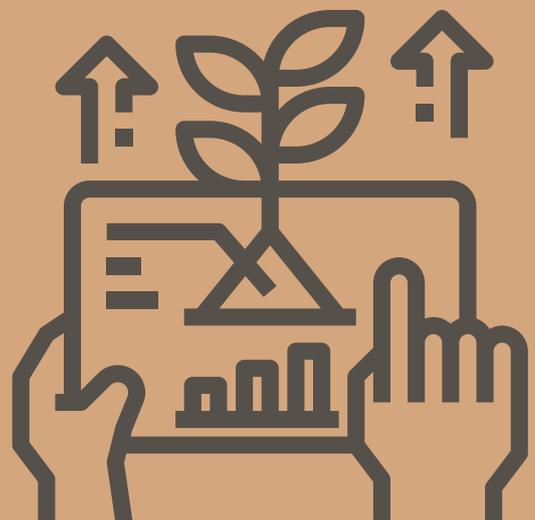


SHADOW REPORT

FROM MONITORING WORK
AND EFFECTS OF
THE SECTOR WORKING
GROUP ON AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

January – December 2020





THROUGH
DIALOGUE **TO**
EU

SHADOW REPORT

FROM MONITORING WORK
AND EFFECTS OF
THE SECTOR WORKING
GROUP ON AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

January – December 2020

 This project is funded
by the European Union



 ФОНДАЦИЈА
ОПЕНОТВОРЕНО
СОЦИЈАЛНО ШЕСТВО
МАКЕДОНИЈА

REAC-OR
research in action

 Center for Civil Communications
Центар за граѓански комуникации

ЕВРОТИНК
ЦЕНТАР ЗА
ЕВРОПСКИ СТРАТЕГИИ

 CENTER FOR
EUROPEAN STRATEGIES
EUROTHINK
eurothink

**SHADOW REPORT FROM MONITORING WORK
AND EFFECTS OF THE SECTOR WORKING GROUP
ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
JANUARY – DECEMBER 2020**

ORIGINAL TITLE:

ИЗВЕШТАЈ ВО СЕНКА ОД СЛЕДЕЊЕТО НА РАБОТАТА И ЕФЕКТИТЕ НА
СЕКТОРСКАТА РАБОТНА ГРУПА ЗА ЗЕМЈОДЕЛСТВО И РУРАЛЕН РАЗВОЈ
ЈАНУАРИ – ДЕКЕМВРИ 2020

Publisher:

Foundation Open Society – Macedonia

For the publisher:

Fani Karanfilova – Panovska, executive director

Authors:

Ivan Stefanovski

Dimitar Nikolovski

Aleksandar Kolekeski, General information on IPA III programming (2021-2027)

Irina Jolevska, Gender Mainstreaming in Sector Working Groups

Editors:

Danche Danilovska – Bajdevska

Nada Naumovska

Sandra Anastasovska Kuzmanovski

Graphic design:

Koma

Translation from Macedonian language:

Katerina Dimishkovska

CIP - Каталогизација во публикација

Национална и универзитетска библиотека „Св. Климент Охридски“, Скопје

35.075.2:341.171(4-672EY:497.7)"2020"(047)

STEFANOVSKI, Ivan

Shadow report from monitoring work and effects of the sector working group on agriculture and rural development [Електронски извор] : January - December 2020 / [authors Ivan Stefanovski, Aleksandar Kolekeski, Irina Jolevska ; translation from Macedonian language Katerina Dimishkovska]. - Skopje : Foundation Open society - Macedonia, 2021

Начин на пристапување (URL): <https://www.dijalogkoneu.mk>. - Текст во PDF формат, содржи 44 стр. - Наслов преземен од екранот. - Опис на изворот на ден 16.09.2021.

- Превод на делото: Извештај во сенка од следењето на работата и ефектите на секторската работна група за земјоделство и рурален развој : јануари - декември 2020. - Фусноти кон текстот. - Библиографија: стр. 44

ISBN 978-608-218-363-3

1. Kolekeski, Aleksandar [автор] 2. Jolevska, Irina [автор]

а) Процес на пристапување во ЕУ -- Секторски работни групи -- Македонија -- 2020 -- Извештаи

COBISS.MK-ID 54968581

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Foundation Open Society – Macedonia, Eurothink: Center for European Strategies, Reactor – Research in action and Center for Civil Communication and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

TABLE OF CONTENT



FOREWORD	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	7
METHODOLOGY APPROACH	9
PART 1: SECTOR POLICIES	11
PART 2: SWG FUNCTIONALITY	13
2.1 Rules of Procedure	13
2.2 Annual plan	15
PART 3: CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION	19
PART 4: CSO CAPACITY	23
PART 5: EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK	27
5.1 General information on IPA III programming (2021-2027)	28
5.1.1 Strategic response and action fiche for agriculture and rural development	32
PART 6: GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS	37
6.1 Findings from monitoring sector working groups	38
6.1.1 SWG meetings	38
6.1.2 Trainings	39
6.1.3 Gender analysis of policies	40
FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	43
FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN TERMS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS	44
BIBLIOGRAPHY	45



FOREWORD

The project “CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations” is committed to ensuring structural participation of the civil society that expresses the views of citizens to impact key sector-wide reforms under the EU accession process. The sector working groups (SWGs)¹ are perceived as exceptionally important mechanism for consultations and civil society participation, and a forum for development of national policies and design of reform processes in the country. Hence, the second edition of 12 shadow reports on performance of sector working groups in 2020 is an attempt to bring this mechanism closer to the citizens and to critically analyse their organizational setup, functionality and efficiency.

For the purpose of the second edition of 12 shadow reports on performance of sector working groups in the period January – December 2020, project researchers monitored 17 from total of 19 meetings held by these working groups. Findings from observing SWG meetings and analysing sector policies were discussed at 11 interviews conducted with IPA coordinators from line ministries responsible for relevant sector groups, and with 34 civil society representatives that participate in SWGs. Moreover, changes noted in 2020 compared to 2019 are supported by responses obtained to 312 freedom of information requests inquiring about SWG performance in the course of 2020.

