstacles that women face finding wage employment. The National Strategy for Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Republic of Serbia (2015–2020)¹⁵⁶ notes that among employed women, only 15 percent report self-employment, compared with 30.5 percent for men. This discrepancy is due to gender discrimination and the existence of stereotypes; limited access to childcare; and difficulties in reconciling work, family, and private life.¹⁵⁷ That said, female entrepreneurs lack access to business resources, information, and networks.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵¹ Commissioner for Protection of Equality. *Discrimination at the Labor Market*, 2019.

¹⁵² Đan, Aurelija and Sofija Vrbaski. *Gender-Based Discrimination and Labour In Serbia*, 2019.

¹⁵³ World Bank. *A Comparative Analysis of the Socioeconomic Dimensions of LGBTI Exclusion in Serbia*, 2019.

¹⁵⁴ Council of Europe. *Study on Homophobia, Transphobia and Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*, 2011.

¹⁵⁵ Babovic, M. *Baseline Study on Women's Entrepreneurship in Serbia*, 2011; Babovic, M. *The Position of Women in the Business Sector in Serbia*, 2014.

¹⁵⁶ Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Economy. *SME Development Strategy and Action Plan*, 2015.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Stakeholders in highlighted that women with disabilities, Roma women, and rural women are at a greater disadvantage with respect to access to economic participation, access to property, and decision-making ability. Economic participation rates among women from marginalized groups is even lower than the general population of women, further exacerbating their vulnerabilities and inequitable opportunities. Roma women and women with disabilities report the lowest levels of economic participation, with 9 and 4 percent in salaried employment, respectively.¹⁵⁹ The percentage of employed Roma women is significantly lower than for Roma men (32 percent). Unemployment rates of Roma women is highest at 50 percent, which is much greater than among Roma men (33 percent) and the general working age population (16 percent).¹⁶⁰ Limited availability of data on labor-market participation among Roma women and women with disabilities creates a challenge for monitoring and addressing these low levels of participation. Rural women engaged in agriculture on family farms are in particularly fragile positions. While they comprise 17 percent of farm heads, they make up 63 percent of the family labor force. They work without secure employment, have no guarantees of salary, and have limited access to employment-based social services. While they can pay retirement and disability contributions as members of registered family farms alone or by farm head, few women elect this option.¹⁶¹

A significant gap exists between what Serbian youth study and the employment opportunities available to them. According to the National Level Youth Study conducted in 2018, 54 percent of respondents replied that they do not work in the profession that they studied for, while 45 percent said that they are engaged in a job somewhat similar to what they were educated and trained for.¹⁶² Furthermore, there is significant dissatisfaction with available employment opportunities: 40 percent of young people work in jobs that require lower qualifications than what they possess, and 75 percent of them rated their working status as bad or very bad.¹⁶³ In a focus group with youth in Novi Pazar, women shared they felt restricted to traditional occupations and did not have support from families and peers to work in occupations men normally hold (such as engineering, construction, truck driving, and entrepreneurship).

Private-Sector Networks Strengthened to Enhance Competitiveness.

Despite improved economic growth in Serbia, the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum indicates that Serbia decreased from 65 out of 140 positions in 2018 to 72 out of 141 in 2019.¹⁶⁴

One preliminary finding multiple stakeholders cited was that gender-based segregation in the labor market had an impact on overall competitiveness and limited educational choices. Women are less-frequently employed in full-time-equivalent jobs in comparison to men, and they have less-flexible working hours. They are concentrated in typically female-friendly professions and low-paid sectors (education, health care, social protection, and public administration).

“The biggest gap is in the private sector. They don’t offer the same jobs for women as for men. This is a small mindset of the small places like Presevo, Vranje, Bujanovac; it is not like in Pristina or in Belgrade which are bigger cities. In private companies, women are not sure if they will be harassed, will they be good workers, could they fulfill company expectations.”

Female Key Informant, CSO, Presevo

¹⁵⁹ Markovic, M. Persons with Disabilities in Serbia. Population Census 2011, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2014.

¹⁶⁰ UNDP, World Bank. Roma at Glance, Serbia, 2018.

¹⁶¹ Bogdanov, N, Babovic, M. Labor Force and Activity on Family Farms. 2014.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ World Economic Forum. The Global Competitiveness Report 2019, 2019.

In the formal sector, dominated by industry and services, women show higher shares of wage employment, and they work full time and more frequently than men in the public sector. On the other hand, part-time work in the informal sector is more common among women, particularly in agriculture. A gender wage gap exists in both the public and private sectors, but more data analysis is needed to reveal these gaps.

Interest is rising in establishing women-owned micro, small, and medium enterprises. In 2016's Year of Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Economy implemented programs fostering entrepreneurship, including women's. About 12,000 firms applied for governmental financial support, and

"My backups were my father and brother. Men have money in this city. Men, my family and friends, men from friends and family helped me to start the business. Men are better at supporting women than women. Not only because they have money they can give you, but also because they are more encouraging."

Female entrepreneur, Novi Pazar

14,200 entrepreneurs benefited from training and workshops—all of which increased the number of female entrepreneurs. Despite this growth, according to the USAID-funded Annual Business Survey for 2019, only 19 percent of women are majority owners. According to the same survey, women's ownership shares of all firms is 22 percent; micro, 24.9 percent; small, 13.5 percent; medium, 13 percent; and large 15.9 percent (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Women business ownership and management share

| Type of companies | Women ownership share | Women management share |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| All firms | 22 | 34.7 |
| Micro | 24.9 | 34.9 |
| Small | 13.5 | 34 |
| Medium | 13 | 35 |
| Large | 15.9 | 33.7 |

Source: Annual Business Survey CARDNO, 2019

According to 2016 research on discrimination and sexual harassment against women in the workplace, 22.1 percent of employed women were exposed to some form of sexual harassment. Young women are more likely to experience harassment than older women (25.2 percent versus 18.5) as are divorced women compared to married ones (43.9 percent versus 15.5). Women with weaker employment status are also more exposed to sexual harassment. For example, among women who work without contracts, 33.9 percent were exposed to sexual harassment, while among those formally employed, 19.3 percent had that experience. Similarly, among women employed with short-term contracts, 22.5 percent experienced sexual harassment, while among those with long-term contracts, 17.5 percent did.¹⁶⁵

Rural women face higher levels of discrimination across all spheres of public and private life. This tendency is due to the patriarchal context of societal norms and culture, as well as the economic and social underdevelopment of the areas in which they live. Rural women's vulnerability increases if they are also members of other marginalized groups facing discrimination, such as based on age disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and health status. Unemployment rates are high within rural communities, with more than 55 percent of the unemployed in rural areas being women. Limited ownership of land constrains women's entrepreneurship in rural areas; if a woman inherits lands, it will be registered in the name of the male relative. Within agriculture, 74 percent of women work as unpaid family members. This practice increases their risk of poverty, as they do not receive benefits such as health insurance,

¹⁶⁵ Victimology Society of Serbia. Discrimination of Women on the Labor Market in Serbia. 2012.

social security, and pension. In addition, they do not have the rights to maternity leave, yet they have the responsibility to care for children and carry out household duties. Rural women also face GBV within the household, with limited access to support services.¹⁶⁶ This situation ultimately effects their ability to work and be productive. It also affects the male perpetrators, who likely experience decreases in productivity.

According to the Competitive Economy Annual Survey 2019, which canvased 133 fruit and vegetable processing companies, women owned 33 percent of the firms: 23 percent as majority owners and 10 percent as minority ones.

Women managed 61 percent of the businesses and were CEOs of 42 percent of them. It appears that women have a

larger ownership and management share in agribusiness, fruit, and vegetable companies (including specialty-food enterprises) compared with Serbian firms overall. This finding is partially attributable to the agribusiness sector requiring less money to function as compared to other industries, as well as because the agribusiness sector is more conducive to innovation where women have excelled. Women are trusted to manage a business but not necessarily to own it. If there are women in top management positions, then they are mainly daughters or wives in family businesses. Women-owned firms are more focused on local markets and lack experience with exports.¹⁶⁷ An opportunity to expand pathways for women's economic empowerment is in the organic farming and production value chains. Currently, there are limited chances for women in organic farming as those businesses are often family ones and thus led by men. Two difficulties with organic production are the preparation of the land and the requirement for greater acreage. Gender gaps are prevalent in this segment as women own less land and have limited access to the financial resources to obtain more.

