

## Occasional Budget Brief No.3:

May 2020

### Impact of the adopted Rebalance of Republika Srpska Budget for 2020 on women and vulnerable categories

Based on the Proposed Rebalance of Republika Srpska (RS) Budget for 2020, UN Women Office in BiH made an initial overview on how the rebalance will affect those who have been most affected by COVID-19 pandemic, including women and vulnerable categories<sup>1</sup>

The Rebalance of Republika Srpska Budget for 2020 was adopted in the National Assembly on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020. The total budget expenses are 3.613.000.000 KM.

#### 1. General overview

- The Budget **does not contain** an overview of how much budgets are cut of each ministry/institution;
- From a thorough analysis, the following is noted:
  - Budget of RS Ministry of Economy and Entrepreneurship was **cut by 20%**: this includes cut of a Programme **for assistance in increasing efficiency of businesses and introduction of new technologies in the amount of 2,9 mil KM**;
  - Budget of RS Ministry of Science and Technology and Higher Education was **cut by 7%**: grants to **science institutions reduced by 26%**, activities in the field of **technology cut from 400.000 KM to 160.000 KM**;
  - Budget of **The RS Secretariat for Religions increased by 17%**: grants to religious organizations have been increased for 250.000 KM;
  - Budget of the **RS Center for exploration of war, war crimes and seeking missing persons increased by 25%**, expenses for **work of independent international committees increased by 270%** (for additional 540.000 KM).
  - Transfers to BiH Institutions for **public administration reform cut by 33%**;
- Financing of political parties **was not reduced**.

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<sup>1</sup> Anita Bhatia, UN Women Deputy Executive Director: *Women and COVID-19: Five things governments can do now*. <https://bit.ly/2wWGpeP>

## 2. Potential positive impact on women and vulnerable categories

- **Increase of budget for RS Ministry of Health and Social Welfare by 29%**

→ The largest increase in the budget was that for the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (by 29%), or 61 million KM, including for: Transfer to the Health Insurance Fund in accordance with the Law on Health Insurance increased by 90%, from 57.5 to 109.5 million KM; Transfers to local self-government units, social protection increased by 4% (25.5 million KM); Subsidies to the Institute of Public Health increased by 41%, from 0.98 million KM to 1.38 million KM; also a new item, Grant for prevention and control of infectious diseases in the amount of 8.7 million KM.

→ The impact on women and vulnerable categories **is not visible**, neither the percentage use of funds supporting these categories, nor is it noted in the Explanation of the Rebalance. Design of measures and activities for spending of these funds, in a gender responsive manner, can ensure the positive impact of women and vulnerable categories.

- **Subsidies for agriculture remain the same**

→ Subsidies for support of agriculture and rural areas in the amount of **75 million KM remain unchanged**;

→ Through its longstanding collaboration with RS Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, as well as achieved results in the field of gender responsive budgeting, **UN Women believes that the criteria for allocation of subsidies does take into account the needs of women in agriculture and rural areas**;

- **Support to students remains unchanged**

→ Support to financing of accommodation and food for students living in student housing, **in the amount of 4.3 million KM remains unchanged**. Additionally, the planned budget for scholarships in the country and abroad is unchanged.

→ **UN Women calls for an equitable support to both women and men, based on previously implementing a gender analysis<sup>2</sup>**

- **Budget for tourism has been increased by 54%**

→ **Grant for development of tourism has been increased from 700.000 KM to 1.08 million KM**;

→ UN Women notes that tourism represents a great potential for development and it is a sector where women account for 50.8% of all employed in the segment of services in Republika Srpska.<sup>3</sup>

## 3. Impact on women and vulnerable categories

The adopted CS Budget Rebalance **does not specifically demonstrate impact on women and vulnerable categories**.

- **There is a need for the Government to be transparent** in newly planned budget allocations **based on the assessed priorities** and the need for **efficient combining of budget and non-budget resources**. **This specifically relates to planned international assistance as well as applying a gender lens in the implementation of planned measures and activities.**

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with requirements foreseen by the Decision for conducting Regulatory Impact Assessment of legislation ("RS Official Gazette" No. 21/19), <https://pscsrcpska.vladars.net/sr/Pages/Ria.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> RS Labour Force Survey 2019, [https://www.rzs.rs.ba/static/uploads/bilteni/anketa\\_o\\_radnoi\\_snazi/Bilten\\_Anketa\\_O\\_Radnoi\\_Snazi\\_2019\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.rzs.rs.ba/static/uploads/bilteni/anketa_o_radnoi_snazi/Bilten_Anketa_O_Radnoi_Snazi_2019_WEB.pdf)