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Tatjana Žarković

„Women who inspire...“
Research of the possibilities and conditions of the lives of women in small local communities in BiH

Sarajevo, 2017
WOMEN SAY:

“If I had what I do not...“

“I would pay for a spa because I never had a decent vacation in my life. “

“I would have a supporting wall around the house so that the landslide does not bring dirt and land in front of my door and the staircase."

“I would fix a tooth, pass the driving exam, and participate in a course of beekeeping."

“I would help my child get a job. My time has passed, I want him to have at least something. “

“I would help my family because we live from 850 KM, the four of us."

“Arranging park space in the immediate vicinity, creating a ramp for the movement of people with impaired physical abilities."

“I would return debts and give the money to my son for alimentation for my
grandchild, which he was unable to pay.”

“I would buy all the medication I need!”

“I would finish my dream education and start my own business in Tešanj.”

“I would pay for length of service for the last couple of years I did not pay and part of the money would go to humanitarian purposes.”
Content

1. Introduction..........................................................................................................11
2. Space where everyday life of women is taking place...........................................11
   2.1. Education and the media..................................................................................12
   2.2. Legal framework and practice of state authorities and institutions in BiH.13
      2.2.1. Incompliance of laws and discrimination by the territory principle – Social care and health protection...........................................................................................................13
      2.2.2. Incompliance of laws and discrimination by the territory principle – Free legal aid.........................................................................................................................14
      2.2.3. Violence against women and inadequate (and contrary to law) work of subjects of protection.....................................................................................................................15
      2.2.4. Inefficiency of the judiciary....................................................................16
   2.3. Discrimination on the labor market...............................................................17
   2.4. Inconsistency between law “on paper” and practice..................................17
3. Goals, methods used and relevance of the selected approach......................18
4. Analysis of the responses of the NGO sector – possibilities, problems and good practices of cooperation.................................................................20
   4.1. Problems which organizations face when implementing activities..........21
   4.2. Good practices of cooperation....................................................................23
   4.3. Organizations report on the problems of women........................................23
5. Analysis of the questionnaires from women – part of the project.............25
   5.1. Profiles of women who participated in the research – jobs and incomes..26
   5.2. Help from the state........................................................................................29
   5.3. Understanding nationality and religion......................................................32
   5.4. Living conditions and ownership of housing.............................................33
   5.5. Investments and the possibility of investing in personal gain....................33
      5.5.1. The possibilities and practices for personal and/or professional groth.......................................................................................................................34
      5.5.2. Importance of NGO’s............................................................................34
      5.5.3. Regular health examinations – possibilities and practice......................35
   5.6. Women grade ... part I................................................................................38
   5.7. Women grade ... part II...............................................................................40
   5.8. Resources for legal advice and urgent cases.............................................42
5.9. Women daydream..............................................................42
6. I feel different because I am.................................................43
6.1. Part I – Simply woman......................................................43
   6.1.1. Woman in the private sphere.......................................44
   6.1.2. Housewife without personal income.............................44
   6.1.3. Mother........................................................................45
   6.1.4. Independent parent......................................................46
   6.1.5. Divorced woman..........................................................46
   6.1.6. Woman without children.............................................46
   6.1.7. Woman of a different style and look.............................47
   6.1.8. Woman of different sexual orientation (lesbian, bisexual i trans* woman)........................................................................................................47
6.2. Woman in the public sphere..............................................48
   6.2.1. Woman on the labor market.........................................48
   6.2.2. Woman activist and woman feminist............................48
   6.2.3. Woman in traffic..........................................................49
   6.2.4. Woman without a man in man’s world.........................50
   6.2.5. Woman with imposed feelings of shame........................50
6.3. Part II – Problems which are caused by identities and differences which are not specific only for women................................................50
   6.3.1. National or ethnic minority, religious minority, displaced person, returnee...............................................................51
   6.3.2. Person with disability....................................................51
   6.3.3. Person with psychological problems..............................51
   6.3.4. Elderly persons............................................................52
6.4. Part III – I feel like I am treated differently because of more reasons than one......................................................................................53
7. We have a lot of work to do....................................................57
   CURE Foundation concludes................................................
   Literature...............................................................................58
   About CURE Foundation......................................................58
   About the author – Tatjana Žarković, MA..............................58
   Annexes:..............................................................................61
   Analysis of interviews from the Bihać region............................61
Questionnaire I .........................................................................................................................64
Questionnaire II ......................................................................................................................78
1. Introduction

The research that is in front of you was created as part of the activities that are being implemented as part of the project “Women’s Advocacy for Gender Equality” implemented by the CURE Foundation in 2017. The research was conducted for four months from March to July 2017. The main goal of the research is to analyze the problems of women in everyday life, as well as the existence of local gender policies with a focus on five selected areas: Romanija and East Sarajevo (Pale, Sokolac, Rogatica, East Sarajevo, Trnovo, Bjelosavljevići, Podromanija, Prača); the wide area of Sarajevo (Hadžići, Ilijaš, Semizovac, Hrasnica, Visoko, Kakanj); Canton 10 (Livno, Kupres, Bugojno, Bosansko Grahovo, Tomislavgrad); Tuzla and the surroundings of Tuzla (Tuzla, Srebrenik, Špionica, Gračanica, Orašje, Gradačac); Bihać and its surroundings. Within the research, one of the goals was to specifically map the problems of socially marginalized groups of women.

We also extended the focus of interest to Bihać and the surroundings. From the need and desire to continuously listen to the needs and problems of women from their region, women from the Center for Education and Research “Nahla” - Bihać branch, suggested volunteering to conduct interviews with women in the area in order to provide material for analysis. The CURE Foundation has accepted the proposal and this research is richer for one region thanks to the interest and initiative of women from the mentioned organization, and we thank them for their efforts on this occasion.

The results of the research will also produce a concrete result through advocacy for the creation of functional mechanisms for further empowerment of women. Based on research findings, an advocacy platform for future advocacy activities of women in selected small local communities will be created. The mapping offered by the analysis in front of you offers an input for all those who will be motivated to make changes in these local communities. With this research, CURE Foundation went outside the framework of the “main” problems of primarily women from larger cities, and targeted women in other, smaller local communities, which are usually invisible, neglected and often “by-pass” to those who have the power to make decisions in the socio-political context.

2. Space where everyday life of women is taking place

The primary goal of the research that is before you was to examine the everyday life of women of various social, ethnic and national groups in local communities, the problems they face, and the positive aspects that stand out. As an insight into the current situation and practices, as the designation of the space which determines everyday life, we will present some of the challenges faced by women, especially marginalized groups of women, as recognized in various reports and analyzes. The insight into the situation will certainly point to the relevance of the topics that we focused on when forming questionnaires filled by women on the field and online.
2.1. Education and media

What we learn in schools and what we hear and see every day in the media has a great influence on our system of reasoning and shapes us and our relationship towards ourselves and others from a young age. Therefore, the quality of the program and content offered by the media is of great importance, as well as an educational program that will be in line with the basic principles of education in an open society. However, the reality in BiH is that women and topics of interest to women are underrepresented and insufficiently visible in all media, as well as in textbooks used in schools, and when they are present, there is a stereotypical presentation of their patriarchal social role and position.¹

Civil society organizations in “Reporting on the Application of Final Observations and Recommendations of the CEDAW Committee for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013 - 2017”² point out that gender stereotypes in the field of education and the media are visible and widespread, although the Law on Gender Equality of BiH and the recommendations of self-regulatory bodies in media areas recognize the obligation and the need to eliminate gender stereotypes. The report states: “BiH has failed to systematically point out gender stereotypes through education strategies, curricula and programs, as well as education of educators and workers, and promote gender equality and carry out wider actions aimed at eliminating gender stereotyped and discriminating content in textbooks through all levels of education. Non-formal education programs on gender stereotypes, violence, gender equality and women’s rights are implemented by civil society organizations, without secured continuity and to a limited extent, depending on the available support from international organizations and funds.”³

Regarding education and learning from formal education, it is important to emphasize that gender stereotypes are not the only controversial points in textbooks from which children learn in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and therefore, according to the analysis of the content of the textbooks of the national group of subjects (which include the mother tongue and Literature, History, Geography, Religion) conducted by the Open Society Fund of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Promente Social Research, what is expected of primary school children to adopt and learn from textbooks is that women are primarily mothers and that girls are expected to be nice and “honest”, that Roma people are nomads who will deal only with petty trade, waste collection and music, that Serbs and Montenegrins like to fight, that religious and ethnic affiliation is identical, that all of immigrants in Europe are Muslims, that the Middle East is characterized by conflicts, oil, Islam and terrorism, that atheists are immoral, without a clear goal and a sense of life who are condemned to ruin, etc.⁴ So, we live in a society where hatred, intolerance

⁴ More details in: Education in BiH: What do(n’t) we teach our children, Analysis of content of national group of subjects in elementary schools, Mas Media Sarajevo and Open Society Fund, Sarajevo 2017.
and stereotypical thinking are cultivated and nurtured even in the institutions that are obliged, and from which, accordingly, is mostly expected to respect the principles of social justice, interculturalism, and respect for human rights. Education as a public good should put pupils at the center of their attention, as well as determining their action and program according to the stated principles (social justice, interculturalism, respect for human rights), rather than interfering with the game of reproduction of power relations for political interests.

2.2. Legal framework and practice of state authorities and institutions in BiH

What is evident in previous reports and analyzes is that women are discriminated in many areas of life\(^5\), and for certain groups of women, such as Roma women, women with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, single mothers, women victims of violence, drug addicts, sex workers and elderly women can be said to be completely socially ignored and excluded.

Legislative frameworks and mechanisms for protection against discrimination and exclusion on the basis of gender exist and, for example that would be the Law on Gender Equality in BiH (2003), which refers to the provisions of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination. The Law on Gender Equality guarantees equal opportunities for all citizens, both in the public and private spheres of the society, and prohibits direct and indirect discrimination based on gender. In addition to the aforementioned law, there are also a number of strategic documents, action plans, institutional mechanisms for gender equality at different levels of government in BiH.\(^6\)

In practice, unfortunately, mechanisms for the protection of rights are rarely used, although they exist. The partial reason for this is the lack of information of the disenfranchised persons, but also the problem of non-compliance and different treatment of laws at lower levels of government, and the incompetence and inadequate work of the subjects of protection, the judiciary, and alike. Below we will mention the most striking examples of discrimination and neglect of women due to inadequate work of state institutions and bodies, which are carried out in addition to guaranteed rights based on numerous laws, international documents and conventions.

2.2.1. Incompliance of laws and discrimination by the territory principle – Social care and health protection

The most famous example of discrimination and the deprivation of rights due to non-compliance of laws is certainly the right to maternity benefits. In the Special Report of

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\(^5\) More details in analysis and reports: Orange report, Sarajevo 2016; Analysis of the legal position in access to justice of women in BiH, Sarajevo 2015.; Advocacy platforms of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2016; Gender equality in municipalities in Bosni i Hercegovini, Sarajevo 2015.

the Ombudsman for Human Rights of BiH from 2015, discrimination against mothers in the Federation of BiH has been confirmed.

The right to maternity benefits is one of the basic rights of women, not only employed ones but also unemployed, and the state is obliged to provide effective payment mechanisms in accordance with international and domestic standards. However, due to the non-compliance of laws at lower levels of government, it can be said that women are discriminated against on a territorial basis, because maternity benefits in different parts of the country are uneven, and in some parts of the country it is realized only in a limited form or not at all, because the right to compensation for mothers is treated differently in different parts of BiH.

Thus, for example, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina there are large differences in fees for unemployed mothers, which in most of the Cantons are reduced to only one-time assistance. In only two out of a total of ten Cantons, unemployed women receive a 12-month reimbursement, in four they receive a 6-month compensation, while others receive one-time assistance in the amount of 100 to a maximum of 500 KM. It is important to note that benefits for unemployed mothers in most Cantons are dependent on the income census or the amount of households income.

A similar problem is the treatment of infertility as well as the exercise of other rights in the field of family protection with children, but also by exercising rights under the law in the field of social protection, such as the right to permanent or one-time financial assistance, child allowance, disability allowance, help and alike. The right to health care is also linked to the territory where people are housed, as well as the problem of lack of adequate health services, especially medical devices. The CURE Foundation is actively working with women in the field to obtain data on women waiting for mammography for 6 months to a year, and for a spine examination up to 2 years.

2.2.2. Incompliance of laws and discrimination by the territory principle – Free legal aid

Non-compliance of laws also applies to the provision of free legal aid. Legal aid is a mechanism for facilitating access to justice. The burden of proof in civil proceedings is on the parties, and it should be noted that the court no longer has the duty to assist a foreigner who does not have knowledge in the field of law or is unable to provide adequate legal assistance. Thus, ignorance about the legal framework can harm women citizens in civil proceedings, and so if a person who is not knowledgeable in the field of law and cannot provide financial assistance, or within his or her circle of acquaintances or friends does not have adequate legal assistance, he/she has a limited access to justice, irrespective of all conventions, laws and mechanisms of protection.

There are only individual laws on providing free legal aid at lower levels of government, and in some parts of the country they have not yet been adopted. This creates uncoordinated, inconsistent and discriminatory practices again, primarily by the
territorial principle, but also by other criteria, and as a consequence, we have unequal
treatment of vulnerable categories of persons in access to justice and violations of the
rule of law principle. Such a situation greatly affects women as subjects in claiming the
exercise of rights.

In the Law on Free Legal Aid except for residence, as one of the discriminating factors,
there are many more problems, from the criteria that determine the right to free legal
aid, through selective and inconsistent realization in practice.