“We see gender diversity as a precondition for economic success. When you integrate a gender perspective among investors and funders, it contributes to overall economic development.”

Male Key Informant, Implementing Partner

Access to finance is a major challenge for women because they often cannot demonstrate business results and have shorter and less-robust credit histories than men. Loans frequently are tied to real-estate collateral, but women own less property, hindering their access to financing.¹⁶⁸ Even if machinery and business assets are allowed to be used as collateral, that policy would not benefit women because they usually operate in non-capital sectors.¹⁶⁹ Women also fear rejection and intimidation when accessing a bank loan and lack the confidence to decipher the loan process. In addition, women-owned companies have received a lower amount of grants than men-owned companies.¹⁷⁰

Another challenge for women entrepreneurs is that most investors are men. Even if women have innovative ideas for business startups, they lack experience and industry knowledge. Women also face structural barriers as the state requires paying high taxes at a business's start-up. The Impact Hub Belgrade, with the support of USAID and other international donors, designed a program to address these constraints called Women Angels (Andjelke). It supports and promotes women investors and connects them with new women entrepreneurs, fostering mentorships and support networks. Angel investors address gender and cultural biases, demonstrating that women can be business leaders—not only mothers and wives with household duties. The program views gender diversity as a precondition

¹⁶⁶ Dokmanovic, M. Gender Analysis for Serbia. Brussels: The European Union, 2016.

¹⁶⁷ CARDNO. Competitive Economy Annual Survey, 2019.

¹⁶⁸ Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Economy. SME Development Strategy and Action Plan, 2015.

¹⁶⁹ U.N. Women and NALED. Gender Analysis of Economic Programmes and Financial Measures in Serbia, 2019.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

for economic success. Integrating a gender perspective among investors and funders will contribute to overall economic development.

Digital development and transformation are key priorities for Serbia's economic growth, especially as they are key to accession requirements to the European Commission. Gender gaps exist in access to ICT relating to urban and rural areas. While 83 percent of men and 76 percent of women living in urban areas used computers in 2019, just 67 percent of men and 60 percent of women did so in rural areas. The gender gap is more

pronounced among older generations, while among young persons (18–24 years) it disappears.¹⁷¹ Enhancing digital literacy and opportunities represents a central pillar in the country's workforce-development initiatives as well as its competitiveness. According to a recent assessment of digital skills in Serbia with a focus on the gender digital divide, capabilities in Serbia lag behind the EU average and the level of aptitude of Serbian women is lower than for men. According to this research, 62.6 percent of female respondents did not have any or had low digital skills, while 37.3 percent had basic or above-basic skills; 46.7 percent of male respondents did not have any or have low skills, which 53.2 percent had basic and above-basic skills. Empowering women and their digital literacy has the potential to decrease gender gaps in Serbia, increase opportunities for female entrepreneurship, and reduce poverty overall.¹⁷²

“USAID should address the gender gap by using English and ICT to advance more competitive economic opportunities and not always supporting stereotypical gender roles. It is important to increase the entrepreneurship spirit among youth and young women.”

Female Entrepreneur, Novi Sad

In the energy sector, which was not a priority focus area of this gender analysis, there are opportunities to address women's roles as managers and providers of sustainable energy services. If USAID pursues programming in this sector, it is necessary to build upon existing research¹⁷³ to identify opportunities for USAID programming.

4.2.2 DO 2: Business-Enabling Environment and Women's Economic Empowerment Recommendations

- Support women's business and entrepreneur networks to enhance mentoring, networking, and growth initiatives for remote rural women producers and entrepreneurs to bring more of them into formal-sector high value chains and markets (including organic agriculture). Particular attention should be paid to young women in rural areas to bring in new and innovative forms of businesses. **(WE3)**
- Support economic empowerment and entrepreneurship programs targeting marginalized groups of women, including ethnic minorities, rural women, women with disabilities, and single mothers. Support skills building to increase employability and digital literacy and strengthen technical training for rural women linked to local markets and job opportunities. Promote networking among marginalized women businesses to enhance access to markets and increase competitive business opportunities. **(WE3)**

¹⁷¹ Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Use of ICT, Belgrade, 2019.

¹⁷² Bradic-Martinovic, Aleksandra and Banovic, Jelena. Assessment of Digital Skills in Serbia with a Focus on Gender Gap, 2018.

¹⁷³ WISE SEE.

- Support vocational orientation programs in occupations from which girls traditionally are excluded (construction, engineering, and ICT). Collaborate with private-sector partners to mentor young women in developing career goals and pathways towards achieving them. Support businesses to provide incentives for young women to enter into the ICT, engineering, and business sectors. **(WE3)**
- Support USAID partners to adopt and implement codes of conduct and mechanisms to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace. **(WE3)**
- Support initiatives by the public and private sectors bolstering awareness and capacity to combat discrimination against LGBTI persons in the labor market.

Recommendations: *The following recommendations align with USAID J2SR sub-dimensions on inclusive development, economic policy, and capacity of the economy.*

Recommendations for Subtheme Private-Sector Networks Strengthened to Enhance Competitiveness

- Develop strategic partnerships with female investor networks and business associations (for example, the Angel Investor Network and the Association of Businesswomen in Serbia) to address challenges women face in networking and access to capital. Support the mentorship of angel women investors with new female entrepreneurs to enhance productivity, access to finance, product design, and links to markets. Include banks as partners in networking initiatives and increasing access to finance. **(WE3)**
- Increase women's visibility and presence at higher levels of value chains through expanding existing women-run businesses and building capacity on exportation of products and services. Increase export capabilities for larger women-run businesses and the supply networks for smaller ones. **(WE3)**
- Build the capacity and desire of youth and women from an early age to enter nontraditional occupations. Foster collaboration between businesses (particularly in the higher value-added service industry) and secondary schools, technical institutions, and universities to match female graduates with internships, apprenticeships, and eventually employment. **(WE3)**
- Incentivize private companies to provide female staff with on-the-job training and mentoring and training for women in nontraditional occupations. **(WE3)**
- Strengthen the capacity of women entrepreneurial and business networks including gender minorities to advocate for legal labor rights, including access to finance, maternity leave, childcare, and addressing sexual harassment in workplace. **(WE3)**
- Strengthen the digital-literacy capacity of women to decrease gender gaps in the labor market. **(WE3)**
- If USAID plans to continue and expand in the energy sector, it is recommended to build upon existing gender analyses of the sector to identify constraints and opportunities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment within the sector, and apply the findings to future programming.

5. USAID/SERBIA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

5.1 USAID Global Policy on Gender Equality

Numerous USAID frameworks promote gender equality and the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. The 2012 USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy provides guidance on pursuing evidence-based investments in that area and how to institutionalize them in USAID missions. The U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (updated in 2016) along with the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls (launched in March 2016) offer useful approaches to promote gender equality. The USAID J2SR also provides a framework for addressing the contributions of gender equality to country-level self-reliance. And the 2018 WEEE Act emphasizes the importance of addressing women's economic empowerment in USAID's strategies and programming.

5.2 Recommendations for USAID/Serbia

Based on the primary data collection, the following items are recommendations to advance gender integration in USAID/Serbia's programming.

