

Guidebook

for

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women,
Peace and Security for Local Self Government
Units and Equal Opportunity Commissions

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Disclaimer

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I. Background and Purpose:

From a women's and gender equality perspective, UNSCR 1325 represents one of the most important UN resolutions in the field of peace and security policy. It contains instructions for the *prevention* of armed conflicts, the *participation* of women at all levels of the peace process and security policy, the *protection* of women and female children in war and post-conflict situations, especially their protection from sexual violence and abuse, which are often part of the armed conflict strategy.

As is the case in other parts of the world, in the Republic of Macedonia the Resolution provided a key legal and political framework for involved and affected stakeholders to engage in strengthening the participation of women in prevention, conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building, as well as in securing their legal and physical safety, while focusing on the use of all available means in the prevention of armed conflicts. The increased participation of women in all these fields is an integral part of efforts to further enhance peace and security in the country and in the Western Balkan Region.

The Resolution opens up a new avenue to women in the region in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, which is especially important since Republic of Macedonia contribute to NATO missions in conflict affected regions of the world.

The continued rise in civilian suffering demonstrates the urgency of full and complete compliance with the Resolution. Reports, data and other information on the nature of previous and recent conflicts show that most of the affected civilians in post-Cold War conflicts have been women and children. Women did suffer, and still do, similar hardships, brutalities and abuse in all conflict and post-conflict zones.

On the other hand, it should be noted that the horrific abuse of women's rights during the wars has been followed by the worsening of their actual economic and social rights as the consequence of austerity policies (social protection, health care, childcare, unemployment) in the current economic and financial crisis. This erosion has been accompanied by the growth of conservative, traditional, even fundamentalist, religious values that do not favor women in public and political life. This anti-modernist trend has been present – although to a varying extent – in all post-Yugoslav countries, and is especially pronounced in rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia.

In the Republic of Macedonia, women have emerged, individually or in groups, as strong peace advocates. Women's CSOs, have been in the forefront of the fight for the protection

of the rights of vulnerable groups such as refugees, minorities, and women and girls.

Bearing all of the above in mind, government and the civil society, and especially women's CSOs have recognized UNSCR 1325 as a unique peace and security document which stands above all for the full participation of women in the establishment and maintenance of sustainable peace. The Resolution's definition of violence against women – especially sexual abuse – as being a threat to peace and security strikes a deep chord with all women in the country and broader in the region. On the whole, the Resolution has played a key role in gender mainstreaming in governmental policies in the security field. It has given rise to many valuable initiatives and also advanced the process of change in the perception of the role of women and girls in post-conflict and transitional societies.

Macedonia has adopted National Action Plan in January 2013 and after three years of its implementation it is a time to evaluate the achievements so far and to embark into development of new National Plan based on the experiences and lessons learned.

In doing so we, through this guidebook, we want to contribute in further raising of the awareness for the involvement of women in Macedonia in the implementing the objectives of Women Peace and Security Agenda especially in keeping the internal security process stable by contributing to cohesion of society and sound inter-ethnic dialogue.

This guidebook demonstrates that there is untapped potential within the local communities and the exiting mechanisms that have not been utilized to their greatest potential for the purpose of implementation of National Action Plan for UN SC Resolution 1325.

We hope this guidebook to be source for capacity building of actors in local communities such as municipal administration, local self government Council's commissions, representatives of security bodies and representatives of civil society –women citizen organization for their mobilization and action in maintaining the peace and keeping the security in the country.

Also we believe that this guidebook will inspire central government and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy /Department for Equal opportunities for Women and Men to embark in new planning and implementation cycle for second National Action Plan for implementation of United Nation Security Council Resolution 1325.

II. The importance of UNSC Resolution 1325 in modern society and how does the nature of the conflict and the peace has changed.

Fifteen years ago, Security Council resolution 1325 reaffirmed the importance of the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for maintaining and promoting peace and security. In the years since, it has buttressed this decision by adopting six further resolutions on women, peace and security.

Resolution 1325 was one of the crowning achievements of the global women's movement and one of the most inspired decisions of the United Nations Security Council. The recognition that peace is inextricably linked with gender equality and women's leadership was a radical step for the highest body tasked with the maintenance of international peace and security. Turning the Security Council's words into actions and real change has been a driving passion of many actors since the resolution was adopted as a global norm in 2000.

Since World War II, the actual number of conflicts and the number of civilians affected by conflict has drastically reduced. And yet it is public perception that the world is in the midst of an unprecedented, devastating state of conflict and crisis. One reason for this is that the global media and advances in communication technology have brought the stark reality of existing conflicts into people's living rooms and workplaces, thereby raising awareness about the scale of destruction, and the pain and suffering of civilian casualties. Our interconnectedness, therefore, makes it appear that conflict is extremely devastating and never-ending.

Secondly, conflicts in many parts of the world are also more protracted. In these situations, for civilians living in these areas, violence has been normalized, warlords become role models, the economy is unregulated and States remain fragile for long periods of time. These protracted conflicts destroy civilian life. Criminal action becomes prevalent as drug trafficking, human trafficking and smuggling and corruption begin to dominate public life.

Thirdly, since 2001, the nature of conflict in certain, specific areas of the world has changed in dramatic ways. In fact, in the survey that was undertaken among civil society organizations for the Global Study¹, 84 per cent of the respondents stated that the emerging issues

1 <http://wps.unwomen.org/~media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf>

of concern were violent extremism and counter-terrorism. In the 1990s most of the wars were in Africa, linked to a system of fragile States and powerful warlords. Today, there are new types of conflict that directly involve civilian populations in an unprecedented manner.

While terrorist acts had been a regular phenomenon even earlier, since 2001 the nature and scale have proved to be destructive to an unprecedented degree. Suicide bombing and explosions aimed at civilian targets seemed to reach a peak in the first decade of the century. Their cruelty and brutality has actually left the international community very shaken but unusually united.

The period since 2000 has also seen a great deal of technological innovation that is changing the nature of warfare. Though there has been a great deal of positive use of technology to protect populations and to assist in the humanitarian effort, the technology of weapons used in conflict is much more devastating. Unmanned aerial weapons of war, new types of aircrafts and new types of ground to surface weapons have posed new and unforeseeable dilemmas for women living in warzones. This is a decade where brutal 'in your face' beheadings of individuals co-exist side by side with the clinical targeting of places and individuals where women are mere numbers in what is termed 'collateral damage.' So, women in this century can be brutally gang raped and mutilated in one continent, requiring individual survivor assistance, while being treated as merely an anonymous, clinical number in another.

Today's wars, whether in fighting traditional civil wars or engaging in asymmetrical warfare, have resulted in the largest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees since World War II, leading to terrible humanitarian consequences. This is made more difficult by the fact that sacrosanct humanitarian spaces and the neutrality of humanitarian actors is not always respected, leaving civilian populations deeply vulnerable with little chance of survival except as a refugee or an IDP. In these contexts, older women often come forward as peacebuilders and humanitarian actors, as they are often the only people who have the legitimacy and trust of all sides to do humanitarian work.

In making these criticisms, one cannot be blind to certain imminent threats posed by violent extremist groups from diverse ethnic and religious groups who do not recognize dissent, democracy or the rights of women. However, the overwhelming opinion of women living in those areas, as well as women practitioners working in the field, was that force alone cannot be the answer. There must be greater emphasis on prevention, more empowerment of women peacebuilders while respecting their autonomy, and more resources placed to make strategies of prevention realizable. Conflicts must be prevented, and if they are inevitable, they must become more humane.

While the practices of war have changed in some parts of the world, so have many of the perceived 'root causes.' While the wars immediately after World War II were nationalist wars or political wars based on political ideology, many of today's wars are religious or ethnic in origin. They are firmly in the realm of identity politics and in their most extreme form, deeply conservative and reactionary toward women and their rights.

In 2000 when resolution 1325 was adopted, the major issues facing women in situations of conflict were:

- Brutality of sexual violence,
- Losing children or loved ones to the conflict,
- Being forced to or voluntarily becoming a combatant, and/or, refugees, or internally displaced persons.

Today all these concerns remain, but in addition, in certain wars, women's concerns have become more dire while, at the same time, the nature of warfare invades their most private spaces, those spaces in the family and the community where their sense of identity and security are deeply threatened. In every one of these new situations they are faced with stark, impossible choices and, as a result, they are often constantly living in a state of insecurity and ambivalence.

In 2000 when the Security Council passed resolution 1325, after the wars in Bosnia and Rwanda, the world was a united place especially around issues of women, peace and security as well as children and armed conflict. A great deal of activity resulted from this resolution at the international, national and regional levels. However, since then, although there have been major steps forward with regard to sexual violence, the atmosphere of easy consensus has clearly changed. The political process is far more polarized, both within the Security Council and outside, and decisions are taken at a slow pace because of distrust and fears of hidden agendas. This polarization and distrust have taken a toll on the women, peace and security agenda as well as other thematic items on the agenda of the Council.

Full text of the Resolution 1325 is provided in Annex 1 of this document

For this reason, there was a belief among stakeholders that the next decade of women, peace and security should begin to identify other forums and institutions to advance the issues. In this regard, not only other multilateral forums linked to the UN, but, also, regional organizations and subregional organizations were identified as those that could assist in ensuring the implementation of resolution 1325.

National governments were also called upon to become the primary drivers of 1325 and women's organizations to be adequately funded at the community level to ensure that they hold their governments accountable.

We should acknowledge that since 2000 the nature of "Peace" and what we understand when we think "Peace" has changed as well. For decades, peace meant mainly the silencing of guns and the renewal of formal politics as the way of governance. Ceasefires and demobilization were the main focus of peace processes. However, today it is recognized that peace is something far more than the 'absence of violence.' Peace has increasingly meant an inclusive political process, a commitment to human rights in the post-war period and an attempt to deal with issues of justice and reconciliation. Sustainable peace is only possible if there is inclusive peacemaking, in other words, it includes all relevant stakeholders and among them women.

Similarly to the war and peace the nature of "Security" and our understanding of security has changed. In earlier eras, security too was seen in the context of the 'absence of violence.' Today, security is seen in a far more expansive way that is not only limited to containing physical violence.

Security also has political, economic and social dimensions. It is both public and private. It means absence of fear but also absence of want. It also implies active agency, to be allowed to participate in the decisions that are made on your behalf. While earlier the security was connected with ensuring the survival of individuals, in recent times it is recognized as a broader term aimed at securing the well-being of individuals and their communities.

While women were not a major factor in the earlier definitions of security, current approaches, which include security in the home and the community, make them central actors and stakeholders.

III. Short History of Women, Peace and Security Agenda in international context and in Republic of Macedonia

The Women, Peace and Security agenda of today is the product of more than a century of international women's peace activism. A global women's civil society movement for peace first emerged in protest of the widespread devastation of World War I, and evolved out of several decades of smaller-scale organizing on local and national levels. For the first time, pacifist women from around the world gathered at the International Congress of Women in The Hague on 28 April 1915, determined 'to study, make known and eliminate the causes of war'. One outcome of the Congress was the founding of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which remains active as a leader in the movement for women, peace and security today. Throughout World War II, the international women's peace movement continued to advocate for an end to conflict and for international disarmament. Peace as an end in itself was the center of their agenda.

Shortly after the founding of the United Nations in 1945, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was created in 1946 as the UN body dedicated to gender equality and the advancement of women. The Commission continues to meet annually, bringing together Member States and representatives of civil society, to discuss pressing issues facing the world's women, evaluate progress and make recommendations, and formulate policies for gender equality.

Over the last decade there has been a positive shift in the understanding of the importance of bringing women and women's perspectives into security related decision-making. This is also reflected in the adoption of six subsequent resolutions in addition to UNSCR 1325, and the seven resolutions together make up the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Each of the resolutions is shortly described below.