The general assessment implies certain progress in SWG performance despite the extraordinary year which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has raised challenges for the overall society. Progress is primarily noted in respect to

1 The sector working groups are a formal mechanism for consultations and cooperation among the executive authorities (ministries), civil society organizations, the donor community, and other interested parties. By the cut-off date for this report, 12 sector working groups with competences in different areas are established in the Republic of North Macedonia, in order to ensure the sector-wide approach.



transparency in SWG operation, notably by means of greater access to published information that are of importance for SWGs. Furthermore, 2020 was marked by organization of 19 plenary sessions, compared to only 12 sessions held in 2019. However, despite the mild increase in the number of meetings, SWGs still do not meet pursuant to the frequency anticipated under the rules of procedure, which could guarantee a commitment to sector policies and reform implementation. SWGs demonstrated a satisfactory level of functionality, as stipulated in their respective rules of procedures, but these documents fall short in defining the role and position of civil society organizations within SWGs. Having in mind that the central focus of the project “CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations” is put on civil society organizations and their efficient involvement in policy shaping, this report stresses the need for advancing the role played by civil society organizations in sector working groups.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

FORMED: 2015

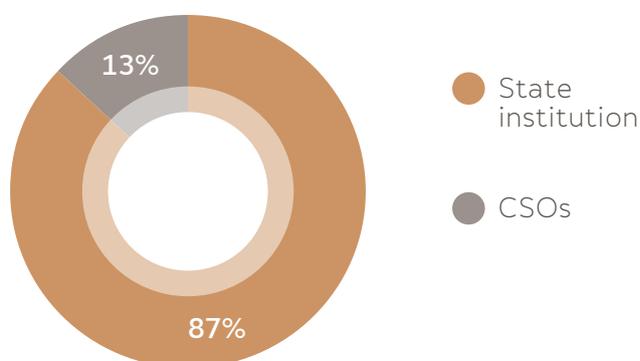
NUMBER OF SWG MEMBERS: 23, institutions x 20 members, civil society organizations x 3 members

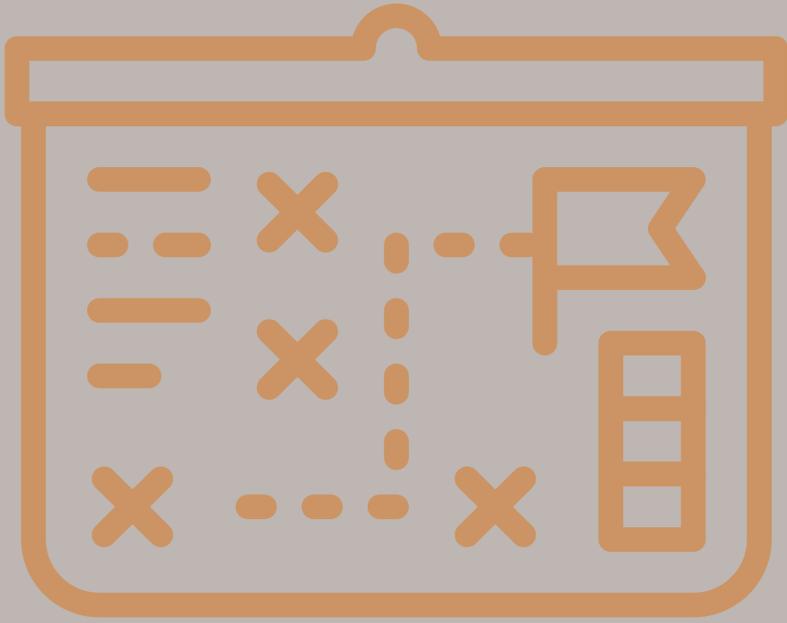
NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD IN 2020:
two operational meetings, 08.06.2020 and
07.10.2020

SWG CHAIR: Minister of Agriculture, Forestry
and Water Economy

CHART 1.

**Distribution of various representatives
in SWG Agriculture and Rural Development**





METHODOLOGY APPROACH

This report is based on desk research that included browsing information on official websites of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Secretariat for European Affairs and Agency for Financial Support in Agriculture and Rural Development (IPARD Agency).

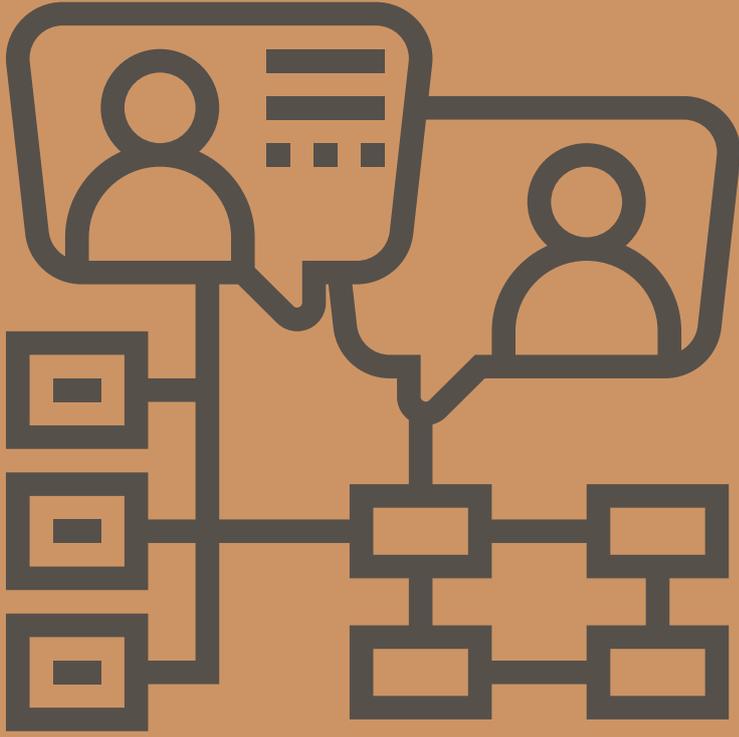
In particular, the desk research implied in-depth analysis of laws, documents and strategies that are of significance for this sector working group (*for more information see BIBLIOGRAPHY*). Moreover, the research team submitted **22 freedom of information request** to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy as the institution competent for operation of this sector group. Responses to all information requests were disclosed in timely manner.

