Republic of Serbia saw the beginning of implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality (2016-2020) and its Action Plan (2016-2018), while Strategy to end violence against women and girls has been initiated. Development of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (UNSCR 1325) for the period 2016-2020 is underway. The process of making a legislative framework for gender equality continued. The Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence will enter into force on June 1, 2017. The Law brings changes into the existing practices of institutional response to violence. It envisions urgent measures of removing the perpetrator from the family and prohibiting the perpetrator from approaching the victim. It also stipulates professional and disciplinary liability for officials who fail to act in accordance with the law.

The Serbian Parliament adopted changes to the Criminal Code introducing new criminal offences of domestic violence and tougher penalties.

Draft Law on Gender Equality is in final phase of preparation. Coordination Body for Gender Equality is envisioned by the Law on Gender Equality. The Law on Gender Equality will enter the parliamentary procedure in the 3rd quarter of 2017.

The Coordination Body for Gender Equality remains a key national partner for gender equality, with emphasis that in the upcoming period other state partners will be included in the implementation of gender mainstreaming initiatives and activities. The Coordination Body for Gender Equality plans establishment of the Gender Equality Office.

Drafting the new Law on Cadaster in the cadastre is underway. It is supposed to allow both spouses as property owners in the cadastre and thus contribute to greater equality of women and men in the field of property rights.

May 18 has been officially declared as the Remembrance Day for Murdered Women Victims of Violence following the initiative of women NGOs who collected 3,000 signatures.
GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING (GRB)

In close cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, the Coordination Body on Gender Equality, the Finance Secretariat and Secretariat for Demography, Social Policy and Gender Equality of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, UN Women in Serbia has continued to support introduction of gender responsive budgeting and enhancing monitoring of spending for gender equality through building capacities of women parliamentarians in the Provincial Government and women’s CSOs and gender experts. In total, 27 out of 43 parliamentarians in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and 13 gender experts passed training in GRB and increased their knowledge on GRB requirements as stipulated in the Law on Budget System, methodologies for GRB introduction, and potential role of MPs and gender experts in supporting the GRB process.

Minister of Finance and the Provincial Secretary of Finance issued the Annual Plan for GRB Introduction in March 2017, stipulating the obligations of budget users in further enhancing the GRB introduction. In 2017, 35 national budget users and 14 provincial budget users are to introduce gender perspective in their 2018 budgets.

COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

UN Women had preparatory meetings for the regional programme “Implementing norms, changing minds” supported by European Commission and agreed on planned interventions in Serbia. The three-year Programme “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds” aims at ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women, with a focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The kick-off event is due in late May.

In Serbia, UN Women has also been following the implementation of five different projects funded by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. These include: ASTRA – Anti trafficking network, Autonomous Women’s Center (AWC), Mental Disability Rights Initiative MDRI, Association of Roma, Novi Becej and Provincial Secretariat for Health, Novi Sad. All these projects vary from aiming to increase the safety and support to different groups of women victims of family violence and human trafficking to introducing feminist change of the educational system, tackling arranged and forced marriages of Roma girls and assisting stronger institutional response to gender based violence in Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Two new projects have been approved by the UN Trust Fund: Center for Girls and Good Garden of B92 Fund.

SDG 5 - ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Since monitoring and reporting on SDG achievements is one of the key obligations and indicator of commitment of countries across the world, UN Women engaged in assessing the availability of data for monitoring of achievements of Sustainable Development Goal 5 in Serbia - Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls.

The Assessment, which was completed in March, provides an overview of the legal framework, policies and practices governing the production of gender statistics relevant for monitoring and reporting on SDG 5; evaluates the availability and accessibility of data for monitoring progress on SDG 5 and several other SDG targets in line with UN methodology and indicators; identifies data sources and adequacy of data for Serbia monitoring and reporting on SDG 5; and recommends improvements to fill gaps in data production and use and to enable systematic monitoring of progress in Serbia in achieving SDG 5 and other selected SDG targets.
HIGHLIGHTS OF UN WORK IN SERBIA

In addition, the project is supporting the Coordination Plan for Gender Equality (NAP) 2016-2018. The overall objective with such meetings is to create a basis for the knowledge hub on gender mainstreaming in Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and to initiate the practice of annual experts meeting among IPA programming officers and IPA project coordinators in the Balkans.

GOVERNANCE

With the support of the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), UN Women continued to support strengthening the institutional framework for gender equality through the Strengthening the Coordination Body for Gender Equality in the Republic of Serbia Project. This includes supporting the national gender equality mechanism to efficiently and effectively lead and monitor the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAP) 2016-2018. In addition, the project is supporting the Coordination Body for Gender Equality to engage in a dialogue with key stakeholders, including women's organisations.

On November 28, UN Women organised in Arandjelovac the 2nd Annual Meeting on gender mainstreaming in the processes of programming resources and implementation of actions in the instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) in Serbia. The Meeting gathered IPA programming officers and IPA project implementation officers as well as representatives of the Serbian European Integration Office (SEI) and the Coordination Body for Gender Equality. The main idea was to support development of gender sensitive sectoral fiches, including specific commitments on gender equality and women’s rights, as a precondition for successful integration of gender perspectives into IPA programming process and project proposals. The overall objective with such meetings is to create a basis for the knowledge hub on gender mainstreaming in Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and to initiate the practice of annual experts meeting among IPA Programming professionals in the Balkans.

