

PROMOTING TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN ALBANIA



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Result area

GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE



Since the start of UN Women’s strategic note for Albania, 2022–2026, UN Women Albania has focused on enhancing its reach and impact. Below is a summary of the key results achieved over the two-year period from 2022 to 2023.

UN Women works with central and local institutions to ensure a gender equality perspective in policies and programmes, addressing the needs and priorities of all women and girls in Albania. In addition, UN Women works with central and local institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), audit bodies and other partners to ensure sufficient public funding for gender equality issues. UN Women also advocates with party leaders, media and other stakeholders to promote women’s political participation and address underlying stereotypes that hinder their full participation in political and public life. Key results include:



**At the
central
level**

- In the first National Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) gender equality was prominent by requiring all disaster management phases and projects to consider the needs of vulnerable groups including women and girls. It mandates a gender lens in DRR efforts, including capacity-building for women in preparedness and recovery, promoting women’s leadership roles, and implementing gender-sensitive budgeting criteria in strategic projects.
- The Second National Action Plan (NAP) on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was developed and approved, reaffirming Albania’s strong commitment to promoting the inclusion of women and girls in peace and security processes. The NAP addresses structural barriers women may face as participants in the security sector or recipients of public security services, promotes their participation in the sector, and tackles emerging challenges such as cybercrime, sexual harassment and natural disasters.
- The budget for gender equality rose to 10% in the 2023-2025 mid-term budgeting program, up from 9% the previous year, with all line ministries increasing their allocations. 53 out of 128 budgetary programmes are engendered and include specific performance indicators on gender equality and women’s empowerment (an increase from 47 in 2022) Albania is amongst the few countries globally where a system is in place to track budget allocations dedicated to gender equality.
- The Supreme Audit Institution strengthened its oversight and advocacy on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and conducted a parallel gender audit focusing on rural women’s access to the labor market and their linkages with unpaid care work.
- 280 public officials from 11 line ministries and 20 municipal Gender Equality Employees enhanced their capacities on gender mainstreaming, the integration of GRB in MTBP 2023-2025, and gender statistics through coaching and mentoring.
- Gender-sensitive media reporting in Albania has increased visibility and awareness of GEWE issues, with 55 reports on topics like gender-responsive budgeting, women’s political participation, and violence against women. This progress stems

from UN Women's year-long capacity building for media, including forums attended by over 40 journalists, who now have enhanced skills to report on gender dimension effectively. 14 women Members of Parliament and decision makers at the central and local levels have improved dialogue with the media on the barriers hindering women's full participation and role in politics and decision-making.

- The final draft of the national Social Protection Strategy (2023-2030) includes key elements on GEWE and is aligned with international and national gender equality standards. It identifies and addresses gender disparities, intersectional discrimination and the specific vulnerabilities women face.
- 42 students (33 girl and 9 boys) were coached and mentored to develop and [implement solutions](#) for inclusive service delivery in partnership with the Department of Social Work and Policy at the University of Tirana.
- 5 municipalities developed, costed and approved Local Gender Action Plans to foster gender equality and women's empowerment. Additionally 5 municipalities signed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, bringing the total number of signatories in Albania to 18, accounting for nearly one third of all municipalities.
- 10 municipalities implemented Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB), integrating 10 gender-sensitive initiatives into their budgets. Training led to 30 new gender-responsive indicators in local budgets, while 249 (158 women and 91 men) staff members from local governments and municipal councils enhanced their capacities to apply GRB principles.
- Over half of the issues raised by women and girls during participatory budgeting sessions in five municipalities were considered and incorporated into local budgets.
- Five budget [Watchdog Reports](#) issued by CSOs part of the PRISMA network enhanced institutional accountability in budgeting for gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE).



At the local level

In the municipalities of Vai I Dejes, Fushe Arrez, Dropull, Delvine and Gjirokaster, 700 vulnerable women and girls actively engaged in local participatory budgeting processes and enhanced their understanding and abilities to contribute to these processes, and were able to influence local decision-making processes. Notably, 60% of the issues raised by women were effectively included in local budgets.