- UNSCR 1325 (2000) is the first of the thematic resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. It stresses the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in peacebuilding and the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It encourages states to increase women's participation in decision-making.

ing regarding peace and conflict and in preventing conflicts and violence against women and girls, to enhance protection of women and girls and their rights, and to integrate a gender perspective in relief and recovery activities.

- UNSCR 1820 (2008) focuses on sexual violence in armed conflict. It states that rape and other forms of sexual violence are sometimes used as a tactic of war, and recognizes these atrocities as a possible war crime, a crime against humanity or a constitutive act of genocide.
- UNSCR 1888 (2009) focuses on sexual violence in armed conflict and reinforces UNSCR 1820. It calls for the UN Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.
- UNSCR 1889 (2009) specifically deals with the role of women in post-conflict situations. It urges actors on different levels to ensure women are better represented in conflict resolution and peace processes.
- UNSCR 1960 (2010) focuses on sexual violence in armed conflict, and expresses concern with the lack of progress on this issue. It argues sexual violence should be seen as a criterion for targeted sanctions against guilty parties.
- UNSCR 2106 (2013) focuses on combating sexual violence in the context of armed conflict, calling on all parties to do more to combat these crimes. It further notes that the risk of arms being used to perpetrate gender-based violence is a criterion that exporting states shall consider, according to the new Arms Trade Treaty.
- UNSCR 2122 (2013) reiterates commitments made in Resolution 1325. It focuses on women's access to justice in transitional and post-conflict periods, including reparations to victims. It further emphasizes women's empowerment and participation in all aspects of decisionmaking regarding conflict.

A recurring theme among the resolutions is the call for more data and a systematic assessment of the impacts of armed conflict on women and girls. There is additionally a recognition that there needs to be better understanding of what gender mainstreaming means in practical terms, beyond achieving a balance in the numbers of women and men.

The pillars of these resolutions are:

- Women's participation in all peace, security and conflict-related matters;
- Inclusion of women and a gender perspective in the prevention of conflict and of gender based or sexual violence;

- Protection of women and girls and their rights in peacetime and during conflict;
- Inclusion of women and a gender perspective in relief and recovery activities (including the prosecution of perpetrators of sexual and gender-based crimes and peacebuilding or peacekeeping activities).

These four pillars are inter-connected. Women's participation is an overarching theme, but it is both a means and an end itself. On the one hand women should be given the opportunity to participate in peace and conflict-related activities simply because it is their democratic right to do so. But women's participation is also a means to:

- achieving greater gender-awareness in conflict analysis;
- ensuring women's perspectives are taken into account in peace settlements;
- increasing protection of women; including them in reconstruction efforts, and so on.

These linkages show that the four pillars are inherently related and often mutually reinforcing.

1. Women, Peace and Security Agenda Development in Macedonia

The National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE) 2007–2012, prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, is the first document to specifically include a gender perspective in Macedonia's peace and security policy, containing a strategic goal which partly covers implementation of UNSCR 1325.

The NAPGE acknowledges the pivotal role of women and women's groups in Macedonia during the conflict and in the post-conflict setting, through their participation in a strong anti-war movement and their contribution to relieving the consequences of war for civilians, with an emphasis on refugees and internally displaced persons, a majority of whom were women and children.

NAPGE had defined nine strategic goals and one of them being Women in peacekeeping activities. The strategic goal regarding women in peacekeeping activities encompasses five main areas:

- organising campaigns and educational activities for public promotion of UNSCR 1325;

- producing educational programs to promote a culture of peace, non-violence and multi-ethnic dialogue;
- forming training teams for promotion of UNSCR 1325, gender perspectives, women's rights and nonviolent communication;
- designing training programs on gender equality and women's rights for security officers and representatives of peace missions; and
- analysing the need to adjust relevant domestic legal regulations in accordance with UNSCR 1325

Although NAP appear to cover the main relevant principles of UNSCR 1325: participation of women, protection against and prevention of gender-based violence and conflicts it was not sufficient when it comes to the invested efforts for implementation and resources allocated for implementation of activities.

Following the NAPGE other strategic documents related to Equal Opportunities and advancement of position of women in society reflected on these issues with the different extent until 2012 when a comprehensive consultation process for the developing of the National Action Plan of RM for implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 was launched. The process was successfully completed in January 2013 with the adoption of the Plan by the Government of Republic of Macedonia.

Of the crucial importance in pursuing WPS Agenda in the country was the involvement of the Civil Society organizations (CSOs). Although the number of CSOs focusing on gender issues and the impact of conflict on women is relatively limited, these organisations were actively involved in the anti-war movement and had a substantial input in peace building, reconciliation and improving inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia and the region both during and following the conflict period. They helped to alleviate the effect of the war on civilians, focussing on refugees and internally displaced persons, the majority of whom were women and children.

Activities undertaken by CSOs were crucial in setting the stage for the development of NAP 1325. More precisely, these organisations have made considerable efforts to create a solid foundation for developing NAP 1325 by undertaking awareness raising campaigns, workshops and training to educate relevant institutions and the general public about the importance of SCR 1325. Yet it was only in February 2012 that the first concrete steps were taken to develop NAP 1325 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, when the working group responsible for drafting an action plan was established.

2. Reform of the Security Sector in the country

Another equally important aspect of WPS agenda in Republic of Macedonia is its security sector transition and reforms. Below it is provided a short overview² of the reform which indicates that interethnic stability is connected and very much influences the country's security system.

Macedonia declared its independence in 1991, following the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The first decade of independence (1991-2001) saw the establishment of basic state institutions and democratic practices. The Army of the Republic of Macedonia, one of the essential pillars of the security sector, was formed during this period. Preliminary steps were taken to reform the other security sector institutions and turn them into democratic security actors, although overall the transformation remained limited in scope.

This period also witnessed the deterioration of interethnic relations, leading to an armed conflict in 2001 which, although it was brief, revealed the deficiencies of Macedonia's security sector.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) ended the armed conflict and provided for substantial reforms to the political system, the public sector and the security sector. In essence, the OFA stipulates adequate and proportional representation of Macedonia's various ethnic communities. The direct result of the OFA for the police was the establishment of multi-ethnic patrols in ethnically-mixed areas.

In terms of gender mainstreaming, the Electoral Law was amended in 2002 in order to comply with the OFA. Women's lobby groups in both formal and informal sectors used this momentum to press for changes, resulting in the adoption of electoral quotas requiring at least 30 percent representation for each gender in electoral lists (Law on Election of Members of Parliament, 2002).

The years which followed the signing of the OFA (2001-2008) have been characterised as a postconflict and integrationist period. Efforts were made to effect recovery from the conflict and return to peace-time politics, while simultaneously measures were taken which aimed to integrate Macedonia into international organisations such as the EU and NATO. This combination of actions resulted in increased reform activity in both public and security sectors.

² The overview is adopted for the purpose of this document from the publication "Women Peace and Security in the Western Balkan", Belgrade Centre for Security Policy, 2013 p.90

Text box 1: (No) Inclusion of women in negotiation of Ohrid Framework Agreement

Political dialogue preceding to Ohrid Framework Agreement signature took place during the summer of 2001 with the signature of the agreement on 13. August 2001.

By analyzing the participants involved in negotiation, mediation and supporters from international community we could not identify any female member in none of three analyzed teams.

Although women may have participated in advice and/or support positions of the teams in term of visibility and public image during the process of negotiations and the signature of OFA they were invisible. Below we provide full composition of the team's involved.

Political discussions in Skopje Negotiations took place under the auspices of President Boris Trajkovski.

Negotiators: Representatives of the four main Macedonian and Albanian political parties took part: the Interior Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity, VMRO-DPMNE, headed by Ljubco Georgievski; the Democratic Party of the Albanians, DPA, headed by Arben Xhaferi; the SocialDemocratic Union of Macedonia, SDSM, headed by Branko Crvenkovski and the Party for Democratic Prosperity, PDP, Imer Imeri.

Dialogue facilitators: James Pardew from the State Department and Francois Leotard, retired French politician

International Community representatives: EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and NATO Secretary General, Lord George Robertson and OSCE representative Mircea Geoana

The period from 2008 onwards witnessed a reduction in the pace of security sector reform also as a result of the veto against NATO membership and lack of significant progress in EU accession efforts. However, this period also saw an intensification of activities aimed at integrating a gender perspective into the security sector.

IV. Introduction of National Action Plan of RM for implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325

NAP 1325 was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on 9 January 2013 after comprehensive participatory process for its development led by the ministry of Labour and Social Policy and with MLSP and supported by the Ministry of Defense³. The process of NAP development itself lasted one year.

After undertaking a research⁴ aiming to identify the entry points for implementation of the Resolution 1325 In February 2012, a working group for preparation of NAP 1325 was established by representatives of state institutions (the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Crisis Management Centre), three women's CSOs (Antico, NCWM-UWOM and Macedonian Women's Lobby), representatives from UN Women and academic institutions.

The NAP 1325 development process was transparent and inclusive as it engaged with Key relevant stakeholders. The working group was responsible for preparing the activities to be implemented by the affected ministries in the NAP. Also the draft NAP was presented and discussed in eight local workshops. The aim of the local workshops was to gather input on the local level which was considered later at the sixth session of the working group during the process of defining the NAP.

While the local government was engaged through the workshop the Parliament was involved through the Parliament Committee for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men which organized a public debate on Draft NAP 1325. Also the MLSP published a draft version of NAP 1325 on its website, thus making the document publicly available. This participatory consultation process, which took into consideration the diverse perspectives, needs and interests of the various stakeholders, enabled various standpoints to be acknowledged and created alliances between various stakeholders. It also increased ownership and responsibility by increasing the level of support for the implementation of the NAP.

As stated above the NAP was adopted in January 2013 along with the Operational plan for

³ MLSP had a Memorandum of cooperation with the Ministry of Defense in developing the NAP.

⁴ Baseline/mapping study for implementation of UNSCR 1325 and entry points for developing a NAP on UNSCR 1325,

its implementation for 2013⁵. NAP It defines the political guidelines, principles, stakeholders, activities, strategies, indicators, monitoring and evaluation, as well as financial implications for the implementation of activities.

There are three strategic objectives of NAP for implementation of the Resolution in Women Peace and Security aiming to:

- Strengthen the gender perspective in the country's peace, security and defence policies, with emphasis on conflict prevention, early warning systems, risk reduction, disaster management and policy development;
- Increase participation by and strengthening the role of women in peacekeeping (civilian and military) where Republic of Macedonia takes part,
- Prevent violence against women in pre- and post-conflict settings, as well as during humanitarian crises caused by natural disasters

While defining those strategic objectives 18 provisions of the UNSCR 1325 were taken into consideration. These provisions are divided into three separate categories:

- Representation: increased representation and participation of women at decision making levels in national, regional and international institutions, conflict management, prevention, resolution and peace building.
- Gender perspective: a gender perspective should be adopted in planning and implementation of peace operations and negotiations;
- Protection: increased attention to the protection of and respect for women's rights (including protection against gender based violence).

With further analyze of the NAP through the main principles of the Resolution 1325 we can conclude following:

Participation is most frequently translated into two objectives: firstly increased participation by women in decision-making in general and secondly increased representation of

5 All documents are available at the web site of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy www.mtsp.gov.mk There is no evidence of the Operational plan for implementation of NAP for 2015 and 2015. There are no annual implementation reports and the update of what has been achieved from the NAP on an annual bases.

women in operational and decision-making posts in the domestic security sector and in peace-keeping operations. NAP aims to increase the recognition of women in security sector institutions dealing with the police, defence, crisis management, civil protection and integrated border management.

It also recognizes more explicitly the role of women in conflict management, prevention, resolution and peace building at home rather than solely in international peace-keeping missions. More specifically, NAP recognises the need to respect the needs of women affected by the peace building and conflict prevention measures ensuing from the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA). It aims to increase participation by women in politics and in the activities of the OFA Implementation Secretariat as well as in implementation of the Strategy for Equitable Representation of Communities not Representing the Majority and the accompanying Action Plan. In a nutshell, it aims to involve women in peace-building at home and also help ethnic minority women be represented at all levels of government.