- Include gender criteria in proposal assessment criteria. Such standards may include whether the proposal was developed in consultation with both women and men; whether it responds to the needs of women, men, girls, and boys; how it will affect women, men, girls, and boys; and whether there will be a gender balance among project staff.
- Require at least one gender objective in each activity's monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan, including indicators for measuring gender-equality results (input, output, and outcome/impact).
- Increase the number of USAID IPs' that include indicators and reporting on levels of participation of women and men in public life, leadership roles, decision-making authority (intra-household and beyond), and access to and control over resources.
- Ensure activity-level gender analyses are incorporated across the program cycle.
- Create a Gender Coordination Group at the mission, including representatives from each USAID team, to take forward and prioritize the recommendations in this analysis and to disseminate good practices and evidence on gender-equality integration in programming.
- Carry out more-targeted programming to support GEWE among marginalized communities (ethnic minorities, gender minorities, rural women, women with disabilities, youth) outside of Belgrade, specifically in Southwest, Southern Serbia, and Vojvodina.

ANNEX A: GENDER ANALYSIS SCOPE OF WORK

USAID/Serbia is in the process of developing its new Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for the strategic period FY2021- FY2025. Gender analysis is a mandatory analysis for CDCS (as per ADS 201 and ADS 201mag, Regional and Country Development Cooperation Strategy (R/CDCS) Development and Approval Process.

USAID's commitment to gender equality was reaffirmed with the release of the USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in 2012. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is a core development objective of USAID. USAID investments are aimed at achieving three overarching outcomes for all people:

- Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities and services economic, social, political, and cultural.
- Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities; and
- Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies.

These outcomes are deliberately set at a general level. However, in strategic planning they should be adapted into specific results that have associated targets and indicators for tracking progress. At the CDCS or country level, the analysis should identify the macro or sectoral level societal gender inequalities or obstacles to women's empowerment so that gender equality and women's empowerment can be reflected in:

- CDCS Goal
- Development Objectives (DOs)
- Intermediate Results (IRs) and sub-IRs

A Gender Analysis team will undertake all aspects of the Gender Analysis process as per the ADS 205 and will produce the draft report for review and approval by the Mission. The gender analysis will also address the requirements in the 2016 updated U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence, the 2019 USAID Policy Framework, and the 2018 Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act (WEEE).

As is clearly articulated in the ADS 205 gender analysis is not solely focused on women and girls; the power dynamics between males and females should be explored as such the gender-based barriers men and boys face experience. Quantitative data to review would include any data that may point to the influence of gender inequalities on CDCS development goals and objectives.

Existing quantitative and qualitative data from research, USAID, other donors' and government data reports and evaluations should be reviewed. Primary data collection through key informant interviews or observations will be undertaken by the Gender Analysis team to deepen understanding about issues revealed in the quantitative review or to explore areas in which there are few data or data are not detailed or are outdated. The Gender Analysis should include country-level data on employment, unemployment, labor force participation, inactivity rate, access to finance, percent of women entrepreneurs, business owners, business managers. For the market data, the Gender Analysis should also include dis-aggregation by age sub-cohorts (15-24, 25-30, etc.) if it is available in the statistical information. The analysis should also differentiate data between the urban and rural areas. In addition,

the Gender Analysis should show different trends in different regions populated with different ethnic groups since their cultural norms are varying from one group to another.

The quantitative and qualitative information gathered is focused on understanding the gaps and dynamics that are relevant to achievement of the development objectives (DO) and Intermediate Results (IR) of the CDCS. The gender analysis should address the five ADS205 domains in the gender analysis findings. These domains include:

1. **Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices:** Examines the context in which men and women act and make decisions and the extent to which these legal instruments or practices contain explicit gender biases (e.g., explicit provisions that treat males and females differently or have or implicit gender biases (e.g., the different impacts of laws, policies, regulations, and practices on men and women because of different social arrangements and economic behavior);
2. **Cultural norms and beliefs:** Examine appropriate qualities, life goals, and aspirations for males and females. Gender norms and beliefs are influenced by perceptions of gender identity and expression and are often supported by and embedded in laws, policies, and institutional practices. They influence how females and males behave in different domains and should be explicitly identified in the gender analysis at the country level and especially in project design because they affect potential participation of males and females in project activities. These cultural norms differ in different regions in the country populated with different ethnic groups.
3. **Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use:** Examines roles and time use during paid work, unpaid work (including care and other work in the home), and community service to get an accurate portrait of how people lead their lives and to anticipate potential constraints to participation in development projects.
4. **Access to and Control over Assets and Resources:** Examines whether females and males own and/or have access to and the capacity to use productive resources – assets (land, housing), income, social benefits (social insurance, pensions), public services (health, water), technology – and information necessary to be a fully active and productive participant in society. Gender gaps in access to resources are especially important at the project and activity levels.
5. **Patterns of Power and Decision-making:** Examines the ability of women and men to decide, influence, and exercise control over material, human, intellectual, and financial resources, in the family, community, and country. Analyses should examine to what extent males and females are represented in senior level decision-making positions and exercise voice in decisions made by public, private, and civil society organizations.

The gender analysis should present findings and recommendations for the following development objectives, in line with the mission's priorities for the next CDCS:

- Conditions for Resilient Democratic Development Enhanced
- Conditions for Sustainable Economic Growth Improved

The gender analysis should also present findings and recommendations on the following cross-cutting themes within each sector or development objective:

- Gender-based violence presentation and response.
- Digital Development
- Decentralization
- Youth
- Ethnic minorities (Albanians, Bosniak (predominantly living in Sandzak area – South-West Serbia, and Roma)
- Persons with disabilities

Process and Methodology

The gender analysis team will:

- Conduct a desk review of relevant national policies, laws, and regulations or sectoral analyses in the research and grey literature conducted by but not limited to: national governmental entities; USAID regional or pillar bureaus; the USAID Mission; other donors or international organizations; universities; and think tanks. The literature review will be focused at the macro or sectoral level (see Annex 2: USAID/Serbia CDCS Results Framework) to identify the gender and social inclusion inequalities or obstacles to female empowerment related to the mission's overall Goal and Development Objectives.
- Examine available country-specific quantitative and qualitative data from sources such as national statistics bureaus, national surveys and reports by organizations such as but not limited to: the World Economic Forum, the World Bank Data Portal, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) websites, Demographic and Health Surveys, International Labor Organization (ILO) and UN reports;
- Collaborate with the USAID/Serbia staff to develop a list of key individuals or groups within USAID and with external informants with whom to conduct qualitative interviews. USAID/Serbia will provide support to coordinate these interviews or site visits.
- Conduct Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions or other qualitative data methodologies to understand and describe the drivers of gender and social inequality. The team may interview a range of informants including, but not limited to, mission staff, stakeholders such as relevant government gender and social inclusion/protection agencies, UN Women, and NGO advocacy groups focused on addressing gender equality, female empowerment, gender based violence and social inclusion and, if appropriate, implementing partners and beneficiary community members; and draft and finalize a gender analysis report that includes recommendations for the mission's future gender integration priorities.

USAID/Serbia will provide a review and approval of draft work plan, approach to data collection, questionnaires for the focus groups and key informants prior to field work. The gender analysis report will be organized as summarized in the Gender Analysis Report outline in Annex I.

Gender Analysis Team

The Gender Analysis team will comprise the Senior Gender Expert (international) and two Gender Experts (local). The Senior Gender Expert will serve as the Team Lead, who will schedule conference calls (as needed) of the team, coordinate writing responsibilities, and assemble all the components of the draft Gender Analysis Report for review by the team prior to review by the Mission reviewers. The Mission Gender Advisor will be responsible for coordinating meetings with Mission technical teams and other informants, but it will not be an active team member.

The Gender Analysis team will determine how best to divide the research and writing of the gender analysis report among the members. Senior Gender Expert, in consultation with the team, will determine and assign roles and responsibilities. All team members will have responsibility for conducting and compiling research and data, conducting interviews or recording interview responses, transcribing qualitative interview notes, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, and writing portions of the Gender Analysis Report.

The Team Leader (international) must have the following qualifications and experience:

- Master's degree or its equivalent in social science or related subject.
- Minimum eight years of experience in designing and/or conducting analyses of gender, and in integration of gender perspectives into assistance programming.
- Excellent communication, presentation, and writing skills in the English language.
- Strong team management skills.

- Good knowledge of USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, the ADS205, and the USAID 2019 Policy Framework.