What is shocking and points to a very high level of institutional discrimination of
women, despite all the legal frameworks, both state and international, is that some
laws do not provide provision of legal assistance to victims of trafficking and victims
of domestic violence. It is clear that victims of human and victims of domestic violence
are predominantly women, thus creating a vicious circle from which is difficult to get
out, and which are certainly not all equal before the law because they do not have
equal access to justice and all the mechanisms available to them as a remedy, because
they do not know, do not have the opportunity, or even do not have the right to
be given assistance and information on existing protection mechanisms. In such an
environment, we can say that women live, the environment in which violence and
sexual exploitation of women, and especially women of lower socio-economic status,
is ignored by the state.

2.2.3. Violence against women and inadequate (and contrary to law) work of subjects of protection

The social problem of domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by
laws at entity level, with the aim of faster and more complete protection of victims.
In order to ensure the complete and rapid protection of victims of domestic violence,
the subject of protection, according to the provisions of the Law on Protection
against Domestic Violence, is obliged to provide protection, assistance and support
to the victims of domestic violence regardless of whether a criminal or misdemeanor
procedure has been initiated against the perpetrator.

Unfortunately, in practice, there are very few criminal charges filed ex officio, as the
police often decide to file misdemeanor charges where the perpetrator is only fined.
The aforementioned legal provision is not applied in practice, and it creates a very
dramatic and traumatic situation in which victims of domestic violence are insufficiently
protected and helpless.

The problem pointed out by the non-governmental organizations dealing with the
protection of women who survived the violence is the problem of poor development
of awareness of the obligation to report violence, and the charges are filed only with
serious forms of violence that have characteristics of crime. Therefore, the police
practice, in addition to being in contravention of the legal provisions, is in complete
contradiction with the reality and seriousness of the situation in which women victims of violence are.

In order to illustrate the seriousness of the consequences arising from such a practice, we will imagine a situation in which a woman decides to report domestic violence, where she has the first contact with the police by solely reporting violence. Contrary to law, the practice is such that the police first assess the merits of the report on the violence committed, which additionally traumatizes and humiliates the victim, and finally only sends a misdemeanor report, after which the woman who is a victim of violence, who most often does not have property in the patriarchal BiH society, and is blackmailed by the partner, society and the environment in which she lives, and the income, if any, is smaller than her partner, she must return into a situation from which she tried to get out of and continue to live in insecurities and agony, with an additional shortage in the home budget, after a fine arrived for the perpetrator with whom she lives. We wonder if and under what conditions a woman who has experienced such an experience will report violence again if she experiences it.

2.2.4. The inefficiency of the judiciary

In the text above, we have cited a hypothetical example of a woman experiencing domestic violence, and we continue with this example to further illustrate the disadvantage of women arising from the ineffective and inadequate work of state authorities and institutions. Let’s suppose the above mentioned woman is a victim of violence that has a child with the abuser, managed to get out of all psychological, emotional, social, and institutional traps and divorced from the husband of the abuser and started a life as an independent parent.7

In order to provide all means of support for the children, a woman requires alimony/ or child support. In order to exercise her right, she is referred to the Family Law that regulates relationships between marital and extra-marital partners, parents, children and other blood relatives and adoptions, guardianship, adoption, and special procedures for the exercise and protection of these rights. According to the provisions of this Law it is regulated that the actions in the procedures are taken urgently.

The conducted Analysis on the legal position and access to justice of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina8 reports that in practice the provision of the Family Law that requires that the actions in the proceedings take place immediately is not met, and that certain procedures where all the facts necessary for the conduct and conclusion of the proceedings are uncontested are ongoing for one to two years from the date of filing a lawsuit or request to the court. They further report: “In practice, problems are also evident when persons who are obliged to give sustenance to legal and executive

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7 CURE Foundation is committed to changing the terminology term “single mother”, which is one-dimensional. Instead of a single mother, we use the term independent parent. Autonomy is an empowering word, unlike a one-dimensional adjective “single “ because the mother / parent has many more roles to recognize and emphasize.

8 „Analysis of the legal position in access to justice of women in BiH“, Sarajevo 2015.
judgments do not do so. Even if they are employed and if the court, in accordance with the Law on Enforcement Procedure, undertakes actions and activities in order to implement a decision on execution, it often happens that the child does not realize his/her rights to the extent that he/she belongs to him/her. The Criminal Code of the Federation of BiH stipulates the criminal offense of Avoiding Support. However, in spite of the fact that users exhaust all legal possibilities in the enforcement procedure and file a complaint with the competent prosecutor, it is rare for the prosecuting prosecutor to file an indictment and forward it to the court for confirmation.”

Here, it is still necessary to emphasize the above mentioned limited availability of free legal aid that the state is obliged to provide to citizens, and what, unfortunately, follows for our example is that a woman who has withdrawn from a violent community because of the inefficiency of the court and the prosecutor's office, continues to live together with children in poverty. In everyday practice, we meet with women who remain in a bad and violent community to “not harm the children,” although it is traumatic for children to live and grow up in such an unhealthy environment.

2.3. Discrimination on the labour market

In the labor market, women are multiple discriminated. Numerous research and statistics point to the fact that women do not have equal economic opportunities in relation to men even if they are employed. Women all over the world are in such a situation, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and what is specific to BiH is that it is the worst in Europe. Expert Market in London, according to its research, states that the gap between women and men in Bosnia and Herzegovina amounts to 46% and is the highest in Europe.

In addition to the disproportionate income, mobility and poorer opportunities for women in the labor market, gender discrimination in employment is also evident, hence the access to the labor market is more difficult for women. Free legal aid organizations report that legal aid beneficiaries state that during the job interview itself, employers have asked for a guarantee from women that they will not marry, remain pregnant, and that women have had to sign fixed-term contracts for years, and when they get pregnant the state simply does not conclude a new contract with the aim of disabling the rights based on maternity leave, which is in line with the Law on Gender Equality.

2.4. Inconsistency between law “on paper” and practice

Based on the available analyzes and reports, we can conclude that the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, although it adopted laws and signatories of various international documents, conventions and declarations, did not establish an adequate system that would enable the exercise of the rights on paper.

9 ibd str. 6
10 When do women begin to work for free because of their pay gap? Libela.org. October, 2016.
As we can see, institutional mechanisms for gender equality exist, but at lower levels of government, where laws and mechanisms should be adopted, because otherwise the law passed is just an empty abstraction without execution in practice, and the concrete implementation of the measures regarding gender equality and protection against discrimination is at a very poor level, due to the lack of control over gender equality bodies, mismatches of the law, incompetence of the work of the court and the police, the health system, and alike.

3. **Goals, methods used and relevance of the selected approach**

How does the aforementioned legal framework and specific practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as socially imposed values and roles, affect the very quality of life from a female perspective is the issue that we were trying to answer through this research. Through interviews conducted directly with women, we wanted to explore the extent to which the rights themselves, provided by laws and conventions, as well as system solutions and services by state services, authorities and institutions, have found the way to the lives of citizens to whom they should serve. So how much is known about them and how much are they at their disposal. In addition, we wanted to see how much the “people” themselves are ready to take charge of themselves and to fight for their rights and what are the relations of solidarity and communion that we often refer to as one of the characteristic features of the people living in these areas.

In order to create a more comprehensive picture, our plan was to do at least 250 interviews with women, focusing on the four regions that represent the main focus of the project in which the research was conducted:

1. Romanija and East Sarajevo (Pale, Sokolac, Rogatica, Istočno Sarajevo, Trnovo, Bjelosavljevići, Podromanija, Prača)
2. Wide area of Sarajevo (Hadžići, Ilijaš, Hrasnica, Semizovac, Visoko, Kakanj)
3. Canton 10 (Livno, Kupres, Bugojno, Drvar, Tomislavgrad, Bosansko Grahovo)
4. Tuzla and surroundings (Tuzla, Srebrenik, Špionica, Gračanica, Orašje, Gradačac)

During the research, the focus was expanded to the Una-Sana Canton, thanks to the initiative and cooperation with the Center for Education and Research “Nahla” - the branch of Bihać, and in addition to the above regions, the answers from the women from:

5. Bihać and surroundings.

Considering great interest, we received a total of 534 responses, 317 from the regions
that are the main focus of the project in which the research was conducted, with the addition of 217 responses from the Bihać area and the surroundings.

As a fieldwork tool, a questionnaire containing standardized questions with scales and offered answers was used, but with some open questions, in order to enable statistical analysis and comparison in the analysis of a large number of interviews with women from different social, national and ethnic groups about the issues they face in everyday life. Questions in the questionnaire were directed to different areas that determine the overall quality of women’s lives.

When making the questionnaire, we were guided by the Allard’s concept of quality of life, distinguishing three categories of basic life needs that we focused on, while taking into account the objective and subjective indicators for selected categories:

**Having** which implies a material dimension of the living standard, such as, for example, material resources, housing conditions, employment and working conditions, health, education and the environment.

**Loving** which implies the need for belonging and social contact, such as neighbors, families, relatives and a circle of friends, as well as activities and relationships in associations and other organizations.

**Being** which implies the possibility of participating in the society and investing in personal profit, such as political activity, the ability to make decisions and meaningful work, etc.\(^{12}\)

Accordingly, we focused on the six main sets of questions:

- Questions related to the quality and subjective experience of living and housing conditions;
- Questions related to the possibilities of self-development and investment in personal profit;
- A group of questions related to family relations, friends and community;
- A group of questions about daily activities and social engagement;
- Questions about the health status of women and a subjective sense of satisfaction;
- Questions related to specific identities and differences that determine the life of women and the attitude of the local community towards them.

In order to take into account the perspective of non-governmental organizations dealing with the protection of women’s rights, we have prepared a questionnaire with five open questions for non-governmental sector organizations that, within their activities, are engaged in the protection of women’s rights or otherwise work through their work in direct contact with women from their local communities. The questionnaire is intended only for organizations operating in smaller local communities. We did not take into account the responses from the larger cultural and economic centers of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka) because in the context of this research on the life of women in small local communities, they were not significant for analysis.

We consider the perspective of the non-governmental sector to be very important in the context of our research, because the NGO sector can be considered “interconnected” between citizens and the state institutions, especially considering that in the reality of Bosnia and Herzegovina many laws, regulations and obligations of state institutions stand only as a dead letter on paper, and here the NGO sector is often an entity that takes over the social protection of the citizen on their own. That is why we recognized these NGOs as “experts” in the field of knowledge about women’s lives and the key problems they face.

Many organizations that are active at BiH level, especially from smaller local communities, do not have their own website on the Internet, or, if available, the available website does not contain all the information relevant to our research. Therefore, the analysis of web sites with information on activities and other relevant data available on the Internet was insufficient and, therefore, the questionnaire with five open questions was distributed in various ways to organizations, through the Women’s Network of BiH and the Peace Building Network in BiH, as well as directly to organizations through e-mail address.

Given that it is difficult to get information that is taboo in our society on the ground, such as domestic violence, sexual violence and alike, in addition to questions about activities, good practices, possibilities of cooperation and problems in cooperation with state institutions and NGOs sector, we asked organizations to identify the problems of women with whom they came into contact through their work. It was very important for us to get this information from organizations, since the NGO sector took over most of the work within the provision of psychosocial protection, with very little or no support from the state. Below is the space for the voice of the organization.

4. Analysis of the responses of the NGO sector – possibilities, problems and good practices of cooperation

We consider the perspective of the non-governmental sector to be very important in the context of this research, because the NGO sector can be considered “interconnected” between citizens and the state institutions, especially considering that in the reality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, many laws, regulations and obligations of state institutions
stand only as a dead letter on paper, and here the NGO sector is often an entity that takes over the social protection of the citizen on its own. Therefore, within the research we have also prepared questions for organizations, with five open questions, in order to gain insight into activities, practices, information, cooperation opportunities and problems in cooperation, and support from state institutions. In this, we focused primarily on the so-called non-governmental organizations that deal with the protection of women’s rights or otherwise work directly with women. The questionnaire is intended only for organizations operating in smaller local communities.

Unfortunately, it is necessary to highlight the alarming situation within the NGO sector where only 6 organizations considered themselves competent to answer questions and set aside time for this although a large number of organizations were contacted through the Women’s Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Peace Building Network in BiH. We cannot conclusively determine the reason for such a poor response to the questionnaire. Is it a lack of funds, projects, staffing, competencies and activities, time to monitor women and peace networks or alike, or simply the infection with general apathy and lethargy that governs the society in BiH, but what is very important to point out is that this state of affairs points to the need to strengthen the NGO sector, with a special focus on strengthening the cooperation and networking and targeted educations within the NGO sector, but also financial support.

We thank organizations that answered our organization questionnaire:

Association of women “Li-Woman” i Association of women „Bistrica“ from Livno, Center for education and research „Nahla” – Bihać office, Association of citizens “Budućnost” Modriča, UG ToPeer – Doboj, and Association of women “SEKA” Goražde.

4.1. Problems which organizations face when implementing activities

The most common problems encountered by organizations in carrying out activities can be classified into four different areas that are not at all independent of each other, but are conditioned and interpenetrated.

Non-governmental organizations point out that politicization is present in all areas of society, which is the most visible in smaller local communities. The problem of politicization is reflected in the fact that political parties in power support their companions, and minimize the activities and suggestions that come from civil society organizations. Due to such a situation, persons active in non-governmental organizations point out the lack of understanding by the governing structures of what they do and what they are advocating for as a difficulty they often face, which is reflected in difficult cooperation with the authorities. With this close connection, there is another problem that determines the precondition for work and activities within the organization, which is the lack of adequate space for work and money.

In addition to problems related to state support and governing structures, there is also a problem that comes from the “other side” - from the citizens. Organizations
emphasize the problem of the small response of people to the actions and activities they organize, as well as poor motivation and interest of the members of organizations, as they claim because of poverty and unemployment.