The NAP also recognise the need to improve participation by women in peace-keeping and humanitarian missions. NAP emphasises that this can take the form of participation in both military and civilian missions. Recognising a greater pool of potential women candidates for civilian jobs, as well as the need to assist the local population by providing services other than military protection, NAP aims to develop a national civilian capacity for multinational operations by setting an objective to create a centralised roster of capacities for civilian missions.

Table 1: Participation of women in decision making structures

Local election 2013	4 women mayors (4.7%) out of totally 81; 405 women councilors (30%) out of total 1390 councilors
Parliamentarian election 2011	42 women members of parliament (34.1) out of 123 seats in total.
Government of RM ⁶	out of 4 Vice-prime ministers 0 women (0%), 5 ministers without portfolio- 0 women, 2 women minister (14%), 2 deputy minister women (14%) and 6 state secretaries women (40%) out of 15 ministries.
Public administration	Local level of government ⁷ : 3014 women employed out of 5619 men
Judicial authorities ⁸	Basic courts: 59.5% of women judges Appeal courts: 50.5% of women judges Supreme court: 71% of women judges Administrative court: 67% women judges

Protection. The principle of protection is represented in objectives aimed at empowering women and girls and protecting them from gender based violence (GBV) and threats stemming from conflicts. NAP contain measures aimed at improving the protection of women both in their home countries and in countries where national security forces might be deployed as part of peace-keeping operations. NAP have the noble cause of protecting women in common, but they rarely recognise the active role that women can take in prevention of and protection against GBV, as well as in peace and security.

The plan pay special attention to developing knowledge about and the capacity to understand GBV threats to women in the peace-keeping environment, and have designed measures such as specialised training and force sensitisation

⁶ The information refers to the government resulting parliamentarian election results 2011-2014.

⁷ Analysis for qualitative participation of women in the public and political life of the local self government units http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/informacija%20za%20analiza_lokalna%20samouprava.pdf

⁸ Source: state statistical office for year 2010.

Prevention - The prevention pillar of UNSCR 1325 should provide for: the application of gender equality in all conflict prevention activities; gender-sensitive mechanisms and institutions for early warning; strengthening of efforts to prevent violence against women; and the fight against impunity for gender and sexual violence.

In the NAP, the prevention principle is translated into measures aimed at developing the capacity of security sector institutions to prevent risks of violence and other threats to women. Most of these measures are aimed at developing prevention measures that will protect women, while failing to include women as active participants in prevention. NAP promotes the active role of women in conflict prevention and the recovery of society after emergencies and in this way it acknowledges a gender-based risk assessment for natural disasters, and especially the vulnerability of rural women to natural and humanitarian crises and catastrophes. It envisages the engagement of women in conflict-prevention and recovery at the local level through Prevention Councils and Municipal Councils as well as in collaboration with civil society.

When it comes to Monitoring and Evaluation three general indicators have been identified for each of the three strategic goals:

- Content analysis of key political documents on representation, type and frequency of terms related to gender quality;
- Number of applications and appointments of women for participation in international civil and peacekeeping missions increased by 10% by 2015;
- Strengthening of prevention of violence against women and girls, and improved mechanisms for gender-sensitive risk assessment of natural disasters.

While the NAP identifies the Inter-ministerial Working Group for Monitoring of Implementation as the main coordinating and oversight body, it does not include specific information on how and how often participants will communicate with each other.

The activities planned in the NAP have no financial implications, and will be mainstreamed into existing institutions, activities and budgets, as defined by the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2012).

National Action Plan for implementation of the Resolution 1325 and the Operational plan for implementation of NAP for 2013 are provided in Annex 2 and 3 of this document.

1. Challenges in implementation of the NAP

The body responsible for driving the 1325 agenda is the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy / Department for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The selection of gender equality bodies rather than security or foreign policy institutions as hosts for coordination could indicate the prioritisation of women's perspective in the local interpretation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

In addition to the MLSP in implementation of NAP were included the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Crisis Management Centre as the key institutions responsible for implementation of the NAP.

Implementation of the NAP will be coordinated by inter-ministerial working group comprised of representatives of the relevant ministries in cooperation with the MLSP. The MLSP will inform the government of activities carried out via ad hoc reports on specific issues, while the government will inform parliament and its committees about progress in NAP implementation.

The activities planned in the NAP will be mainstreamed into existing institutions, activities and budgets, as defined by the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2012). Even though all ministries have appointed Coordinators for Equal Opportunities, state institutions possess relatively limited capacities for implementation of NAP 1325 in terms of knowledge, people and resources, as well as lacking an adequate understanding of the concept of gender in general and gender mainstreaming in the security sector in particular.

While there is no available annual report on the status of implementation of the NAP and respective Operational plan for 2013 we can elaborate only about the anticipated challenges that involved parties were faced based on the existing available documents.

The key challenges for implementation are related to budgeting and weak monitoring mechanisms, keeping in mind that the NAP has no financial implications and activities will be mainstreamed within the existing activities and budgets of the relevant institutions.

Besides the Inter-Ministerial Working Group for Monitoring Implementation, NAP 1325 does not specify a clear reporting mechanism which will require accountability and responsibility from stakeholders. The existing reporting mechanism foresees that the MLSP will inform the government about activities carried out via ad hoc reports on specific issues, while the government will inform parliament and its committees about the progress of NAP implementation.

There is a need for gender mainstreaming in the security sector to go beyond representation by engendering policy and legislation, and to expand the focus on the representation of women in the security sector to a broader gender mainstreaming concept which addresses the differential, gendered needs and aspirations of women and men in terms of conflict prevention, resolution, management and peace-building. Increased numerical representation does not ensure improved access to decision-making positions. A case in point is the MoD, with 36.9% of women of whom very few occupy decision-making positions. On the other hand, the MoI is the ministry with the fewest women among its workforce, and it has been labelled the "most masculine" ministry.

Much needs to be accomplished for the gap between policy and practice to be reduced. In order for the SSR to be effective, just and democratic, it is essential that a gender perspective is mainstreamed in all SSR initiatives. Failure to integrate gender issues into the security sector will lead to further neglect of the security needs of women and girls, as well as marginalised men and boys. SSR is crucial for the promotion of development, good governance and peace, and the process itself opens a "window of opportunity" for implementing gendered initiatives at the structural, policy and personnel levels in order to enhance local ownership, effective service delivery and oversight and accountability of the security sector.

Text box 2: Definition of Gender Mainstreaming

The most commonly used definition for gender mainstreaming is taken from the report of the United Nation Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 1997 and it is as follow: "Mainstreaming gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy of making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."

2. Legislative and Institutional set up and involved stakeholders

LEGISLATION

The principle of gender equality has been enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia since its adoption in 1991 (Articles 9, 54, and 110). The gender dimension was incorporated into Macedonia's strategic documents following the adoption of CEDAW

(which entered into force in 1991). There are many laws which have embedded gender provisions and some of the most important ones are the first Law on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (2006) which aims to arrange the basic and special measures for establishing equal opportunities for women and men, as well as the responsibilities, duties and tasks of the entities responsible for the establishment of equal opportunities, the procedure for determining unequal treatment of women and men, and the rights and duties of the Representative for Equal opportunities between Women and Men.

The second Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men adopted in 2012 includes prevention of and protection from discrimination, in accordance with the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, adopted in 2010. As in the previous version of 2006 the purpose of this Law is to establish equal opportunities for women and men in political, economic, social, educational, cultural, health, civil or any other area of social living. Establishment of equal opportunities is a concern of the whole society, respectively of the entities in the public and private sectors and represents removal of obstacles and creating conditions for achieving full equality between women and men.

In regard to National Strategies some of the most important documents are presented below:

National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2007 - 2012 year have a significant contribution to the achievement of equal opportunities. It defines ten strategic areas for action, activities, indicators, and the responsible institutions, stakeholders and interested parties to establish gender equality in different areas.

Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020 represent a continuation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2007-2012) and further enhancement of gender equality as a strategic priority of the country as the strategy is endorsed by the parliament of RM. Strategy for Gender Equality provides a comprehensive framework for equality between women and men. It enables cross-sector and horizontal linkages among institutions and areas/sectors and will establish sound foundation for achievement of gender equality in the country. The Strategy highlights 9 sector priorities where gender equality should be pursued. 1. Enhancement of gender equality in health and social protection, 2. Gender equality in politics, public life and media; 3. Economic empowerment and gender equality; 4. Combating gender based violence; 5. Gender sensitive education; 6. International politics and cooperation; 7. Women, peace and security; 8. Gender sensitive budgeting; 9. Institutional mechanisms.

Beside the Strategy there is a National Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2013-

2016 and its three strategic goals and Operational plan for 2013 for implementation of the Strategy and the National Action Plan.

Second National strategy for protection against domestic violence covers the period 2012-2015. It has 5 strategic goals: Prevention; Protection, assistance and support for victims; prosecution of violator; multi-sector cooperation, institutional capacity development and specialized services; Implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The Strategy for gender responsive budgeting 2012-2017 further enhances the requirements of Law for Equal opportunities calling for integration of principles for equal opportunities in all strategic plans and budgets of public institutions. The strategy envisages: 1. Integration of gender perspective in programmes and budgets of all budget users (ministries, agencies, local self-government units, etc) at central and local level of government, 2. Enhance legal framework for gender responsive budgeting and, 3. Enhance institutional mechanisms and capacity development for integration of gender perspective in policy, programme and budget creation.

Institutions -Central level

In March 2007, the Department for Equal Opportunities was established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) (in a restructuring of the Unit formed in 1997), and it is a crucial actor in implementation of the Law for Equal Opportunity for women and men and it is a driving force for coordination and implementation of National Action Plan for Resolution 1325.

The Coordinator and the deputy coordinator for equal opportunities of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. They are responsible to promote and establish equal opportunities and achievement as per the objectives of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, through the application of the basic and the special measures stipulated in this Law. The coordinator and a deputy coordinator for equal opportunities, monitors the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities for women and men in the strategic plans of the competent ministries and the budgets, which cooperate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Coordinators for Equal Opportunities between women and men in all government ministries

They are appointed pursuant the Law on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men,

which stipulate that ministries are obliged to designate an official – coordinator, who is responsible for implementing the requirements under the authority of the Ministry to establish equal opportunities and is required to submit annual performance report to the Ministry of Labour and Social policy. Coordinators for equal opportunities between women and men have been appointed in all 14 ministries in the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. Coordinators for equal opportunities were appointed in 10 state institutions as well, i.e. Employment Service Agency, the State Statistical Office, the Broadcasting Council, the Agency for Sports and Youth, the Ombudsman, the General Secretariat of the Government of RM, the Institute for Social Activities, etc.

Inter-sector consultative and advisory group for equal opportunities between women and men. The members of this group are representatives of relevant line ministries and government institutions, Civil Society Organizations and experts. The programme for work in 2014 is consisted on 9 activities aimed at further enhancement of gender equality at national and local level. Further information on this group can be found on http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/programa_inter.pdf

Commission for equal opportunities between women and men in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. In September 2006, according to the Law on equal opportunities, the Commission on Equal Opportunities between women and men was established in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, as a permanent body of the Assembly. Its main responsibility is to monitor the incorporation of gender equality aspects in the legislation.

The competence of the Commission is to review draft laws and other regulations with respect to the inclusion of the gender concept in them, and to initiate adoption and amendment of laws and other regulations concerning equal opportunities between women and men.

The Secretariat for Implementation of Ohrid Framework Agreement (SIOFA) of the Government of Macedonia is established in 2008. It's primary mandate is to: actively participate in the implementation of Ohrid Framework Agreement and monitor results in the following areas: fair participation of representatives of ethnic minorities in Macedonia and decentralization process; SIOFA is to coordinate and monitor education process and the usage of languages in line with the legal provisions; cooperate with associations and foundations and to ensure administrative and expert support to Deputy Prime Minister who is in charge of implementation of Ohrid Framework Agreement.