UN Women has been supporting women’s CSOs in preparing an alternative CEDAW report on the status of rural women, in consultation with women’s organizations and wide range of stakeholders. The report, which has been drafted, is focused on identifying critical issues and challenges faced by rural women, and in accordance with the “Harmonized guidelines on reporting on the International human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents” [HRI/MC/2006/3 and Corr.1].

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

A National Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) expired in 2015 and the new Action Plan for the period 2016-2020 has been developed. UN Women has been discussing with the Ministry of Defense, the costing of the National Action plan 1325 through technical assistance and the advisory support in the specific areas.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Women and girls with disabilities frequently encounter a myriad of physical and social obstacles making them the victims of two-fold discrimination: as women and as persons with disabilities. In a bid to take into account and to address their concerns, Commissioner for Protection of Equality, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Serbia and UN Women organised a round table on the occasion the International Day of Persons With Disabilities on December 3. The round table concluded that women and girls with disabilities are often invisible in public life, face obstacles in education, in health and social care; they are poorer and more unemployed than men with disabilities and are often victims of psychological, physical, sexual and all other forms of violence.

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

Together with OHCHR, OSCE Mission to Serbia and Human Rights House in Belgrade, UN Women organised on April 27 a seminar on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) as a unique process which involves a periodic review of the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States, Serbia included. UN Women contributed to the discussion with gender aspect on reporting for UPR.

With the support of the European Union and Swiss Government, and through European PROGRES Programme, UN Women and UNOPS continued strengthening the role of women in decision-making processes at a local level. This comprised empowerment of women and men councilors by increasing their knowledge on gender equality and development of skills necessary for advocating and promoting gender equality at local level in the local assemblies, parliamentary debates and with the local authorities.

A total of 10 women councilors` networks were established in ten municipalities (Aleksinac, Babusnica, Brus, Knjazevac, Medvedja, Merosina, Priboj, Prijepolje, Svriljig, Surculica), ten annual plans adopted and over 10 initiatives realised. As many as 97 women councilors have become active members of women’s councilors networks. This came after a series of trainings, meetings, conversations with local women in more than 20 villages and the like. As a result, 25 recommendations for local policies and programmes have been developed.

RURAL WOMEN

GENDER RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE

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WOMEN’S HEALTH

UNFPA together with Centre for Women’s Health Promotion supported the second Training for Health Care Providers on GBV using methodology developed within UNFPA/WAVE/CWHP Resource Package Health Sector Response to GBV. The objective of it was to advance the knowledge and capacities of healthcare professionals in preventing gender-based violence and providing support and care to survivors. Twenty five participants from Sumadija region, most notably from Local Health Center Kragujevac, Local Health Center Arandjelovac, Local Health Center Lapovo, Local Health Center Knik, Institute for Health Protection of Employees- ZASTAVA Kragujevac, and Institute for Emergency Care Kragujevac, demonstrated high motivation and satisfaction working on GBV issue and participated very actively and showed great interest for further and advanced trainings in the issue.

Advocacy for policy and legislation framework regarding SRH&RIGHTS and family planning in Serbia resulted in the development of the National Program for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, first such document developed in Serbia. Document was drafted in 2016 by the expert working group endorsed by MoH. Document defines SRHR priorities for the following period and sets out action plan for its implementation. It is expected that document will be officially adopted in 2017.

Additionally, National Clinical Guidance for Modern Contraceptive Provision and Action plan in relation to family planning and contraception, according to European action plan for human rights-based sexual and reproductive health 2017–2021, as a part of sexual and reproductive health for Serbia for 2016/2017, were developed and discussed by the expert working group.

Development and adoption of national standardized guidelines and/or training materials: Basic course in Family Planning and Modern Contraception to meet the professional needs of general practitioners in Serbia was developed and accredited with 10 points CME. First training took place in November 2016 and it was attended by 19 doctors from different parts of the country namely Novi Pazar, Raska, Nis, Kragujevac, Novi Sad and Belgrade. Roll out National Training on Guidelines [basic course] in Serbia, according to the ToT Course Agenda took place in Nis, Belgrade and Novi Pazar. The education was held according to previously established agenda of the basic course that was developed by expert team of the Republic Family Planning Centre, Institute for Mother and Child Health Care of Serbia. Courses were attended by 36 medical doctors from Southern Serbia, Novi Pazar, Raska, Tutin, Sjenica, Belgrade, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar, Novi Sad, Nis, in order to have wider reach and to involve also public health institutions from all over the country. The general view of participants cited in evaluation forms, was that they would appreciate more similar training courses in the future.