The National Gender Experts (national) must have the following qualifications and experience:

- Degree in social sciences or related subjects.
- Minimum five years of experience in designing and/or conducting analyses of gender issues in the Republic of Serbia and/or the region, and in integration of gender perspectives programming.
- Good knowledge of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policies.
- Excellent communication, presentation, and writing skills.
- Ability to carry out an intersectional analysis of gender equality, ethnicity, and religion in the Republic of Serbia.

Team responsibilities include:

Virtual collaboration:

- Literature search using sites such as Web of Science, Wiley Online Library, Cochrane Reviews/Cochrane Library, Science Direct, Scopus, PubMed, IFRI, ELDIS, Google Scholar and review of pertinent documents.
- Review of documents provided by DO teams.
- Synthesize data in an Annex under the five gender analysis domains. This reduces text in the body of the gender analysis report while presenting evidence for conclusions and recommendations.
- Develop key informant and/or focus group discussion guides and other tools for specific groups of informants (for example, government, NGO staff and/or academics; USAID sector experts).
- Review of overall gender analysis findings and finalization of key gender issues to recommend for incorporation into CDCS Goal, Development Objectives (DOs), and Intermediate Results (IRs)
- Contribute to writing sections of the Gender Analysis Report.
- Team will be responsible for logistics (travel arrangements, accommodation and scheduling the meetings).

In-person collaboration:

- Travel locally as need to conduct qualitative data collection methodologies with external informants. Interviews are expected to take place in Belgrade as well as in the North (Novi Sad); South-west Serbia (Novi Pazar) and South (Presevo).
- Participate as interviewer or note-taker in each of the group interviews with DO teams and external informants. The note taker will be responsible for transcribing notes and sharing with the rest of the team. These roles will be alternated within the team.
- Participate with all team members in discussion and analysis of data, summarizing domains and identifying key gender issues to recommend for inclusion under CDCS Goal, DOs and IRs.

Timeline and Level of Effort

USAID has allocated 44 workdays for the Team Leader (assuming a six-day work week), and 32 workdays for the two national gender experts beginning on or about November 15, 2019, for the Gender Analysis Team to conduct the desk research, inception report, and data collection – ultimately culminating in a Final Report. A six-day work week is authorized while in Serbia. A notional timetable is provided below. This timetable is illustrative – the dates may differ, and the team should allocate LOE per task as needed.

| Task / Deliverables | Estimated Duration / LOE (Days) | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Team Leader | National Gender Expert | National Gender Expert |
| Preparation and Research (prior to arrival in country, includes draft of an initial work plan) | 7 | 4 | 4 |
| Travel to Serbia | 1 | | |
| Team planning, work plan review and meeting with USAID in Belgrade | 2 | 2 | |
| Field work throughout Serbia | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Discussion, analysis, debrief meetings with USAID, and preliminary draft report presentation of key findings and recommendations | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Departure from Serbia | 1 | | |
| Team prepares and submits draft report to USAID (out of country) | 12 | 7 | 7 |
| Team prepares final report to USAID, incorporating USAID feedback on draft report | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Totals | 44 | 32 | 32 |

The majority of effort for a CDCS gender analysis is a review of the literature to assess trends, major changes in country context and emerging issues at the macro or sectoral level within a country that may affect a mission's overall goal and development objectives. It is important to validate extant research and literature with qualitative data and allow time for the team to work together collaboratively to come to consensus on the most important challenges and opportunities facing the partner country related to gender equality and female empowerment, and identify those areas that the Mission should plan to address. Completing the gender analysis for the CDCS entails two components:

- **Virtual work to prepare the Inception Report and Work Plan (Including Literature Review):** The time for analysis begins when USAID/Serbia provides internal documents and a list of recommended reports for review and beginning of the intensive literature search and review by the Gender Analysis team members. This period may include a preliminary outline of the draft Gender Analysis Report Sections (prior in in-person collaboration) and the final drafting of Gender Analysis Report following the completion of TDY. This is a parameter for the estimated calendar days needed. This may be adjusted based on availability of Mission staff and external team member(s).
- **In-country primary data collection:** 15 working days to conduct key informant interviews, engage in team discussions, build consensus on key themes and recommendations and participate, as required, in Mission in-brief and debrief. Depending on the composition of the Gender Analysis team, if the in-country members are able to do the qualitative data collection independently, no TDY support may be needed for this phase. All qualitative data will be shared with external team members and may be discussed/reviewed through conference calls, VTC etc.

Deliverables:

- Inception Report and Work Plan, including Literature Review

- PPT with summary of preliminary findings and recommendation for Mission senior leadership debrief
- Draft CDCS Gender Analysis Report (see Annex I for required sections/content)
- Final CDCS Gender Analysis Report

ANNEX B: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Inception Report

The research team prepared an inception report from February 14 –28, 2020, which included a desk review of the secondary data sources specified in Annex C. The purpose of the desk review was to identify the major gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) advances, gaps, and opportunities in Serbia as a whole, with a focus on the two aforementioned thematic areas that will be the main units of analysis for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Serbia 2020–2015 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). Based on the desk review’s findings, the research team designed the methodology and work plan, which included a research matrix (see Annex D) that connected the research questions to potential sources of information (both primary, including stakeholders, and secondary documents) and the instruments used for collecting information (Annex E). It also included question guides tailored to each data-collection method, as well as a list of stakeholders to consult during primary data collection.

2.2 Primary Data Collection

A team of three consultants (one international and two national) carried out data collection in Serbia from March 2–18, 2020, in Belgrade, Novi Pazar, Presevo, Bujanovac, Novi Sad, Leskovac, Vranje, and Nis. The main data-collection tools consulted are summarized in the following table and include semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The team consulted 136 stakeholders in total. Annex F provides a detailed list of interviewees.

Table: Primary Data-Collection Methods and Tools

| Technique | Stakeholders | Purpose |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Semi-structured interviews | USAID staff, USAID implementing partners (IPs), government counterparts, civil-society organizations (CSOs), the international community, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the central and local levels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To gather data on GEWE advances, gaps, challenges, constraints, and opportunities in line with USAID/Serbia’s priority thematic areas of intervention, crosscutting themes, and geographical areas of intervention• To analyze lessons learned from previous gender-integration efforts, examples of good practices, and assess gender priorities and strategies moving forward |
| Focus groups | Women and men participants in USAID programs and projects Local CSOs, entrepreneurs, and activists | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To capture project participants’ opinions and perceptions regarding gender constraints and the benefits and opportunities associated with USAID programming• To determine how projects and IPs identify and address advances and gaps• To analyze lessons learned from previous gender-integration efforts and to assess gender priorities moving forward |

2.3 Presentation of Preliminary Findings to USAID

On March 26, 2020, the research team presented its preliminary findings and recommendations to USAID/Serbia. The purpose of the presentation was to validate and expand upon the preliminary findings and recommendations and gain initial feedback. Due to COVID-19, the presentation was conducted through Google Meet at the request of the USAID/Serbia mission.

2.4 Data Analysis, Interpretation, and Report Preparation

The research team analyzed and interpreted the primary data collected and delivered the draft gender analysis report to USAID/Serbia on April 24, 2020. The research team will deliver its final gender analysis report to USAID/Serbia on May 8, 2020, which will address USAID/Serbia's feedback on the draft.

2.5 Protection of Informant Information

The research team obtained free and prior informed consent at the organizational level and from all research participants, which included the following steps at the beginning of all semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and discussion workshops:

- An explanation of the research's purpose, how long it will take, and the procedures to be followed
- A description of any risks to the person participating
- A description of any expected benefits to the person participating or to his or her community
- A statement describing whether the data will be anonymous or stored confidentially
- Contact details for the subject if he or she has questions or concerns regarding the research
- A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty, and the subject may stop participating at any time

For interviews with at-risk individuals or groups, the research team did not record respondents' personal information, including names, ages, organizations, and even interviews' times and dates.