For the purpose of this reach, an interview was conducted with the head and three representatives from the sector on EU affairs at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy². In addition, another interview was conducted with representative from one of civil society organizations involved in this sector group, i.e. the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES).

According to the monitoring methodology, performance of sector working groups is assessed in respect to five segments:

- SWG functionality;
- civil society participation in SWG;
- CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG;;
- effects from SWG work; and
- IPA.

² Interview with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy was conducted on 13.10.2021



PART 1

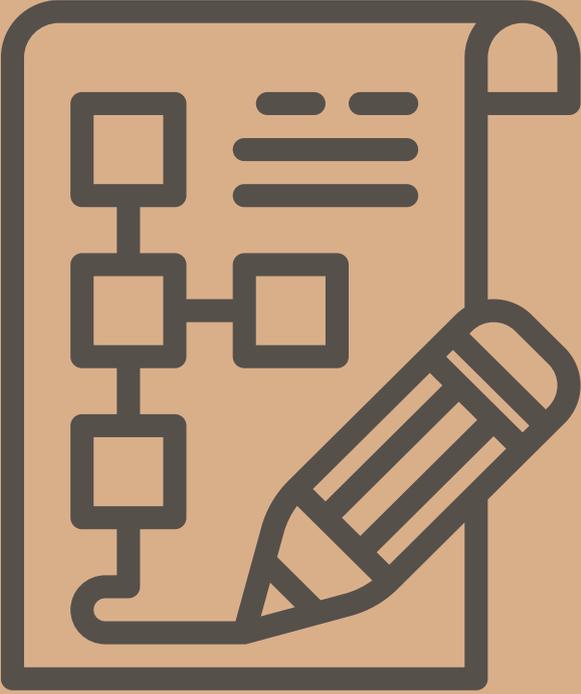
SECTOR POLICIES

In 2020, MAFWE worked on several draft documents that are closely related to the sector on agriculture and rural development. In December 2020, MAFEW finalized the National Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development for the period 2021 – 2027, which was adopted by the Government in January 2021. In 2020, work started on drafting the Law on Amending the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development which regulates the application procedure for funds under the program of direct payments to agriculture and implementation of administrative procedure for the Single Register of Agriculture Holdings and the Land Parcel Identification System, including regulation of agriculture holdings.

In the monitoring period, the ministry focused its work on development of draft strategic response to IPA III and creation of key indicators and targets by 2027 for defined priorities, objectives and actions under IPA III assistance, with the key document in that regard being dedicated to sustainable and specific economy in rural development. This action document should contribute to improved and sustainable competitiveness under window 4, thematic priority 2: development of the private sector, trade, research and innovation, and thematic priority 3: agriculture and rural development.

At the same time, 2020 Annual Report³ on Implementation of IPA 2 Assistance enlists that with assistance from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), six programmes are implemented as part of technical cooperation, including support for land consolidation, privatisation of state land and support for integrated community development. North Macedonia participates in six regional programmes supported by FAO, and three programmes financed by other donors, but implemented by FAO.

³ 2020 Annual Report on Implementation of IPA Assistance, available at: <https://bit.ly/3w4K1Fo>



PART 2

SWG FUNCTIONALITY

2.1 RULES OF PROCEDURE

SWG Agriculture and Rural Development has draft rules of procedures, but it is a matter of general draft rules that have been anticipated to serve as model that would be latter adjusted to specificities of individual sector working groups. The document disclosed by MAFWE is not adjusted to operation of SWG Agriculture and Rural Development. Moreover, the text of this document is drafted in English language and is not published on the website of SWG Chair, i.e. MAFWE (which is also the case with majority of other SWGs). The interviewed representative from one civil society organization that participates in SWG for many years shared information that no SWG meeting included discussion on the rules of procedure and improvements and adjustments thereto to reflect operation of this sector group. Interviewed representatives from MAFWE expressed full preparedness to cooperate with civil society organizations on joint adaptation of SWG rules of procedure.

One annex to the draft general rules of procedure concerns SWG Agriculture and Rural Development and enlists MAFWE as the lead institutions and the European



Union (EU) as the main donor, through IPA and IPARD programmes. Structure of SWG members is presented in a table comprised of four categories: coordinators, core working group, other members (when needed), and donors and international financial institutions. It should be stressed that this annex, intended to describe SWG structure, does not include civil society organizations, academia, external experts, trade unions or any other actors that are part of the broader civil society. The formulation used in regard to SWG structure refers to “representatives of the civil society”. Although they are not formally included in the annex to the draft rules of procedure, MAFWE representatives reported they regularly communicate with and involve civil society representatives (such as the National Federation of Farmers of Macedonia, Rural Coalition and Association of Agricultural Economists) and representatives from the academic community, especially from the Faculty of Agriculture Science and Food.

The NIPAC structure, Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy are all enlisted as SWG coordinators/chairs. As regards basic actors involved in this sector group, in addition to coordinators/chairs that are enlisted for the second time, the list also features the Director of the Food and Veterinary Agency (FVA), Director of the Agency for Financial Support to Agriculture and Rural Development (IPARD Agency) representatives from the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, and the National Authorising Officer from the Ministry of Finance. The category of “other members, invited when needed, enlists representatives from several state institutions, such as: Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Local Self-Government and Ministry of Health. Moreover, it includes management staff from institutions that could be competent in some priority areas discussed at SWG meetings. This category includes a general formulation on civil society representatives, which allows the observation that all non-state actors should be SWG members “when needed”. The last category presented in this annex refers to donors and international financing institutions, and enlists actors such as: EU, France, Germany, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Credit Bank for Reconstruction, European Investment Bank and the Council of Europe Development Bank.