WORKING WITH MEN AND BOYS IN SERBIA

UNFPA worked with men and boys on encouraging them to abandon harmful stereotypes, through trainings and public actions. In partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Center E8, UNFPA supported local “Be a man” clubs in five cities: Nis, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Krusevac and Cacak. Some of the clubs are now empowered and some of it are brand new. Trainings for young men in the five cities went very well with great interest from the local young men who actively participated in workshops full of interactive activities, and they especially expressed satisfaction with role play activities.

Public event was co-organized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Coordination Body for Gender Equality, UNFPA Serbia CO, Center E8 and Local Youth Office in Cacak.

OLDER WOMEN

Knowledge about the needs of older people in rural areas as well as the accessibility of medical, social and other public services including transportation, to the older people of rural areas was assessed in the project done to the concept of activism, mechanisms and methods of activism. Events were attended by 54 women and 7 girls - 49 women from Afghanistan, 4 women from Iran, 1 woman from Russia, as well as 2 girls from Syria, 4 from Ghana and 1 from Cameroon, all of whom prepared very powerful messages for the external audiences.
EMERGENCIES

The unprecedented flow of refugees and migrants into Europe has exposed the high level of suffering and violence experienced by people fleeing conflict, persecution and poverty. This situation verged on the unbearable especially for women and young girls. Female refugees and migrants frequently face specific challenges, particularly in maternal, newborn and child health, sexual and reproductive health, and violence. On their way toward countries of destination, women are facing various forms of violence, discrimination and stigmatization caused by prejudices based on their religion, nationality, and status. They are more exposed to risks related to sexual, physical, psychological, and emotional abuse and suffering consequences.

As part of humanitarian response, UNFPA supported Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs to develop Standard Operation Procedures of the Republic of Serbia for Prevention and Protection of Refugees and Migrants from Gender Based Violence. SOPs are modeled against Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action and SOPs developed in FYRoM. Development process included wide consultations with line Ministries and other government bodies, IOs and CSOs which are providing assistance in the field.

Capacity building of front line workers and service providers on SRH and GBV working directly with refugees and migrants was done through specialized trainings, which took place in Subotica, Sremksa Mitrovica, Vranje, Sid and Presevo with the total of 215 participants. It was an opportunity for total of health and non-health workers to gain technical knowledge, jointly express their concerns and ideas how to improve direct assistance. In addition, GBV mentorship programme for service providers was provided for targeted professionals.

Direct work with survivors of gender-based violence within the refugee populations was achieved through support to mobile teams and cultural mediators in 21 locations Belgrade (Maternal Home, AC Krnjaca, 4 Shelter of NGO Atina, Reintegration Center of NGO Atina, 2 parks), Subotica (RAP Subotica, Horgos, Kelebija), Sid (Adasevci, Principovac, Reintegration Center of NGO Atina, 2 parks), Presevo, Tutin and Bogovadja. Provision of support and empowerment of women and girls, as the most vulnerable category of asylum seekers, was carried out in the form of educational, empowerment workshops in the Asylum Center Krnjaca and Reintegration Center of NGO Atina. 1,276 women, girls and young boys participated in the educational, empowerment workshops.

As sexual and reproductive services are not available in systematic manner and at the beginning were not positioned as prior support, UNFPA in cooperation with Ministry of Health was able to position sexual and reproductive health among prior services within protection of refugees/migration. Within this activity 359 refugee/migrants women in 2016, and 423 refugee/migrants women in 2017 were supported with culturally sensitive and appropriate SRH and GBV services through mobile clinics. Over 13,300 thousand condoms have been distributed since 2016, in dispensers available in the sanitary blocks and in the medical areas where available. Along with preservatives, hygienic kits were also distributed to increase the overall well being of migrant/refugees women and young girls. The distributes was undertaken in eleven location (Sid, Adasevci, Principovac, Presevo, Bujanovac, Krnjaca, Sjenica, Tutin, Subotica, Kelebija, Horgos). In total, 1,282 women and girls received 19,051 dignity items in the month of November and December 2016.

OHCHR has been supporting Roma women and Roma youth networks Serbia in understanding the review processes of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and a training and workshop has been scheduled for June 8. CERD review of Serbia is scheduled for the 2nd half of 2017. Gender-focused civil society partners are following up by providing inputs to CERD for the review.
**GENDER AND SMALL ARMS IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

SEESAC released the "Gender and SALW in South East Europe" study and accompanying practical toolkit, as well as an infographic, providing fresh insights into the numerous ways in which gender and SALW-related behaviors and practices intersect.

The study documents the gender differentiation of specific risks that women and men face in respect to small arms and light weapons (SALW) in South East Europe (SEE). The analysis of the data collected in cooperation with SALW commissions and relevant institutions in SEE presented in this report shows that:

- Men make up an overwhelming majority of firearm owners – more than 95 per cent. Men’s dominance in acquiring firearms is persistent.

- The use of firearms in homicide is widespread but varies greatly across the region.

- Men are responsible for more than 97 per cent of firearm-related incidents, women for less than three per cent.

- Men account for the vast majority of victims of firearm-related incidents (more than 80%), but are more often perpetrators than victims. Women are several times more often victims than perpetrators.