Result area

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



By increasing engagement with the private sector and collaborating with other stakeholders at the central and local levels, UN Women has helped create an enabling environment for businesswomen, entrepreneurs and artisans to contribute to sustainable, productive and inclusive development.

Key results

- 54 private sector companies signed the Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs), signaling steadily increasing commitment and concrete engagement of the private sector in promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment in Albania.
- 151 women entrepreneurs benefitted from additional capacity-building and networking at the Regional EXPO 2023.
- More than 30 rural women improved their business skills through capacitybuilding, which will enable them to operate two traditional product incubators established by UN Women and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- Local government partners increased their commitment to promoting women's economic empowerment, providing artisan women in two municipalities affected by the 2019 earthquake with a free, dedicated space for promoting and selling their handicraft products. Additionally 21 women received training in marketing, branding and product promotion, gender-sensitive value chains, and formalizing their businesses.
- 180 vulnerable women and their families benefitted from value chain interventions in four municipalities/administrative units across the country, effectively engaging and participating in value chains and market system, resulting in increased employment/self-employment, higher income, and economic security.

Result area

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



UN Women supports local and national institutions, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), national human rights institutions and private sector partners to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women (VAW). These efforts include supporting alignment between national policies and international standards, ensuring adequate services for survivors, raising awareness about VAW in Albania, and engaging men and boys in addressing and preventing violence.

Key results

- Stronger institutional commitment to implementing laws and policies to address violence against women and better alignment with international standards, as well as increased engagement of the government and CSOs with human rights mechanisms such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee. The CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations include several important recommendations that were aligned with inputs provided by CSOs and other partners, such as the need to urgently amend the definition of rape in the Criminal Code in line with the Istanbul Convention.
- Around 350 people in 14 municipalities received services such as legal aid, psychological support from 8 CSOs in coordination with Local Government Units. The intervention primarily served women and girls, including at least 27 Roma and Egyptian women, 16 women with disabilities, and 92 women from rural areas.
- Over 160 survivors of violence (51 women and 114 children) received socio-economic reintegration support (housing, medical care, employment aid, legal and psychosocial assistance). Four municipalities included reintegration plans into their social programs, and 60+ officials were trained to offer coordinated long-term support to survivors. 70 Roma, LGBTQI+ and women with disabilities improved their digital capabilities and were equipped with mobile phones, internet and Vodafone's BrightSky app, which provides survivors of violence with critical information on reporting violence and seeking support.
- Over 110 service providers from the police, social services, health care and local government increased their ability to respond to gender-based violence (GBV) in a coordinated manner. In addition, over 70 officials on tailoring support to women from marginalized groups (Roma, LGBTQI+ and women with disabilities).
- The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign reached over 200,000 people online and through events UN Women and partners organized including sports events, community awareness sessions, media forums, private sector initiatives, and radio and TV appearances.

Result area

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



Engaging young people has been critical to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women has stand-alone interventions targeting young people, in addition to mainstreaming youth engagement across all its efforts.

Key results

- More than 1,700 youth gained skills through Empowerment through Self-Defense (ESD) classes, which aim to reduce GBV, and ESD was integrated into the 2022-2029 National Strategy for Youth and its Action Plan. The ESD methodology is an innovative approach which aims to promote behavioral changes in communities, particularly in relation to issues such as gender-based violence, by fostering skills that enable emotional, psychological and physical safety of young women and men.
- The regional youth-led research "Voices of Youth" culminated in a Youth Forum of 40 young activists who acknowledged gender equality, women's increased participation in decision-making processes, and equal access to services as prerequisites for social cohesion in the region.

Result area

UN SYSTEM COORDINATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY



UN Women coordinates the UN System in Albania to promote gender mainstreaming across internal policies, programming, communications, advocacy, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and to ensure that staff understand and implement gender equality principles in their work.

