

Gender Equality Facility



Image: Fotoinfot/Shutterstock.com

The Gender Equality Facility (GEF) Phase 1 was implemented as an initial 18-month project that ran from May 2015 to October 2016. Funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and implemented by UN Women, the GEF project provided technical assistance to the government of Albania to integrate the EU gender equality acquis and ensure that the EU accession process and its related reforms equally benefit women and men, girls and boys. Engaging in sectors where neither the EU nor UN Women had previously addressed gender equality, the GEF project cooperated primarily with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry for the EU Integration (MEI) and the EU Delegation (EUD).

The GEF worked to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed through the EU accession process and that the EU gender equality acquis is successfully transposed to ensure more equitable socioeconomic development outcomes for women and men, girls and boys, in the EU candidate countries.

Implementing entity: UN WOMEN

Gender Equality Facility engagement at central and local level

The GEF has been effective in engaging with a broad range of government institutions and partners at central and local level. Similarly, it has promoted gender mainstreaming in the key reforms, policies and processes where it is not typically considered (e.g. tourism, anti-corruption, transport, economic reform, justice and decentralisation). The GEF has also worked to mainstream gender at local level, using the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local life.

Successful transfer of Gender Equality Facility approach

The GEF approach was taken up by the UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, with replication already underway in Serbia and planned for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Others have also shown interest in the GEF approach, such as North Macedonia, Kosovo and Moldova.

Learning and capacity-building potential

The GEF helps public administrations to view gender as a principle of good governance and enables them to apply gender mainstreaming in line with international and EU standards to create change in women's and men's lives. This approach enables participation and active engagement of civil servants and decision-makers at different levels of governance, with knowledge and skills transfer as the main objective. Coaching and provision of gender teaching assistance and guidance are essential elements of ensuring gradual capacity development and identification of bottlenecks (particularly at managerial level) in implementing gender policy and legislation.

Sustainability of the Gender Equality Facility

Recent consultations with primary partners clearly articulated the need for technical assistance in mainstreaming gender equality across priority reform sectors and levels of government. Based on GEF Phase I, a Phase II proposal was prepared. Designed as part of the IPA 2017 European Integration Facility, GEF Phase II is similar to the EU IPA Project Preparation Facility in the MEI. Its primary role is to ensure that the government's reform programmes meet EU standards on gender mainstreaming within strategies and plans, and that EU legislation and directives (EU gender equality acquis) are implemented through these reforms. Upscaling will significantly expand the number of ministries and thus the numbers of government staff targeted by the GEF. Phase II also foresees enhanced engagement at municipal level, as well as the exchange of good practice with national gender machineries and EUDs in the EU candidate countries and potential candidates, thereby raising the number of indirect beneficiaries.

National plans and strategies

Gender mainstreaming permeates all of the objectives of the National Strategy on Gender Equality (NSGE) 2016-2020 and is foreseen as a tool in implementing the resulting action plan. As such, the GEF contributes fully to the achievement of the national strategy. However, it requires strong commitment from the government to ensure allocation of human resources in the national gender machinery and to safeguard ongoing capacity-building.

Achievements and tangible outcomes

Collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office resulted in an increase in gender-sensitive indicators used for monitoring national development goals. Of the 43 indicators recommended by the GEF, six feature in the final National Strategy for Development and Integration II, eight in the NSGE and seven in the National Statistical Programme 2017-2020. The indicators also feed into current UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) localisation.

As a result of GEF input, nine EU IPA programming documents for 2017 Sector Budget Support refer to gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive budgeting, gender statistics and affirmative action. The 'Gender Brief Albania 2016' made available a reference document on the state of gender equality and implementation of gender and socially responsive measures. The reference document localises the EU Gender Action Plan II 2016-2020 and is used by development and integration actors (including EU Member States) as an information, prioritisation and accountability tool.

Today, the Albanian School for Public Administration (ASPA) is equipped with 10 tailored gender mainstreaming training modules for public servants. Following a pilot study, 41 designated ministerial staff members across a variety of sectors are familiar with the essentials of gender mainstreaming in the framework of EU IPA.

Drawing on guidance developed by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), GEF initiated application of the EU gender equality acquis at local level. Inspired by a 36-person study visit to Serbia - organised in collaboration with UN Women Serbia - six Albanian municipalities signed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local life, aiming to strengthen local democracy and achieve a better life for all members of the community.

Contacts/Further Information

Further information

[Gender Brief Albania, 2016. Available in English.](#)



[Gender Brief Albania, 2016. Available in Albanian.](#)



[Dervishi, I., 'Barazia gjinore në Shqipëri, rrugë e gjatë drejt balancimit të peshores burra-gra', The Reporter \(part of the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network \(BIRN\)\), 2 October 2016](#)



[Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local life.](#)



Metadata

TOOL: Gender equality measures in the IPA region