The issue of gender equality and equal opportunities is perceived primarily as a matter of gender balance of women and men employed in the institutions. There is an increase of the

number of women employed in the state institutions since they are increasingly attaining university education. Slowly the traditional attitude on gender issues is changing. There are no special measures for equal employment of women and men.

The Secretariat does not possess gender and ethnic disaggregated data on employees in the state administration. There are some difficulties in gathering data on issues related to the implementation of the OFA, some ministries report to the Secretariat, some not.

SIOFA is closely cooperating with the Ministry of Local Self Government, ZELS, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and local commissions for inter ethnic dialogue, which are regularly sending reports to the SIOFA. The Secretariat together with MOLSP is collaborating in the area of IPA funding aimed at the enhancement of employment potentials of women belonging to minority ethnic communities.

Ministry of Defence. Equality between women and men is guaranteed by the Defence Law (2001), the Law on Army Service (2002), the Law on Internal Affairs (2009) and by-laws regulating the employment and career development of women and men. In 2009, in accordance with the NAPGE, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) adopted the Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the MOD and ARM, aimed at promoting equal opportunities for recruitment and professional development for women and men in all segments of the MoD and army⁹

The measures and activities proposed in the programme are directed towards preventing all forms of direct and indirect discrimination, as defined in the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Additionally, women's right to promotion in the Armed Forces is guaranteed by the 2010 Defence Strategy. As stated in the Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the MOD and ARM (2009), 36.9% of employees in the MOD are female, while in the ARM they account for 50.3% of civilian posts and 5.5% of operational jobs. In November 2012, the MoD produced a Gender Perspective and Gender Equality Committee with the aim of undertaking comprehensive activities to include a gender perspective in defence policy.

Ministry of Interior. In line with the Law on Police (2006), the MoI recruits on the basis of gender equality as stipulated by law, meaning that specific quotas are not set in advance.

⁹ The Programme for equal Opportunities for women and men in Ministry of Defense and Army of RM can be downloaded from <http://www.morm.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/Programa-1-va-strana.pdf>

The absence of quotas is justified by the large number of applications received, which renders quotas obsolete. Women represent 14.83% of all MoI employees, with 6.12% in uniform and 47.08% commissioned. Since independence, two female ministers and 94 have been appointed as head of the MoI.

Crisis Management Centre (CMC) was assigned by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on 21 April 2009 as the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The CMC holds the strategic position in the Crisis Management System (CMS) of the Republic of Macedonia. In the execution of the crisis management tasks, CMC shall perform the activities that refer to: providing continuity of the inter-departmental and international cooperation, consultations and coordination of the crisis management; preparation and updating of a unified assessment of the risks and dangers to the security of the Republic; proposing measures and activities for resolving a crisis situation; and executing other activities laid down by law.

National Prevention Council is a part of the larger structure of community policing and its main coordinating body. National Prevention Council is consisted of high-level officials such as the Prime Minister, and other ministries that have a law enforcement responsibility – Interior, Local Governance, Education, Health, Justice, Transport and Communication and Finance. This council is obliged to meet at least twice a year, but there is no disclosure on whether that obligation is met, or what was adopted or what subject was discussed. The lack of information about the activities of this body questions its efficacy.

Mechanisms-Local Level

Commissions for equal opportunities between women and men in the Local Self-Government Units aim at incorporating gender perspective and equal opportunities in the local policy, to promote the position of women on local level and to implement strategic objectives of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Law on Gender Equality between women and men. Main responsibility of the Commissions is to work on promotion of the position of women and to provide equal opportunities for women and men on local level through the process of drafting and adoption of policies, their implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the achieved results. The Commission on equal opportunities

is requested to submit a performance report to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, at least once per year.

Coordinator for equal opportunities between women and men in the local self-government units are individuals from the municipal administration with the status of civil servant who, among other duties, deal with promotion of equality between women and men and support

ports the Commission in the implementation of its duties and responsibilities. The Coordinator is appointed by the Mayor.

Committees for Inter-Community Relations are established in the municipalities where more than 20 percent of the local population belongs to a certain non-majority community. Their role is to enable institutional dialogue between the different ethnic communities and to act as an instrument for enabling direct citizen participation within municipal decision-making processes). The Committees are obliged by law to review issues that refer to the relationships among the local communities, to provide opinions, and to propose ways to resolve problems that may arise between communities. They are critical for resolving issues pertinent to non-majority communities, particularly those requiring the adoption of special voting procedures, since municipal councils are obliged to consider the Committee's opinions and make decisions based on them. The 20 multiethnic municipalities legally required to establish such Committees have now done so; and, according to data collated a further twelve municipalities have on a voluntarily basis. It is admirable that so many municipalities have recognized the benefit of establishing Committees for Inter-Ethnic Relations, even though they are not obliged to do so¹⁰.

Local Prevention Councils. The idea for establishing Local Prevention Councils originates from OSCE's involvement in the community policing program in Macedonia. It was first introduced in 2007 with the aim to provide wider institutional and citizen-backed support of the community policing model. The highly structured approaches, have followed a model which provides a sound platform for discussion of topics relevant to local safety issues. These would usually consist of members of the local municipality council, local police and, depending on the topic of discussion, members from various ministries like Ministry of Education or Labor and Social Affairs. The mayor is the chairman and all ministry representatives in the council must cooperate with him at local level. There is no minimum quota when it comes to the number of meetings that should be conducted. In the period of 2010-2014, according to the Ministry of Interior Local Prevention Councils were formed in all municipalities in Skopje, and in 2013 after the local elections MoI initiated a restart of the local councils for prevention with the newly municipal members. Having the relationship between the Ministry of Interior and the Local Municipalities unregulated with clear mandates creates confusion in this area.

¹⁰ Lyon, Municipal Decentralization in the Republic of Macedonia.

Text box 3: Women in Security Sector

The available information indicates that many security sector reforms were introduced and that the process of normative and institutional set-up is almost finished. Most progress has been made since 2005 when Macedonia was invited to join the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU. International actors such as the USA, EU, OSCE and NATO have been instrumental in supporting the reform process and have thus contributed to the reform of the security sector too. However, the security sector still faces many challenges, including “gender discrimination which is endemic to a patriarchal society”.

The only statistical data available point to the severe underrepresentation of women in the military – about 1%, although there are no formal barriers for their participation and in spite of the fact that women represent half of the population in Macedonia. Out of the total number of employees in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, according to some sources, 16.05% are women.

Gender-equality reforms are coordinated by the Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination departments at the Ministry for Social Policy and Labor. It is expected that by raising their profile and moving their offices from the ministry to the government’s general secretariat new impetus will be provided, as well as assurance of the effective implementation of Macedonia’s action plan to achieve the objectives set out in Resolution 1325.

The procedure for admission to the police takes into account the gender principle and there is no predetermined quota or principle of positive discrimination, but neither are there any special promotion campaigns for the recruitment of women. The Training Center within the Bureau of Public Security is responsible for training, while the Ministry of Internal Affairs organizes training relating to human rights, including a program to offset discrimination in the police.

It seems obvious that traditional prejudices against the position of women position in society and politics, and especially their presence in the police and armed forces, still have a strong influence on social attitudes and that determined action is needed, both at governmental and non-governmental level, to intensify gender-mainstreaming in the security sector.

V. Relevance of UNSC Resolution in R. Macedonia through the lenses of Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance.

UNSC Resolution 1325 in Macedonia has its relevance also in the aspect of the country inner stability and it contributes in establishing the culture of non-violence and multi-ethnic dialogue;

Women in general and specifically women active in civil society organizations have been recognized as a unifying and cohesive element of the society. Due to their dedication and advocacy activity, among other efforts, the country has managed to overcome the biggest security crises in 2001 since its independence which has resulted in Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA). While the impact and OFA content is elaborated below the efforts of women CSO remained unrecognized at the time when the agreement was discussed. Also the content of the agreement did not had any reference on women and the importance of women Participation, Prevention, Protection and more importantly Relief and Recovery.

Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) is a major stone in integrating inter-ethnic relations within the highest legal document in a country. Namely, with signing the OFA by major political party leaders representing major ethnic groups in Macedonia-Macedonians and Albanians- after a conflict in 2001 was followed by major constitutional amendments into to constitution restructuring political system of the country. OFA was a peaceful settlement in response for a greater participatory democracy in decision-making processes both at national and local level. It was a response to a challenge requesting greater institutional understanding and accommodation of differences within political system in building and promoting development of civil society while recognizing multiethnic character of all its citizens. In its words of the Agreement “an agreed framework for securing the future of Macedonia’s democracy and permitting the development of closer and more integrated relations and the Euro-Atlantic Community. This Framework will promote the peaceful and harmonious development of civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of all Macedonian citizens”.

- Ohrid Framework Agreement was a document, which contained seven major areas plus three annexes that constituted the integral parts of the agreement. The areas of the agreement were treated under the following sections:
- The Basic Principles-emphasized the rejection of violence for political aims, uni-

tary character of the State, progressive development of its constitution as to fully meeting needs of its citizens, and the development of local self-government for “encouraging the participation of citizens in democratic life, and for promoting respect for identity of communities”.

- Cessation of Hostilities- underlining the commitments made about complete cessation of hostilities and voluntary disarmament of the ethnic Albanian armed groups.
- Development of Decentralized Government - focusing on three major interventions.
 - Revision of the Law on Local Self-Government in reinforcing the powers of local officials and enlarging their
 - Territorial reorganization of boundaries of municipalities in accordance and after the new census is organized.
 - Increased competence to municipal councils in the selection process of local heads of police in coordination with the Ministry of Interior as to ensure that “police are aware and responsive to the needs and interests of local population”.
- Non-Discrimination and Equitable Representation - focusing on the principle of non-discrimination in employment in public administration and public enterprises, and access to public financing for business development. Laws regulating employment in public administration will have to include measure to assure equitable representation of communities in all central and local public bodies and at all levels of employment within such bodies. Additionally, special mechanisms for appointing members to the Constitutional Court were introduced in order to meet equitable representation of communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia. Special measures were also to apply to the election of the Ombudsman (Public Attorney) and the election of three of the members of the Judicial Council.
- Special Parliamentary Procedures- voting system for issues related to communities of non-majority “Badinter rule” (double majority) voting rule was introduced. Laws that directly affect culture, use of language, education, personal documentation, and use of symbols, as well as laws on local finances were some of issues mentioned in the agreement as the issues requiring majority votes of the Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

- Education and Use of Languages- focusing on language of instruction provided in native language in primary and secondary education while applying uniform standards in academic programs. Higher education language of instruction conditioned on the language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population of Macedonia. In addition, any other language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population will be set also an official language. In the organs of the Republic of Macedonia, it was foreseen that any other official language spoken other than Macedonian may be used in accordance to law. With respect to local self-government, in municipalities where a community comprises at least 20 percent of population of the municipality, the language of that community will be used as an official language in addition to Macedonian. Similarly, in criminal and civil judicial proceedings at any level, an accused person or any party will have the right to translation at State expense.
- Expression of Identity – regulated the use of symbols in public buildings marking the identity of the community by respecting international rules and usages.
 - All above mentioned measures were detailed and grouped in three Annexes that constitute integral parts of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The annexes were separated into:
 - Annex A- Constitutional Amendments
 - Annex B- Legislative Modifications
 - Annex C- Implementation and Confidence Building Measures

Those measures stemming from the comprehensive OFA peace process provided positive legal framework in support of peace and stability by promoting inter-ethnic dialogue and strengthening civil society by building trust among different communities. The OFA measures were grouped in laws and major constitutional amendments, legislative modifications were made progressively resulting in constitution accommodating all citizens’ rights while promoting non-discriminative measures, and inter-ethnic dialogue at all levels of government.