- Murder by intimate partner is the most common form of female homicide in SEE (ranging between 41 per cent and 100 per cent), while it comprises only a minor share in the total number of male homicides.

- The high share of women murdered with firearms (from 33% to 100%) reflects the high lethality of firearms in the context of domestic violence.

- Women are still underrepresented in SALW control policy making. They account for 14-29 per cent of members of SALW commissions, while the share of men is between 76 and 86 per cent.

By building on this data and taking a tailor-made approach to policy analysis, the study reveals gaps in the prevailing legislative policy response in SEE which indicate that the gender concerns outlined above go mostly unnoticed and are inadequately addressed. The study underlines the necessity of the integration of the gender perspective into SALW legislative and policy frameworks and demonstrates the practical benefits of mainstreaming gender in policy response delivery. In order to achieve this, a practical toolkit aiming to facilitate the development of innovative solutions to the challenges at hand is accompanying the study.

**BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE - REPORT WEAPONS, STOP VIOLENCE**

"Before it’s too late" campaign was launched in November 2016, by the Gender Equality Coordination Body of the Government of Republic of Serbia, European Union and UNDP SEESAC to raise the awareness on the dangers of misuse of firearms, especially in the context of domestic and intimate partner violence.

The widespread presence of firearms in households in Serbia is closely interrelated to its growing misuse for domestic and gender-based violence. Concerning the significant possession of both legal and illegal firearms, combined with the numbers of officially recorded fatal incidents committed with the use of firearms in previous years - there is visible connection between the presence of guns and their misuse in domestic violence, affecting safety of women, families and the community, as it was case in a massacre in Zitiste in July, 2016. The campaign aimed to sensitize the general public on the risks that firearms, particularly illegal ones, pose in domestic contexts.

The campaign used leaflets, posters, billboards, radio jingle, TV spot and social media. Crucial information was shared via billboards, boards, radio jingle, TV spot and social media. The campaign used leaflets, posters, billboards, radio jingle, TV spot and social media. Crucial information was shared via billboards, boards, radio jingle, TV spot and social media.

**GENENDER TRAINING OF TRAINERS COURSE FOR AFRICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL**

UNDP SEESAC, together with the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM) and the Peacekeeping Training Centre of the Serbian Armed Forces organized a “Gender Training of Trainers” (GToT) course from 7-15 December 2016 for fifteen [15] participants of Armed Forces from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Rwanda. The course was delivered by gender trainers from the Ministries of Defense and Armed Forces in BiH, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with support from NCGM and UNDP.

The aim of the course was to build upon results achieved within UNDP’s Gender Equality in the Military in the Western Balkans project, and utilize the capacities developed to foster south south cooperation. The course was an opportunity for the participants to get acquainted with the good practices observed in advancing gender equality in the military in the Western Balkans and to create networks with the existing military ender trainers in BiH, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The GToT prepared instructors and trainers to effectively plan, conduct, and evaluate education and training for troops, units, staff and officers on the gender perspective in military operations. It supported the participants in developing skills to integrate a gender perspective into military training and education in their respective countries.
## Highlights of UN Work in Serbia

### Gender and SALW in South East Europe

**MEN MAKE UP MORE THAN 95% OF FIREARM OWNERS IN SEE.**

- Women less than 5%

**Firearms are often the weapon of choice in homicides.**

- **66% ALB**
- **30% BIH**
- **38% MKD**
- **70% MNE**
- **42% SRB**

*Homicides committed with firearms:

- **Over 97% of firearm-related incidents are committed by men.**
- **Less than 3% by women.**

**Men account for the vast majority of victims in firearm-related incidents.**

**Men are more often perpetrators than victims of firearm-related incidents.**

- **Women are several times more often victims than perpetrators.**

**Women are still underrepresented in SALW control policy making.**

- They account for 14-29% of members of SALW commissions, while the share of men is from 71-86%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Perpetrators</th>
<th>Victims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The high share of women murdered with firearms reflects the high lethality of firearms in domestic violence context.**

- Women more often than men see firearms as a risk or a threat rather than a means to protect themselves and the family.

**Young men are the majority of both victims and perpetrators of firearm-related violence.**

- More than 80%

**The misuse of firearms in the context of domestic violence is seven times more fatal than in a criminal context.**

- Young men aged 15-44

- More than 75%

**Murder by intimate partner is the most common form of female homicides.**

- It comprises only a minor share in the total number of male homicides.