What non-governmental organizations recognize as a common problem of governing structures and “ordinary” citizens is the lack of information and insufficient knowledge of the topics and issues dealt with by organizations, primarily focusing on the problem of gender inequality and the protection of women’s rights, which in turn results in ignoring or disinterest in citizens, as well as institutions.

Specific examples of these problems are, for example, the failure of the initiative to amend the subordinate legislation on the financing of safe houses, initiated by the Citizens’ Association “Budućnost” Modriča, where it was requested that the costs be divided into fixed and variable in the financing of safe houses. Safe houses would have fixed costs regardless of the number of women and children using the services, and the variable costs would relate exclusively to the costs of the victims. Unfortunately, there is lack of support even though this initiative is the most reasonable proposal and an attempt to improve the existing situation and the problem of financing safe houses, said the Association of Citizens “Budućnost” Modriča. This association also points out that all the positive processes that have been developing for years in the local community have been stopped. For example, this year, the Municipal Assembly of Modriča did not include the Report on Violence against Women in its work program, although since 2007, this topic has been continuously reviewed on a yearly basis. There are many other indicators of the retrograde procedures of local authorities in this municipality as well as other municipalities.

UG ToPeeR from Doboj emphasizes that although they have good cooperation and communication with many organizations, in the end, all efforts are stopped at educations, discussions and meetings due to the insufficient support and interest of local institutions. In particular, they emphasize the demands and pressure of organizations related to gender-sensitive budgeting. In addition, they find it very difficult to get information that is necessary for work and activities due to the lack of transparency in work and poor openness for cooperation by institutions.

The Association of Women “Li-Woman” from Livno says that education is the only successful initiative that has been going on for a long time with young people, women and men. Experience with state institutions is often not successful because most people within institutions understand the term gender as something that does not have a scientific basis and which is contrary to the traditional values of the family, and only advocacy for gender equality for such persons means supporting everything that is not “normal”, stated the women from Li-Woman.
4.1. Good practices of cooperation

In addition to the bad experiences and obstacles encountered by activists, there are also examples of good and successful cooperation, which is also very important to mention. Here we will mention only some of the examples that organizations emphasize in particular.

One of the successful initiatives is the cooperation that took place during the adoption of the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence in Republika Srpska. At that time, cooperation with all relevant ministries and the Gender Center of Republika Srpska was achieved, said the Association of Citizens “Budućnost” Modriča.

Li-Woman states that they worked with the municipality to form a Gender Equality Commission in Canton 10, as well as the mayors of municipalities on the occasion of initiating the initiative to establish a Safe House in Canton 10. In addition, as a good practice, the Gender Center (Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), in cooperation with the non-governmental sector, adopted the Strategy for the Prevention and Fight against Domestic Violence. Also, they emphasize activities and cooperation with NGO “Women of Grahovo”, which are doing a lot on education and economic empowerment of women both in Grahovo and in the whole Canton, as well as with the Center for Civic Cooperation in Livno, which implemented the project “Promoting the Law on Gender Equality in Canton 10”.

The Women’s Association Bistrica states successful cooperation with the Cantonal Hospital in Livno, where the “Early Breast Cancer Screening Program” is implemented. They successfully carried out a fundraising campaign for the procurement of mammography and lymphatic drainage equipment.

An example of good cooperation practice is definitely the initiative of the Center for Education and Research “Nahla” – Bihać office, which suggested that we expand the research to the area of Bihać and the surroundings. From the need and desire to continuously listen to the needs and problems of women from their region, they volunteered to make interviews with women in this area. CURE Foundation has accepted the proposal and this research is richer thanks to the interest and initiative of women from this organization. It is interesting to note that thanks to the relevant and burning issues that this research has touched on, two organizatons, CURE Foundation, which actively works on feminist principles through advocacy for social and political change and the “Nahla” organization that is actively working on education and empowerment of women from the spiritual aspect have connected.

4.2. Organizations report on the problems of women

Given that it is difficult to get information on the ground because of taboos in our society, such as domestic violence, sexual violence and the like, in addition to questions about activities, good practices, possibilities of cooperation and problems in cooperation with state institutions and NGOs sector, we asked organizations also what
are the problems of women with whom they are in contact through their work. It was very important for us to get this information from the NGO’s, since the NGO sector takes over most of the state’s work in the field of social protection, and thus feels the voice of the socially most vulnerable groups of women through the organization’s report.

Women’s Association Li-Woman from Livno states that the most frequent problems women face are in relation to domestic violence and economic dependence. In their responses, the problem is that the economic dependence of women is a major problem, which is a consequence of the patriarchal system of values, which often further prevents a woman from thinking about her rights, to see herself as equal to the dominant group. In this regard, many projects for the economic empowerment of women were realized in order to improve their position in society. Also, peace projects were launched where women were the bearers of the activities. They further stated that the results of the research that was conducted were “expected” as well as in other environments, and that gender equality is almost non-existent. They try to influence these problems by educations and initiate a protocol on cooperation with government institutions for taking measures and drafting documents that would address gender equality issues.

UG ToPeeR from Doboj states that various research was often carried out within their activities in order to identify the problem of the community in which they operate. The root cause of most of the problems is the lack of recognition of the needs of women, especially by the institutions, and as examples state the lack of a gender sensitive budget, insufficient incentives for women entrepreneurs (whereby the limiting factor is that the property is not in their possession). In addition, it is seen as a problem that many women’s associations are not sufficiently sensitized, and often do not have enough knowledge, skills, or resources to initiate public policy change initiatives, but direct their activities in two directions - socializing and possibly promoting arts and crafts.

The Center for Education and Research “Nahla” – Bihać office, emphasizes primarily poor education on disease prevention, poor or slow health care system, long waiting for specialist examinations (which often has fatal consequences), lack of compensation for unemployed women (100 KM one-time assistance for unemployed mothers in the Una-Sana Canton), lack of public transport, as the main problems faced by women with whom they come in contact.

The Citizens’ Association “Budućnost” Modriča provides various types of support to women, such as, for example, counseling (legal, psychological, social), shelter for women and children who are victims of violence, and therefore have a good insight into the problems of women from their community. In this regard, they initiated a series of activities related to the adoption or modification of legal and by-laws for women victims of war, women victims of domestic violence, and the achievement of gender equality in political and public action. They cooperated with different institutions, and in this context they often encountered barriers for various reasons, and most often for
financial ones. What is an alarming and serious problem is that institutions, such as the Center for Social Work, even though they are in the job description, do not inform their clients about the rights they have, so many citizens miss the deadlines and do not know that they can to exercise a certain right.

AW “SEKA” Goražde also recognizes that the most alarming problem that women encounter is related to domestic violence, and plans to conduct research on domestic violence in 2017 and to investigate how domestic violence cases have been resolved through police records, centers for social work and their association in the last 5 years since there is a coordination team for the prevention of domestic violence in the BPC area. The goal is to get information about the reasons why women remain in violent marriages / partnerships and how to remove these obstacles and create conditions tailored to the needs of survivors of violence. In doing so they want to cooperate with all the institutions that are the actors in solving the problems of domestic violence in the BPC area and Goražde.

5. Analysis of the questionnaires from women – part of the project

In order to create a more comprehensive picture, our plan was to do at least 250 interviews with women, focusing on the four regions that represent the main focus of the project in which the research was conducted:

1. Romanija and East Sarajevo (Pale, Sokolac, Rogatica, Istočno Sarajevo, Trnovo, Bjelosavljevići, Podromanija, Prača)
2. Wide area of Sarajevo (Hadžići, Ilijaš, Hrasnica, Semizovac, Visoko, Kakanj)
3. Canton 10 (Livno, Kupres, Bugojno, Drvar, Tomislavgrad, Bosansko Grahovo)
4. Tuzla and surroundings (Tuzla, Srebrenik, Špionica, Gračanica, Orašje, Gradačac)

During the research, the focus was expanded to the Una-Sana Canton, thanks to the initiative and cooperation with the Center for Education and Research “Nahla” - the branch of Bihać, and in addition to the above regions, the answers from the women from:

5. Bihać and surroundings.

As part of the survey, 317 interviews were conducted, half of which were done directly with women on the ground, and the other half were online. For the region of Eastern Sarajevo and Romania, 58 interviews were conducted, the wider area of Sarajevo 53, in Canton 10 a total of 75 were made, and in the Tuzla Canton 66 interviews. In addition, 65 random interviews were conducted in other cities and smaller towns in BiH as a control group, which is classified in the category “Other”. In this category are included smaller places that do not belong to the mentioned groups, but also bigger cities such as Mostar, Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Doboj etc.
Table 1. Number of responses by chosen locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romanija i East Sarajevo</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide area of Sarajevo</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canton 10</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuzla and surroundings</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1. Profiles of women who participated in the research – Jobs and incomes

In our sample of 317 women respondents were women between the ages of 15 and 83, with an average age of 41 years. Regarding the level of education among women who participated in the research, 3% were without primary school, 5% only with elementary school, 6% had a craftsmanship, 41% completed high school with matriculation, and the largest number of participants had a university degree or higher vocational school, 44% of them. The largest percentage of women work full-time, 40% of them, while 5% work part-time, 22% of women are unemployed and looking for work, 12% are retired women and 12% housewives, while 10% are still in the process education.

The data on women’s jobs in relation to their level of education is interesting. Among the women who stated they have employment (40% full time and 5% part-time), as many as 92.5% work according to their level of education. By contrast, 8% of women say that they work in positions below their level of education.

Given that a large number of women in our sample state that they are not working and that they are looking for work, it is surprising that so few women work in positions below their level of education. For such a situation, many factors may be the reason, for example, the fact that women who do not have permanent employment do not mention occasional part-time jobs, or, as with the women from Hrasnica, who informed us orally that they are working as cleaners or guarding children in families in Sarajevo, but do not state it officially as a job. In addition, some women state that in the household, through the garden and breeding of chickens or similar, they can create the value of the average “labor” salary, and therefore they prefer to decide to dedicate themselves to household income, rather than working at poorly paid and unsafe jobs. In this context it is important to mention that women state that they have been doing badly paid jobs for many years and that they have not been paid contributions. Do women not report unreported and occasional jobs, because they are paid more to do business within their household than to work out their skills or because they have been tired of poor working conditions, employers who badly pay and do not pay...
contributions, or simply no available jobs of lower professional qualifications, remains as a open question for further research.

Although we have a large number of highly educated women in our sample, and of the total number of women claiming to have paid employment, in most cases they are employed in accordance with their level of education, women’s incomes are still very poor. Thus, 35% of women report that they do not have any personal income, 22% have incomes below 500 KM, from 500 to 1000KM of monthly income accounts for 28% of women, and over 1000 KM, only 14% of women. Therefore, women in our sample, although they are mostly highly qualified and working in positions according to their level of education, are still in a large majority in poorly paid positions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women’s personal income</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 500 KM</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 500 to 1.000 KM</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 1.000 to 1.500 KM</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 1.500 to 2.500 KM</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2.500 KM</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Women’s personal income*

Income in the entire household is also very poor, especially since (according to the persons with whom the women live in households) there are three to four people on average in the household. More than half of women report that their monthly income for the entire household is up to 1000 KM, and even 21% below 500 KM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income in household</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 500 KM</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 500 to 1.000 KM</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 1.000 to 1.500 KM</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 1.500 to 2.500 KM</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2.500 KM</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Income in household*

Commenting on income, some women state that without the help of their relatives
abroad they would not be able to settle all life obligations, and such comments are especially common in the Tuzla Canton. Thus, the inflow of money from abroad is present as a resource for improving living standards. On the other hand, women who are dedicated only to households often state that income from husbands is not sufficient, and that they generate additional income in the household, for example by nurturing the garden, by raising animals, etc. So, while 35% of women say that they do not have any income, there is definitely an unpaid so-called “invisible” work of women that affects the improvement of family living standards also in the terms of increasing income.

We asked women about their subjective experience of the economic situation they are in, and to evaluate their personal economic status with grades between one and seven, 1 means very dissatisfied and represents the worst grade, and 7 marks the highest possible rating. The lowest average women’s rating is assessed by women in Canton 10 with an average score of 2.88; Romanija and Eastern Sarajevo are rated with an average score of 3.69; followed by Tuzla and its surroundings with an average score of 3.85; and women from cities and places around Sarajevo with the average score of 3.98 are best rated.
Romanija and East Sarajevo; Wide area of Sarajevo and ZD Canton; Canton 10; Tuzla and surroundings; Other

1.2. Help from the state

Although we can see that the incomes are very poor, only 7% of women state that they receive help from the state, and most of the women receive help in the form of a child allowance, namely 9 of 317, social assistance for only 3 people, unemployment benefit for only 2 persons, aid for civilian victims of war 3, invalidity 3, municipal scholarship 2, supplement for care 2, incentive for self-employment only 1 person. According to this data, we can see that the state aid is insufficient in relation to information on low household income, and that the social protection system works very poorly. In addition, it should be noted that incentives from the state are very rare, and that of 317 women, only one states that she is receiving an incentive for self-employment. It is particularly worrying that we have a case where a divorced woman (from Sokolac, Romanija), with three underage children and without any income, states that she does not receive any help from the state. Why is this so and how it all came to be should be further explored.

1.3. Understanding nationality and religion

As the project was determined to include women from different social, national and ethnic groups in this survey, we asked women about their national and religious affiliation. The question was of an open type, without pre-categorized, offered answers, as it is customary. Our goal was to leave women free to express their views how they want to, but also to examine the impact of pre-imposed categorizations that are common when questions about religious and national affiliation are raised.