According to the most recent list of SWG members presented to the research team, MAFWE as the lead organization in SWG Agriculture and Rural Development is represented with the highest number of members, i.e. a total of 7 members. FVA, IPARD Agency, Cabinet of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Health and SEA are represented with 2 members each. One member each is allotted to three civil society organizations that participate in this sector group, i.e. MES, Association of Agricultural Economists and Center for European Strategies – Eurothink. It should be noted that except for these three civil society organizations, there are no other non-state actors involved in SWG work. However, representatives of the academic community, farmers, trade unions and chambers of commerce are invited to attend SWG meetings.

According to formulations from the draft general rules of procedure, invitations are sent to SWG members, minutes are compiled from SWG minutes in standardised form and shared with SWG participants, who are able to comment them before their formal adoption. The interviewed representative from civil society organization reported distribution of invitation for plenary sessions (when these were held before 2020) and almost always received minutes therefrom, but was not invited to comment draft minutes, while SWG invitations and minutes are not published on the ministry's official website. MAFWE representatives indicated that this is a problem at governmental level, and that there should be an aligned practice among line ministries for publication of such information.

2.2 ANNUAL PLAN

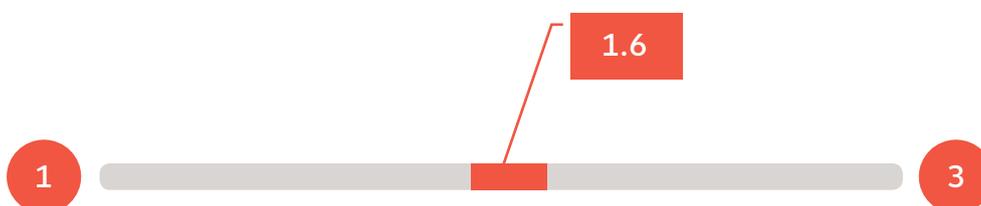
SWG on Agriculture and Rural Development doesn't have an annual work plan.

ASSESSMENT ON SWG FUNCTIONALITY

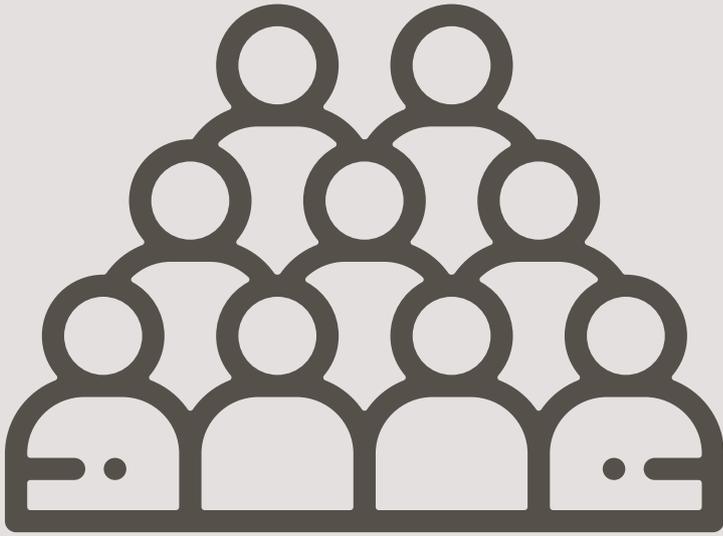


According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects from sector working groups, **SWG functionality** is measured against 14 standards and 8 indicators that focus on creation of relevant work documents by SWGs (rules of procedure, annual plan and annual report) and their enforcement in the practice. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score for functionality of SWG Agriculture and Rural Development in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.6.







PART 3

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

As mentioned earlier, the rules of procedure allow an opportunity for civil society organizations to join SWF work, and three SWG members are nominated by three civil society organizations. However, this sector group did not hold any plenary sessions in the course of 2020 and therefore, civil society participation cannot be assessed. On the other hand, the interviewed representative from one civil society organization shared her opinion that minutes compiled after SWG meetings were regularly shared.

In addition, she stressed that the manner in which SWG meetings had been organised allows all members to share their opinions and join discussions, as well as to suggest topics to be discussed at such meetings. However, her remarks concern lack of structured communication among SWG members, but more importantly lack of communication between state and non-state actors beyond SWG work. All types of cooperation between representatives from state institutions and civil society organizations takes place exclusively on personal basis and previous collaboration. She stressed that, in the future, SWG must pay greater attention to all types of communication, as well as to public relations.



MAFWE representatives indicated excellent cooperation with the civil society through the National Convention on the European Union in North Macedonia (NCEU-NK) and proposed further development of SWG to be modelled according to this example. Also, non-state actors provide significant contribution through the IPARD monitoring committee. Interviewed representatives expressed regret that over a period of three years they had not been asked to renew the list of civil society organizations that participate in SWG, as they would like to expand this list with interested and professional organizations.

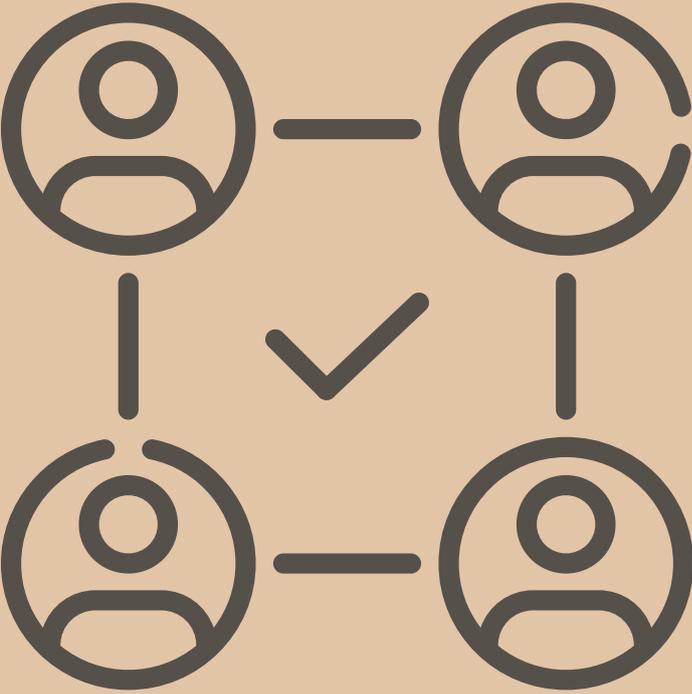
ASSESSMENT ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **civil society participation in SWG** is measured against 9 standards and 3 indicators that focus on the number and the status of CSOs involved in SWG work. Moreover, they cover regular and timely delivery of invitations and necessary materials for SWG meetings, as well as opportunities afforded to CSOs to join discussions before, during and after meetings. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score for civil society participation in SWG Agriculture and Rural Development in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.2.