- **Albania:** 6% (murderers) vs. 1% (victims)
- **Kosovo:** 4% (murderers) vs. 1% (victims)
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** 4% (murderers) vs. 2% (victims)
- **Montenegro:** 6% (murderers) vs. 3% (victims)
- **FYR Macedonia:** 4% (murderers) vs. 1% (victims)
- **Serbia:** 6% (murderers) vs. 3% (victims)
In a bid to support effective implementation of the Law on Prevention from Domestic Violence, which will enter into force on June 1, 2017, UNDP established partnership with the Ministry of Justice and developed joint initiative to pilot implementation of provisions of the Law that regulate processing the reported cases of domestic violence through the work of local groups for cooperation and coordination. The pilot included development of the curriculum and training of police, social welfare centers and prosecutors on the new Law, consultative support to local groups for cooperation and coordination in planning measures to protect victims and development of the Rulebook for the work of local groups. In total, 40 professionals (police officers, social welfare workers and prosecutors) from Krusevac, Cicevac, Varvarin, Cacak, Ivanjica, Lucani, Guc, Uzice, Bajina Basta, and Gornji Milanovac that participated in the piloting were trained on the Law on Prevention from Domestic Violence. UNDP was also tasked to develop and pilot bylaws and documents that will regulate and enable effective work of prosecutors, police and social welfare centres in processing reported cases of violence. In addition, UNDP communicated with the Ministry on challenges and developed recommendations for more successful implementation of the Law on Preventing Domestic Violence.

This was all part of a joint UNDP, UNFPA, UNWOMEN and UNICEF project, Integrated Response to Violence against Women and Girls in Serbia II that aims to improve protection and response mechanisms to survivors of violence by enhancing the institutional practices at state, community and individual levels. It focuses on prevention, protection, prosecution, policy and partnership by engaging all relevant sectors and actors including the government, the police, NGOs, social, judicial, health, and education sectors.

Joint actions of UN agencies and Government bodies contribute to solving the problem of domestic violence and violence in partner relations, enhance support to women, girls and their families and create society which does not tolerate violence. The project is implemented with the support of the Government of Sweden.

UNDP supports exchange of good practices between municipalities with the goal to promote and improve provision of protective services to women and children victims of violence. More than 40 police officers, prosecutors, caseworkers from social welfare centers, civil society organizations, local self-governments and health and educational institutions from municipalities of Batocina, Topola, Arandjelovac, Knic, Lapovo and Raca, that do not have developed multi-sectoral cooperation, had a chance to exchange experiences with professionals from Krugujevac and Zrenjanin who have extensive practice of multi-sectoral cooperation. They served as a model for multi-sectoral cooperation in the new Law on Preventing Domestic Violence.

In addition to this, the Program on economic empowerment of women survivors of violence implemented by the Provincial Secretariat for Social Protection, Demography and Gender Equality was also presented to the participants. The program was developed in the previous phase of the project Integrated Response to Violence against Women as an integral part of the provincial Program for Protection of Women from Violence in family and partner relations and other forms of gender based violence in Autonomous Province of Vojvodina for the period from 2015 to 2020. This innovative program for economic empowerment of women survivors of violence has been implemented since 2014 in cooperation with the local social welfare centres as part of the integral support service to women survivors of violence. Since 2014, 33 women have been employed through this program.

Following up the conference, representatives from the local self-government, social welfare center and women’s NGO from Krugujevac who expressed interest to implement the program in their local self-government had an opportunity to learn from the experiences of entrepreneurs who participated in the program as well as to hear the voices of the women who were beneficiaries.

With regards to victims’ protection UNDP supported 8 SOS helpline services operated by women’s NGOs to scale up and extend the service. Grants to support activities of SOS helpline service to women in situations of domestic violence were provided to 8 local women’s NGOs within the project Integrated Response to Violence against Women and Girls in Serbia II. The competition was open to all civil society organizations that provide helpline services to women survivors of violence. The grant competition was announced on the 28th of March 2017 and was open until the 18th of April 2017. 8 out of 16 organizations received a grant. In the selection of projects to be supported, UNDP’s focused on the extension of the service, ensuring diversity in terms of geographical location enhancing the availability of the service to women from vulnerable groups, including organizations working with Roma women, as well as women with disabilities.
WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

“Environmental protection and women in Serbia” national conference was organized in anticipation of this year’s Women’s Day (March 8). Key topics discussed at the conference were women’s roles in the environmental protection, their skills and knowledge used to tackle the environmental challenges, the importance of women associations within the decision-making process and the environmental impact on women’s health. Karla Robin Hershey, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Serbia used the occasion to highlight the relevance of the topic for the achievement of the new Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, which “calls all countries and stakeholders to take urgent action to ensure global well-being by shifting the world onto a sustainable and resilient path of development.”

That’s not going to be possible without addressing poverty and inequality, including - of course - gender inequality. The recent - and first such - Study on Gender and Climate Change for the Republic of Serbia recognized this.

It was understood from the conference that existing gender inequalities, such as limited access to natural resources, to land and finance, and to household - and community decision - making, constrain women’s ability to adapt to - and cope with climate change. It was highlighted that after the catastrophic floods that struck Serbia in 2014, women were noted to be more vulnerable to the injustices women suffer, demanding an end at last to violence against women. This year One billion raised in solidarity against the exploitation of women. Leaflet with infographics available here.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

UNDP Serbia hosted sub-regional workshop on gender mainstreaming in disaster preparedness and response. The workshop focused on sharing lessons learned and reflecting further on integrating gender in DRR interventions. The workshop gathered teams working on gender equality, disaster risk reduction and energy environment from UNDP Offices in the Western Balkans and the Istanbul Regional Hub.