1. Inter-Ethnic Relations Institutional Framework

Within the constitutional amendments, stemming from the Ohrid Framework Agreement in support of inter-ethnic dialogue at the national governing body the Committee for Inter-Community Relations was established. The Committee in fact replaced the Inter-ethnic Rela-

tions Council introduced by 1991 Constitution¹¹. The Committee for Inter-Community Relations is considered to review issues related to inter-ethnic relations with emphasis of those issues, which require double majority as it is stated in Article 69. In this article, adoption of laws that require double majority is in domain of culture, language, education, personal documentation, equitable representation in public bodies and use of symbols. The Committee makes assessment of those issues and makes proposal to the Parliament for their solution. The Parliament is obliged to take into consideration appraisals and proposals from the Committee and to act upon those by making decisions.

The Parliamentary Committee for Inter-Community Relations in its current composition is comprised of 19 members out of which seven belonging to MP from Macedonian ethnic community, seven belonging to MPs from the Albanian community, one MPs each belonging Turkish, Serbian, Roma and Bosnian communities. This composition is a reflection of multicultural dimension of the population and when functioning effectively can play great role in promotion of good inter-ethnic relations at national level that has substantial impact on promotion of good relations at the local level.

The replication of the Parliamentary Committee for Inter-Community Relations at the local level is the municipal Commission for Inter-Community Relations (CICR). Although the Commission is not vertically integrated to the Parliamentary Committee in essence, the commission considers very same issues of concern at the local level and it is very essential for inter-ethnic dialogue and promotion of active participation in the work of municipality to all citizens. Consequently, establishing of the CICR both favors multi-ethnic character to the municipality and integration of ethnic communities through equitable representation and recognition of ethnic differences while institutionalizing the ethnic differences that already exists in communities.

Within this spirit legislation established Committees for Inter-Community Relations in municipalities where more than 20 percent of the local population belongs to a certain non-majority community.

Municipalities can also establish Committees in areas where local communities comprise less than 20 percent (description of the composition and the role of municipal committees is provided on the section above); however, this decision is at the discretion of the municipal council. Their role is to enable institutional dialogue between the different ethnic commu-

¹¹ Constituional Mechanism for Inter-ethnic Dialogue in the Republic of Macedonia, Deskoska

nities and to act as an instrument for enabling direct citizen participation within municipal decision-making processes. The Committees are obliged by law to review issues that refer to the relationships among the local communities, to provide opinions, and to propose ways to resolve problems that may arise between communities. They are critical for resolving issues pertinent to non-majority communities, particularly those requiring the adoption of special voting procedures, since municipal councils are obliged to consider the Committee's opinions and make decisions based on them. The 20 multiethnic municipalities legally required to establish such Committees have now done so; and, according to data collated a further twelve municipalities have on a voluntarily basis. It is admirable that so many municipalities have recognized the benefit of establishing Committees for Inter-Ethnic Relations, even though they are not obliged to do so.¹²

2. Challenges related to inter-ethnic dialogue (as a precondition for peace and stability) in the country

Inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration is crucial to sustaining healthy community relations, social trust and tolerance. The promotion of such dialogue and collaboration requires the encouragement and engagement of central and local government, as well as the participation of a broad and inclusive social spectrum, namely civil society, including religious, women's and youth leaders, as well as the media and the business sector. The inclusion and full engagement of these actors and their realization of inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration can lead to important outcomes: it can resolve immediate problems or concerns between ethnic groups on vertical and horizontal, as well as local and national, levels; it can build medium-term trust and consensus between groups while strengthening democratic governance; and it can increase the ability of society to re-dress structural inequalities and to better understand and promote inter-ethnic, inter-religious and intercultural understanding, thereby reducing the prospect of conflict.

However while this strong infrastructure is in place, there are existing challenges that hinder the full realization of inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration in the country. The mayor one related to the capacity of organizations and institutions to promote inter-ethnic dialogue

¹² Lyon, Municipal Decentralization in the Rrepublic of Macedonia.

which should be improved at all levels. This includes improving the skills and competencies of individuals within those organizations and institutions.

The challenges are evidenced at operational, human resource and financial levels which limit the full potential of local level organizations and women organizations to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration.

Meanwhile, other mechanisms and resources at the community level are not fully developed or operational, including, instruments that, for example, assure representation, promotion and protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups which by the biggest extent are women.

VI. Local Self Government Units and the connection between Gender Equality, Inter-ethnic cohesion and public security mechanisms

While the National Action Plan for implementation of UN SCR 1325 highlights the involvement of central government institutions and the Parliament, it also refers to the need for involvement of Local Self Government Units in implementation of planned activities.

On the other hand, so far there is no available information related to the extent of implementation of the NAP (2013-2015) and its Operational plan for 2013, its impact and achieved results. Also since the existing NAP ended in 2015, there is no information whether the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and its Department for Equal Opportunity for Women and Men intends to develop a new one.

In the absence of this information, here in this section we will analyze to what extent local government and stakeholders active in local community can contribute in implementation of NAP and what are available mechanisms. Hopefully these findings will be used for the preparation of new NAP for implementation of UN SCR 1325 and for greater mobilization of Local Self government Units in embracing Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Table 2: LSGU involvement in implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 in NAP 2013-2015

Strategic objective	Strengthening of the gender perspective in the formulation and implementation of the peace, security and defense policy	Strengthening of the participation and contribution of women in international civilian and military missions in which the RM participates	Prevention of violence and protection of the rights of women in conditions of peace, conflicts and humanitarian disasters
LSGU involvement in anticipated results	1.2 Increased participation and contribution of women/men in the adoption and implementation of the peace, security and defense policy of the Republic of Macedonia, including early prevention	2.1 Strengthened capacities of employees in institutions (women and men) in relation to the gender aspects of the MSDP of the Republic of Macedonia	3.1 Improved legislative framework regarding violence against women and girls from a gender perspective in line with EU and international standards for natural / humanitarian crises and disasters 3.2 Strengthened role of public institutions responsible for the protection of victims of domestic violence through expansion of their competences and strengthening of their capacities to deal with gender-based violence

Strategic objective	Strengthening of the gender perspective in the formulation and implementation of the peace, security and defense policy	Strengthening of the participation and contribution of women in international civilian and military missions in which the RM participates	Prevention of violence and protection of the rights of women in conditions of peace, conflicts and humanitarian disasters
Activities	<p>ALL within 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To establish a procedure for mandatory introduction of gender perspectives in the adoption of MSDP and in strategic implementation documents in line with the Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men - To establish gender-sensitive preventive sectoral policies within the MSDP and an implementation mechanism at national and local level; - To strengthen the capacities of coordinators for equal opportunities and collaboration and consultation with NGOs / civil society on issues related to peace and security policy from a gender perspective. Number of cases resolved (or actions taken on cases) - % Of women who refereed legal obligations concerning ective in the relevant ministries and institutions at central and local level 	<p>All within 2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of Trainers - TOT for persons from relevant institutions; - Creation of an expert database for Res. 1324 WPS) - Development of a training curriculum on Res. 1325, the Agenda on WPS, gender-based violence (by the people who will be trained within TOT) - Updating of training courses for professionals (civilian and military experts) that are referred to peacekeeping missions with information on gender issues, Res. 1325, gender-based violence; - Exchange of experiences and best practices among trainers (expert database on Res. 1325 gender issues) from the countries in the region and beyond 	<p>3.1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of an inter-departmental working group for self / evaluation of the gender perspective of the legislative acts regarding violence against women and girls - Introduction of gender-sensitive measures for conflict resolution <p>Conducting of a gender analysis of the situation concerning the impact of natural and humanitarian crises and disasters on women and girls on a local and national level (a gender-sensitive risk assessment);</p> <p>3.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement of the function of the centers for public services for women - victims of domestic violence by improving the quality of services and the accessibility to services, as well as by putting in place effective processes and procedures;

The table above clearly shows the need for more substantive involvement of Local self government Units than it was on the existing NAP.

Namely, the relevance of local government is acknowledged by the existing NAP as the local government is reflected under the responsible institutions for the activities under the strategic objective 1 and 2. We believe that Local Government can provide input in strategic objective 3 as well.

With the process of decentralization and in the context of further empowerment of municipal administration the perspective of LSGU should be incorporated in all relevant documents both in the process of their development but also in the process of implementation and assessments of the results.

Also taking in consideration the principles of participation in the process of policy making, the central government must ensure that the LSGU are involved in the process of policy

development regardless the fact that implementation of these policies is not directly in the domain of local government.

Therefore we see an opportunity for LSGU involvement in all three strategic objectives being it by direct implementation and contribution or indirectly by providing its perspective on how these policies affect local governance.

Mechanisms:

There are several mechanisms that can be used as an entry point for more intensive implementation of the activities (to be) defined in next NAP for implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1325. They are:

- Commissions for Inter-Community Relations (CICRs)
- Equal Opportunity Commissions between for Women and Men of the Municipality Council and the Coordinator for equal opportunities between women and men in the local self-government units
- Local Security Councils
- Civil Society Organizations

As elaborated previously, the activities deriving from NAP can be used for further enhancement of the country's stability and security. While, on the other hand, stable inter-ethnic relations are one of the important factor influencing stability and security.

Commissions for Inter-Community Relations (CICRs).

We have elaborated on the earlier chapter in details the responsibilities and the composition of the CICRs. Here we only emphasize the fact that Local governments can play a key role in identifying and advancing effective and efficient ways to resolve and prevent negative inter-ethnic relations. Local governments are at times the most knowledgeable bodies on local-level issues and are able to consider and apply the balance of interests while advancing the institutional framework.

Article 55 of the *Law on Local Self-Government*²⁶ makes a provision for the establishment of Commissions for Inter-community Relations (CICRs) in municipalities where at least 20% of the population belongs to a certain ethnic community. The law does not preclude other municipalities from establishing CICRs, which are consultative bodies composed of an equal number of representatives of each community represented in the municipality.

By law, CICRs are to review issues that refer to the relationships among the communities represented in the municipality, provide opinions and propose ways to resolve problems that arise between communities. According to the same article, the Municipal Council is obliged to review CICR opinions and proposals and make consequent decisions.

Equal Opportunity Commission between women and men and the Coordinator.

Every Local Self -Government Unit is obliged to establish a Commission for equal opportunities between women and men as a mandatory commission of the local self government units. The Commission aims at incorporating gender perspective and equal opportunities in the local policy, to promote the position of women on local level and to implement strategic objectives of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Law on Gender Equality between women and men. Main responsibility of the Commissions is to work on promotion of the position of women and to provide equal opportunities for women and men on local level through the process of drafting and adoption of policies, their implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the achieved results. The Commission on equal opportunities is requested to submit a performance report to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, at least once per year. The commission prepares its action plan for equal opportunities reflecting activities, timing budget and monitoring indicators to achieve the objectives explained above.

More specifically, work of the Commission should be focused in following aspects:

- a. The commission should focus its efforts in ensuring that all **development documents** and such as strategies, programmes and project **MUST** be reviewed through gender lenses. Therefore, the Commission should **INSIST** to receive these documents and provide its **INPUTS** before they are approved by the municipal council.
- b. The Commission must be proactively involved in the **process of budget preparation**. While doing this the Commission has dual objective. The first one is to ensure that the budget reflects the activities planned on the Action Plan of Equal Opportunities, prepared by the Commission and endorsed by the Municipal Council. Second objective, more complex one, is to ensure that the prepared budget is gender responsive one. In other words to ensure that the budget funds activities from which will benefit both women and men.

