

### INTEGRATED RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SERBIA III

#### PROFILE

**Donor:** The Government of Sweden

**Funding:** \$1,499,709

**Main Partner:** The Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia

**Implementing UN agencies:** UNDP (lead), UNICEF, UN Women and UNFPA

**Duration:** 2020-2022

#### GOAL

To enable women and girls, especially those from vulnerable groups, to live lives free from violence, be encouraged to report violence and ensure that they receive timely and effective institutional protection.

#### CONTEXT

Countering gender-based violence is a goal of the Republic of Serbia's gender equality policy, with domestic violence prohibited by several laws. Despite evident progress, achieving freedom from violence remains a challenge for women and girls in Serbia, additionally burdened by circumstances related to the Covid-19 outbreak. Women can experience violence regardless of their class, ethnicity, education, profession or age, but not all are ready to report it. For women from vulnerable groups, such as women with disabilities, women from the Roma community and women living in rural areas, barriers faced every day make it harder to report violence and seek help. Effective protection of women from violence is further hindered by unevenly distributed protection services and institutional response of varying quality across the country. Harmful practices affecting children, especially girls, such as child marriage, as well as gender stereotypes leading to tolerance of violence in partner relationships, still present challenges in ending violence against women and girls.

#### FOCUS

**Empowering survivors and ensuring they have long-term support**

- *Providing easily accessible information on how to report violence and seek protection from competent institutions, as well as support from specialized civil society organizations.*
- *Expanding support services and enabling continuous learning for professionals in competent institutions so that they are able to ensure long-term safety of all survivors.*



Photo: Milena Djordjevic

**Ending harmful practices affecting children, especially girls**

- *Working towards improved legislation that prevents child marriage.*
- *Promoting non-violent parenting methods.*

**Changing perceptions and dominant gender norms to build a society where gender-based violence is not tolerated**

- *Supporting governmental bodies and institutions in ensuring that legislation addressing gender-based violence is applied evenly in the country.*
- *Raising awareness about unacceptability of violence through engaging youth, especially young women, to advocate greater gender equality and no tolerance for violence in their local community, improving media reporting and working with men to prevent violence.*

## CHALLENGES THE PROJECT ADDRESSES

72%

of survivors of domestic violence reported to institutions are women.

84%

of women killed by their partner or family member had never turned to institutions for help.

56%

of girls from Roma settlements get married before the age of 18.

45%

of children aged 1-14 years, experience violent disciplining at home.

63%

of media reports do not fully apply ethical standards for reporting on violence against women.

### Sources of data:

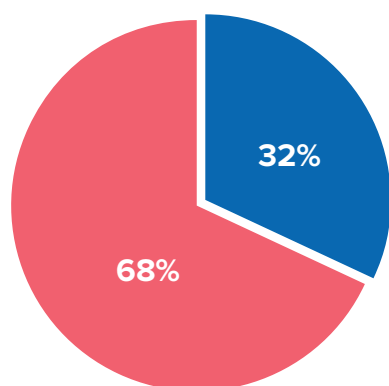
1) Serbia Covid-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment, UN Serbia and UNDP, 2020

2) Femicide – Murders of Women in Serbia: Quantitative-narrative report January 1- 31 December 2020, Autonomous Women' Centre, 2021

3) Serbia MICS Survey for 2019, UNICEF Serbia, 2020

4) Analysis of Media Reporting on the Problem of Violence against Women during the first half of 2021, group Journalists against Violence, UNDP Serbia, 2021

Participants of the multisectoral training on efficient institutional response to domestic violence, by gender



■ Women (65) ■ Men (30)

## RESULTS DO DATE

- ✓ The **Serbian Government** adopted the **Strategy for Prevention and Combating of Gender-based Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for the period 2021-2025**, supported by the project.
- ✓ **New and more broadly available online and offline SOS support services**, adjusted to beneficiaries' needs in the Covid-19 context, are provided to women by 8 CSOs.
- ✓ **Programmes for perpetrators of violence that work with men to take responsibility for their actions** are available in 4 cities in Serbia and cooperate closely with services that empower women abused in a partner relationship.
- ✓ **Tenants in over 2700 buildings** in 5 cities in Serbia **gained instructions** on what steps to take when witnessing domestic violence, thanks to building managers who joined the **"It IS my business"** awareness raising campaign.
- ✓ The **group Journalists against violence**, established by the project, now gathering over 90 women journalists and media editors, has **contributed to less sensationalist reporting** on this problem, through media monitoring and guidance on media's prevention role.
- ✓ **E-learning modules developed** for the Judicial Academy will allow professionals from competent institutions unhindered access to online training on the implementation of the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence.
- ✓ **95 professionals** from courts, prosecutor's offices, police, social welfare centres, health and education system **have improved knowledge on effective response to domestic violence** through multisectoral trainings.

### Contributing to Sustainable Development Goals:



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