UNDP’S CONTRIBUTION TO V-DAY AND CAMPAIGN “ONE BILLION RAISING”

UNDP has continued supporting the campaign One billion raising which is organized on 14 February each year in cooperation with the Center for Modern Skills. The world-wide campaign, launched for the first time on Valentine’s Day 2012, began as a call to action based on the staggering statistic that 1 in 3 women on the planet will be beaten or raped during her lifetime. With the world population at 7 billion, this adds up to more than ONE BILLION WOMEN AND GIRLS. On 14 February, people across the world came together to express their outrage, strike, dance, and RISE in defiance of the injustices women suffer, demanding an end at last to violence against women. This year One billion raised in solidarity against the exploitation of women. Leaflet with infographics available here.

SUPPORTING LOCAL MECHANISM FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE

As part of the Joint Programme Integrated response to violence against women and girls in Serbia II implemented by UN agencies (UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF and UNFPA) with the partners, the Coordinating Body for Gender Equality and respective line ministries – UNICEF supports the implementation of education programme on gender-based violence (GBV) intended for professionals engaged in local child protection inter-sectoral teams, in 12 municipalities.

On 17-18 May, the first out of three trainings on GBV was held in Nis, for inter-sectoral teams in Zajecar, Knjazevac, Svrlija, Aleksinac and Nis, as the peer support team. Two additional trainings will be held for inter-sectoral teams from 8 other municipalities. Professionals from the social welfare, police, health care, education system, judiciary and NGOs are supported to upscale their capacities for efficient response to violence, as part of their comprehensive capacity building. In addition, the NGOs from 20 municipalities will be supported as well, to increase their knowledge on GBV and use it in advocacy and monitoring for better child and women protection from violence.

UNICEF has further supported training of health, education and social welfare professionals to address issue of sexual violence against children. A total of 100 professionals had their capacities strengthened to recognize, report and respond together with other relevant systems in the cases of child sexual violence.

GENDER AWARENESS IN PRE-SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS

As a part of the Join UN Programme, UNICEF initiated the implementation of a project aiming at increasing gender awareness and supporting social norms that respect gender equality and oppose gender based discrimination and violence in pre-schools and school settings. The project will be implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) - Group for the Protection from Violence and Discrimination, Group for Pre-school Education, Group for Social Inclusion, Group for School Administrations and UNICEF. The project answers the need to further support systemic changes and scale up the level of interventions to pre-schools, having in mind that the early years are critical for child development of gender-based identity/gender role and optimal for parental involvement. The project will also support development and implementation of programmes aimed at prevention of GBV and discrimination, through provision of the guidance for horizontal learning and mentoring support for model schools.

DROP-OUT PREVENTION

UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development supported the development of innovative tools for preventing drop-out in the education system. Data collected throughout the implementation indicate that significant results were achieved in the 10 schools par-
Participating in the pilot project, with a dropout rate reduced by more than 65%. Individualized support to students at risk of dropout proved to be one of the most efficient measures. Gender specificities are in the heart of these approaches. Child marriage or early marriage were identified as key reasons for the highest drop-out of Roma girls in the pilot schools. Many risks of dropping are similar for both male and female students. According to the Study on Effectiveness of the Dropout Model, boys and girls are at a similar risk of dropping out, but boys have a minimally higher risk of dropping out. Although the effect of the risk factor is minimally more intensive on boys, there are some risk factors to which girls are more exposed (such as teen pregnancy) that we need to take into consideration. The tools and mechanisms for prevention of school dropout were presented at the national conference on drop-out. More results on: Study on Effectiveness of the Dropout Model and Guide for schools in implementing the model.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)

Support to all primary health care centers in Belgrade, to strengthen their response to early childhood development with particular focus to the most vulnerable children and their families, has started in the second quarter of 2017. Trainings for pediatricians and visiting nurses, strengthened the capacities of professionals not only to address child development, but also other issues of crucial importance, such as father’s engagement in child-bearing, mother’s wellbeing [with particular focus on postnatal depression], early recognition of family violence and furthermore, empower them to transfer their skills on better child nutrition and protection to parents. In May 2017, the training of trainers on the 14 ECD modules for visiting nurses (on the topics already mentioned) has been organized enabling trainers to support capacity building throughout the country – through in-service and well as pre-service education. Father’s engagement in childbearing together with nurturing parenting of both parents will be promoted through National ECD campaign that will start in September 2017. Aligned with this campaign, UNICEF is supporting the development of gender informed education and communication materials on ECD for fathers and mothers and will hold a National ECD Conference on the 28th of September.

SUPPORTING MOTHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION ALONG REFUGEE/MIGRANT ROUTE

UNICEF and various partners have continued to support Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and Commissariat for Refugees and Migration in organizing mother-and-baby corners for refugee and migrants children and families stranded in Serbia. Since the beginning of 2017, through currently 7 active MBCs, UNICEF supported 609 children under 2 and 352 mothers.

UNICEF, in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) is conducting training on Physical Violence and Other Harmful Practices, Sexual Violence and Child Labor, of the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. The training targets frontline workers in shelters and the city center of Belgrade from NGOs, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, the Center for Social Work and volunteer organizations working directly with refugee and migrant children and families. The main objective of the training is to enhance knowledge, capacity and self-confidence of frontline workers to identify and support children at risk of sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking. By end May the training has covered 130 frontline workers.