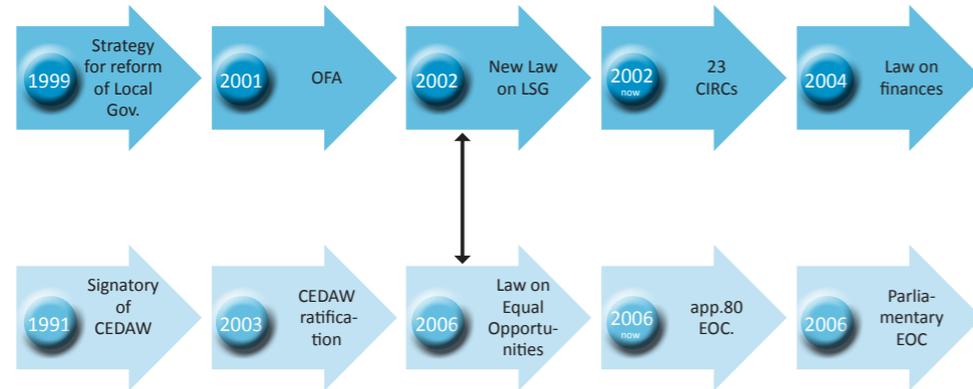
- c. Since the budget follows programmes and projects, the Commission primarily goal should be to suggest and influence the content of the **municipal council programme** for work from the aspect of equal opportunities and in this way mainstream gender aspects in these documents. As in the first point, the Commission must review the document through the gender lenses and as such provide it inputs before it is endorsed and financed.
- d. Last but not least, the Commission has the autonomy to influence **the work of the LSGU**, its **administration** and undertaken **operations** from gender perspective. For instance if there is unequal gender representation in management boards, working groups and/or enterprises of the LSGU, the Commission should react and suggest changes. Or, in case a service provided to the citizens by the LSGU is not sensitive to the needs of both genders, than the Commission should initiate redesign of that service so to fit the needs of both women and men.

Coordinator for equal opportunities between women and men in the local self-government units are individuals from the municipal administration with the status of civil servant who, among other duties, deal, enhance and promote the equality and equal opportunities measures between women and men. S/He in addition supports the Commission in the implementation of its duties and responsibilities.

Both CICRs and EOC are relatively new in the structure of the Local Self Government Units and their process of evolution is graphically presented on the table below:

Graph 1: Evolution of Inter-Ethnic and Equal Opportunities agenda

a. Evolution of Inter-ethnic process and establishment of CICRs



b. Evolution of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunity and establishment of EOC

Although there are ample of possibilities for cooperation between these two mechanisms available at the municipality level, unfortunately there is no evidence that such cooperation is taking place in general nor on the issues related to inter-ethnic dialogue.

Furthermore the Equal opportunity Commission is consisted only by the Elected Councilors as regular members of the Commission which hamper the full participation of representatives of civil society organization in the work of the commission.

As for the CICRs the composition of existing commissions is dominated by male members. This implies that inter-ethnic relations are viewed primarily through male dominated perspective.

Third available mechanism, not directly under the responsibility of local Self Government, is Local Prevention Council (LPC). Detailed description of this mechanism is provided in the section of 3.2 of this report however it should be noted that similarly with cooperation of CICs with EOC, neither of these two mechanisms have established cooperation with LPC in general and in regard to the prevention and security related issues.

Civil Society Organization primarily Women Citizen Associations represent important factor which contributes with the bigger share until now in implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325. In most of the cases Civil Society representatives are the most knowledgeable for the process and the activities that are required for WPS agenda on the local level. Unfortunately due to lack of capacities, awareness and to some extent political will not much of exchanges between civil society and the mechanisms elaborated above takes place. On the other hand they (together and each of them) represent valuable entry points for implementation of the resolution at the local level.

Graph 2: Mechanisms and stakeholders for implementation of WPS Agenda in LSGU



VII. Women refugees in Macedonia and challenges to be addressed by the Resolution 1325¹³

The peaceful Syrian uprising that began in March 2011 has deteriorated into a brutal and bloody conflict between the Assad regime and a variety of opposition forces with regional implications. The conflict has been noted as “one of the largest exoduses in recent history;”. Women and girls in particular are being severely and adversely affected by this conflict. As refugees, Syrian women and girls have fled all they have known for a stark, new reality where the burdens they face as females have significantly increased.

From 1 January to 31 December, 2015 over 1,008,616 asylum seekers from some of the world’s top refugee producing countries, including Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, have made their way towards Western Europe by sea. Of these, more than 851,319 people (including women and children who comprise 17% and 25% of the total population respectively) have traveled through Turkey by sea to Greece, and onwards through the Western Balkans with the hopes of reaching destination countries further north, including in Austria, Germany and Sweden. Total population figures are believed to be much higher, as only an estimated 2/3rds of asylum seekers are being registered upon arrival in transit countries. In 2015 alone, over 3,771 persons making this perilous journey have died or gone missing at sea. R. of Macedonia is the main corridor for people traveling from Greece to Serbia.

The government reports that over 279,900 people have registered intention to apply for asylum in the country from 19 June to 24 November, 2015, although real numbers are estimated to be almost double. Once the registration papers are issued, asylum seekers are permitted to board government-run trains, or private buses and taxis to travel northwards towards the Serbian border (a 3-4 hour journey) where they pass through the Tabanovce transit center. Daily arrivals in Macedonia in December decreased to 2,827, most likely in large part due to averse winter weather conditions.

Macedonia is primarily transit country along the Western Balkans route, and the priority of asylum seekers is to move through its territory as quickly as possible in order to reach

13 Adopted for the purpose of this document from UN Women Study “Gender Assessment of the refugee and migration crisis in Serbia and FYR Macedonia”, available at <http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/country/serbia/gender%20assessment%20of%20the%20refugee%20and%20migration%20crisis%20in%20serbia.pdf?v=1&d=20160112T163308>

destination countries in Western Europe. The refugee and migrant population is extremely heterogeneous, comprised of individuals with different nationalities, languages, cultures, ethnicities, religions, sexes, ages, and levels of vulnerability. Individuals also differ widely in terms of their group composition, socio-economic status, levels of education, social capital and reasons for leaving their country of origin.

Beginning in October 2015, front line workers reported shifts in population trends away from largely single men, to increased numbers of women and children as well as vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied and separated minors, elderly persons, pregnant and lactating women, people with disabilities and people with chronic illnesses. These populations also appeared to have less money, fewer resources and less information about their journey, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. By November 2015, women and children comprised up to 42% of the affected population (18% and 24% respectively) - an average 10% increase in the percentage of women as compared to May 2015. The profile of women and girls reflects the diversity of the broader affected population and includes pregnant and lactating women (including women at late stages of pregnancy), married women (including second or third wives, as well as married adolescent girls), widows, women with disabilities, elderly women, adolescent girls, younger girls, female unaccompanied minors, single women, among others.

Many of these women are traveling to join their husbands who are already in countries of asylum. Others have left their husbands behind, assuming they and their children will have a higher likelihood of a successful asylum application, after which their husband can follow. Women may also be traveling exclusively with their husbands (without children or a larger group), or completely alone or alone with their children (without a husband or a larger group), although examples of the latter case are few.

Identified risks are as listed below.

Protection risks:

Refugee and migrant women and girls face specific challenges and protection risks in transit, including family separation, psychosocial stress and trauma, health complications, particularly for pregnant women, physical harm and injury, and risks of exploitation and gender-based violence. Many of the women are fleeing conflict in their homeland and have suffered extreme violence and rights violations, including regular bombardment of civilian areas,

killing and disappearance of family members, sexual and gender based violence (GBV), disrupted access to food, water and electricity and destruction of their homes and livelihoods. Some have been repeatedly displaced or have been exploited or abused while attempting to seek asylum. Women also often serve as the main caretakers for children and elderly family members, further deepening their need for protection and support.

Women and children (including unaccompanied minors) traveling without male family members, who depend on smugglers and have limited funds, are at increased risk of sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Language barriers, cultural factors, as well as the intention of asylum seekers to move as quickly as possible, may limit the ability of women and girls to communicate with service providers and can prevent them from seeking the protection and assistance they need. The lack of time and privacy to build trust with women, combined with limited numbers of trained personnel, and the rapid movement of populations, make case identification, referral and service provision (including providing a continuum of care across multiple countries along the route) extremely challenging.

Humanitarian Response:

In Macedonia, the national response to the crisis is outlined in the Government's Response Plan in Event of Mass Influx of Migrants (September 2015), which aims to outline the institutional, material and administrative capacities of the state to respond in case of a mass influx of migrants. The key measures and activities outlined in the plan focus on maintaining security and public health, registering migrants, providing temporary accommodation as well as humanitarian and medical assistance, enabling unimpeded safe transit of migrants through the country, and coordinating actions among public institutions, humanitarian organizations and international organizations. The plan makes mention of targeted assistance needs for vulnerable categories of persons including through special assistance at temporary check points (including for pregnant women, unaccompanied minors, persons with special needs, etc.) and for psychosocial protection for vulnerable categories of persons in the event of longer term stays.

While the government contingency planning to date has focused on hardware (for example, number of winterized shelters and beds needed) rather than on the need for services (including on protection and Gender Based Violence -GBV prevention and response) under conditions of longer term stay, it should be noted that contingency plans should consider

the provision of services to accommodate and accompany longer term stays, including protection services, and take into account any targeted support needed in light of sheltering mixed /heterogeneous population groups over long periods of time.

Coordination:

Coordination of all line Ministries for the overall response is assumed by the national Crisis Management Center in line with the Law on Crisis Management. Border control and registration is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior, while humanitarian assistance and reception conditions are coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) in cooperation with UNHCR. An inter-ministerial working group oversees the response with the support of an operational body for managing the increased numbers of migrants, managed by the Ministry of Interior.

Inter-agency coordination for the crisis response is undertaken through the UNHCR-chaired UN Task Force for Refugees and Migrants, which oversees the coordination of a Refugee Protection Working Group, co-chaired by the MoLSP and UNHCR. Weekly field level coordination meetings take place in Gevgelija and Tabanovce with the involvement of up to 35 operational actors (UN, INGOs and local NGOs and local authorities), and chaired by the Crisis Management Center in cooperation with UNHCR.

Attention to gender within government coordination frameworks is limited. At the Ministerial level, the national gender machineries do not participate in the inter-Ministerial coordination bodies and are not active in the response. However they can and should play an important role in ensuring that a gender analysis is brought to the table and that relevant national policies and planning frameworks are gender sensitive, including response and contingency plans. They also have an important role to play as advocates for women and girls in the context of the response and can potentially form partnerships with their gender machinery counterparts in countries along the transit route.

Registration:

Ministry of Interior (MoI) is in charge of registration, and collects sex- and age-disaggregated data as well as data on country of origin and vulnerability criteria. However due to the weak registration procedures means that the data required to provide the basis for accurate programme planning, assistance and protection is limited - including critical data on the charac-

teristics of a population including sex and age breakdown as well as the number and type of groups with specific needs.

UN and EU-supported efforts to improve the capacity of the MoI to strengthen registration procedures are underway. This includes aiming to ensure that all asylum seekers are registered, and that the protection component of the registration system is strengthened, including through standardizing vulnerability criteria, building the capacity of staff to identify and refer vulnerable groups (including victims of trafficking), and harmonizing registration procedures across the region, so that data is comparable and efficiency of registration increased

Reception and Transit Centers

Main reception center is located in the town of Gevgelija on the border with Greece, with the main purpose of registering asylum seekers, providing them with urgent assistance, including short-term shelter, water, sanitation, hygiene, food, NFIs, health care and protection – and facilitating the continuation of their journey northwards towards Serbia. The majority of the time asylum seekers spend at Gevgelija are outside the reception center waiting for their registration papers to be processed, which can take from 1-6 hours depending on the numbers of people waiting and on the police commander in charge. Outside the center they have no access to basic services including shelter, Water, Sanitary and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, Non-Food Items (NFIs), food or medical care. After dark there is no lighting outside the center, increasing risks for women and girls.