2.6 Limitations of the Gender Analysis

Due to the limited presence of USAID IPs in the regions, in particular the ethnic minority areas, the research team spent time establishing initial contacts and planning for field visits and interviews. Great efforts were made to ensure a broad-based representation of informants were included in the data collection; however, there were challenges. During the latter part of data collection, COVID-19 had a significant impact on the interviews. Organizations and individuals started to request interviews via telephone or Skype. The field trip to Vojvodina region was cancelled and follow up was conducted via phone. The international consultant had to depart from Serbia on March 14. Yet all subsequent work and responsibilities were thoroughly conducted. Working with the in-country Serbia team, interviews were completed, and data was collected for the completion of a comprehensive gender analysis. In addition, interview data was triangulated with secondary literature, including national data, statistics, national gender studies, and reports.

ANNEX C: LIST OF KEY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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ANNEX D: GENDER ANALYSIS RESEARCH MATRIX

The tables below include the research instrument that facilitated the gathering of the required information for the USAID/Serbia Gender Analysis. The table reports the research objectives, the specific information needs, and the tools for gathering the information from both secondary (documents) and primary sources (persons and institutions/organizations). The information needs were the base for designing the information gathering tools (interviews and focus group discussions) that were tailored according to stakeholder and context.

| N° | Research Theme | Information Needs | Tools and Sources of Information |
|----|--|--|---|
| 1 | Current gender gaps between women and men regarding USAID's key priority intervention areas and main domains. ¹⁷⁴ Examining access to and control of resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender equality advances and gaps in: Democracy and Governance and Economic Growth. Specific gender gaps regarding young women and men, and other relevant groups regarding vulnerability. | <p><u>Literature review:</u> National statistics and databases, research reports, global indexes, USAID's studies.</p> <p><u>Semi-structured interviews:</u> USAID staff and implementing partners, national and local government officials, civil society organizations/associations and experts, international organizations.</p> |
| 2 | Key issues and constraints to equitable political and socio-economic participation and access to opportunities for women and men. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main restrictions/obstacles/limitations to equitable access to sector's opportunities and participation. Gender stereotypes and direct and indirect discrimination; based off of culture, sexual identity/expression, and/or disability status. | <p><u>Literature review:</u> Research reports, USAID and other donors' studies, national reports and statistics.</p> <p><u>Semi-structured interviews:</u> USAID staff and implementing partners, national and local government officials, civil society organizations/associations and experts, international organizations.</p> |

¹⁷⁴ Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices; Cultural Norms and Beliefs; Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use; Access to and Control over Assets and Resources; Patterns of Power and Decision-making.

| N° | Research Theme | Information Needs | Tools and Sources of Information |
|----|--|---|---|
| 3 | Areas of opportunity for promoting gender equality and female empowerment across key thematic areas ¹⁷⁵ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential entry points for advancing gender equality and female empowerment and integrating into thematic areas. | <p><u>Semi-structured interviews:</u> USAID staff and implementing partners, Mission Gender Focal Point, national and local government officials, civil society organizations/associations and experts, international organizations</p> <p><u>Focus groups:</u> USAID project beneficiaries</p> |
| 4 | Areas of opportunity for advancing women's economic empowerment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential entry points for women's economic empowerment Addressing barriers that exist to women's access to employment | <p><u>Semi-structured interviews:</u> USAID staff and implementing partners, national and local government officials, civil society organizations/associations and experts, international organizations.</p> <p><u>Focus groups:</u> project participants and stakeholders</p> |

¹⁷⁵ Key interventions areas: 1. Democracy and Governance and 2. Economic Growth. The analysis will focus on men and women across different regions, as well as people with disabilities, youth and minority communities.

KEY QUESTIONS FROM THE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT DOMAINS FOR EACH USAID THEMATIC AREA

| USAID/Serbia theme | Women's Economic Empowerment Domains ¹⁷⁶ | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| | Agency | Enabling environment | Leadership | Access | Risk Mitigation |
| DO 1: Accountability of Key Democratic Institutions Strengthened | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are women vs. men able to exercise their voice in decisions made by public, private, and civil society organizations, both individually and as collectives? What are the governance structures (national, regional, or local) for decision-making over public resource allocation at the community level and how do they affect women's access to services to upgrade their business, enter the workforce, and withstand economic shocks? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do policies exist to incentivize the creation of community-based childcare solutions? Are legal mechanisms in place for women to register property, thereby formalizing ownership and enabling asset use as collateral? Does national level legislation guarantee equal pay for equal work? What type of national legislation exists to prohibit workplace-specific sexual harassment and abuse of power? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What decision-making and leadership roles and opportunities do women have nationally and regionally? What has the impact of female leadership been on macroeconomic policy reforms, including issues affecting trade, value chains, the informal sector, and access to public services? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are gender-responsive budgeting or informal economy budgeting being used to drive discussions on macroeconomic policy? Do women and men equally have access to social security coverage, annual paid leave, parental leave, and paid sick leave? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the prevalence of gender-based violence? What are attitudes about violence against women? Which forms of GBV are illegal (including workplace, street, and other forms of public harassment?) |
| DO2: Conditions for Broad-based Inclusive Economic Growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are women able to access financial services that meet their specific needs? At the level of financial institutions, are women engaged in the design of financial services that meet their specific need? To what extent are women engaged in defining what digital financial services are | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are commitments to address gender equity included in sector policies? How do women's contributions throughout the value chain and in the sector lead to global, regional or country-level policy goals? Do financial institutions have strategies or policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At what levels in the value chain do women hold leadership positions and what has the impact been on economic empowerment opportunities for women? What stereotypes affect women's ability to take on leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What types of assets do women own and how does this differ from men? How do social norms and practices (such as on decision-making, mobile phone use, women's mobility) affect women's access to and use of credit and collateral? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are women able to access and control land and other property legally owned by a spouse or other male family members? What is the division of labor between men and women, and how does this affect |

¹⁷⁶ Banyan Global. Women's Economic Empowerment and Equality Technical Guide (forthcoming 2020).

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| | <p>available and for what purposes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are women able to independently start and operate a business without the involvement of male family members? • How do gender norms about women as wage earners or engagement in profit-earning work affect their level of self-worth, confidence, self-esteem and vice versa? | <p>directed at the creation of financial products that meet the needs and demands of women?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do national laws give men and women the same rights to rent, own, sell and inherit property? • Are legal mechanisms in place for women to register property, thereby formalizing ownership and enabling asset use as collateral? | <p>positions at various levels in agricultural sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the lack of co-responsibility in households and lack of community-based childcare services factor into women's ability to participate and take on leadership positions in business networks, cooperatives? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many women vs. men work in a specific value chain by activity (supply, production, processing, transportation, trade)? • Are women involved at points in the value chain where income is earned? • Do socially acceptable practices restrict women's access to property ownership? | <p>agricultural productivity and available time?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are trade routes considered safe to travel by female traders? • What GBV risks, including sexual harassment, do women face in bringing products to market and/or with traders? • Do women have access to decent roads and public transportation services that are safe, affordable and reliable? |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|

ANNEX E: INTERVIEW GUIDES FOR THE GENDER ANALYSIS

Ia. INTERVIEW GUIDE—USAID STAFF *(to be adapted based on sector and composition of data-collection event participants)*

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Name(s) of interviewee(s) | |
| Title(s) | |
| Institution/organization | |
| Sex(es) | |
| Date of interview | |
| Names of interviewers | |

INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much for setting aside time to talk with me today.

We are conducting a gender analysis to inform the USAID/Serbia 2021–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). The gender analysis will include concrete findings and recommendations on how the mission can build upon existing advances in gender equality and women’s empowerment and mitigate gender inequality in two sectors: accountability of key democratic institutions and conditions of broad-based inclusive economic growth.

For this analysis, we are conducting interviews and focus group discussions with USAID staff, implementing partners, project participants, and other stakeholders. Findings from all interviews and focus group discussions will contribute to a report that will be finalized by May for USAID. It will be published on Banyan Global’s website.