PART 4

CSO CAPACITY

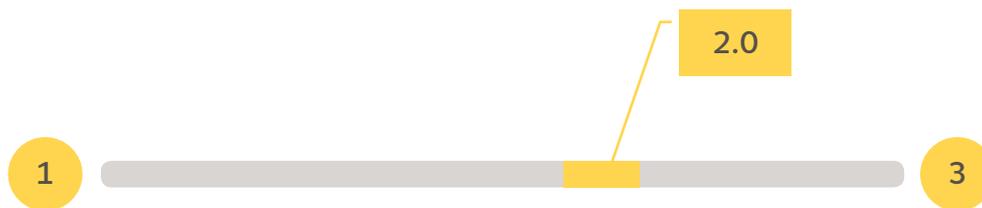
Capacity of civil society organizations significantly varies from one to another organization. MES has several decades of experience related to work on programs and projects that are closely related to agriculture and rural development. On the other hand, the Association of Agricultural Economics holds comprehensive knowledge in the area of agro-economy and they are part of other activities related to MAWFE's work, but are inactive in respect to this sector group. This means that, at the moment, the civil society organization's capacity is not used for that purpose. The third organization represented in SWG Agriculture and Rural Development, i.e. Eurothink, has small and limited capacity in respect to the sector group's work. While in the last year this organization worked extensively in the field of fight against organized environmental crime, with special focus on illegal timbering, it should be noted that it would take longer period of time for the same to seriously build its capacity in this regard. Nevertheless, the interviewed representatives from MES is of the opinion that civil society organizations represented in the sector group have solid capacity, which could of course be enhanced in the future. Her comment is similar to those made by the ministry.

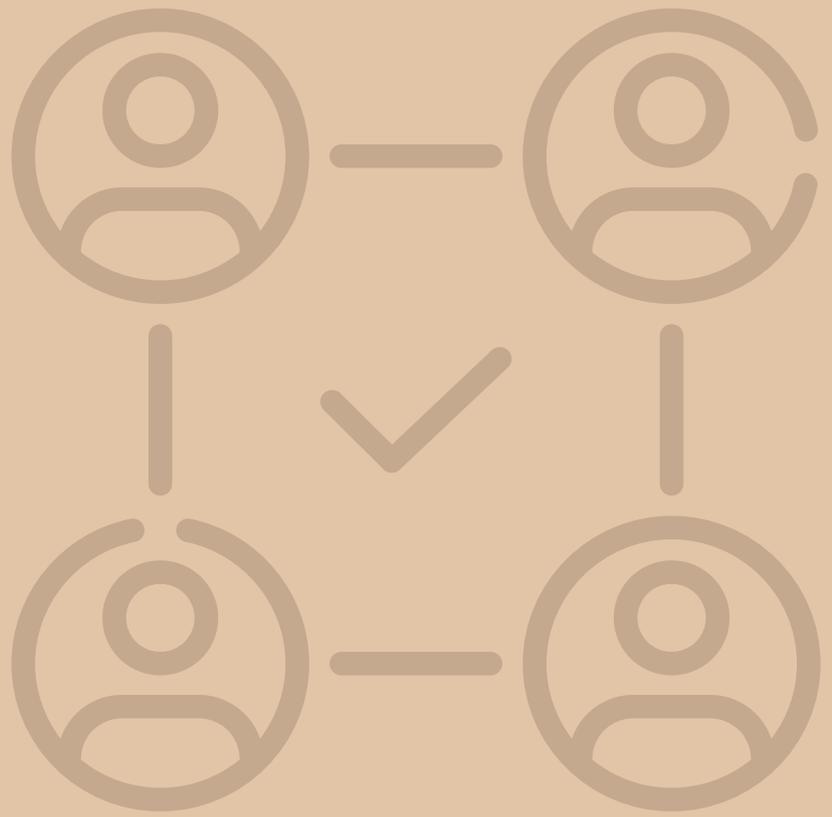
ASSESSMENT ON CSO CAPACITY



According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **CSO capacity** for contribution and participation in SWG is measured against 5 standards and 2 indicators that focus on ability, knowledge and skills disposed by CSOs. Moreover, they concern proactivity on the part of CSOs in respect to organization of consultations and information sessions, production of analyses, research papers and policy briefs, as well as engagement in advocacy for important issues falling within SWG scope of work. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score for CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG Agriculture and Rural Development in this monitoring period is calculated at 2.0.







PART 5

EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK

According to the draft general rules of procedure, SWG Agriculture and Rural Development should meet at least once every month. However, as elaborated in the introductory section, this sector group has organized only two operational meetings, one held on 08.06.2020 and the other held on 07.10.2020. Based on minutes from SWG meetings, both plenary sessions were held online, via the platform WEBEX. In addition to strategic responses for IPA III, as presented above, the first meeting also included discussion on common market organization measures, quality and marketing of agriculture produce, importance of fisheries and development of in-depth analysis on state-of-affairs, land consolidation, establishment of risk management system in respect to agriculture resilience to climate and market change, introduction of new technologies, rural development, and phytosanitary policy. General conclusions from this meeting include: definition of proposed priorities and addition of new priorities when relevant, review of the draft strategic response for IPA III, regular organization of SWG meetings in respect to future cooperation on thematic priorities, all future projects should meet the maturity criterion and should be in line with EU policies in order to be financed by the Union, and all areas supported under IPA III should concern the period 2021-2027. Focus of the second meeting was on strategic responses for IPA III and there were no additional agenda items and conclusions.