In Tabanovce along the Macedonian/Serbian border, the transit center is built around the train station and serves as a way station for people moving onwards to Serbia –where they spend an average of 30 minutes (vulnerable individuals arriving late at night have the option to stay overnight in short term accommodation facilities). A range of services are available inside the center (short-terms shelters, WASH, NFI distribution, food, health care, protection) although it is much smaller than the site in Gevgelija and services are crowded together. As with Gevgelija, information on the route and signage about what services are available are not always clear.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):

WASH facilities in Gevgelija and Tabanovce are made of semi-permanent construction sanitation blocks with wheelchair accessible sex-segregated toilets, sex-segregated

showers (in Gevgelija) and hand washing facilities. The facilities are lit at night. In Gevgelija, there is a separate a mother/baby changing station in the sanitation block which can be accessed by requesting a key from the UNICEF Child Friendly Space nearby.

Toilets are separately labeled for women and men, however in Gevgelija signage is only visible from specific points in the center, as such many asylum seekers are not aware where toilet facilities are located, and men were observed mistakenly entering the female sanitation block. In Gevgelija the women's shower blocks have no private dry changing area, as such women must use the public area of the sanitation block to change. In Gevgelija toilet facilities are at the opposite end of the center from the train boarding area, making it difficult for mobility-challenged individuals to access toilets while waiting in line for the train. There are no toilet facilities outside the reception center in Gevgelija where hundreds of people queue, sometimes for several hours, to be registered.

Food and Non-Food Items:

Many actors (including volunteer organizations which were among the early responders to the crisis) are involved in the procurement and distribution of food and non-food item (NFI). Food distribution may range from hot meals to cold snacks and water. Due to the large numbers of women and girls, NFIs need regular replenishment including: dignity kits, women's underwear, women's leggings (for warmth and easy dress/removal), baby carriers, as well as women's and girls' winter coats, shoes and clothing.

Cultural and contextual factors shaped distribution modalities and NFI content. Specifically, front line workers reported that early on in the crisis, women were not taking sanitary napkins despite their availability. Focus group discussions with women revealed that they did not feel comfortable taking sanitary napkins in public, particularly if male front line workers distributed them. As a result, more discrete distribution modalities were put in place.

Protection:

The protection response in R. Macedonia is focused in and around the main reception and transit centers and includes: deployment of mobile protection teams to identify vulnerable groups; protocols for fast tracking vulnerable groups; informal cross-border case identification and referral systems; provision of psychosocial support and specialized care through child friendly spaces and mother/baby tents; rights monitoring and awareness raising; capacity building of front line workers on identification and referral of vulnerable groups in-

cluding victims of trafficking and GBV survivors; support to unaccompanied and separated children and family reunification.

Social workers staffing working in child friendly spaces reported that often they see children accompanied by mothers who need psychosocial support, due to stress, exhaustion and at times trauma (due to the loss of a family member at sea), however they are not able to provide individualized attention, as the number of staff compared to the need is limited and the mandate of the spaces is to prioritize support for children and babies. Front line workers repeatedly identified the lack of targeted psychosocial support for women, as well as the absence of womenonly spaces (where women could rest, change their clothes, remove their hijab, access medical services, and receive psychosocial support) as a critical protection gap in the current response.

Gender Based Violence (GBV):

there are no comprehensive services for GBV in the context of the broader crisis and protection response in the country. No dedicated GBV expertise on staff, no systemic thematic focus on GBV within the coordinated protection response, and no GBV referral pathways have been established within the respective countries or trans-nationally. The majority of Government and UN officials felt that GBV is not an issue in the context of the crisis as no cases have been reported. Others felt that even if GBV incidents did occur, the nature of the crisis in transit countries would limit the ability of protection actors to identify, refer or provide substantive support to survivors, and therefore by that logic, there was little that could be done. Protection actors reported furthermore that within both FYR Macedonia and Serbia, domestic legislation, policies, protocols and referral pathways for GBV are weak, as such may not be able to inform comprehensive efforts to support high-risk or affected asylum seekers in transit.

Health:

Health response includes 24/7 presence of Ministry of Health medical staff and Red Cross staff in transit and reception centers, who work closely with translators to provide basic medical and follow up health care treatment. Services for pregnant women are limited in both countries, and often times pregnant women may delay health treatment in the interest of reaching their country of destination in Western Europe. This has led in some cases to medical complications, including miscarriages. In terms of mental health, limited psychosos

cial support services are provided to women through child friendly spaces and mother/baby centers. Additional staff is needed to provide short-term psychosocial support and trauma counseling to women in the context of semi-private women-only spaces.

Communication and Information Needs:

In Macedonia, asylum seekers need access to critical updated information in order to help them continue their journey quickly and safely. Most men and some women seemed to have cell phones and thus could communicate freely with friends and family. Reception and transit centers have phone charging stations and free Wi-Fi, to facilitate communication between asylum seekers, family members and friends. Despite various efforts, providing asylum seekers with information about registration procedures as well as about what services are available in reception and transit centers remains a challenge. Language barriers, as well as cultural factors limited the ability of most women to access information directly (many often relied on their husbands for information) and conversely made the ability to communicate directly with women more difficult.

Media and Host Communities:

stakeholders reported that there has been limited media coverage of the refugee crisis and limited statements by the government in support of refugees, as much of the attention of the country has been on the national political crisis.

The response of local volunteers and NGOs to supporting the refugees and migrants has been enormous with thousands of individuals donating their time and resources. They have played a critical role in providing support to vulnerable populations particularly in the early days of the crisis and throughout the current response including in underserved areas. In the country, NGOs are working with rights and anti-xenophobic organizations to play media campaigns in support of tolerance and acceptance of refugees. Within these efforts, no specific attention has been given to refugee and migrant women and girls.

Remaining challenges

The assessment found that while up to 42% of refugees and migrants are women and children. Response planning, services, protection capacity and information are not yet sufficient to meet their needs and address their specific vulnerabilities. Specifically, registration systems are not adequately identifying and referring at-risk groups, and have weak linkages to protection responses. Focused attention on gender and GBV in the context of the broader

government and UN coordination mechanisms is limited with negative implications for planning and operations; the capacity of humanitarian front-line actors to identify and respond to issues of gender, GBV and protection of vulnerable groups needs strengthening, as does the capacity of social services and local women's organizations to participate operationally in the humanitarian response;

Some sector-specific services do not yet have adequate provisions in place to ensure that women, girls, boys and men can equally access and benefit from them and some urgently needed targeted services for women and girls are missing or need to be scaled up, including: increased protection monitoring, GBV prevention and response services, targeted psychosocial support and trauma counseling, women-only spaces, and full-time gynecological services on site in transit and reception centers.

With populations movements anticipated to continue throughout 2016, it is critical that the response is strengthened to better uphold the safety, dignity and rights of refugee and migrant women and girls, in line with international humanitarian and human rights standards.

VIII. Good practices in implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 from the countries in the Balkan Region and in Europe.

1. European Union Implementation of UNSCR 1325

The starting point for European Union regional implementation of UNSCR 1325 is the Comprehensive EU Approach to Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820. This policy covers the whole spectrum of EU's external action instruments throughout the conflict continuum, from conflict prevention to crisis management, peace-building, reconstruction and development co-operation. It sets out a 'three-pronged approach' to its implementation of UNSCR 1325:

1. To integrate women, peace and security issues in its political and policy dialogue with partner governments, particularly of countries affected by armed conflict, in post conflict situations or situations of fragility.
2. To mainstream a gender equality approach in its policies and activities, especially in the context of crisis management and in its long-term development cooperation.
3. To support specific strategic actions targeted at protecting, supporting and empowering women

Importantly, the Comprehensive Policy commits the EU to both outward (supporting third countries in developing NAPs) and inward-looking (providing a forum for EU member states to discuss best practice and joint interests in domestic implementation of UNSCR 1325) actions. Indicators for implementation of the Comprehensive Policy were adopted in 2010, but the indicators remain quite general, without specific attachment to responsible entities. Consequently, reporting on performance reflects this shortcoming, in documenting initiatives undertaken under each indicator in general and non-systematic ways.

Crucially, however, the indicators incorporate an inward-looking approach, by requiring EU member states to report on their individual performance under the indicators. An informal ‘Women, Peace and Security Task Force’, consisting of Council Secretariat and Commission services, as well as EU member state participation, oversees the Comprehensive Policy and its implementation.

2. Ireland’s National Action Plan for implementation of UNSCR 1325

Ireland’s National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2011–2014) was launched in November 2011 by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore TD, and former President Mary Robinson. The National Action Plan (NAP) co-ordinates Ireland’s inputs to international efforts to implement UNSCR 1325 and other UN obligations on Women, Peace and Security.

The NAP was drafted drawing on interdepartmental and civil society consultation and an international cross-learning initiative. It sets out how Ireland will promote and implement the objectives of UNSCR 1325 in its programme support activities, diplomatic advocacy and policy-making across the interrelated areas of peace, security and development. It has national application in that it includes provisions relating to migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls in Ireland. It also recognises the relevance of UNSCR 1325 and other UN obligations on women, peace and security to the conflict on the island of Ireland. The NAP focuses on five Pillars, each with a number of objectives, and establishes clear actions and target timeframes. It can be reviewed in full on the DFAT website at www.dfa.ie.

The five Pillars are:

Pillar 1: Prevention of Conflict, including Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

Pillar 2: Participation and Representation of Women in Decision Making.

Pillar 3: Protection from Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Other Violations of Women’s Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Pillar 4: Relief, Recovery and Rehabilitation.

Pillar 5: Promotion of UNSCR 1325 in International, Regional and National Arenas.

Context:

Ireland’s NAP is part of a suite of national, domestic and foreign policy policies and strategies on women’s equality and human rights the most recent of which is Ireland’s international development policy One World, One Future. The proposed ‘Whole-of Government’ approach to development bringing together the Political Division and the Development Co-operation Division reinforces the importance of coherence in Ireland’s NAP.

Whilst debates about the value of UNSCR 1325 as a policy instrument are on-going, there is clear recognition of the potential for NAPs to provide a useful mechanism to respond to the needs for women’s protection, participation and empowerment during conflict. Expertise in action planning on 1325 is growing, with some National Action Plans in their second stage of development. Challenges are evident, for example in linking EU NAPs to each other and to the Comprehensive EU Approach to UNSCR 1325. The current climate of economic constraint also presents a challenge to delivering the depth and quality of actions without the need for significant additional funding.

Achievements:

There has been a high level of activity in progressing objectives across the Pillars of the NAP with a number of noteworthy achievements. The implementation of commitments in the NAP has brought together a significantly diverse group of actors with different perspectives and levels of engagement in the women, peace and security agenda. One of the key strengths of the NAP has been to provide an entry point for Departments and agencies to deliver a wide range of actions and build and embed engagement on gender equality, GBV and women’s empowerment issues within and across individual units and Departments and partner organisations.

Progress on actions within Pillars 1, 3 and 5 has been delivered, with some valuable and significant results for a number of critical implementing Departments and actors. Key areas of success have included work on gender mainstreaming, GBV protection and advocacy at EU and UN fora. Amongst the achievements in gender mainstreaming are the production of a Defence Forces Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and Irish Aid’s work in strengthening gender mainstreaming in its humanitarian action programming. Ensuring the prevention of conflict

and protection of GBV violations in conflict forms a critical part of the NAP actions and there has been positive action on embedding standards of practice, behaviour and accountability for personnel on overseas engagement in peacekeeping and humanitarian roles.

The NAP has supported a wide range of initiatives to strengthen the protection and participation of women particularly in conflict-affected states through a comprehensive programme of funding and efforts to build the capacity of CSOs partners to focus directly on UNSCR specific themes. Pillar 5 is a distinctive dimension within the NAP that demonstrates a strategic approach to enhancing Ireland's leverage and influence within international, regional and national arenas as a champion of women's equality and human rights. A wide variety of actors have demonstrated dynamic and innovative work in policy development, advocacy, diplomacy and support to key institutions, delivering an impressive range of results which has further enhanced Ireland's reputation as an advocate for human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment.

Challenges:

A central question emerging from the review is the extent to which the actions on prevention and protection can be attributed specifically to the NAP as opposed to on-going work on gender equality commitments as a result of other mechanisms. For the NAP to bring added value there needs to be clearer identification of NAP specific actions across all Departments and agencies.