The interview will take approximately one hour. All information you share with me will be confidential and no personal information will be disclosed in any setting. Participation in this interview is voluntary; if you would like to stop the interview at any time, please let us know. Please feel free to give as much information as you can in response to the questions, and please ask me for clarification if you don’t understand a question. Do you have any questions about this interview?

If you wouldn’t mind, my colleague will be taking notes to capture the highlights of our conversation to use in our analysis. Would that be alright?

USAID Office Directors and Technical Staff

1. Please tell us about how gender equality and female empowerment are integrated into your work and your development objective (DO)?

2. Does your office have any policy documents or other guidance related to gender and women's empowerment? If so, what documents? (Ask for copies)
3. In your view, what are the most-critical issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment in Serbia, under your DO?
4. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges and constraints in addressing these issues?
5. If you had to cite three main results that your office has produced (under the current CDCS) or is producing in terms of addressing gender equality and female empowerment, what would they be?
6. What are the key gaps and constraints that limit or impede equal participation and access to program activities and opportunities and benefits? How do other conditions, such as age, ethnicity, disability, and location (urban/rural), affect those gaps and constraints? Can you provide concrete examples?
7. What key issues are important to know to prioritize women's economic empowerment in the upcoming CDCS?
8. Are you aware of gender-based violence where the programs take place? Does it affect in any way the participation and access to benefits for women, girls, men, and boys? If so, how is it addressed?
9. Our team will conduct interviews on gender and female empowerment in Belgrade and the Novi Sad, Novi Pazar, and Presevo Regions. Do you have advice for the team on key issues we should explore? What questions do you think are the most important for the team to investigate?
10. Reminder to ask about relevant crosscutting themes: if they should be addressed relating to gender, and, if so how? (Gender-based violence prevention and response, digital development, decentralization, youth, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities)
11. Is there anything else you want to add or ask about that we didn't discuss in the interview?

1b. INTERVIEW GUIDE—USAID IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS *(to be adapted based on sector and composition of data-collection event participants)*

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Name(s) of interviewee(s) | |
| Title(s) | |
| Institution/organization | |
| Sex(es) | |
| Date of interview | |
| Names of interviewers | |

INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much for setting aside time to talk with me today.

We are conducting a gender analysis to inform the USAID/Serbia 2021–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy. The gender analysis will include concrete findings and recommendations on how the mission can build upon existing advances in gender equality and women’s empowerment and mitigate gender inequality in the two sectors: accountability of key democratic institutions and conditions of broad-based inclusive economic growth.

For this analysis, we are conducting interviews and focus group discussions with USAID staff, implementing partners, project participants, and stakeholders. Findings from all interviews and focus group discussions will contribute to a report that will be finalized by May for USAID. It will be published on Banyan Global’s website.

The interview will take approximately one hour. All information you share with me will be confidential and no personal information will be disclosed in any setting. Participation in this interview is voluntary; if you would like to stop the interview at any time, please let us know. Please feel free to give as much information as you can in response to the questions, and please ask me for clarification if you don’t understand a question. Do you have any questions about this interview?

If you wouldn’t mind, my colleague will be taking notes to capture the highlights of our conversation to use in our analysis. Would that be alright?

1. Please tell us how your work addresses gender equality and women’s empowerment. What are the key strategies and actions (specific/non-specific) that the program puts in place to support advances or overcome potential constraints for ensuring active participation and empowerment of women, girls, men, and boys?
2. Does your office or organization have any policy documents or other guidance related to gender and women’s empowerment? If so, what documents? (Ask for copies)
3. In your experience working on this project (or in another capacity), what are the main gender equality and women’s empowerment constraints? Can you provide examples?
4. In this project, how do women and men participate? What do they do? What are the key issues and constraints that limit or impede equal participation and access to program activities and benefits? How do other conditions, such as age, ethnicity, disability, and location (urban/rural), affect those gaps and constraints? Can you provide concrete examples?
5. What key issues are important to know to prioritize women’s economic empowerment in the upcoming CDCS?
6. How do you think your project and work has contributed to addressing challenges and to successes related to gender equality and women’s empowerment?
7. Did the project conduct a gender analysis? If yes, when? Are there any good practices that you want to cite about the analysis? What were some of the challenges in conducting the analysis?
8. Are you aware of the existence of gender-based violence in the context where the program takes place? Does it affect the participation and access to benefits for women, girls, men, and boys in the program?
9. In your experience working on this project (or in another capacity), what are the most-important successes the program has produced (or is producing) in reducing gender gaps and constraints and promoting women’s participation and empowerment? Can you provide examples?

10. Can you provide recommendations about what work in your sector should be done in the future related to gender equality and women's empowerment? If you could redesign the project or create a new one today, what recommendations do you have for increasing gender impact (reducing gender gaps and promoting female empowerment)?
11. Reminder to ask about crosscutting themes: if they should be addressed relating to gender and, if so, how? (Gender-based violence prevention and response, digital development, decentralization, youth, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities)
12. At the strategic level, what do you think that USAID should prioritize regarding gender?
13. Is there anything else you want to add or ask about that we didn't discuss in the interview?

Ic. INTERVIEW GUIDE—GOVERNMENT OF SERBIA (national and local) *(to be adapted based on sector and composition of data-collection event participants)*

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Name(s) of interviewee(s) | |
| Title(s) | |
| Institution/organization | |
| Sex(es) | |
| Date of interview | |
| Names of interviewers | |

INTRODUCTION:

Thank you very much for setting aside time to talk with me today.

We are conducting a gender analysis to inform the USAID/Serbia 2021–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy. This analysis focuses on identifying key gender-related trends that advance or exacerbate key outcomes for women, men, girls, and boys in Serbia as well as identifying successful strategies, approaches, and lessons learned that the program can use to strengthen its activities.

For this analysis, we are conducting interviews and focus group discussions with USAID staff, implementing partners, project participants, and stakeholders. Findings from all interviews and focus group discussions will contribute to a report that will be finalized by May for USAID. It will be published on Banyan Global's website.

The interview will take approximately one hour. All information you share with me will be confidential and no personal information will be disclosed in any setting. Participation in this interview is voluntary; if you would like to stop the interview at any time, please let us know. Please feel free to give as much information as you can in response to the questions, and please ask me for clarification if you don't understand a question. Do you have any questions about this interview?

If you wouldn't mind, my colleague will be taking notes to capture the highlights of our conversation to use in our analysis. Would that be alright?

1. Does your ministry or office have any policy documents or other guidance related to gender and women's empowerment? If so, what documents (ask for copies)? Are there any issues

related to gender equality and female empowerment for which you would like to have guidance? If so, what kinds of issues?

2. Please tell me briefly about your work and how it relates to gender equality and female empowerment. In your view, what are the most-important issues related to gender and female empowerment?
3. Thinking about your work in this ministry, office, or sector over the past 5-10 years, what progress do you think has been made in relation to gender equality and female empowerment? Can you provide examples of successes? In your opinion, what were the main reasons for these successes?
4. In your view, what are the main challenges in your work, sector, ministry, or office to working on gender equality and women's empowerment?
5. In what ways has USAID supported your work in relation to gender and female empowerment? In your opinion, what kind of support would be most useful for USAID to provide in the future?
6. Thinking about the future of work in your ministry, sector, or office, what recommendations do you have for changes in policies or approach related to gender equality and female empowerment?
7. Reminder to ask about crosscutting themes: if they should be addressed relating to gender, and, if so, how? (Gender-based violence prevention and response; digital development, decentralization, youth, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities)
8. Is there anything else you want to add or ask about that we didn't discuss in the interview?

Id. INTERVIEW GUIDE—CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, EXPERTS, AND ASSOCIATIONS *(to be adapted based on sector and composition of data-collection event participants)*

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Name(s) of interviewee(s) | |
| Title(s) | |
| Institution/organization | |
| Sex(es) | |
| Date of interview | |
| Names of interviewers | |

INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much for setting aside time to talk with me today.

We are conducting a gender analysis to inform the USAID/Serbia 2021–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy. This analysis focuses on identifying key gender-related trends that advance or exacerbate key outcomes for women, men, girls, and boys in Serbia as well as identifying successful strategies, approaches, and lessons learned that the program can use to strengthen USAID/Serbia’s activities.