Key results

- o The development of additional tools and resources for gender mainstreaming in UN Programming, such as the [Gender Equality Screening Tool for Joint Programmes](#), which ensures that these programmes in Albania tackle gender inequalities and promote women's rights, enhancing UN Albania's overall accountability in line with the requirements of the UN Country Team System-Wide Action Plan (UNCT-SWAP) Gender Equality Scorecard.
 - UN Women led the development of joint advocacy pieces to promote and increase the visibility of gender equality: [an op-ed on the importance of reviewing the Gender Equality Law](#); [a press release promoting women's leadership in local elections](#); and a [joint statement against gender based-violence](#).
 - UN Albania met or exceeded 13 out of 15 indicators of the [UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard](#), indicating a high level of gender mainstreaming across various areas of UNCT work, including programming, communication, partnerships and M&E.

Result area

SUPPORT GENDER-RESPONSIVE POLICIES



UN Women spearheads UN Albania's engagement with human rights mechanisms, particularly those with a strong gender perspective like CEDAW, as well as other human rights and intergovernmental forums such as the Commission on the Status of Women.

Key results

- A [legal review](#) carried out from a gender perspective of the Criminal Code, Family Code and Civil Code by UN Women, the Resident Coordinator's Office, and the Center for Legal and Civic Initiatives identified key gender discriminatory elements in existing laws and informed the Concluding Observations to CEDAW's fifth periodic report for Albania.
- Over 60% of the CEDAW Committee's [Concluding Observations](#) drew from the recommendations in the UNCT Confidential Report and its addendum. The Committee's recommendations addressed key issues central to UN-wide advocacy efforts, led by UN Women, including the need to amend the 2008 Gender Equality Law, which has been a major focus of recent advocacy by UN Women and UNCT, including through [this position paper](#). The Government of Albania accepted all recommendations, ensuring that all upcoming legal and policy reforms will be aligned with international gender equality standards.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN GENDER EQUALITY 2022-2023

GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE



Government budgetary allocations for gender equality efforts **have increased**

1% TO 10%

in the past ten years

at the central level, representing a steady improvement over time.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

54

PRIVATE SECTOR

companies have now **signed the Women's Empowerment Principles**, signaling increasing private sector commitment to gender equality and women's economic empowerment.



ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



>500

PEOPLE, MOSTLY WOMEN AND GIRLS

many of whom are survivors of violence accessed information, goods, resources, and/or services with support from UN Women.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



>1,700

YOUTH benefitted from the **Empowerment through Self-Defense programme**, which has been integrated into the **National Strategy for Youth**.

PARTNERSHIPS



UN SYSTEM COORDINATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

UN Albania met or exceeded **13 OUT OF 15 INDICATORS OF THE UNCT-SWAP GENDER EQUALITY SCORECARD**, indicating a high level of gender mainstreaming across its work.



More than 90 partners

including **multilateral agencies, civil society organizations, government institutions and private sector companies** have partnered with **UN Women** to forge gender equality and **women's empowerment**.



SUPPORT FOR NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE LAWS, POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS



The national government **accepted all recommendations from the relevant Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women**, ensuring that legal and policy reforms will be aligned with international gender equality standards.

PARTNERSHIPS (2022-2023)



Donors Swedish International Development Agency, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Swiss Agency for Development, Peace Building Fund, European Union, European Commission.



Institutions Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Finance and the Economy, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of State for Entrepreneurship, Parliament of Albania, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education and Sports, Supreme Audit Institution, Ombudsperson, INSTAT, Local Government Units.



CSOs Centre for Legal and Civic Initiatives, Human Rights in Democracy Centre, Vatra, Tjeter Vizion, Albanian Disability Rights Foundation, Different and Equal, Association for Gender, Peace and Security, Shelter Edlira Haxhiymeri, Women Forum Elbasan, Together for Life, Community Centre Today for the Future, Diakonia Agape, Social Development Investment, Creative Business Solutions, Women in Sustainable Agriculture, Albanian Women Empowerment Network, Roma Women Rights Centre, Aleanca LGBT, CSOs members of the PRISMA network, and Resource Environmental Center Albania.



UN Agencies United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Children's Fund, International Labour Organization, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office.

Media and Private sector: All 54 WEPs signatories, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