Women's participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding is intrinsically linked to tackling the causes and structures of conflict and more progress is needed across NAP Departments and agencies to improve the position of women at strategic and policy levels. In international fora, women's engagement in mediation of conflict and peace processes is still to be fully realised, but with the potential to make a difference. More evidence of the impact that interventions are making on the ground is required, along with regular consultation with women in local communities to assess the extent to which peacekeeping, development and humanitarian activities are meeting their needs. Greater attention is needed to extend the NAP's current focus within the relief, recovery and rehabilitation Pillar beyond disarmament, demobilisation and security sector reform to reflect the full extent of Irish Aid's humanitarian and development programmes in conflict and in post-conflict rebuilding.

Uniquely, Ireland's NAP has inward and outward looking dimensions. Overseas and in international arenas is where the NAP has been most useful in taking action to bring about concrete changes to the lives of women and girls. Less progress is evident in the implementation of actions within Ireland-Northern Ireland for women from conflict-affected countries living in Ireland and women in Northern Ireland. Greater attention is needed to deliver the current actions and to expand the range of actions for these women across all the Pillars.

Amongst the key challenges in measuring progress on the NAP's implementation was the absence of baseline data in relation to objectives, actions and indicators. There were inconsistencies in the level and nature of monitoring data, a lack of quantitative and qualitative data including information on financial expenditure and in many cases limited data in relation to specific indicators. This links to flaws in the overall monitoring framework with weaknesses in relationships across objectives, actions, indicators and indicators and actions which are unrealistic or too narrow to encompass what has to be done. The NAP would benefit from shifting from its current somewhat bureaucratic approach where there is a disproportionate focus on quantitative indicators to actions which sustain impact and contribute to even greater change. This can be achieved by reflecting more accurately the significant breadth of work that Departments can currently deliver as well as identifying priorities for future work.

Challenges were also evident in leadership and coordination roles for the lead department with responsibility for implementing the NAP, and greater clarity and strengthening of roles is required to lead and drive the NAP and coordinate, oversee and monitor NAP implementation across Departments and agencies. Clarity of roles is also needed within the Monitoring Group regarding responsibility for promoting awareness of the NAP and UNSCR 1325. Strengthening communication within the group would also support greater understanding and build collaboration between representatives. Ireland's NAP is a 'living' document which is part of an evolving process to build a transformative approach to enabling women to be active participants in peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan for implementation of UNSCR 1325

The adoption of the Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010⁴⁰ was an important moment for the promotion of gender equality and security in Bosnia. The Action Plan (AP) refers to the period between July 2010 and July 2013. Implementation of the AP beyond this period will depend on the assessment of the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Coordination Board.

The starting point for drafting the AP was the Monitoring Report on Implementation of SCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Women to Women and UNIFEM, 2007). The AP drafting process was coordinated by the Gender Equality Agency, in collaboration with the Working Group for the Preparation of the AP for implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The working group consisted of representatives of the following institutions: the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, the Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska, the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Federal Police, the RS Ministry of Interior, the BiH Mine Action Centre and a representative of the CSO Women to Women.

The AP was adopted in July 2010 and represents a comprehensive strategy document for the integration of gender mainstreaming in the security sector. The document covers a three year period, from July 2010 to July 2013. In July 2013, implementation of the AP will be evaluated by the Agency for Gender Equality of BiH and the Coordinating Board, including an assessment of the defined objectives, activities, commitments, stakeholders and indicators of achievements/non-achievements. Following this, a new action plan will be developed.

The AP defines a number of tasks that need to be completed by July 2013. The national government and its agencies, institutional mechanisms, committees, CSOs and international organizations are jointly responsible for all activity stakeholders, and a large number of indicators for assessment of progress, as well as the financial resources for achieving the eight (8) goals.

The financial resources for implementation of the AP are partly taken from the budget of the authorized institutions, and partly from the funds of the FIGAP program. So far, the BiH Gender Equality Agency has submitted two reports to the Council of Ministers on the implementation of the AP, which were adopted by the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly.

The basic mechanism for monitoring implementation of the AP is the Coordinating Board which is composed of personnel from the security sector and its member institutions and one member representing civil society. The Coordinating Board was appointed for the duration of the Action Plan. The proactive approach of the Coordination Board in monitoring AP implementation was recognized in both BiH and the region as an example of good practice.

Key achievements and challenges in AP 1325 implementation

Inclusion of women in decision-making

The legacy of the war and the economic crisis continues to undermine participation by women in public life. Gender inequality is apparent in all sectors of public life. Only an estimated 5-7% of executive positions are held by women at the local level, while no woman holds an executive position at the national level. Although a quota system and gender mainstreaming mechanisms have increased participation by women in political life overall, the actual number of women leaders and decision-makers in executive areas at all levels of government has not increased.

The weak nature of politics in BiH under international administration means that gender is a less important focus than solving issues such as ethnically-based nationalism, poverty and unemployment. The problem is that awareness raising programs about the importance of participation by women have not been implemented systematically or continuously, but rather represent ad hoc action taking place only two or three months before elections. Such an approach does not contribute to the understanding of gender perspectives in women's empowerment and civic participation.

Gender perspectives in the security sector

The gender training of police, judges, prosecutors, health-care officials and teachers is defined by the National Gender Action Plan, but delivery of programmes relies on close cooperation between governmental and civil society actors. The lack of reference to gender in police reform indicates the scant attention it receives in current police training, and the treatment of gender-specific concerns by local police and the treatment of women remain erratic and uneven. International defence forces operating in BiH are governed by the command of their state, and there is wide variation in the level of training on gender issues members of these forces have received.

The NATO headquarters in Sarajevo and the MoD have conducted joint activities to promote and raise awareness of the importance of UNSCR 1325. Around 3000 MoD and BiH Armed Forces personnel took part in the training. The Gender Equality Agency, in cooperation with the entity gender centres, agencies for civil servants and the European Union Police Mission (EUPM), conducted training for representatives of Ministries of Interior, police forces and civil servants.

Human rights of women and girls

The frequent occurrence of domestic violence and human trafficking in the post-conflict environment of BiH calls for constant attention to those issues. While CSOs report widely on incidences of violence against women, the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence is not thoroughly integrated with other criminal legislation and has not yet been comprehensively implemented. Trafficking of women and girls is another assault on women's human rights in BiH. The prevalence of discrimination against women, unemployment, poverty and the unresolved problem of the displacement of large numbers of people continue to exacerbate the likelihood of human trafficking. Both state and UN actions to combat trafficking in BiH have been inadequate.

Assessment of the impact of the Action Plan

Despite some successful practice, there are still problems which are not identified in the AP. Firstly, sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination in security institutions are "invisible" or "non-existent" events or experiences which are not spoken about publicly. Sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination is hardly ever reported, possibly due to a combination of several factors, including sexual harassment not being recognized, victims of harassment being afraid to report it and the fact that only a few institutions have put in place institutional mechanisms and policies to enable reporting.

Text box 4: Examples of good practice in AP implementation in BiH

The Agency for Gender Equality and the Entity Centers submitted proposals for amendments to state and entity laws on police officers in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, which is a prerequisite for increased participation by women in the police force and in decision-making.

The BiH Ministry of Security is implementing positive measures to encourage women to apply for and participate in peacekeeping missions. They have reduced the general criteria of work experience from 8 to 5 years for women, while the condition for men remains at 8 years of service, which will lead to an increase in the current percentage of 14.29% of women in peacekeeping missions

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees is leading the Strategy for developing the process for improving the rights of women victims of abuse in the war.

Initiatives such as the Women Police Officers Network (WPON) on the regional level, the Network of Women in the Ministry of Interior of the Republika Srpska (WPON RS), the Network of Police Women of the Federation of Bosnia and the Association of Women Judges of BiH may possibly initiate discussion on issues related to AP implementation.

Under the WPON framework, two associations of women police officers have been established: the Network of Women Police Officers in BiH and the Association Network of Women in Republika Srpska Ministry of Interior - WPON RS (BiH). The two associations work at the grass-roots level and aim to promote gender equality through a strategic approach to education, employment, training, and career development of women in the police, as well as by announcing results achieved by female personnel of the police services.

Important partners for the relevant institutions in implementing the Action Plan for implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2010-2013) are international organizations active in this field, such as: UN Women, NATO Headquarters in BiH, UNDP and OSCE. UN Women will continue to support CSOs' projects in cooperation with institutional mechanisms and governmental institutions.

The Coordination Board's members have participated actively and contributed to the promotion and implementation of the AP, both within the institutions from which they come, as well as amongst the general public and on the international level. All processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina which concern UNSCR 1325 are part of regional cooperation at all levels and will continue to be so in the future.

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Annex 2 National Action Plan of Republic of Macedonia 2013-2015 for implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325

Strategic Objective 2: Strengthening of the participation and contribution of women in international civilian and military missions in which the Republic of Macedonia participates			
Result	Activities	Indicator	Time frame
2.1 Strengthened capacities of employees in institutions (women and men) in relation to the gender aspects of the MSDP of the Republic of Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of Trainers - TOT for persons from relevant institutions; - Creation of an expert database for Res. 1324 WPS) - Development of a training curriculum on Res. 1325, the Agenda on WPS, gender-based violence (by the people who will be trained within TOT) - Updating of training courses for professionals (civilian and military experts) that are referred to peacekeeping missions with information on gender issues, Res. 1325, gender-based violence; - Exchange of experiences and best practices among trainers (expert database on Res. 1325 gender issues) from the countries in the region and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type and scope of developed curricula and training manuals on Res. 1325 Agenda for WPS and gender-based violence; - Completed trainings and number of certified trainers by sector; - Number of completed trainings for high and middle management; - Involvement of experts and trainers on gender aspects of MSDP in regional and international cooperation; 	<p>2013-2015</p> <p>In accordance with the annual operational plans on gender equality of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</p>

2.2 Strengthened role and function of the mechanism / institutions for referral of women in international missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of guidelines and internal acts aimed at creating a more efficient referral procedure and participation for women in missions (for e.g., criteria for the work of the Inter-institutional Committee on Referral of Professionals to Missions; shortening deadlines for making decisions) - Inclusion of international norms and procedures for referral of professionals to missions into national norms and procedures by specifying the SOFA agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed and adopted guidelines and internal regulations for referral of women to missions; - Degree of compliance of national legislation with international legislation regarding the referral of professionals to international missions; 	<p>2013-2015</p> <p>In accordance with the annual operational plans on gender equality of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</p>
2.3 Greater representation of women diplomats in high positions at the diplomatic and consular missions and establishment of the position adviser on gender issues in peacekeeping missions in which Macedonia participates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of an internal act on the percentage representation(30%) of women to the Committee for Referral of Professionals to Diplomatic and Consular Missions; - Adoption of an internal act for appointing advisers for gender issues in peacekeeping missions to the Committee for Referral of Professionals to Diplomatic and Consular Missions within the MFA - Establishment of a mechanism for gender-sensitive mediation and dialogue at national and regional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an increase of 30% in the number of women members of the Referral Committee as a result of an internal act; - an increase of 10% in the number of women who have been nominated for referral; - an established mechanism for gender-sensitive mediation - number of women mediators - proposed and implemented mediation initiatives (formal and informal) by women mediators 	<p>2013-2015</p> <p>In accordance with the annual operational plans on gender equality of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</p>

Indicators for Strategic Objective 2: Number of nominated and accepted women for participation in **international civilian and military missions in which the Republic of Macedonia participates, increased by 10% in each area by 2015**

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Directorate for Protection and Rescue, Department of Health, Center for Crisis Management, LGUs, civil sector, training centers and Diplomatic Academy (MFA), academic institutions, the Commission for Referral of Professionals to Diplomatic and Consular Missions, the Inter-ministerial Commission for Referral of Professionals to International Organizations.