For this analysis, we are conducting interviews and focus group discussions with USAID staff, implementing partners, project participants, and stakeholders. Findings from all interviews and focus group discussions will contribute to a report that will be finalized by May for USAID. It will be published on Banyan Global’s website.

The interview will take approximately one hour. All information you share with me will be confidential and no personal information will be disclosed in any setting. Participation in this interview is voluntary; if you would like to stop the interview at any time, please let us know. Please feel free to give as much information as you can in response to the questions, and please ask me for clarification if you don’t understand a question. Do you have any questions about this interview?

If you wouldn’t mind, my colleague will be taking notes to capture the highlights of our conversation to use in our analysis. Would that be alright?

1. In your view, what are the main gender equality and female empowerment issues for your community or region?
2. What have been some of the biggest challenges for your community in advancing gender equality and female empowerment in recent years? What situations or factors have contributed to these challenges?
3. What have been some of the successes for your organization or community in recent years when it comes to gender equality and female empowerment? What made them successful?
4. What progress do you want to see in the future? What is your dream for your community?
5. Reminder to ask about crosscutting themes: if they should be addressed relating to gender, and, if so, how? (Gender-based violence prevention and response, digital development, decentralization, youth, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities)
6. What should donors, such as USAID, do to help your community to address gender equality and female empowerment?
7. What do you think USAID should prioritize in this sector to reduce gender gaps and promote female empowerment?
8. Is there anything else you want to add or ask about that we didn’t discuss in the interview?

2a. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE—USAID PROJECT BENEFICIARIES *(to be adapted based on sector and composition of data-collection event participants)*

INTRODUCTION

Welcome. My name is [name of interviewer]. I would like to thank you for your willingness to speak with us today. I would also like to introduce you to our evaluation team [names].

We are conducting a gender analysis to inform the USAID/Serbia 2021–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy. This analysis focuses on identifying key gender-related trends that advance or exacerbate key outcomes for women, men, girls, and boys in Serbia as well as identifying successful

strategies, approaches, and lessons learned that the program can use to strengthen USAID/Serbia's activities.

For this analysis, we are conducting interviews and focus group discussions with USAID staff, implementing partners, project participants, and stakeholders. Findings from all interviews and focus group discussions will contribute to a report that will be finalized by May for USAID. It will be published on Banyan Global's website.

The discussion will take approximately one hour. All information you share with me will be confidential and no personal information will be disclosed in any setting. Participation is voluntary; if you would like to stop at any time, please let us know. Please feel free to give as much information as you can in response to the questions, and please ask me for clarification if you don't understand a question. Do you have any questions about this interview?

If you wouldn't mind, my colleague will be taking notes to capture the highlights of our conversation to use in our analysis. Would that be alright?

1. In your view, what are the main gender equality and female empowerment issues for your community?
2. What have been some of the biggest challenges for your community in advancing gender equality and female empowerment in recent years? What situations or factors have contributed to these challenges?
3. What have been some of the successes for your community in recent years when it comes to gender equality and female empowerment? What made them successful?
4. What progress do you want to see in the future? What is your dream for your community?
5. Have you faced any problems in being able to participate in the project's activities? If yes, are they from your family, the community, or the program itself? What are the reasons that limit or prevent your ability to participate?
6. In your opinion, do you think the project takes into account the specific needs of women and men? How? What is missing?
7. Did you or members of your community or organization participate in the design of the project?
8. In general, what are the main problems that women (age, rurality, ethnicity, disability) face to get ahead, get their families ahead, and be more successful? Is support available to address these issues? If so, what?
9. Reminder to ask about crosscutting themes: if they should be addressed relating to gender, and, if so, how? (Gender-based violence prevention and response, digital development, decentralization, youth, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities)
10. Do you have any recommendations about how the project could be improved so that more women, men, and a more diverse population could participate to improve their and their families' lives or make the program more impactful?
11. Is there anything else you want to add or ask about that we didn't discuss in the discussion today?

Additional Women's Economic Empowerment Questions to Consider for All Stakeholders:

1. What structural barriers exist for women advancing in economic empowerment?
2. What barriers exist to women's access to employment within the targeted sector?

3. What are the differences, if any, in the ways that women and men access the productive inputs necessary for enterprise growth and entrepreneurship?
4. Do socially acceptable practices restrict women's access to property ownership?
5. To what extent have the efforts of labor unions and women's groups reduced gender-related pay disparities?
6. How do social and economic networks factor into women's access to credit, for example by promoting access to information and facilitating access to markets?
7. Do initiatives exist to increase women's leadership and participation in networks, cooperatives, or business associations? If so, how have or can these initiatives affect women's economic empowerment?
8. Do women play key roles in decision-making in networks, cooperatives, and business associations?
9. What key issues have women's business associations prioritized over the past five years?
10. What stereotypes affect women's abilities to take on leadership positions at various levels in different sectors?

ANNEX F: LIST OF KEY INTERVIEWEES

Disclaimer: In cases where an individual or organization could be at legal, social, or physical risk because of their participation in this research, names, dates, and contact information have been redacted or omitted. This safeguard will protect participants, ensure quality data collection, and adhere to do no harm and ethical data collection protocols and standards. For all interviewees, free and prior informed consent was obtained before the interview.