Women who participated in the survey answered with as much as 15% of the cases that they are Bosnians or BiH citizens. Furthermore, the majority of women declared themselves Bosniaks, 36% of them, followed by 21% of Serbs, 14% of Croats, and 2% of Roma women.

How great the impact of the categorization imposed by the state and its institutions, but also education and media, is most evident in the answer where women state that they belong to the “Other” in answering the question of national affiliation. Although there were no answers offered where they had to sort themselves out and write anything, they still designate their nationality as “Others”, that is, they perceive it as something invisible without the need to name it specifically.

In addition, there is a rebellion against such imposed categories, where a large number of women, even 20% of them, either do not want to declare themselves on national or religious affiliation, or explicitly state “I do not belong”. In addition, we have one person who says that he is a multi-ethnic and multinational affiliate, as well as one alien.
The influence of the last political system on the experience of national belonging is also interesting, and so there are 15 women who declare themselves Muslim and 2 Yugoslav women among the women who completed the questionnaire, i.e. a total of 5%.

When asked about religious affiliation, we have the largest number of members of Islamic faith, 46% of them, then 19% of Orthodox Christians, and 14% of women belong to the Catholic Church. In addition, we have atheists and agnostics 6%, 12% of them did not want to make a statement or stated “I do not belong”. There are also individual cases where we have one pantheistic and one person who states “Others” under religious affiliation.

It is interesting to note that 19% of women state their religious or ethnic affiliation, or both in a male gender, and thus women state that they are, for example, Bosniak, Croat or Serb, and almost 3% of them mix nationality and religious affiliation. The largest number of women claiming their nationality in a male gender can be found with Bosniaks, then Croats and Serbs.

Data analysis has shown that there is a statistically significant tendency for women who are defined as members of one of the three “constituent” nations, according to the categorization of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to experience their national affiliation as a conditionally “masculine” thing and express it in a masculine gender. The highest percentage of women Bosniaks is expressed in masculine gender, 33% of them, followed by Croats (23%), followed by Serbs in less than 9%, but more often they mix nationality and religious affiliation, 5% of them. We assume that there is a great influence of the media, formal education programs and public discourses of political elites on this expression of national and religious affiliation.

When we divide the sample into women who declare themselves as members of one of the constituent peoples and those who talk about themselves differently and outside of these frameworks, and then exclude women who do not express themselves either on national or religious affiliation, the experience of nationality and religious affiliation looks like this:
Illustration 2. Expression of national and religious affiliation

ILLUSTRATION TRANSLATION:

Expression of national and religious affiliation; female gender or neutral expression; mixes nacional and religious affiliation; constitutive peoples; expresses differently

We can see that women who “differently” declare their national and religious affiliation are significantly less confused about their nationality and religious affiliation, and to a lesser extent they mix nationality and religious affiliation and are less often referred to as women in the male gender.

It is also interesting that the level of education does not have a significant impact on the tendency of expressing in the wrong gender and the blending of nationality and religion, which is not strange because according to the analysis of primary school textbooks, we learn that ethnicity and religious affiliation are unambiguous and in the textbooks women are not sufficiently represented and gender-sensitive language almost does not exist.

The conclusion is that women who are more critical of imposed categorizations by the state, its institutions, the media, and education are significantly more aware of their gender, as well as the differences between ethnicity, religion and nationality. Looking and responding to the question asked, they are more aware and critically perceiving their nationality and religious affiliation as their own and expressed in their own gender, rather than in an imposed “masculine” gender.
1.4. Living conditions and ownership of housing

As many studies have shown, women’s major problem is that they do not own real estate in their own name, especially if they are married or live with someone in a community. Only 19% of women live in a house or apartment that reads in her name or is 2/1 - in her name and somebody else’s. Of the married women or women who live in an extramarital community, only 17% of them live in a home or apartment that reads in their name or is 2/1 - in her name and in somebody else’s.

With this in mind, it is interesting to provide more details about where divorced women live in our sample. Even 31% of women claiming to be divorced live in rented apartments and represent the highest percentage of women who claim to live in rented accommodation. Furthermore, 50% of divorced women live in the home or apartment of another member of the family, and only 19% live in an apartment that is in their name. So in more than 80% of cases when a woman decides to divorce she begins to live as a tenant or moves into the house or apartment of some of the members of the family.

The positive value is that the overall average rating by which women assessed their housing situation is relatively high. We asked women to evaluate their housing situation with grades from 1 to 7 and the average grade from the entire population sample was 4.9, which is a solid grade. Women in the region of Romanija and East Sarajevo give the worst grade, and the best grade is in Tuzla and Tuzla surroundings, but in all regions the average grade is above 4.
1.5. Investments and the possibility of investing in personal gain

In order to examine practices and opportunities for participation in society, social engagement and investment in personal profits, we asked women whether they are active in an association or organization, how much it affects the general quality of their lives, and whether they have recently participated in courses, workshops, vocational training or the like, which relates to their personal interest or further education and/or vocational training. In addition, in the context of investments and the possibility of investing in personal profits it was of great importance to examine both the state of health and the practice related to regular medical examinations.

1.5.1. The possibilities and practices for personal and/or professional growth

Most of the women who filled out our questionnaire participated in courses, workshops, vocational trainings or the like in the last year or plan to participate, 58% of them. Of the remaining 42% who state that they did not participate or plan to participate in the next year, only 22% state that the reason for this is the lack of desire and interest in
such activities. The rest of them, as many as 78% of respondents, state that they do not participate in courses, workshops, vocational training or the like because they are prevented for various reasons. **So in almost 80% of cases, women have the will but are prevented from investing in their personal and/or professional development**, and as the most common reason they state that they are financially unable to participate in courses, workshops, vocational trainings or the like. A big problem that women point out is also that there is nothing in the offer available to them that corresponds to their interests, and the next by the frequency of referencing women point out as an obstacle that they do not have time for such activities due to business and/or family obligations.

1.5.2. **The importance of NGOs**

There is 41% of women who are members of associations, organizations, religious communities and similar or their occasional visitors, so most women are not engaged in this matter. Unfortunately, we did not ask for a reason for non-participation in associations and organizations, but we asked for their significance. Women’s associations, cultural and leisure associations and sports associations have the greatest significance and positive impact on the general quality of life of women, and for them 100% of women state that they have a positive influence due to various factors. As examples of the positive influence of women, they say that engagement in civil society organizations enables useful and productive socializing within organizations, making acquaintances, exchanging ideas, then the possibility of involvement and engagement in the community, gaining new experiences, taking care of oneself and your body, increasing self-confidence and knowledge and the like. Trade unions have the slightest positive impact, and women who are trade union members often say that unions do not protect workers’ rights enough, and they feel powerless within the union.

1.5.3. **Regular health examinations – possibilities and practices**

Non-governmental organizations warn that a major problem in the prevention of illness is insufficient health education and the importance of regular health check-ups. Our results show that while women in 93% of cases have health insurance, in as many as 35% of cases they do not go to regular medical check-ups.

We must point out that there is probably a much greater percentage of women who do not go to regular health check-ups, since the notion of “regular health examinations” is unclear to many women with whom we have contacted in the research. An experiment was conducted in the Tuzla Canton with women who responded to the questionnaire directly with researchers, and we were orally asked by women who were instructed to go to regular medical examinations, what this in practice means specifically in their example, where in the vast majority of cases women indicated that they were going “as needed” and “as soon as they felt the discomfort”, or within the scope of their jobs as regular systematic examinations.

Concerning are the reasons why women do not go to health checkups. The highest
percentage of women, 37% of them, say that the reason is that they are financially unable to go to regular health checkups and that is a very worrying fact since women in 93% of cases have regular health insurance. **So women, even though they are in the possession of health insurance, consider that regular medical examinations are something they have to pay extra.** Why is it like that we do not have enough data to say with certainty, but we can see from the following responses that women state as reasons why they do not go to regular health check-ups. 22% of women report that they do not have time for medical examinations with the explanation that they wait a long time for examinations, or even if a person has a pre-arranged appointment, she must spend more hours in front of the clinic, even the entire working day to have a check-up. Especially controversial are the appointments at the gynecologists according to women. It is also alarming that even 16% of women lack confidence in health care staff in public hospitals and health centers, and as many as 13% of women do not go to regular examinations because they are far away from the Health Center where they can do it and do not have adequate transportation to it. 13

In addition, many women who conduct regular health examinations state that although they have health insurance, such examinations are most often performed in private clinics, because otherwise the appointment takes too long, healthcare staff is not dedicated enough to them, and because the quality of service is generally poor in public health institutions due to the lack of equipment, apparatus and the like. According to these data, we can see that access to health services and the right to health is not equally afforded to all women in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to the listed reasons where women are prevented by external factors to go to regular health examinations, there are factors that depend on the individual, her attitude towards her health and information, so almost 10% of women do not go to examinations because they think it is not important to go on regular medical check-ups, and 3% of women state that they do not go out of negligence and laziness. Therefore, education on the prevention of the disease and the importance of the examination is something to be done especially, and it is important to emphasize that the **highest percentage of women who do not go to regular medical examinations is among unemployed women.**

1.6. Women grade... part I

Within the questionnaire, women had the opportunity to evaluate the importance and quality of the offered items that relate to different aspects that affect the general quality of their lives. In the first group are items **related to the possibilities of self-development and investment in personal profit,** which include: job and employment opportunities; formal and non-formal education; health care; religion; exercise and physical activity.

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13 Information received on-site within the CURE Foundation's activities - most women have to pay for participation prior to individual examinations, and also some medications or examinations themselves (reagents, hormones, etc.) must be paid at 10KM or more. Particularly important is the problem of transport to the nearest health institution (larger institutions where specialist examinations are carried out) - the example is Canton 10 where women from Bosansko Grahovo have to go to Livno or Mostar to a larger health institution must pay a minimum of 50 KM in one direction.
As the most important aspects for the quality of personal life women evaluate health care and employment / work, formal and non-formal education, followed by exercise and physical activity, and the following as the least important in relation to other stated aspects of life is religion. It is important to point out that the least important in relation to other aspects is religion, but still it received a relatively high average grade of 4.8 (evaluated in grades from 1 to 7), therefore, it is still relatively significant in women’s lives.

Illustration 4. Grades of relevance by chosen regions for the possibility of self development and investment in personal gain

ILLUSTRATION TRANSLATION: Employment/work, Formal and non-formal education, Health care, Religion, Exercise and physical activity

Interestingly, the exact opposite result can be found in women’s assessments of the question of how they assess the current state and the ability to exercise their rights in the same areas. The reality in BiH is such that priorities related to living needs and improvement of quality of life are poorly taken into account by those who have socio-political influence. Thus, the best rated is the ability to practice religion, which, in relation to other factors, is rated as least important for the general quality of life. Possibilities to exercise and have physical activity are also rated by a high average grade. Poor grades were given to the situation and opportunities within formal and non-formal education, then in the framework of health care, and the worst grade was given the possibility of employment and achievement at work. The worst situation in all of these items is in Canton 10.
Ilustracija 5. Ocjene trenutnog stanja po izabranim regijama za stavke koje se odnose na mogućnost samorazvoja i ulaganja u ličnu dobit

ILLUSTRATION TRANSLATION: Employment/work, Formal and non-formal education, Health care, Religion, Exercise and physical activity

Women were given the opportunity to comment when evaluating each of the items offered. The reasons for low grades in assessing job opportunities and achievements at work are the following: corruption, nepotism and party influence in employment, employers who do not pay contributions, low salaries, poor possibilities for promotion and job change. Women who are owners of independent craft shops state that large obligations imposed by the state in relation to income, and that there are no available incentives by the state, such as an adequate incentive to hire or train a third person within a craft shop, and therefore it is impossible to take human resources for financial reasons, although this would have a positive impact on employment growth, especially among young people entering the labor market.

Formal and non-formal education is most often rated by low grades due to corruption and poor organization within formal education, especially at state faculties. In addition, because of the lack of opportunities for further education or retraining and training, for financial reasons or because there is nothing in the offer that is available and can be aligned with the obligations.

In the healthcare sector, the most frequent problems are the waiting times for examinations, and the fact that healthcare personnel are not sufficiently dedicated to patients, then the lack of necessary equipment, the departure of quality personnel abroad, and the fact that many services ultimately have to be paid in addition to health insurance (such as pensioners’ annual marks or many medicines that have to be taken regularly, and free of charge within health insurance can be taken only a few times a year and so on). Often, there is a particularly bad attitude of medical staff towards the elderly.

When commenting on the assessment of the given essence to religion and the possibility of practicing it women often state, and even women who judge religion as very important in their lives, that there is too much “godliness” in relation to the things that are needed in everyday life and in carrying out everyday activities. One example is the situation in which a religious woman who is 74 years of age from Donja Špionica in the Tuzla Canton states that there are two mosques near the house, and that the nearest Health Center is tens of kilometers away. In addition, it should be emphasized that religious minorities assess the possibility of practicing religion with lower grades.

The ability to exercise and have physical activity women most often assessed well because of the proximity to nature, and bad for personal reasons, such as poor health or lack of time, and there is also the problem of infrastructure, the lack of bicycle paths and the like.
1.7. Women grade... part II

We then asked women to evaluate the given items related to the relationship with the community in which they live: state services (e.g. police, firefighters, state institutions); public education and state schools; security in the neighborhood in which they live; the feeling of communion and mutual help and solidarity in the community in which they live; social and cultural events offered in the place of residence.

The most important for the quality of life in the community where women live is security in the neighborhood and a sense of community and mutual help and solidarity. Next for the importance of the quality of life in the community are public education, state schools and state services, and at the very end are the social and cultural events offered at the place of residence, but which are still very important for the general quality of life in the community, with an average grade of 5.7.