5.1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON IPA III PROGRAMMING (2021-2027)



The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) concerns the programming period 2021-2027. The European Commission introduced this instrument together with the new EU multiannual financial framework. IPA programming took place throughout the entire 2020 and was initiated with development of PAF indicators,⁴ followed by strategic responses and action fiches.

IPA III is introduced with adoption of the Regulation on Establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and the Regulation on Implementing Rules and Principles for IPA III⁵ by the European Union, and is coherent to other funds, programmes and instruments of the Union, primarily the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument. According to its structure, IPA III is organized into 5 windows:

1. Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy;
2. Good Governance, Acquis Alignment, Good Neighbourly Relations and Strategic Communication;
3. Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity;
4. Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth;
5. Territorial and Cross-Border Cooperation.

⁴ Performance Assessment Framework (PAF)

⁵ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) COM/2018/465 final.

Each window is comprised of several thematic priorities, as follows:

TABLE 1:
IPA III windows and thematic priorities

<p>WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Judiciary; ◆ Fight against corruption; ◆ Fight against organized crime; ◆ Migration and border management; ◆ Fundamental rights; ◆ Democracy; ◆ Civil society. 	<p>WINDOW 2: GOOD GOVERNANCE, ACQUIS ALIGNMENT, GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Good governance; ◆ Administrative capacity and acquis alignment; ◆ Good neighbourly relations and reconciliation; ◆ Strategic communication, monitoring, evaluation and audit.
<p>WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Environment and climate change; ◆ Transport, digital economy and energy. 	<p>WINDOW 4: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Education, employment, social protection and inclusion policies, and health; ◆ Private sector development, trade, research and innovation; ◆ Agriculture and rural development; ◆ Fisheries.

WINDOW 5: TERRITORIAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

This window is comprised of a separate list of thematic priorities given in Annex 2 to the IPA III Regulation.⁶ Modalities for implementation of this component include:

- ◆ cross-border cooperation with IPA countries;
- ◆ participation in micro region strategies.

⁶ COM/2018/465



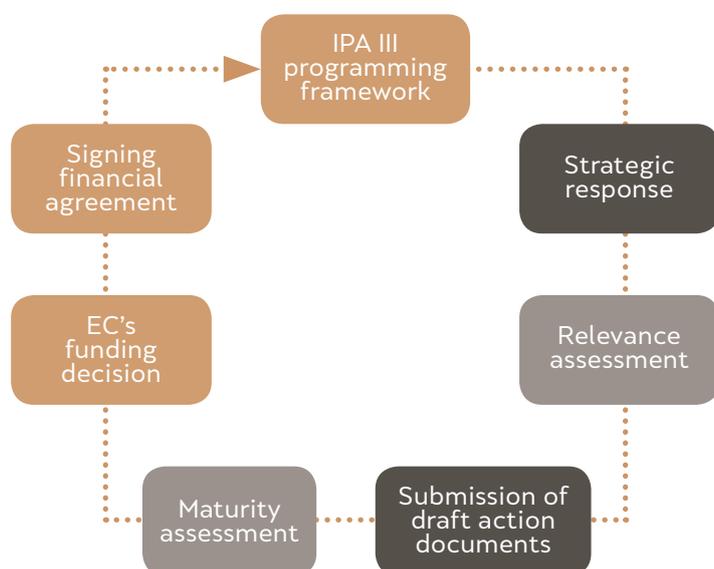
According to the IPA III Regulation, the European Commission proposes a programming framework for the period 2021-2027 that includes all priority areas eligible for funding. Based on this programming framework, each IPA III country develops its strategic responses, elaborating links between EU priorities and those under national and sector strategies, followed by development of projects in the next phase.

IPA III does not include specific financial allocations per beneficiary country. Actually, countries will have to compete for the total of 14.162 billion euros available on the basis of their capacity and project proposals. However, IPA III introduces the principle of fair share in order to ensure certain balance and proportionality in distribution of IPA III funds among beneficiary countries.

IPA III programming is pursued in two stages.

- 1. Relevance assessment.** In this stage, the country develops summary action fishes with elaboration of proposed projects. The European Commission assesses these fishes in terms of their relevance.
- 2. Maturity assessment.** This stage implies development of action documents, but only for projects that have passed the relevance assessment, followed by detailed elaboration. The European Commission assesses projects in terms of their maturity. After action documents are approved, the country presents the European Commission with tender documents for projects approved in both stages, followed by signing of financial agreements for individual action documents.

CHART 2.
IPA III programming cycle



The process for developing strategic and action documents for the years 2021 and 2022, but also for next programming years, is anticipated to take place within the existing sector working groups (SWGs), established under the sector-wide approach from IPA II.

In the second half of 2020, under coordination from the Secretariat for European Affairs, sector working groups developed and presented the European Commission with 22 action fishes, of which 10 for the year 2021⁷ and 12 for the year 2022.⁸

mission with 22 action fishes, of which 10 for the year 2021⁷ and 12 for the year 2022.⁸

TABLE 2. 2021 and 2022 action fishes for IPA III

ACTION FISHES 2021			
INDICATIVE TITLE OF THE ACTION	INDICATIVE BUDGET	CO-FINANCING RATIO	
		EU	MK
1. EU for Efficient Judiciary and Enhanced Prevention of Corruption	10 million euros	85%	15%
2. Civil Society Facility	3 million euros	/	/
3. EU for Modern Administration	10 million euros	100%	0%
4. EU for Good Governance	9 million euros	89%	11%
5. EU Integration Facility	5 million euros	100%	0%
6. EU for Environmental Standards	12 million euros	83%	17%
7. EU for Clean Air	14 million euros	86%	14%
8. EU for Prespa	23,7 million euros	76%	24%