| # | Organization | Name | Position Title |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| USAID | | | |
| 1 | USAID | Mike De La Rosa | Mission Director |
| 2 | USAID | Ivan Vukojevic | Deputy Director, Program Strategy and Coordination Office |
| 3 | USAID | Todd Andrews | Director, Program Strategy and Coordination Office |
| 4 | USAID | Djordje Boljanovic | Project Management Specialist |
| 5 | USAID | Greg Olson | Deputy Office Director ODEG |
| 6 | USAID | Marko Pjevic | Office of Democratic and Economic Growth (ODEG) |
| 7 | USAID | Sinisa Canjo | ODEG |
| 8 | USAID | Aleksandra Krzic | COR/AOR ODEG |
| 9 | USAID | Shanlem Pinchitti | ODEG Director |
| 10 | USAID | Jovana Mehandzic Durdjic | ODEG COR/AOR |
| 11 | USAID | Jelena Mihajlovic | Development Program Specialist |
| 12 | USAID | Jelena Avramovic | Project Management Specialist - Civil Society |
| Implementing Partners | | | |
| 13 | Cardno Emerging Markets | Dragana Stanojevic | Deputy Chief of Party |
| 14 | Cardno Emerging Markets | Mila Pejic | Monitoring and Evaluation Learning Specialist |
| 15 | Cardno Emerging Markets | Jasmina Debeljak | Deputy Chief of Party |
| 16 | Cardno Emerging Markets | Svetlana Kijevcanin | Workforce Development Team Leader |
| 17 | CEPPS (NDI, IRI, IFES) | Wim Borremans | Director NDI |
| 18 | CEPPS (NDI, IRI, IFES) | Ana Jevremovic | Program Associate IRI |
| 19 | CEPPS (NDI, IRI, IFES) | Biljana Ljubic | Senior Program Officer IRI |
| 20 | Impact HUB | Nenad Moslavac | CEO |
| 21 | Impact HUB | Danijela Jovic | Director of Programs |
| 22 | CRTA | Vukosava Crnjanski | Director |
| 23 | CRTA | Radovan Kupres | Creative Director |
| 24 | CRTA | Nadja Micic | Project Coordinator |
| 25 | IREX | Evan Tracz | COP |
| 26 | IREX | Maja Radicanin | Director of OPC |
| 27 | IREX | Marija Breberina | Executive Office Coordinator |
| 28 | Coordination Body for Gender Equality | Ljiljana Loncar | Gender Advisor |
| 29 | Checci | Ana Martinovic | Deputy Chief of Party |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| 30 | Checci | Irena Posin | Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Reporting Specialist |
| 31 | CEPRIS | Sofija Mandic | Legal expert |
| 32 | NALED | Aleksandra Sekulovic | Public-Private Dialogue Adviser |
| 33 | NALED | Jelena Bojovic | Policy Director |
| 34 | NALED | Ana Ilic | Good Governance Director |
| 35 | Pro Credit bank | Nenad Tintor | Partner Relationship Specialist |
| 36 | Pro Credit bank | Dijana Pateros | HR Department Senior Specialist |
| 37 | Development Professionals Inc. (DPI) | Marc Lassman | Chief of Party |
| 38 | Development Professionals Inc. (DPI) | Dragana Lukic | Deputy Chief of Party |
| 39 | Development Professionals Inc. (DPI) | Sonja Prostran | Senior Specialist for Support to the State Attorney's Office |
| 40 | OSCE Mission in Serbia | Zorana Antonijevic | Gender Focal Point |
| 41 | OSCE Mission in Serbia | Gordana Jankovic | Head of Media Department |
| 42 | OSCE Novi Pazar | Micaela Thurman | Project Manager |
| 43 | OSCE Novi Pazar | Almir Vucelj | Project Assistant |
| 44 | OSCE Novi Pazar | Vladan Atanackovic | Project Assistant |
| 45 | Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation | Aleksandra Kecojevic | Project Manager |
| 46 | Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation | Maja Vranic | Project Manager |
| 47 | Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation | Ana Koeshall | Director |
| 48 | NCD | Danijel Dasic | Program Advisor |
| 49 | NCD | Danijela Radosevic | Program Manager |
| Key Stakeholders | | | |
| 50 | Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities | Natasa Okilj | Advisor for Gender Equality and Antidiscrimination |
| 51 | UN Women | Milana Rikanovic | Head of Office |
| 52 | Trag Foundation | Biljana Dakic Djordjevic | Executive Director |
| 53 | Trag Foundation | Natalija Simovic | Director Grantmaking Program |
| 54 | EU Delegation | Ana Milenic | Gender Focal Point |
| 55 | Jug press, Leskovac | Ljiljana Stojanovic | Editor |
| 56 | PDV political party Presevo | Ardita Sinani | Head of the PDV Party, former Mayor of Presevo |
| 57 | PDV political party Presevo | Flutra Huseni | Member of the party and candidate for future elections |
| 58 | PDV political party Presevo | Fetanete Mehmedi | Member of the Presevo Local Government and MP |
| 59 | Gender Equality Council, Presevo | Shpetime Hasani | Head of GE Council of Presevo |
| 60 | Gender Equality Council, Presevo | Nuraje Namuti | Member of GE Council |
| 61 | Gender Equality Council, Presevo | Ganimete Ismaili | Member of GE Council |
| 62 | Municipal Council of Bujanovac | Shaip Kamberi | Mayor of Bujanovac municipality |
| 63 | Municipal Council of Bujanovac | Fazila Azemovic | Head of Office for Economic Development |
| 64 | Anti-corruption body Novi Pazar | Esma Lotinac | Member |
| 65 | Iz Kruga Vojvodina | Svetlana Timotic | Director and Deputy Director |
| 66 | Iz Kruga Vojvodina | Veronika Mitro | |
| 67 | Commissioner for the Protection of Equality | Emila Spasojevic | Chief of the Department |
| 68 | Befem | Jelena Visnjic | Program Director |
| 69 | Women's Platform for Development | Sanja Nikolin | Founder |

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| 70 | Women's Platform for Development | Aleksandra Vladislavljevic | Founder |
| 71 | SEDA - Sandzak Development Agency | Samir Kacapor | Director |
| 72 | SEDA - Sandzak Development Agency | Krusevljanin Džamila | Manager of MSE |
| 73 | City Council of Novi Pazar | Mirsad Jusufovic | Member of City Council |
| 74 | City Council of Novi Pazar | Hana Jalikoja | Head of Department for Information |
| 75 | Gender Equality Council, Novi Pazar | Dzenana Suljovic | Member of the Council |
| 76 | Youth Office Novi Pazar | Džemaludin Pačinac | Head of the Council |
| 77 | Court Novi Pazar | Ana Pecinovic | President of the Court |
| 78 | Damad | Zibija Sarenkapic | Executive Director |
| 79 | Forum 10, Novi Pazar | Fahrudin Kladnicanin | Director |
| 80 | Sandzak Committee for Human Rights, Novi Pazar | Semiha Kacar | Director |
| 81 | Urban In | Sead Biberovic | Executive Director |
| 82 | Impuls, Tutin | Dženeta Agovic | Director |
| 83 | Roma Center for Democratization, Vranje | Ivana Stosic | Board Director |
| 84 | ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for the Western Balkans and Turkey | Jelena Vasiljevic | Capacity Development Manager |
| 85 | Ethno Network – Association of Rural Women | Niksic Raza | Head of Association |
| 86 | Ethno Network – Association of Rural Women | Niksic Hajrija | Member |
| 87 | Ethno Network – Association of Rural Women | Kimeta Hamzagic | Member |
| 88 | Ethno Network – Association of Rural Women | Omarovic Ismeta | Member |
| 89 | Ethno Network – Association of Rural Women | Avdovic Ramiza | Member |
| 90 | Women entrepreneurs, Novi Pazar | Ajla Ugljanin | Owner |
| 91 | Women entrepreneurs, Novi Pazar | Elmedina Cosovic | Owner |
| 92 | Women entrepreneurs, Novi Pazar | Munevera Tahirovic | Owner |
| 93 | Women entrepreneurs, Novi Sad | Tanja Trobic | Owner |
| 94 | Roma women, Vranje | Samanta Pavlovic | Activist |
| 95 | Roma women, Vranje | Mileva Romcic | Activist |
| 96 | The Future | Gezim | Activist |
| 97 | The Future | Tubu | Activist |
| 98 | Ditura | Blerim | Coordinator |
| 99 | Ditura | Laura | Activist |
| 100 | Ditura | Blenda | Activist |
| 101 | Ditura | Bleona | Activist |
| 102 | Ditura | Besa | Activist |
| 103 | Beyond | Bujar | Activist |
| 104 | Beyond | Bukurije | Coordinator |
| 105 | Center for the Advancement of Youth and Women | Nermine Aliji Ademi | Director |
| 106 | Bujanovacke portal | Nikola Lazic | Editor |
| 107 | Femsat info | Almedina | Director |
| 108 | Beyond | Jelena Randjelovic | Activist |
| 109 | Be Active 16 | Hedon | Director |
| 110 | Inventa | Sadri | Activist |
| 111 | Vizion | Lulzim | Activist |

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| 112 | RTV Presevo | Venera | Activist |
| 113 | Youth for Innovation | Zyrije | Director |
| 114 | Department of Inclusion | Shendrita Felzelullahi | Activist |
| 115 | Department of Inclusion | Shelzen Nimani | Activist |
| 116 | Be Active I6 | Zeqiroa Ahmedi | Activist |
| 117 | Youth Office Presevo | Teuta | Member |
| 118 | Livrit | Avet Velim | representative |
| 119 | Youth Office Presevo | Blesima Berisha | Activist |
| 120 | Search for Your Rights | Abduitam Bajrami | Director |
| 121 | Center for Advocacy C.A.D.D. | Gani Rashiti | Director |
| 122 | Inventa | Shefki Jonuzi | Director |
| 123 | Youth Office Presevo | Altim Borigi | Head of the Youth Office |
| 124 | Be Active I6 | Valon Arifi | Director |
| 125 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Damir Bisevac | Activist |
| 126 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Ilma Suljevic | Activist |
| 127 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 1 | Secondary School Student |
| 128 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 2 | Secondary School Student |
| 129 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 3 | Secondary School Student |
| 130 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 4 | Secondary School Student |
| 131 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 5 | Secondary School Student |
| 132 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 6 | Secondary School Student |
| 133 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 7 | Secondary School Student |
| 134 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 8 | Secondary School Student |
| 135 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 9 | Secondary School Student |
| 136 | Focus group with Youth Novi Pazar | Youth 10 | Secondary School Student |