Regarding the assessment of the current situation in different areas of life in local communities, only rated by an overall average score above 5 (with a maximum score of 7) is security in the neighborhood, and this is the only area where Canton 10 has the highest grade in all other areas, because Canton 10 is worst rated. All other isolated areas are rated at an average grade below 4.5, and ratings for the work of state services and for social and cultural events offered at the place of residence are the lowest, with a score below 4.

As a reason for poor ratings of state services, women report corruption, especially in police, then slow and inadequate response, primarily of the police, but also of the judiciary, and that state services “work for themselves but do not serve the people”. In addition, women from Tuzla state that civil protection does not do their job and ignore the big problem of pollution in Tuzla despite numerous warnings.

Problems related to the social and cultural events that are offered in the place of residence are that events in the smaller towns are rarely organized, especially cultural events are problematic, and the homes of culture that have previously enabled various contents have now been inactive for a long time or “turned in cafes and taverns.”

Illustration 6. Grade of current state in chosen regions regarding the relation to the community in which women live
ILLUSTRATION TRANSLATION: Employment/work, Formal and non-formal education, Health care, Religion, Exercise and physical activity

In addition to the items listed in the questionnaire, women had the opportunity to add and evaluate other important things to them that were not mentioned. The possibility of achieving social assistance is stated as important, and it is rated by the worst grade.

In addition, women further state that in the community in which they live they would like to have available, but they do not have or have very poor quality offered the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women state that in the community in which they live they would like to have available, but they do not have or have very poor quality offered:</th>
<th>Place of residence:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- adequate assistance for farmer households - financial incentives, but also education and training (cite women from Romanija)</td>
<td>Romanija i East Sarajevo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- organized meetings in the place to discuss problems (Romanija)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- program and quality and accessible playgrounds for children (Romanija)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- direct transport to Sarajevo (East Sarajevo)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- public public transport to Sarajevo, as well as night transport (stated by women from Hrasnica and Ilijaš)</td>
<td>wider area of Sarajevo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- better conditions in kindergartens, especially in regards to cleanliness and safety (Hrasnica)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- functional Cultural Center with more content and quality program (Hrasnica)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
-offered and financially accessible courses of languages, computers, hobbies and art courses, handicrafts and the like (B. Grahovo)

-alliance of pensioners and organized gathering of pensioners (B. Grahovo)

-quality and comprehensive care for elderly people

-library, cinema (Drvar)

-quality content and program for children (Gračanica and Srebrenik)

-a safe place for cycling, safe path for cyclists (Gračanica and Srebrenik)

-greater investment in cleanliness of the city (Srebrenik)

-incentives for small entrepreneurs and for starting their own business (Gračanica)

-better conditions in kindergartens, especially as regards to cleanliness and safety (Srebrenik, Tuzla)

-more parks for children and better maintenance of them (Tuzla, Srebrenik, Gračanica)

Table 3. Women state that in the community in which they live they would like to have available, but they do not have or have very poor quality offered

1.8. Resources for legal advice and urgent cases

In order to investigate who the women are relying on in emergencies or if they need legal advice and who they consider to be a relevant resource in this regard, we asked women to tell us who they would address in the mentioned cases, whereby it was emphasized that they should state all resources which they consider essential.

In 40% of cases, women point out that legal advice and emergency assistance are primarily required from the family, friends, neighbors and acquaintances. In 23% of cases, they also rely on municipal authorities and state services, with only 4% of women in this area particularly claiming free legal aid in municipalities. In addition, in 9% of cases, women rely on the non-governmental sector, with some NGOs pointing out that they refer to lawyers and paid professionals to 10% of cases. It is a disturbing fact that 12% of women say that they do not know who to contact, and 4% say that there is no one to address for different reasons.
Who do you ask for legal advice or in an emergency? | Procentage
---|---
Friends, neighbors, family | 39.5%
Generally, municipal authorities and other state services | 19.3%
Concretely point out free legal aid | 3.9%
Attorneys and paid professionals | 10.3%
NGOs | 8.7%
I do not know who to turn to | 12.2%
I do not have anyone to turn to | 4.2%
Internet | 1.9%

Table 4. Who do you ask for legal advice or in an emergency?

Thus, women’s emergency resources and legal advice are primarily sought in the family and friends circle, in addition to privately engaged professionals and the NGO sector, and they are much less reliant on state institutions, as they state, municipal authorities and other state services “do not have time” to devote to them, and they do not give timely and complete information. For free legal aid and legal counseling in municipalities, very little is known, and only 4% of respondents talk about this type of assistance in the survey.

The practice of not trusting state bodies and institutions whose purpose is to work for the welfare of the citizens is very controversial. People from the lower social classes who often do not have friends in these circles to provide sufficient resources for the necessary information about their rights and the possibility of protecting them, or if they do not have the means to pay experts, they are forced to move in a vicious circle that they can hardly come out of if they do not have the opportunity to reach for other information resources. The second major problem in this context are the topics that are taboo, such as domestic violence, and if certain topics are not suitable for a conversation within their private circle, then only the state authorities and institutions, or possibly the NGO sector, can help.

This practice of mistrust and failure to rely on state authorities and institutions is very controversial and affects the most vulnerable sections of society. Legal counseling and legal assistance available to everyone should be provided by the state, and it should enable citizens to receive timely and complete information in order to be able to act as subjects in claiming their rights. However, where there are such mechanisms of information, counseling and provision of legal assistance, they are very poorly known and not accessible to all.
1.9. Women daydream...

We tried to get at least a superficial insight into what women in Bosnia and Herzegovina daydream about. In order to share at least partly the fantasies of women, we asked them to spend 2000 KM as a gift.

More than 46% of respondents have no room to daydream because they have to take care of settling basic needs within the family or otherwise to spend it on family members because they have to repay debts from the “black days”. Other respondents daydream about education, education for themselves and/or their children, then on travel and family vacation, starting a private business, and helping people in need and investing in the welfare of the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you spend 2000 KM?</th>
<th>Procentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responding to the basic needs within the family</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and further training (themselves, children or others)</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning debts and saving for “ God forbid”</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation, travels, seaside with the family</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For humanitarian purposes / helping others from my surroundings and for the benefit of the community</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in private business</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a car or a drivers licence</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To move abroad</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay to get employment</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5. How would you spend 2000 KM?*

1. I feel different because I am...

In order to deepen the analysis, complete it and enrich it with individual confessions and allegations, we asked women whether on any basis they feel different looking at themselves or do they see a different attitude and treatment towards them in their local community, due to different identities which are attributed to them and the specificity of their way of life, origin, or the like. In this part of the analysis, the
responses of all women responding to the questionnaire, both the region selected in
the framework of the project, and the supplement from the Una-Sana Canton, i.e.
a total of 534 interviews, were processed. Women answered that they often feel
differently treated because they are:

1.1. Part I – Simply a woman

1.1.1. Woman in the private sphere

In almost all of today’s societies, there is a division into two spheres: public and private,
where traditionally women are trapped in the private sphere, and the sphere of public
belongs exclusively to men. Pressure, repression, and violence against women is
happening primarily in the private sphere, but it does not stop there but continues to
expand its activities to the public sphere.

On the other hand, the protection of the private sphere is considered to be one of
the most important human rights, however as much as the protection of the private
sphere is important, it allows a violation of women’s rights not to be regarded as a
violation of human rights, but to denote it as a private problem in which the state does
not want to meddle. Such a situation leads to the failure to recognize and ignore the
violation of human rights specific to women.

The undeniable fact is that politic appears in all social relations, from home to state
institutions. From a young age, even within the family, women have been taught that
they are those who need to take care of the household and children, and that the
eventual division of responsibilities regarding the care of common children and the
joint household with male members is merely “help” on their part. Therefore, simply
being a woman buried in the private sphere, to which the protection of basic human
rights is difficult to reach, stops a woman in all other aspects of her life.

Some of the women who shared with us their personal experiences say that they
neglected their health because they were the only ones who were expected to fully
devote themselves to others:

“Women have little time for themselves in addition to all obligations. I did not have
the time or the place to take care of my health, and now I am in a very bad state of
health. In the last 15 years I have nursed firstly my disabled mother-in-law, and then
my disabled husband. The doctor asked me recently if I was under stress—ridiculous! “, Srebrenik

Such a situation creates a vicious circle from which it is difficult to get out, since women
if they want to take the place in the public sphere, they should have the opportunity
and time to dedicate themselves to self care, to their career, and have the opportunity
and time to invest in themselves and their development, which is often not the case,
so one of the respondents points out:

“All obligations are on the women, especially if there additionally have children. There
is no time for ourselves because she is expected to be always there for others. The
women managed to fight for their rights to work, but they had not yet won the right
not to be considered as maids because it is a “female job”. And how can you then
Women, as victims of the inherited and generally accepted patriarchal system of values, which is still dominating the Bosnian society, unfortunately often do not question such a situation at all, but take up and play their role without criticism, while others are aware that they have been brought in an unfair position and that they should wake up and spread the critical awareness about it:

“You do not think about yourself in the sense that you fulfill yourself and your needs. Awareness of this among women in our country is underdeveloped, it needs to develop. “, Srebrenik

1.1.2. Housewife without personal income

Women who think that they feel differently treated because they are housewives without paid employment have also spoken. The particular difficulties they encounter are the subjective feeling of powerlessness, first of all because of financial dependence on the husband, lack of freedom, less appreciation by others, for example in school and state institutions.

“As a housewife who does not have a paid job, it is considered that I have to be at the service of everyone 24/7, and I am chronically ill.”, Podromanija

“I am a housewife with only primary education, and for this reason they misuse my knowledge in public institutions, and especially in the Health Center Ilijaš.”, Ilijaš

In addition to this, it is necessary to emphasize that housewives often enter depressed conditions, precisely because of the feeling of helplessness, isolation and reduced sense of control over their lives due to dependence on others, thus one woman states:

“I have no difficulty or advantage. I’m on a monotonous ride. “, Sokolac

A major problem with housewives is the lack of recognition and the invisibility of their work and insufficient protection by the state, and thus a woman from Srebrenik (Tuzla Canton) states:

“Although I am 62, I do not have the right to a pensioner’s discount for bus tickets when I go to my son, only my husband has, but I do not, even though I have been working in my household for my whole life. “, Srebrenik

1.1.3. Mother

A woman is as a mother, or even just as a potential mother, discriminated against in the labor market itself, because of her specific reproductive role, and against such a practice little is being done in Bosnia and Herzegovina, although among the political elites there is a popular story of the white plague, where women are forced to give birth and have as many children as possible for the nation and the state. So women say:

“The most frequent reason for unemployment was precisely that I am a young woman who might soon want to have children and go to maternity leave.”, Bosanska Krupa
“When applying for a job, I am at first degraded because I am a woman and along with that I have a little child.”, Semizovac

In addition, women as mothers or potential mothers are in a bad position because of the health situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself and due to limited access to medical devices and equipment. So a woman from Bosansko Grahovo states:

“I am planning to have a child, but I do not have the confidence in the gynecological care and maternity care. I'm afraid of pain, but I do not have access to the epidural.”, Bosansko Grahovo

1.1.4. Independent parent

Women who are independent parents in Bosnia and Herzegovina face many obstacles. The first obstacle is certainly the BiH law that is very controversial, because it does not recognize the term of a single parent after divorce, but only in case of partner’s death, if the partner is prevented from performing the parental role (e.g. is serving a prison sentence), if business or parental ability is taken away from them, or if they are simply not present. According to the law, divorced women, since the Family Law does not recognize them as a special, vulnerable category, can only get help to support the child in the form of alimony. However, the big problem of single parents is precisely the impossibility of collecting alimony due to the inefficiency of the work of the judiciary of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Department for monitoring the rights of children of The Institution of the Ombudsman of BiH warns that the procedures for collecting alimony are going slowly although it is a criminal offense with a sentence of one to three years in prison. However, from this institution they state that in the last 25 years nobody has been sentenced to prison. Women are often forced to live together with children in poverty, although they have the right to alimony/reimbursement for child support by law, because the methods of avoiding paying alimony are multiple: from a simple refusal to pay money, by hiding real incomes, to work on black market so that the debtor would not be facing withdrawal of money from the account for the remaining alimony. Women independent parents state:

“Difficulties arise with the payment of alimony that according to law belongs to the child, and it is not solved due to inadequate legal regulations or more precisely criminal sanctions in case of processing. This is a reflection of the poor and inefficient justice system in BiH and all-inclusive corruption in the institutions of the government.”, Sokolac

“I have a son of 3 years. To find a job in Nela, Bingo, Adna markets, the salaries are small, and the kindergarten is expensive, because when I pay kindergarten from 7am to 4pm, it is 130 BAM, I work full time in shifts. For the second shift, I have to find a woman to take care of him and pay her, of course. What happens to my salary in the amount of 450 BAM then?! “, Bihać

Independent parents and their children emphasize that they do not receive adequate

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14 The CURE Foundation is committed to changing the terminology term “single mother”, which is one-dimensional. Instead of a single mother, we use the term independent parent. Autonomy is an empowering word, unlike a one-dimensional adjective “single” because the mother / parent has many more roles to recognize and emphasize.

