

The Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network
Virtual Meeting, 28 July 2022

THE EXPERIENCES OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

(1 or 2 BiH examples) in responding to emerging security issues as you implement your NAP. Practical steps on how you engaged government ministries, departments and agencies, civil society, etc. What worked well and lessons learned.

- **Continuity in BiH NAPs adoption from 2010** has shown BiH government's commitment in the systemic implementation of WPS agenda in BiH.
- Development and implementation of each BiH NAP **was led and coordinated by the AGE BiH through continuous cooperation with relevant institutions and NGOs represented in Government Coordination Board (GCB) for monitoring implementation of BiH NAP** (which is in place from 2010). Members of CB, among other, participate in **annual operational planning and preparation of regular annual reports** to be adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers. **AGE BiH provides regular and continuous professional support** to relevant institutions in mainstreaming gender into their scope of work.
- **BiH has local-national-regional-global approach to NAP implementation** ("from local to global level"). It enables **localization of WPS agenda in BiH**, systemic gender mainstreaming within relevant national institutions, but also regional and international recognition, cooperation, and exchange of best practices. **All is reflected in BiH NAPs which include strategic goals and outcomes to address local, national and regional levels.**
- Human security concept, as one of strategic goals, was introduced in BiH NAP. By emphasizing concept of human security, **the BiH NAP was used as a platform to initiate meaningful change at the community level.**
- **The 3rd BiH NAP** for the period 2018-2022 presents an **innovative approach in addressing new and emerging security threats and challenges from gender perspective** such as natural disasters, migrations, violent extremism and terrorism, and small and light weapons, and recently COVID pandemic as a security issues. **These are common issues for all the counties in the region and wider and occupy more and more space in WPS agenda.**

- **In recent years, more focus was placed on human security aspect of the BiH NAP**, and more specifically on gender sensitive **approach to emerging security threats and challenges and in crisis situations**.
- Activities and analyzes were implemented with competent government ministries in BiH, pointing out to the different position, needs and interests of women and men in conditions of **natural disasters, migration, terrorism, extremism and radicalism, and in crisis and emergency situations (such as COVID-19 pandemic)**. As result, relevant sectoral strategies in BiH were adopted including gender perspective, which contributes to systemic institutional solutions and approach in certain areas of protection of human security.
- The year 2020 was marked by the **consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic**. From the very beginning of the pandemic, the Agency for gender equality of BiH (AGE BIH) pointed to COVID-19 as a human security issue, which in a special way affects the health, physical and economic security of women.
- In this regard, the AGE BiH and the Government Coordination Board (GCB) for monitoring implementation of BiH NAP submitted to executive bodies and crisis staffs at all levels of government in BiH **Recommendations for gender mainstreaming in the process of planning, making and implementing decisions, measures and plans in combating the COVID-19 pandemic**. These recommendations refer to several priority areas of social life, such as: prevention and protection from gender-based violence, women's work engagement, the economy, and equal gender representation in the decision-making body.
- **This proves flexibility of BiH NAP to be aligned with contemporary issues**. Actions, that have been adjusted to the current situation, were justified by the fact that they still contribute to the goal of NAP BiH related to improving human security from gender perspective, specifically to gender-responsive approach in crisis and emergency situations (as defined in NAP BiH).

What worked well and lessons learned

BiH NAPs have proved to be examples of inclusive and effective public policies within an increasingly challenging political environment

- **Key role of GEA BiH:** leads and coordinates the process of adoption, implementation and reporting on the implementation of the BiH AP („help desk” for other institutions)
- **Inter-institutional cooperation** through the Government Coordination Board for monitoring of AP UNSCR 1325
- **Systematic approach to gender mainstreaming** in the scope of work of responsible institutions through:
 - Capacity building and trainings on gender equality in security sector institutions
 - Harmonization of laws and bylaws with the BiH Gender Equality Law.
 - Adopting affirmative, temporary measures for elimination of identified inequalities and advancement of position of women in the security sector.
 - Promotional activities aimed at promoting military and police job for women, as well as for women's participation in peacekeeping missions.
 - Regional and international cooperation as we all can learn from each other that NAPs, at their core, address fundamental issues of long-term peace and security. Regular cooperation on these issues supports stability and increases the prospects for sustainable reconciliation among the countries in the region.
- **Adjustment to the current situation in context of emerging security threats and challenges**
- **BiH approach to women, peace and security issues and policies is applicable in different cultural and socio-economic contexts.**

What is needed:

- Support from institutional top management and political will
- Adequate financial resources and budget allocations
- Inclusion of more women in decision making