On May 29, UNICEF conducted the training on gender-based violence (GBV) and Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) GBV Guidelines for education professionals from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, projects’ implementing partners and UNICEF. The training was aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills of the education professionals to address GBV in the project cycle of education interventions.
UNHCR partners have been providing legal awareness sessions and consultations, health, social and community development activities in Government-run Reception centers (RC), Transit centers (TC) and Asylum Centers (AC) to female asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons.

**GENDER REPRESENTATION**

UNHCR and its partners guarantee gender balance of staff, to ensure that female refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons have access to legal awareness or consultation, procedures to report gender/domestic abuse or other violence, as well as recreational and educational activities.

Belgrade Center for Human Rights — legal partner with country-wide coverage: 8 female interpreters visited the centers and conducted session on legal awareness and consultation for women.

HCIT — covering the West and North: 9 female staff working as translators and in other positions, who conducted awareness raising sessions on the facilities available at the transit zone, cases of violence, especially Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV).

INDIGO — covering child protection: 4 female interpreters (out of 11 interpreters in total) and 18 female staff members (Programme Coordinator, Project Coordinator, Field Coordinator, Financial Administrator, 7 Child Protection Officers and 7 Educators) out of 23 staff members engaged on this project. All the management positions are held by women.

6 female Cultural Mediators/Case Workers and Child Protection Officers from Crisis Response and Policy Center (CRPC). The Mediators continuously support women, children, elderly and disable people in providing any type of identification and referral assistance in the state institutions. Cultural mediation and asylum information on general information dissemination.

Psychosocial Innovation Network (PIN) has 6 female psychosocial counsellors and 13 interpreters providing all sorts of psychosocial counseling and sessions to female refugees.

**LEGAL AWARENESS AND CONSULTATION**

451 female asylum-seekers were provided with legal counseling on their opportunity to seek asylum in Serbia;

9 female refugees were provided with integration services through Belgrade Center for Human Rights;

BCHR always dedicated a special section for gender based asylum application with providing close monitoring and assistance to cases related to SGBV and EVIs.

**PSYCHOSOCIAL COUNSELING FOR WOMEN REFUGEES**

271 Female asylum seekers were providing with psychosocial counselling sessions.

Recreational activities are conducted for female refugees, such as IT workshops, Music Workshops, Individual counselling as required and conducting individual interview with special emphasis on gender identity.

In addition, PIN is also conducting psycho-educational workshops with men which include topics related to gender roles with aim of raising awareness and the challenging attitudes, expectations and behaviours established towards women and girls.

3 female members of the Psychosocial Innovation Network (PIN) were also conducting legal awareness and sessions to female refugees at transit zone, cases related to SGBV and EVIs.

5 cases of female asylum-seekers’ in most cases single women or single mothers, when the birth children was documented.

Women vulnerable cases were documented and provided with psychological first aid assistance.

**DURABLE SOLUTIONS**

Resettlement stats during the reporting period:

- DEPARTED: 4 women, 3 men, 6 boys
- ACCEPTED: 1 woman, 2 boys

**WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND GENDER EMPOWERMENT IN REFUGEE COMMUNITIES**

UNHCR Field Unit in Presevo and Bujanovac organized community mobilization activities for female refugees. Female community leaders who could engage and coordinate with refugee families were identified. Despite initial reluctance, interest increased with time, with more women approaching UNHCR for support. At present there are 7-10 active female Community Leaders [CL] for 8 accommodation units in Presevo, and 1 in Bujanovac.
Meetings were conducted with female community leaders to discuss issues of particular interest of women. Recreational activities were also organized.

Some female CL reported several cases of domestic violence to UNHCR.

Some women arranged to play football every afternoon, and asked for assistance in getting space for indoor sport activities as many of them are not allowed by partners or parents to participate in any activities involving male PoC.

UNHCR organized a meeting with all interested female PoC to discuss their needs. They cited education and self-reliance as their main need, and suffer from low self-esteem due to trauma they experienced, as well as domestic violence. Women often request family counselling sessions with a psychotherapist.

In April 2017, SOS Children Villages, in cooperation with CSW and UNHCR, started organizing weekly discussions on GBV matters, with an emphasis on domestic violence, with male PoC.

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EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Educational and recreational activities were organized for women in RC Presevo and Bujanovac: DRC held language classes; Border Free held IT and yoga classes, CARITAS ran a sewing course; SOS Children Villages provided two sewing machines for female PoC, psychological self-support workshops, and English and German courses; Philanthropy launched a sewing course for women in May 2017.

SGBV IDENTIFICATION AND FOLLOW-UP

All the identified cases are referred to the reception facilities management and outreach social workers of CSW. Depending on the nature of the case it is further referred to relevant actors, such as medical team, police, psycho-social assistance (CSW and NGOs). UNHCR conducts confidential interviews, assures relevant referrals and follow-up activities, and work on exploring possibilities for durable solution. CSW does mediation work with spouses in cases of domestic violence when appropriate, and participates in best interest determination when a case includes minors. Case management meetings are held upon a need, usually once to twice a month.