⁷ <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2021.zip>

⁸ <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2022.zip>



9.	Preparation of European Transport Corridors Projects	9,5 million euros	100%	0%
10.	EU for Green Growth	27,5 million euros	73%	27%
ACTION FISHES 2022				
INDICATIVE TITLE OF THE ACTION		INDICATIVE BUDGET	CO-FINANCING RATIO	
			EU	MK
1.	Private Sector Development ⁹	9,2 million euros	87%	13%
2.	EU in Support of the Fight against Organized Crime	5,2 million euros	88%	12%
3.	EU for Improved Border Management, Migration and Asylum Policy	7,8 million euros	90%	10%
4.	Civil Society Facility	3 million euros	/	/
5.	EU Integration Facility	10 million euros	100%	0%
6.	Union Programmes	15,4 million euros	50%	50%
7.	EU for Modern Waste Water Systems	53 million euros	50%	50%
8.	EU for Safe Roads	20 million euros	50%	50%
9.	EU for Quality Employment and Equal Opportunities	6,6 million euros	91%	9%
10.	EU for Health	5,9 million euros	85%	15%
11.	EU for Trade Facilitation	8,1 million euros	72%	28%
12.	EU for Development of Agriculture	6 million euros	83%	17%

5.1.1 Strategic response and action fiche for agriculture and rural development

The strategic response for the sector on agriculture and rural development is part of Window 4: Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth, thematic priorities 3 and 4.

⁹ Sector fiche with remaining funds under Component I from IPA I for the years 2012 and 2013.

**TABLE 3 . Strategic response and action fiche
for agriculture and rural development**

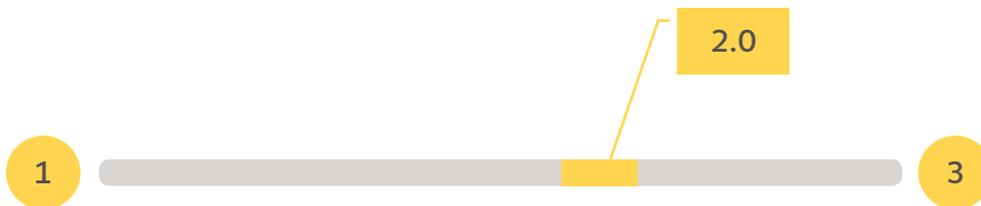
SWG	STRATEGIC RESPONSE	KEY THEMATIC PRIORITY	ACTION FICHE	ACTION FICHE OBJECTIVES
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	<p>WINDOW 4: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH</p> <p>Thematic priority 3: Agriculture and rural development</p>	<p>(1) Preparation of the country for participation in the EU Common Agriculture Policy, alignment of agriculture legislation with EU acquis and standards in the area of agriculture, foodstuff, veterinary, phytosanitary protection of animals, hygiene and environment and development of necessary administrative and institutional capacity</p> <p>(2) Increase competitiveness of North Macedonia on international markets for agriculture produce and foodstuff agro-industry</p> <p>(3) Elimination of risks on animal and human health</p> <p>(4) Elimination of risks on plants, animal health and human health, and reduction of negative effects from agriculture on the environment</p> <p>(5) Promotion of territorially balanced and sustainable development in rural areas</p>	(2022) <i>EU for Development of Agriculture</i> – 6 million euros, 83% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To develop capacity, align policies of North Macedonia for implementation of common market organization for agriculture products ◆ Enhance productivity in agriculture
	<p>WINDOW 4: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH</p> <p>Thematic priority 4: Fisheries</p>	<p>(1) Improve fisheries policies and align it with the EU acquis</p> <p>(2) Prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and promotion of competitiveness in this sector</p>		

ASSESSMENT ON EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK



According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **effects from SWG work** are measured against 3 standards and 8 indicators that focus on changes effectuated by SWG work through planning and monitoring, and methods for foreign aid coordination. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the higher score.

Average score for effects from work of SWG Agriculture and Rural Development in this monitoring period is calculated at 2.0.





PART 6

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

The obligation for gender mainstreaming in work of sector working groups (SWGs) arises from the national legislation, but also from the Country Indicative Strategy Paper for the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance 2014–2020 (IPA II)¹⁰, the European Union’s Gender Action Plan (GAP II)¹¹ and the broader EU acquis. As elaborated in the previous Shadow Report, GAP II stresses the need for gender mainstreaming in programs and assistance programming,¹² while IPA II treats gender equality as cross-cutting issue and as separate priority area for support.¹³

¹⁰ European Commission, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Revised Indicative Strategy Paper for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2014-2020). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3hxZE2W>

¹¹ Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through European Union (EU) External Relations 2016-2020 (GAP II). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Quy3oo>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ European Commission, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Revised Indicative Strategy Paper for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2014-2020). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3hxZE2W>



This year was hallmarked by the public health crisis, which furthered already existing gender gaps and inequalities. The COVID-19 pandemic had negative impact on women's participation in the labour market in RNM, whose activity rate was already low before the crisis. According to the most recent data available, 62.3% of women¹⁴ in the country are economically inactive, compared to 37.7% of men.¹⁵ Moreover, 77% of health sector employees in RNM are women,¹⁶ which means that women - at the time of crisis – found themselves at the frontline of this struggle. Women are more represented in sectors that have been most affected by the crisis. For example, 80% of textile industry workers are women.¹⁷ Therefore, under conditions of pre-existing and deepened inequalities, addressing these issues by gender mainstreaming in work of all bodies and institutions, including SWGs, gains an even greater importance.

6.1 FINDINGS FROM MONITORING SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

6.1.1 SWG meetings

In the course of 2020, SWG meetings rarely included discussion on policy impacts in terms of gender equality as a cross-cutting theme. Information and data collected by the cut-off date for this report¹⁸ allow the conclusion that, as noted in the 2019 report, only two sector groups have integrated the gender perspective in their work: SWG Education, Employment and Social Policy and SWG Agriculture and Rural Development. This refers to the conclusion that SWGs have still not recognized their key role in promoting gender equality by means of gender mainstreaming in development and implementation of sector policies.