15 More details on this in the above chapter „Inefficiency of the judiciary“
help and protection of their rights by state bodies and institutions, and that more active work should be done on developing and improving mechanisms for protection measures and on empowering families with independent parents:

“I want you to pay attention to women who struggle through their lives alone and to empower them.”, Sokolac

“I live without a father, and from the municipality and the state I did not have any help during my education as my younger sister does not have either. So the problem is the small amount of care of the municipality for independent mothers and giving help in raising children.”, Ilijaš

1.1.5. Divorced woman

Women also say that divorced women are often accepted differently, especially in smaller environments. A woman just because she is divorced is exposed to sexist behavior and comments, and so women state:

“Traditionalism, sexism and attitudes towards the divorced woman is that most men, especially in smaller places, feel that they can freely behave however they want towards us, which is disgusting.”, Sokolac

1.1.6. Woman without children

Women with no offspring have a similar problem. The main problems are the sexism and prejudices faced by women in the environment in which they live, but also the restriction and denial of basic rights that follow precisely because of such a sexist attitude and prejudice:

“In my surroundings I have been labeled as not being able to have a child and they are laughing at me and mocking me behind my back.”, Drvar

“I have a problem with my husband’s family because they do not admit that I have the right to my full share of inheritance because we do not have children, even though my husband and I, while he was alive, invested together in the house.”, Srebrenik

1.1.7. Woman of a different style and look

Sexist comments and prejudices are also there for women who with their appearance and style of dressing deviate from the majority and from what society has imposed as normal. If a woman deviates from the image of a “pure and modest woman”, as the ideal of the patriarchal evaluation system, then many people feel free to publicly condemn this person, often sexually harass them, excluding all moral restraints in relation to this person:

“They call me on the street, I feel the dirty looks.”, Pale

“I am bothered by the gossip and jealousy of people. Some have suspected of prostitution in regards to me, which is beyond any sense. They think this only because I deviate with my style of dressing from other women in the place where I live. People are narrow minded, not open, everything new and that does not agree with their way of
thinking bothers them. They will not listen to the other side at all, but they immediately condemn.”, Rogatica

1.1.8. Woman of different sexual orientation (lesbian, bisexual and trans* woman)

Lesbians, bisexuals and transgender women face many problems that have started since school days, and are often physically attacked only because they have different sexual orientations. Most women who say they feel different treatment because of their sexual orientation did not elaborate on what specific difficulties they are facing, probably because this implies a lifelong story that cannot be deduced into a dozen sentences, but what the women pointed out was the following:

“Most of them know, but that is not a problem for me. The main problem is that I cannot see each day my loved one because of her fear of environmental condemnation.”, Sokolac

“I do not think it is good that I have to hide in some way. I would love to walk with my beloved person wherever and whenever I wish.”, Pale

“Arguments with predominantly male relatives are the biggest problem and the famous “When are you going to get married? “ question.”, Tuzla

1.2. Woman in the public sphere

1.2.1. Woman on the labour market

Apart from the fact that pressure and exploitation in the private sphere reflects on all other aspects of life, so a woman often forgets her health, investment in professional development, career advancement, social and political engagement, and the like, women in the public sphere have other problems. Women face stereotypical judgments and evaluations that serve as instruments for maintaining existing power relations within the public sphere. In this context, women state:

“In the workplace, women are often discriminated against by men in terms of intellectual and professional abilities. The Patriarch hardly opens his eyes.”, Bihać

Thus, the patriarchy, as a social organization, produces and reproduces the cultural, political, economic and social structures and ideologies on the basis of which matrices of judgment and appreciation are created, which prolong gender inequality and female subordination. It is precisely such uncritical acceptance and reproduction of the matrices of judgment and evaluation resulting from such social order, according to which ungrounded and non-argued conclusions are provided that serve exclusively to justify and maintain a patriarchal system of values. Women are said to be emotional at the expense of intellect and the like, giving legitimacy to many to put women in a disadvantaged positions and stopping their career.

“Our local community does not treat women as men. They are on the margin, pushed aside. For all the key positions in state institutions, but also in private companies, only men are discussing and they only come into consideration. Men are looked at with greater respect, compared to women, although the same profession is in question,
quality, professional contribution, even when all this is greater in a woman. “, Srebrenik

1.2.2. Woman activist and woman feminist

Women activists and feminists most often cite positive experiences and positive effects of social engagement and activism on their lives and on building themselves as individuals, although they often feel that they are trapped in their activities and efforts. Therefore, women activists and women feminists talk about encountering many obstacles in realizing their ideas when performing activities related to civic activism and advocacy and protection of women’s rights, and that often as women activists and women feminists face many prejudices and are misconceived as gross, aggressive etc. However, what prevails in their stories they shared with us is that the obstacles are what makes them stronger, and that civic activism and advocacy for women’s rights have an impact on the growth of their self-esteem, skills, courage and overall activism has a great impact on the general quality of their lives and the welfare of the community in which they live. Women state:

“Closed minds often offend me because I actually try to provide others with a better tomorrow and a future, but they do not really hinder me because I do not care about that, I am just going forward.” Hadžićić

“Depending on how you look at it, the advantages for me are that I am an activist and feminist because I have the opportunity to fight for my own rights and rights of all women who are in some way endangered or suffer some kind of discrimination and I am knowingly influencing, together with other women, the raising of awareness in the whole society about the needs of equality and equal treatment of women and men in all segments of life. “, Livno

“Only advantages, I always have obligations, even though I am retired, I collect and have many useful information to improve my standard of living.”, Ilijaš

1.2.3. Woman in traffic

Statistics show that men engage in double the number of accidents compared to women, while the likelihood that a woman will suffer a car accident is 25% lower than a man, and that women are significantly less prone to risky behavior while driving, and hence endangering oneself and others in traffic. However, women in traffic are exposed to disdain and insults. Women state:

“Disrespect in traffic, they consider us to be lower creatures and incompetent. I also have a bad relationship with car mechanics who often try to deceive me. “, Tuzla

1.2.4. Woman without a man in a man’s world

To be “other” and to taste “otherness”\(^\text{16}\) as a woman without the protection of a man, as individuals from the dominant group, women emphasize that it is considered...
socially unacceptable, which results in a different treatment in the community. Lack of respect, environmental pressure and sexism in women’s behavior are cited as the most common problems that arise if you are a woman without a man in your closest family circle:

“Sexism is a problem, a generally accepted system of values that I find wrong - where men can be everything they want, and women cannot.”, Kupres

“Everyone pities me, I feel it. I am bothered by the fact that my family does not understand me and that they think if I am left without a husband that I am incapable of everything…”, Pale

“The lack of a male person in the family for which we are often not seriously understood, because we do not enjoy the “protection” of a man who today “finish things” in an easier way than women.”, Hadžići

“For a long time I have been a single mother and a very good mother and I do not want to get married again, even though relatives and friends are putting pressure on me. I want to bring down prejudices about single mothers.”, Sokolac

1.2.5. Woman with imposed feelings of shame

The sense of shame and is placed by psychologists in social and moral feelings, as they influence the reproduction of rules and standards in the society to which they relate, and act as mechanisms for regulating and maintaining generally accepted and imposed social rules and norms. Therefore, the sense of shame can be labeled as a “public” feeling. In psychology, the sense of shame is related to the fact that a social or moral rule has been violated. 17

In a patriarchal society, women are perceived as intruders in the public sphere, whose task is to serve and nurture others and to remain invisible in the shadow, and therefore a woman who deviates from the norms and customs commonly accepted in such a society often feels upset and indecisive with a sense of guilt, because she experiences disapproval of the dominant group in the public sphere because of who she is and what she does. As a consequence of the patriarchal system of reasoning and evaluation, women are often faced with an imposed feeling of shame just because a woman is active in public life, which leads to the loss of an appropriate image of herself in the public and the loss of self-esteem and self-confidence that stops a woman in her actions, so some respondents state:

“You mentioned religion, and it is very important to me in life. I have enough good luck, thank you Allah, but a stronger support for Allah is lacking, and that would solve many of my problems. Of course, I need to be much more active and I need to reduce the shame where it is not needed, which prevents me in many things.”, Bihać

1.3. Part II - Problems which are caused by identities and differences which are not specific only for women

1.3.1. National or ethnic minority, religious minority, displaced person, returnee

Women state that national or ethnic minorities cause many difficulties, and they emphasize that non-affiliation to “constituent” nations or the major ethnic groups in a place of residence often limits the possibility of exercising rights due to corruption, nepotism and party influence in all segments of life in BiH, and often state that employment opportunities are lower in national minorities.

“As a national minority I feel unequal with other fellow citizens, I feel like a second-class citizen.”, Tomislavgrad

In addition, some women state that as a national or ethnic minority they face numerous prejudices, and therefore are often limited in choosing a partner, or exposed to verbal insults:

“I am from a “mixed” marriage, and especially after the war, I listened to many bad comments about it, as well as stupid questions, for example: “What kind of children will they be?” and such. So, most of the verbal insults and pronouncements were maybe sometimes unconsciously addressed to me by my close friends.”, Gračanica

The experiences of national and religious minorities are not always necessarily ugly, so we can hear positive comments, for example, from a woman from Gračanica (Tuzla Canton):

“As a “displaced person” I do not have bad experiences, but a lot of friendships and nice relationships. During Easter, for example, I always make a great effort to beautifully paint eggs and share them with children, to teach children that there are different cultures and religions and to appreciate them. Everyone accepts this nicely. It matters to me very much.”, Gračanica

1.3.2. Person with disability

The most common problems faced by persons with disabilities are discrimination and prejudice, misunderstanding of the environment and inadequate relationship and help of the community in which they live, as well as insufficient commitment and efforts of the state to ensure a dignified life for persons with disabilities, and therefore limited access and achievements in many segments of life.

“The basic difficulty I face is recognition, and therefore also a tacit isolation, a consensus that I cannot do something, that I am not for something, that it is not something for me, as if I have no choice.”, Brčko

“Everything is hardly accessible for me! It takes much more work to prove myself than for those who are not disabled.”, Bugojno

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, not enough steps are taken to eliminate all the barriers faced by people with disabilities, as far as infrastructure is concerned, but also sensitizing people to the specificities of the situations in which such persons are, and
thus women state:

“*The low level of concern of the authorities about persons with disabilities, non-compliance with conventions on equalization of persons with disabilities, architectural barriers for people with disabilities are a problem.*”, Tuzla

“*Misunderstanding of the environment and inadequate attitude - as a student at a preschool education I was on music education where I even played a piano-the peak of professor’s nonsense. I am a deaf person and sound is my problem.*”, Bihać

1.3.3. Person with psycyhological problems

People with mental problems also face similar problems. Lack of understanding and prejudice, but also inadequate and incomplete medical treatment, as well as lack of programs for reintegration of persons with mental problems in the society.

“*Lack of understanding for women with different spectrum of autistic classification of disease.*”, Sarajevo

“As a mother of a daughter with a mental disability, I point out the poor understanding, lack of help and solidarity of the community and inadequate programs and treatment for people with mental disorders. More work must be done on this.*”, Tuzla

1.3.4. Elderly persons

Elderly persons are also at the margin of society without adequate assistance and protection measures:

“*I want to invest more in the future in the care of elderly people, especially elderly women, to educate people to help people in their old age.*”, Bosansko Grahovo

“*I have a fear of old age and illness because I have no right to a pension with 10 years of service, and for new employment I do not have the opportunity because I am 58 years old.*”, Livno

1.4. Part III- I feel like I am treated differently because of more reasons than one...

As the reasons for a different attitude or treatment are multiplied, the sense of non-affiliation and “pushing aside” increases. Problems are similar to those already mentioned above only multiplied. Read the confessions of women! I feel different because I am:

**Woman living in the rural area and a woman feminist activist**

“*Sometimes I have the feeling that I am being “pushing aside” due to public advocacy for a better life of women in the countryside.*”, Rogatica

**Woman without children and woman of different style and look**

“*Rubbing my face with the fact that I do not have the same life as the others, because I do not fit into templates.*”, Bosansko Grahovo
Unmarried and returnee without personal income

“I live in a small place, and I have “enough years of age”- they look at me with regret, because I have not yet been accomplished as a wife and mother, and without income I have no opportunity to establish a family.”, Kupres

Independent parent, woman from a Shahid family

“Difficulties coming with the fact that everyone perceives your family as disabled if you do not have a husband, especially with female children, and you are totally unprotected by society, although I belong to the category of women whose husband gave his life for the state, and that same state did not protect us with anything, devaluating our husbands and ourselves. Children finished faculties and are still unemployed, they are 30 years old and struggling to leave the country where they left their childhood, their father. A terrible feeling. It is like it is still WAR in our souls and this is certainly true. And this is how all Shahid families feel everywhere, that they are discriminated and humiliated to the ground.”, Hadžići

Divorced, housewife without personal income

“I do not have any income and I live from the help of my children.”, Pale

Independent parent, divorced, chronically ill, no income

“They make fun of me, I have no one to have coffee with. There is nobody to help me and understand me.”, Rogatica

Nacional or ethnic minority, woman activist feminist, woman without children

“When I say that I am a Roma woman, people who do not know me usually act surprised and I feel that they are acting differently towards me.”, Ilijaš

Woman activist, woman of different style and look, religious minority, unmarried and without partner, woman without children

“It’s more about “blatant views on the street” but that is not something that would physically endanger me or something I cannot handle. Basically, the problem existed through my education, but you just learn to deal with the fact that you are different because of the religious commitment, the style of dressing, your looks.”, Livno

2. We have a lot of work to do...

The obtained results of the analysis confirm the very difficult situation of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and point to the necessity of further actions in order to empower women in all important aspects of life.

First of all, it is necessary to start by insisting on the development of functional mechanisms for the protection of basic human rights, which the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a signatory of international documents and conventions, already has a duty to protect, by creating a functional system and functional protection mechanisms, which it does not do. It is necessary to act in order to improve and harmonize the
legislative framework, public policies, as well as to effectively implement specific gender-responsive affirmative measures for the effective improvement of the position of women and the protection of their basic human rights.