In Belgrade and West, 10 SGBV cases were identified.

In the South, 15 SGBV cases are currently being followed-up, with resettlement provided for one case up to date. The cases who left the RC have been closed.

PROTECTION AND WELL-BEING OF REFUGEE CHILDREN

UNHCR and Indigo conducted protection monitoring to assess the needs of the refugee children and provided support in cooperation with local and central institutions, local communities, international organizations, and CSOs.

Indigo provided psychological first aid and support on 247 occasions and information to 575 refugee girls. Indigo identified and referred 50 most vulnerable girls to the other actors. Indigo involved 524 refugee girls in its activities.

Indigo also provided the psychosocial support through recreational activities, which included creative and educational workshops, group discussions, social and educational games in Presevo RC and Bujanovac RC.

Indigo organized non-formal educational and recreational activities, including English, Serbian courses, geography, biology and communication courses, for children in Divljana and Pirot. 17 refugee girls participated in Divljana and 29 refugee girls participated in Pirot.

Indigo implemented a project on “Contribution to the Social and Educational Inclusion of Roma IDP Children”, in 2016 and 2017, on social and educational inclusion of Roma IDP children in Kraljevo, Novi Pazar, Bujanovac and Bela Palanka. 84 girls from the pre-school Roma children, aged 4 and 5 attended the preparation activities which enabled them to successfully attend the compulsory pre-school programme in the pre-school institutions and eventually school. 231 Roma school children were primarily assisted in doing homework and studying, and also in learning and acquiring the concepts and skills necessary for good educational outcomes [observing the schedule, coming on time, regular attendance, communication and social skills, transfer from class to subject teaching]. Indigo involved the primary school girls in Bela Palanka, Bujanovac, Kraljevo and Novi Pazar.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO PERSON AT RISK OF STATELESSNESS IN SERBIA

In coordination between UNHCR and PRAXIS:

1,127 women were provided with legal assistance and counseling in obtaining identity cards/documents and reimbursement of the cost.

2,268 were provided with Identity/documents, including 49.69% were women (1127).

432 female beneficiaries were provided with legal assistance and counseling on receiving legal documents, such as; birth certificates, citizenship certificates, marriage certificate and other official documents.

170 women were provided with initiation, counseling and representation assistance in administrative and court procedures with an aim of obtaining personal documents.

34 women were granted with nationality through UNHCR implementing partner legal assistance.

5 women survivors of SGBV from Refugees and IDP population were provided with free psychological and physical assistance through UNHCR.

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UNHCR legal partner PRAXIS, also conducted other activities aimed at prevention and elimination of child, early and forced marriages (CEFМ), including awareness sessions for the representatives of relevant local institutions and NGOs, together with Roma activists, and workshops with Roma men and Roma women:

One two-day workshop with Roma men and women was held in Novi Pazar on 4 November 2016. The number of participants totalled 24 (16 women and 4 men).

CEFМ activities in 2017 were counselling meetings with teaching staff and CEFМ raising-awareness workshops with school children:

The first meeting with teaching staff and CEFМ workshop with children was held in Primary School “Jovan Cvijic” in Kostolac on 15 May 2017 - the total number of participants was 9 (8 women and 1 man).

The second CEFМ counselling meeting with teaching staff was held in the Primary School “Bosko Palkovjivic Pinki” in Belgrade on 23 May 2017. The total number of participants was 33 (28 women and 5 men).

The second CEFМ workshop with school children was held in Primary School “Jovan Cvijic” in Kostolac on 16 May 2017 - with 31 girls participating.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

Following the global theme “Women in the field of work”, Gender Theme Group highlighted inequalities women are facing in their everyday life, especially in the field of labour and domestic work. A recent research shows that women in Serbia work twice as much as men at home – which is in total four hours and 36 minutes per day. To acknowledge the importance and raise awareness on the issue, Gender Theme Group organised together with the EU Delegation in Serbia a panel entitled “Women at work: Double burden” and created a short film featuring a working woman with the family speaking about her regular day, with the emphasis on both the labour and domestic part of her day. In addition to this, postcards featuring the latest statistics on the issue have been also created and distributed at the event. The event got great media coverage and gathered more than 120 people making it the best-crowded event EU Info Center has ever seen.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Together with the Coordination Body for Gender Equality and Council of Europe, UN Women in Serbia marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against women with an event in the cultural institution Parobrod on November 24. Around 100 guests gathered to hear the latest statistics, a story of a woman who survived violence from her partner, but also see a part of the play “Abused” based on true stories of women victims of domestic violence. The event announced a giant interactive SOS phone which was ringing at the Republic Square for the next 16 days (“16 days of violence” campaign). Aiming to raise awareness about violence against women and girls, this creative installation was ringing as an urgent call for change. Those who answered the phone could hear sad statistics on gender-based violence in the country. The phone was broken soon after but it continued ringing until the end of the campaign on December 10.