14 State Statistical Office (MAKStat Database 2019). Active population according to economic activity, gender and age. Economic inactivity of women. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yt39Ov>

15 State Statistical Office (MAKStat Database 2019). Active population according to economic activity, gender and age. Economic inactivity of men. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yt39Ov>

16 ILO (2020). Covid-19 and the World of Work NORTH MACEDONIA Rapid Assessment of the Employment Impacts and Policy Responses, available at: <https://bit.ly/3mGGtV7>

17 Ibid.

18 By the cut-off date for this report, information and data were collected from line ministries responsible for eight sector working groups: SWG Justice, SWG Public Administration Reform, SWG Local and Regional Development, SWG Education, Employment and Social Policy, SWG Home Affairs, SWG Transport, SWF Public Finance Management, and SWG Agriculture and Rural Development.

6.1.2 Trainings

Recommendations made under the 2019 Shadow Report concerned specially designed training for SWG members on gender mainstreaming that would be complementary to already existing gender equality training for administrative officers.

Namely, in 2017 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), with the support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN), developed an e-training course on gender equality intended to enhance knowledge of public administration employees. This training course is comprised of two modules, basic and advanced, and is administered by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA) through the E-learning Management System, which is accessible only to administrative officers.

Defeating is the fact that, in 2020, this basic module of the gender equality training was attended by only three administrative officers and nobody attended the advanced module. For comparison, in 2019 the basic module was attended by 359 and the advanced module was attended by 54 administrative officers. From its introduction to present, the gender equality training was attended by a total of 11,017 administrative officers. However, this figure pales into insignificance against the fact that, by 31.12.2020, public sector institutions employ a total of 131,183 persons.¹⁹ Here it should be noted that this training course is available only to administrative officers, but not to other groups of public sector employees.²⁰

In October 2020, under the Project for Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and in cooperation with UN WOMEN, MLSP organized four one-day trainings on strategic planning, which featured gender mainstreaming elements. These trainings were attended by professional and management staff members and those involved in strategic planning and policy/program development at institutions, including coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities. In total, all four trainings were attended by 32 staff members from 13 line ministries and 1 state institution. In December 2020, a two-day online training was organized on gender mainstreaming in strategic planning and gender responsive budgeting, attended by 33 staff members from 14 line ministries.

¹⁹ Ministry of Information Society and Administration. 2020 Report from the Register of Public Sector Employees. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2T3DTxW>

²⁰ Pursuant to Article 14 of the Law on Public Sector Employee ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 143/19 and 14/20), job positions of employees in public sector institutions are categorized into four groups: administrative officers, officers with public authority, service providers assistance/technical staff.

6.1.3 Gender analysis of policies



In 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy established the working group on gender equality and women empowerment. In 2020, with support from UN WOMEN, this working group developed the document “Recommendations to Support Women in Agriculture and Rural Areas during COVID-19 Conditions”. Moreover, the gender perspective was incorporated in development of the National Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2021-2027, which was discussed at meetings held by SWG Agriculture and Rural Development



FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Main topics discussed at both meetings held by this sector working group in 2020 concern strategic responses and action fishes for IPA III.

Moreover, this sector group is characterized by several shortcoming in respect to its operation such as lack of separate rules of procedure, flow of information and poor involvement of civil society organizations in SWG work.

1. As regards SWG functionality, separate rules of procedure should be drafted and shared with all SWG members, and efforts should be made to improve exchange of information in respect to SWG work. Moreover, SWG Agriculture and Rural Development should expand the list of participants, especially with those from non-state actors, such as the academic community, representatives of farmers, trade unions, chambers of commerce, and other non-state actors. SWG meetings should have a clearer structure of discussions.

2. In order to improve civil society participation, efforts are needed to improve communication with CSOs, i.e. to clearly formulate and define the civil society's role in this sector group. This would necessitate amendments to the rules of procedures in order to define the model for civil society participation which, inter alia, would allow replacement of passive civil society representatives with representatives from other CSOs that will express interest in joining work of this sector group.

3. As regards communications, the public should be informed about work of this sector group, while documents on SWG establishment, minutes and materials from SWG meetings should be published on MAWFE's website. All types of communication need to be improved, especially with non-state actors that are stakeholders in work performed by this sector group. Information on SWG work on websites of all line ministries should be imposed by the government.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN TERMS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS



1. Most SWGs have still not recognized the importance of gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting theme in their work. Although some line ministries have engaged in gender analysis of particular policies or have performed gender-responsive budgeting for individual programs, oftentimes these documents are not discussed and are not taken into account at SWG meetings. Hence the need for gender mainstreaming in work of all SWGs and use of gender analyses on state-of-affairs in specific sectors as baseline for policy development, implementation and evaluation.

2. It is recommended for e-training on gender equality to become part of the framework of generic competences and annual training programs, thereby underscoring its mandatory implementation and ensuring greater coverage in terms of trained administrative officers. Moreover, it is equally important for training materials to be regularly, timely and continuously updated, in order to avoid the risk of outdated content. While implementation of specially designed training course on gender mainstreaming in strategic planning represents a step forward, it is still early to assess its effects. It is recommended for participants in such trainings and workshops to mandatorily include SWG members. In order to ensure that such training gains an even greater importance, it would be desirable to evaluate knowledge of training participants and to regulate organization of such trainings on regular instead of ad-hoc basis.

3. Given that recommendations from 2019 Shadow Report are not fully taken into consideration, valid is the recommendation for involvement of coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities in SWGs, including civil society representatives with expertise and experience in the field of gender equality, as support for gender mainstreaming in all SWGs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ◆ Responses disclosed by MAFWE to information requests submitted under the instrument for free access to public information
- ◆ Desk analysis of documents that are relevant for SWG Agriculture and Rural Development and available on websites of MAFWE, ENER, SEA and IPARD
- ◆ Interview with civil society representative that participates in SWG Agriculture and Rural Development