What affects the socially most vulnerable groups is certainly the lack of information and the lack of adequate free legal aid and legal counseling as a resource for the fight for basic rights as well as for the fight against discrimination and violence.

As the results of the analysis showed, women primarily look for family and friends in urgent cases for legal advice. In addition, if they are able they speak to either privately hired professionals or the NGO sector, and they are considerably less reliant on state institutions such as municipal bodies and other state services because they “do not have time” to help them, and they do not get timely and complete information. For free legal aid and counseling in municipalities, very little is known, and only 4% of women cite a resource they know and are at their disposal. It is a disturbing fact that 12% of women in our sample of respondents state that they do not know who to contact in an emergency or if they need legal advice, and 4% say that they have no one to address for various reasons.

In this context, it is important to point out that the practice of not relying on state bodies and institutions whose purpose is to work for the welfare of citizens is very controversial. People from the lower social classes who often do not have lawyers in the circle of friends and do not have enough professional resources to provide the necessary information about their rights and the possibility of protecting them, who often do not have the means to pay professionals, are condemned to move in a vicious circle from which it is hard to come out of if they do not have the opportunity to reach other sources of information and legal assistance. The second major problem in this context are the topics that are taboo, such as domestic violence, and if certain topics are not suitable for conversation within their private circle, then only the state authorities and institutions, or the NGO sector, which often takes over majority of the burden in the area of social protection of citizens on their own in BiH, unfortunately without adequate support from state or local institutions, can help.

Distrust and failure to rely on state authorities and institutions is very problematic and affects the most vulnerable sections of society. It is necessary to provide free legal counseling and adequate legal assistance to all citizens, provide them with timely, accurate and detailed information and support so that they can act as subjects in claiming their rights. Practice in BiH is such that many citizens are denied the right to this, thus systematically supporting discrimination, which affects the most marginalized and socially vulnerable groups.

Concerning free legal aid, we must point out that it is shocking and points to the emphasized institutional discrimination of women, despite all the legal frameworks, both state and international, that certain laws do not provide legal assistance for victims of trafficking and victims of domestic violence. It is clear that victims of trafficking and victims of domestic violence are predominantly women, thus creating a vicious circle from which it is difficult to get out, in which not everyone is equal before the law because they do not have equal access to justice and all the mechanisms available to them as a remedy, because they do not have information or opportunity, or even do not have the right to be given assistance and information on existing protection
mechanisms. In such an environment, we can say that women are living, in which
violence and sexual exploitation of women, and especially women of lower socio-
economic status, are ignored by the state.

In addition to the need to provide adequate mechanisms to provide legal counseling
and free legal assistance, it is necessary that these mechanisms do not stand as isolated
outside the community, but to allow for the practice of field work and to strategically
carry out information actions on basic rights and mechanisms of protection of rights
and responsible institutions.

In that sense, we should point out the omissions and inadequate action of the Center
for Social Work, because we see that in our sample there are women who live in
conditions of severe poverty, including minors who receive no support or help. Also,
NGOs point out as an alarming and serious problem that institutions, such as the
Center for Social Work, even though that is in the job description, do not inform their
clients about the rights they have, so that a large number of citizens miss the deadlines
and they do not know that they can exercise a right. Therefore, fieldwork is essential,
especially for socially vulnerable and marginalized groups of women, as well as for
women exposed to domestic violence or the like, through mapping, information,
support and communication on the ground.

Therefore, the social protection system works very poorly in BiH. In addition, it should
be noted that incentives from the state are very rare, and that of 317 women, only
one states that she is receiving an incentive for self-employment.

Also, according to the results of the analysis of the interview, it is clearly visible that the
health care system acts discriminatory, primarily at the territorial level, and that it is
contrary to the principles of universality and accessibility. Thus, women living outside
major medical centers in BiH have difficult and limited access to health services. In
addition, the results confirm that the health care system invests a lot in actions of
disease prevention, health preservation and provision of timely diagnostics. As the
results of the analysis have shown, the worryingly high percentage of women from
smaller local communities does not go to regular health check-ups, as they state, they
are waiting for free appointments for a long time because they are prevented for
financial reasons, or because their homes are too far and they do not have adequate
transport to health institutions. On the other hand, education on disease prevention
is necessary because the very concept of regular health examinations for women is
unclear and it is considered acceptable if they go to the doctor “if necessary”, if they
are sick or as part of systematic examinations at work. Therefore, education on disease
prevention is something to be done, and it is important to emphasize that the highest
percentage of women in our sample of respondents who do not go to regular medical
examinations is among unemployed women and housewives.

It is necessary to mention the alarming situation in the NGO sector. Unfortunately, the
Organizational Questionnaire, which we prepared in the framework of the research,
brought very little response. Although a large number of organizations were contacted,
through women’s and peace networks, through personal contacts, only six civil society
organizations responded to the questionnaire. We can not with certainty determine
the reason for such a poor response to the questionnaire, whether it is the lack of
resources, personnel, competencies and activities, time to monitor women and peace
networks or the like, or simply the infection with general apathy and lethargy that rules in BiH society, but what is very important to point out is that this situation points to the need to empower the NGO sector, with a special focus on strengthening cooperation and networking, targeted education within the NGO sector and financial support. Non-governmental organizations that have participated in the research have indeed pointed to the problem that many women’s associations are not sufficiently sensitized, and often do not have enough knowledge, skills, or resources to initiate public policy change initiatives. On the other hand, the possibility and openness to cooperation with state bodies and institutions is very limited, and it is necessary to open and connect them with the NGO sector, as well as to enable greater transparency of their work.

It is important to point out that it is of great importance to have a quality program and content offered by the media, as well as an education program that would be in line with the basic principles of education in an open society, given that what we have the opportunity to hear and see in the media and what we learn in schools greatly influences our system of reasoning and shapes us and our relationships with ourselves and others from a young age. Gender stereotypes in the field of education and the media are visible and widespread, but not only gender stereotypes are what young people and children are exposed to. The results of the textbook analysis from the national group of subjects in elementary schools indicate that we live in a society where hatred, intolerance and stereotypical thinking are cultivated and nurtured. Civil society organizations in the “Report on the Application of the Final Observations and Recommendations of the CEDAW Committee for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013-2017” point out that while the Law on Gender Equality of BiH and the recommendations of self-regulatory bodies in the field of media recognize the obligation and the need to eliminate gender stereotypes, BiH has failed to systematically point out gender stereotypes through education strategies, curricula, and programs, as well as training of educators and workers, and promote gender equality and carry out wider actions aimed at eliminating gender-stereotyped and discriminatory content in textbooks through all levels of education.  

Problems related to the specificity of the lives of individual women are many, and as it has already been elaborated in more detail in the analysis you have had the opportunity to read, how the reasons for a different attitude or treatment in the local community are multiplied, so the feeling of not belonging and being “pushed aside” increases. Women face sexist comments every day, verbal and physical attacks due to different identities and differences that determine them, and are often ignored and insufficiently protected by the state.

Of course, the most famous example of neglect by the state is the attitude towards independent parents who are often unable to collect alimony in order to provide a decent and dignified life for their children. The federal government in 2014 decided to establish an Alimentation Fund in order to compensate from the Fund, i.e. from the budget, for alimony when the parent is not paying. In order to do this, the federal government has tasked the three ministries (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance) to consider the issue and propose

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solutions. However, solutions have not yet been specified.

We have provided only some examples of the achievement and enabling of basic rights guaranteed by the legal framework, international treaties and conventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which stand as a dead letter on paper for various reasons. In addition, it is necessary to highlight omissions at the international level when establishing interstate legal agreements.

In almost all of today’s societies there is a division into two spheres: public and private, where traditionally women are trapped in the private sphere, and the sphere of public belongs exclusively to men. Pressure, repression and violence against women is happening first in the private sphere, but it does not stop there and continues to expand its activities to the public sphere. On the other hand, the protection of the private sphere is considered as one of the most important human rights. However, regardless of how much the protection of the private sphere is important, it allows the state the violation of women’s rights not to be regarded as a violation of human rights, but to designate it as a private problem in which the state does not want to interfere. Such a situation leads to the failure to recognize and ignore the violation of human rights specific to women. Thus, the very concept of universal human rights and the lack of recognition of the specificities of certain social groups, especially the specificity of the violation of women’s rights leaves space for discrimination and thus leads to inequality. It is necessary to add new provisions concerning the specificity of discrimination of women in inter-state legal contracts, because as long as women’s rights are not specifically recognized and processed in international conventions, individual national states will not feel called upon to punish violations.

More work is needed to be done in the struggle for equality and dignity of women in all segments and at all levels, but the positive point is, according to the testimonies of women who participated in the research and shared with us our experiences, that civil activism and advocacy for women’s rights is what makes women stronger and more determined, through a positive impact on the growth of self-confidence, knowledge, skills, courage, and consequently on the general quality and standard of living as well as the welfare of the community.
CURE Foundation concludes

With this research, the CURE Foundation will certainly not stop in its efforts to achieve equality of women in BiH, to fight for a society without patriarchal norms, a society in which violence and discrimination are not tolerated and where women are recognized as drivers and bearers of positive social changes and participate equally in decision making processes in the society.

However depressive some of the results of the analysis are, this research gives us the drive to continue with our feminist-activist efforts. We want to hear our voice even more loudly, without the possibility of negating and ignoring it from the “other” side.

Based on research findings, an advocacy platform will be created for further advocacy activities of women in selected small local communities based on the feminist advocacy platforms that we have previously created. We want to localize and direct our efforts, specifically, locally, and especially empower women in smaller local communities.

The CURE Foundation continues to work on supporting, capacity building and creating a safe environment for all women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for their responsible and active participation in positive social changes, and we invite all women to join us.

Our wish is to work together to build a new generation of activists and feminists in Bosnia and Herzegovina who will continue to work towards the equality of all and the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls in the BiH society.
Literature:


Analysis of the legal position in access to justice of women in BiH, Sarajevo 2015.; Advocacy platforms of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2016. Your rights BiH.


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Edita Miftari (2015.): Gender equality in municipalities in BiH. Sarajevo: Sarajevski otvoreni centar i Fondacija CURE.


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Durkalić M. (2016.): ; Advocacy platforms of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Feminist advocacy platform in BiH: Sarajevo: Fondacija CURE.

Mandić-Đokić T. (2016.): ; Advocacy platforms of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Access to health services and right to health of women in BiH. Sarajevo: Fondacija CURE.


Savičić S. (2016.): Towards gender equality in Cantons in Federation of BiH. Sarajevo: Sarajevski Otvoreni Centar and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung BiH.


Šatrović A. (2016.): Advocacy platforms of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Right to parenting and parenting rights of women in BiH: Sarajevo: Fondacija CURE.

Laws, conventions, declarations:

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women - CEDAW

Convention on the Prevention and Fight against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Official gazette BiH, no. 15/13)

Gender Equality Law (Official gazette BiH, no. 32/10)

Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
About CURE Foundation

The CURE Foundation is committed to the equality of women in BiH, to a society without patriarchal norms, in which violence and discrimination are not tolerated and where women are recognized as responsible drivers and bearers of positive social changes and make equal decisions in society.

The CURE Foundation was founded in 2004 with the idea of creating, implementing or supporting activities in the field of women’s rights. It emerged from the need to change the views of BiH society in relation to violence and discrimination against women of different age groups, with the special need to make the multiple marginalized women visible, so that they can affect the positive social changes in the environment of women and the problems they encounter.

www.fonadacijacure.org

About the author – Tatjana Žarković, MA

Tatjana Žarković has been raised and grew up in the spirit of feminism and peace activism since her first steps. Born in 1985 in Sarajevo, spent the first year of her life in Mostar, in a city she is still in love with. She spent the years of refuge in Belgrade, where she finished elementary and high school. At the age of 19, she returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina together with her sister and mother, who, as an activist of the Woman in Black from Belgrade, managed to find rescue from the rage of Slobodan Milošević in Sarajevo, who, before the “5th October Revolution,” harassed and imprisoned all prominent opponents of the regime. She graduated in Sarajevo and completed her studies of philosophy and sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo. She graduated in Vienna at the Institute of Sociology at the University of Vienna. Love and motherhood make her return to her hometown in 2016. She has been researching since 2013 when she started working as a research assistant at the Institute of Sociology at the University of Vienna, with the mentorship of prominent Professor Christoph Reinprecht. In her research work, she primarily deals with migration issues, the possibilities of integrating marginalized groups into society and gender issues.

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Annexes:

Analysis of interviews from the Bihać region

Analysis – Bihać and surroundings

Thanks to the interest and the initiative of the Center for Education and Research “Nahla” - the branch office Bihać, we extended our interest to the Una-Sana Canton. As already mentioned, women from CEI “Nahla” – office in Bihać have initiated the cooperation on this research with the desire to learn more about the problems and needs of women from their region. Given that our primary focus was not on the wider Bihać area, we will present a brief analysis of the interviews with women from this region with basic data.

In the Una-Sana Canton area, 217 interviews were conducted with women, of which 79% were made in the area of Bihać, and 21% in the surrounding towns and cities. Apart from Bihać, interviews were also conducted in the following cities of Una-Sana Canton: Bosanska Krupa, Bosanski Petrovac, Cazin, Bužim, Sanski Most.

Women covered by the questionnaire are mostly highly educated, 49% of them, and 44% have completed secondary school with a graduate exam, followed by 3% of women who completed vocational education, with only elementary school there are 3%, and women without elementary school were not included in the questionnaire. Most women covered by the questionnaire have employment, 46% full time, 3% part-time, and 16% are unemployed and looking for a job. In addition, we have 22% of women still in education, i.e. students, then 11% of them are housewives and 2% of women them are retired.

