



## Concept Note

### Technical Workshop Gender Equality for sustainable development in Nexus sectors in Albania

*To be held online on 29 June 2021*

In the framework of the project  
*“Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the  
use of the Nexus approach”*

financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

implemented by the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)  
in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

*Working language: Albanian. Simultaneous interpretation in English will be available*

## **Concept Note**

### **Gender Equality in Albania**

Albania has made significant improvements in advancing the normative framework for gender equality in recent years. However, inequalities still exist, and the institutional set-up for gender equality remains under-resourced (both in terms of finances and staff) and requires additional support in human and technical capacity. Challenges in effectively implementing the legal and policy framework on gender equality negatively affect equality between women and men, and the country's development outcomes overall.

Due to different interventions, Albania has progressed in some areas more than others which supports its general advancement. But progress needs to be even in all key development areas. For example, Albania has shown progress in the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum since 2006. In the 2020 GAP, Albania ranked 20 among 153 countries. While this is a significant improvement compared to previous years, it is primarily a result of women increased formal representation in political decision-making. This however is not matched by equality scores in all other GAP subindexes such as Economic Empowerment and Opportunity, Educational Attainment and Health and Survival gaps.

Similarly, for the same reason Albania scores relatively high in the EU's Gender Equality Index (GEI) published in 2020, with 60.4 out of 100 points, which is seven points below the EU-28 average. A closer look shows a significant variability within the index categories. So, women are doing much better when it comes to be represented in politics and attending tertiary education. But these figures are in striking contrast with women's lack of essential productive resources, as evidence by the scores in the domains of money, care provision, time use, and social power.

In UNDP's Human Development Report 2019, Albania occupies rank 69 among 189 countries, reflecting an overall and gradual upward tendency over the past decade. However, Albania scores in the respectively lowest tercile under the "Women's Empowerment" and "Life-course Gender Gap" categories in the following areas: women's employment in senior and middle management; the number of girls in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); the sex-ratio at birth; the share of female employment in non-agriculture; and domestic chores and care work.

### **Gender and sustainable development**

Sustainable development at its core encourages us to think about how to improve economies and societies without compromising the natural environment or the well-being of future generations. But for any development effort to be sustainable and effective, it must consider the needs of all people, including those who do not typically have a voice in decision making. That is why gender equality is a critical ingredient in achieving sustainable development.

Gender equality and sustainable development are inseparable. Gender equality can enable and even accelerate the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While

gender equality is captured as a stand-alone goal (SDG 5), its benefits are multiplied when gender is integrated across all the SDGs, and gender considerations are included in all sustainable development work.

Addressing gender inequalities—including access to and control over natural resources—accelerates the impact of sustainable development policies connected to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Many of the barriers to effective sustainability policies are found in outdated discriminatory social norms and legal systems. Investing in girls and women requires no radical inventions but can break systemic barriers of power and privilege that continue to leave millions behind.

### **Nexus approach and sustainable development**

Sustainable socio-economic development requires, among others, growing levels of food-energy- and water-services. The overall security of resources can be improved by co-optimising different sectors' objectives through an integrated **Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems "Nexus"** approach that aims at reconciling the interests of the different sectors, while respecting environmental needs and human rights. This is done by adopting an integrated and coordinated approach across sectors as sectors compete for the same scarce resources, all while capturing existing opportunities and exploring emerging ones. Under such an approach, interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs among the relevant sectors are assessed, with the aim of identifying solutions that foster water-food-energy security and efficiency and reduce impacts and risks on water-dependent ecosystems.

The Project "Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeast Europe (SEE), through the use of Nexus approach" is supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and implemented by Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean in partnership with the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Its overall aim is to introduce the Nexus approach and catalyse action for its adoption and implementation in SEE at the national and transboundary basin levels. Serving this purpose, Nexus Dialogue Processes are being implemented in the transboundary basins of the Drin and Drina rivers, and in Albania, including the development of analytical technical Nexus Assessments.

### **Gender Equality under the Nexus Assessment in Albania**

From an initial gender analysis, it can be noted that commitment to international, national gender policies and strategies are present at national level, but that nexus sectors policies and strategies, in general, do not have adequate references to gender including in relation to the nexus sectors, water-energy-environment-food and to climate change, whose impacts are very cumbersome especially on women and poor rural areas.

It is in rural development plans/strategies and partly in disaster management related to extreme climate events, such as floods, that gender dimensions and especially women needs/challenges come more evident forward. Due to their close link with nexus sectors such as agriculture, water services/management and environmental management, rural development interventions and adaptation to climate change efforts could contribute in

bringing forward the importance of mainstreaming gender in the Nexus. However other areas need to be explored further.

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To address the above, under the Nexus Assessment for Albania, a dedicated chapter on gender dimensions will be prepared to assess how gender issues are reflected and considered in Nexus related sectors and what are the specific challenges for a more gender mainstreaming approach in the sectors. The methodology to prepare this chapter will be through desk review, the workshop, and a questionnaire to identify the progress, challenges, and potential areas of interest for a more gender sensitive approach in each of the Nexus sectors.

### **Scope and objectives of the workshop**

In the framework of a Gender Equality Nexus Sectors Assessment, this technical workshop aims to initiate a coordinated discussion on the importance of mainstreaming gender equality in Nexus sector for sustainable development between key actors and stakeholders. It will also aim to inform and discuss how gender is addressed in sectors' strategies and policies and bring some concrete best practices on how gender can be addressed in development programmes.

More specifically it will aim to:

- Introduce and update the Nexus-related stakeholders with the basic concepts on gender equality for sustainable development and how gender inequality impacts progress towards Agenda 2030.
- Be informed on what is Albania's progress in fulfilling gender equality obligations.
- Discuss the importance of gender mainstreaming in policy making and how gender is addressed in the Nexus related strategies and policies.
- Discuss on gender-related challenges and opportunities relevant to the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystem sectors.
- Share policy-related experiences, best practices and lessons learned from the Nexus sectors that have progressed in addressing gender in policies and implementation.
- Provide recommendations for future interventions
- Provide recommendations and inputs for the Gender Equality Nexus Assessment.

### **Participants**

This technical meeting aims to bring together representatives from the Nexus sectors especially gender specialists and focal points from the institutions, agencies, and civil society organizations. In this workshop the key stakeholders will be present to contribute to the identification of the main challenges to address gender equality in all relevant Nexus sectors.