The average net income of women is very low, so if we take away the 39% of women who claim to have no personal income because they are either unemployed, housewives or students, we find that among the employed women who are receiving income, the income is quite low even though it is a sample of majority highly educated women and they are at workplaces that correspond to their qualifications. Thus, the unfavorable position of women in the labor market in BiH is very much present, as evidenced by our results that women take up poorly paid positions, so even 26% of women claiming to have paid employment point out that their benefits are below 500 KM and only 25% of them have a monthly income of 1000 KM or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income of employed women</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>below 500 KM</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 500 to 1.000 KM</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 1.000 to 1.500 KM</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from 1.500 to 2.500 KM</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 2.500 KM</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Income of employed women (Bihać region)
These results, as well as the others, more or less coincide with the results of the analysis from other regions, so we will not specifically mention them. As already mentioned in the second part of the analysis, which refers to the identities and differences of women and to a different relationship and treatment in the community, responses from the Bihać region are already included and processed along with other responses. What we will outline are the specifics for the region of Una-Sana Canton, which women state answering the question of what they are especially concerned or worried about in the local community they live in.

Women most often state that they are concerned about politicization and mixing of politics in all spheres of society resulting in inadequate resolution of current problems and slow response to citizens’ needs. Along with this, they often mention that the ubiquitous bribes, corruption and party influence is a big problem that leads to the situation in which important functions are perfomed by people who are unprofessional and incapable of doing their job. Because of this women state that they are deprived of many important things because they do not deal adequately and expertly with current problems, which negatively affects the ability to invest in personal well-being, the community’s well-being, and overall the quality of life.

Women concretizing their allegations point out that they consider the following particularly bad in their local community: a poorly regulated health system as well as the social protection system; high unemployment rate; absence of urban transport; failure to solve the problem of stray dogs; lack of cultural and social events, no offered educations, trainings; poor city infrastructure which includes the lack of public transport and cycling routes; poorly utilized natural resources; poor care of pensioners; massive departure of young people and failure to take adequate measures to prevent it.

Women also state that due to the high unemployment rate they are often forced to work in poor working conditions, without health insurance, for minimum wage, because according to the women from Bihać region, “it is almost impossible to change employment (current) or to find a new job”.

In rural and suburban areas, the situation with regard to urban infrastructure is even more critical, so women state that the suburbs are very poorly cleaned and that in the 21st century water and sewage have not been solved in all local communities. Citizens from suburban settlements are certainly more affected by the problem of the lack of public transport, which is why bicycles are often used as a basic daily means of transport, but safe bicycle paths are not available.

Faced with all these problems, women feel helpless and state that they “communicate poorly with people” whose work is to bring benefits of citizens. This often leads to a situation in which the state of general lethargy and apathy begins to dominate. Many women state that it is precisely the situation in which most citizens are that concerns them and they state that the major problem is precisely the “lack of belief in good, new, better, and lack of will for change, for knowledge, for the fight against corruption and lies, hypocrisy, etc. “

In addition, there are the problems that the women from Bihać region are facing only because they are women, and these problems are related to the general (lack of) conditions in the country which get multiplied if you are a woman. In this context, the
ruling patriarchal ideology and stereotypes are what primarily creates the problem, as well as the imposed heteronormative patterns of behavior dominated by the Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, and women state that they are concerned precisely with such “treatment of women and the role of women in society i.e. its limitation and the opinion that a woman must do something or cannot do something, that something is not for a woman.” This kind of treatment and relationship that is considered socially acceptable, and the failure to take adequate measures and efforts to change it further affects all segments of a woman’s life. We will mention one interesting quote that supports the above mentioned:

“We lack an open consultation with women, integrating women into jobs where they are the same, equal and equally paid as their male colleagues, state support to maternity leave and motherhood. The inequality of women is affected by the fact that almost every segment of a woman’s life is a taboo theme and she has to live silently in the shade in order to be considered an “honorable and good” woman. When a woman talks about simple things like reproduction, sexuality, self-reliance, basic biological functions, that is also considered abnormal and unknowable. This is the state of our consciousness, and that needs to be changed both through institutions and through sharing information and forums where we need to stop looking at the fact that a woman is a living biological being with the same needs as a man as something wrong and bad.”, Bihać

Positive experiences and positive thinking pushes us forward and gives us strength for further action, and it is very important to point out the positive things that women emphasize to be able to especially praise and favor them in the place they live in.

Women in Una-Sana Canton are most often distinguished in the positive context of natural beauty, the River Unč, the National Park, Plješevica, the spacious green areas, the geographical position and the vicinity to the Adriatic Sea. The most prominent positive points that enrich the lives of women from Bihać and the surroundings are the natural benefits of the region.

In addition, women often emphasize that they have a positive influence on the overall quality of their life, mutual solidarity, connection and orientation of people to each other, as well as hospitality of people from the Bihać region.

Certainly there are people who are making efforts and trying to make the world a better place to live, which women certainly recognize, and a large number of women point out that their lives are directly impacted by the engagement and activities of particular people and organizations operating in Una-Sana Canton and who are fighting for a “better tomorrow”.

In addition to the positive examples of citizens’ engagement in the Bihać region and the overwhelming enchantment and love of natural beauty, praise for work, investment, and commitment to the welfare of citizens by civil services and institutions are rarely heard, but there are sporadic positive examples.
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<tr>
<th>1a</th>
<th>Age: ____________</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.1b</td>
<td><strong>What is your marital status?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- single, I live without a partner</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- married or I live in an extra marital community</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- divorced</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- widow and without a partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td><strong>Level of education so far</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- no elementary education (less than 8 years of school)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- elementary education (at least 8 years of school, no craft)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- high school with graduation exam (4 year education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- university or high vocational school</td>
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<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td><strong>Are you currently employed?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Yes, full-time employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Yes, part-time employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No, I am retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unemployed, looking for employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No, housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e</td>
<td><strong>If you are employed, what is your current position?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(state concrete work place; retired women state previous employment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1f. Do you receive any aid from the state? (circle everything that is accurate)
- social help
- compensation for the unemployed
- child support
- aid for civilian victims of war
- I do not receive anything
- other (please state what) ____________________________

1g. What is the current situation in which you are in relation to income? Please rate your current economic status.
Grade this section with grades from 1 (very bad) and 7 (excellent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very bad</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1h. Želi What is the average monthly amount of income you personally receive?
- I do not receive anything
- below 500 KM
- 500 to 1.000 KM
- 1.000 to 1.500 KM
- 1.500 to 2.500 KM
- more than 2.500 KM
1i | **The average monthly amount of your household income including all members of your household):**
   - [ ] below 500 KM
   - [ ] 500 to 1.000 KM
   - [ ] 1.000 to 1.500 KM
   - [ ] 1.500 to 2.500 KM
   - [ ] more than 2.500 KM

1j | **Nacionality**
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

1k | **Religious affiliation**
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

Next we would like to ask you a few questions regarding the place of residence and the housing question, and how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with these and why?

2. Where do you live _____________ (state the name of the city or place you live)?

3. Where did you live before, if you changed the place of residence?

4. What bothers you the most in your local community?
5. What positive examples can you give? What is especially satisfying in your place of residence?

6. Is the apartment you currently live in...

- private property in my personal name
- private property in the name of one of the members of my family (husband, father, mother, etc.)
- I live as a tenant
- social aid apartment
- other: ___________________

7. Do you currently live alone or with other persons?

- I live alone
- I live with at least one other person

7a. If you answered: I live with at least one other person: Who else lives with you in the apartment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband, life partner</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other members of the family, relatives</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other persons</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. If you have children, how many do you have?

9. Generally speaking, how satisfied are you with your current housing situation? Please rank on a scale from 1 to 7!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completely dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now we would like to find out more about self-employment and personal income investments that are at your disposal.

10. Have you participated in the past 12 months and/or are you planning to attend courses, workshops, vocational trainings or anything related to your personal interest or further education and trainings in the next 12 months? (please circle)

- Yes

- No

10a. If no, why not?
I do not have an interest in activities such as these

I do not have time for activities such as these

I do not have financial background to participate

Nothing offered interests me

Other: _____________________________________________________________

11. From the following five items, please rate how important there are in life, then how satisfied you are with the ability to achieve and/or exercise your rights in that area.

Grade it with grades from 1 to 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items to grade</th>
<th>Grading the importance</th>
<th>Grading the possibility to achieve your rights</th>
<th>If you want please give a brief explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1(not important at all) 7(very important):</td>
<td>1(no possibility) 7 (without any problems)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______</td>
<td>______</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal or non-formal education</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health care</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise and physical activity</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other that is of your interest</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_____</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Are you an active member or an occasional visitor to an association or organization?

(put name of the association)

☒ I am not a member of an association/organization

☒ Yes, in the association of women _________________

☒ Yes, in a sports association _________________

☒ Yes, in a cultural and leisure association __________

☒ Yes, in a religious community (Muslim association, church association and alike) __________

☒ Yes, in a union _________________

☒ Yes, in a political party __________

☒ Yes, other (please state what): _________________

12a. Does the organization that you specified influence the overall quality of your life and in what ways?
The fourth group of questions is related to your relationship with your family, friends, and the community you live in.

13. From the following five items, please rate how important they are in your life, then how satisfied you are with the current situation in the area.

Grade with grade from 1 (completely irrelevant/completely dissatisfied) to 7 (very important/very satisfied).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to grade</th>
<th>Grading the importance for the quality of life (from 1 to 7)</th>
<th>Grading of the current state (from 1 to 7)</th>
<th>If you want give a brief explanation of why you are satisfied!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State services (e.g. police and firefighters, civil servants and institutions)</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public education, public schools</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety in your neighborhood</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of community and mutual help and solidarity in the community you live in</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and cultural events offered at your place of residence</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other that is important to you but not mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13a. Who would you contact in emergency cases and if you needed free legal advice and help (please mention all persons, including institutions)?

The next set of questions is about your overall quality of life.

14. If someone gave you 2000 KM, how would you spend or invest that money? What first comes to mind?

15. Please allocate the number of hours you spend on your usual working day for the following activities (specify the number of hours from 0 to 24 in all line items).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework (e.g. cleaning, shopping, cooking etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities with children and close relatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Caring for another member of the family

Volunteering

Time for myself

16. How would you rate your current health condition? (circle all that applies to you)

❏ I feel good, without any health issues
❏ I have small health issues, but nothing in need of medical assistance
❏ I have health issues, and I am currently in medical treatment
❏ I am chronically ill and I am on longterm medication
❏ I have been on longterm treatment and care by other people because I am not able to do my daily activities individually

17. Do you have health insurance?

❏ Yes
❏ No

18. Are you able to go to regular systematic, medical examinations (regular examinations at gynecologists, dentists, internists, and the like)?
18a. If not, why not (state everything that applies to you)?

- Yes
- No

- I do not have adequate transportation and/or the Health Center where I can do it is far away
- I do not have time for check ups
- I cannot cover it financially
- I do not trust the health care staff
- I do not want to, because I do not think it is important to go to regular examinations
- Other: ____________________________________

19. When you think about the future, what are you more or less concerned about from the following items? Rate 1 (I do not care at all) to 5 (strong worries).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No worries</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strong worries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial situation and debts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future/well-being of children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments in the family circle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Problems in exercising my civil rights and in contact with state administration bodies (municipalities, employment bureaus, health insurance, etc.)

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fear of breaking and entering and criminals

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### I am afraid I will not be provided with adequate care in case of illness

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other not mentioned but important to you

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. Now, we are interested in whether you feel that you are differently viewed or being treated differently in your local community, for example because you are: (circle everything that is related to you and what causes people to have a different relationship or look at you differently in your daily life):

- [ ] Independent parent
- [ ] Person with disability
- [ ] Nacional on ethnical minority
- [ ] Mother of a person with disability
- [ ] Person of different sexual orientation (lesbian, bisexual or trans* woman)
- [ ] Woman activist
- [ ] Chronically ill person
- [ ] Person suffering from a rare disease
- [ ] Woman of different style and look
☐ Religious minority
☐ Woman feminist
☐ Unmarried and no partner
☐ Woman without children
☐ Divorced
☐ Returnee
☐ Housewife without personal income
☐ Other (state what)___________________________________
☐ ___________________________________________________
☐ I can not say that anything stands out (if nothing is offered to you or does not fall into your mind, skip the following question)

21. What specific difficulties or advantages does your above mentioned identity cause?

22. Would you like to share some of the details of your life that you feel are of particular importance and which affect your overall well-being in life and we have not mentioned it? Be free to give details if you want.

Thank you for your cooperation and help. We would appreciate if you have someone else to recommend who would like to fill out the questionnaire? (specify the e-mail address of the person if yes).
Questionnaire II

Questions for organizations

Organization in whose name you answer questions: (write the name of the organization and the city in which it operates)

1. What are the most common issues your organization and members of your organization are encountering while performing their activities?

2. Have you done any research so far or have you been in different ways familiarizing yourself with the problems women of different profiles face in your community? If so, what data / results did you get and what are the measures taken? Did you collaborate with some state institutions, NGOs, or in a different way? Specify which if yes?

3. Do you have any examples of successful initiatives that you have implemented and have you cooperated with state institutions or NGO organizations in the process? Which state institutions or organizations did you cooperate successfully with, and which of those did not answer and provide the support, and what was the explanation?

4. Do you know if there are any initiatives, strategies or similar from state institutions, or within the non-governmental sector regarding gender policies and the protection of women’s rights in your local community? Specify which ones if yes?

5. If a person who is deprived of basic civil rights and if they need legal assistance and advice, are you able to provide them aid or refer them to anywhere in your area where it is possible to get help, state institutions or non-governmental organizations? Is there such a possibility in your place or surroundings?