

Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap MPTF

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund in support of the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans



PROJECT DOCUMENT

Project title: Reduce Risk – Increase Safety III	
Targeted jurisdiction(s): Serbia	
Participating organizations: UNDP Serbia	
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Implementing partners: Ministry of Interior, National Institute for Public Health “Dr. Milan Jovanovic Batut”	
Project number from MPTF-O Gateway (if existing project): N/A	
Relevant SDG targets: SDG 16.1, 16.3, 16.a; SDG 5.2; 5.c.	
Project duration (in months): 24 Months Anticipated start date: 23 October 2023 Anticipated end date: 23 October 2025	Total amount: US\$ 776,135 Sources of funding: 1. UN MPTF: US\$ 776,135 2. Other sources of funding N/A • Government: US\$ ____ • UN Organization: US\$ ____
Brief project overview: The project aims to reduce the risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicide in Serbia. It will foster collaboration and knowledge exchange of relevant stakeholders and enhance community response to firearms-related crises and trauma. More specifically, the project aims to i) Review gender and age data collection practices, use lessons learned to facilitate evidence-based policy making and mainstream firearms risks into domestic violence regulations; ii) Enable networking and capacity building of women to actively participate in SALW control policies; iii) Improve conditions for improved detection of potential firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides and ensure comprehensive prevention support; iv) Make available information on the harmful effects of underlying practices and attitudes leading to firearms misuse and supportive mechanisms preventing suicides. V) Enable best practice sharing with professionals, media and academia on effective mechanisms for prevention of future firearms related incidents.	
Contribution to Roadmap Goals: 2 and 4	
Project Gender Marker Score (1, 2, 3 or N/A): 3	

Names and signatures of the Participating UN Organizations

Yakup Beris Resident Representative UNDP Serbia	DocuSigned by: <i>Signature:</i>  Date: 25-Oct-2023 <small>8E8AB6D378F0463...</small>
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Description of the project

The project aims to bridge the gaps identified under Goals 2 and 4 of the Roadmap by reducing the risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicide in Serbia. It will foster collaboration and knowledge exchange of relevant stakeholders and enhance community response to firearms-related crises and trauma. The project will support the Network of Women Police Officers in their efforts to strengthen the role of women and promote women's leadership in SALW control policies and build capacities for gender mainstreaming of SALW control policies. It will also focus on improving data collection that contributes to gender-responsive and evidence-based policy development. The project will involve a task force of experts from the criminal justice system, civil society, the healthcare system, and social protection, to assess the efficiency of current legal solutions and measures related to domestic violence.

Furthermore, the project will work on enhancing capacities of the healthcare system to better filter persons at risk of firearms misuse and collaborate with other institutions to manage cases of domestic violence reported by the healthcare system while ensuring the safety of survivors. It will involve training within health institutions on legal obligations to exchange information with other institutions, on indicators of domestic violence and the further processing of these cases in the system. It will also map out the effective practices aimed at changing masculine stereotypes that lead to harmful incidents with firearms. Two mass murders that have occurred, the most devastating in the recent history of Serbia, require learning from these incidents in order to prevent future occurrences. The group Journalists against Violence will be supported to analyze media reporting on firearms-related incidents in the context of domestic violence, suicides and mass shootings with a view of identifying violation of ethical reporting and propose alternatives that contribute to prevention.

The project has been built upon the previous phases, lessons learned, gaps identified through implementation of initiatives, results and recommendations of the Mid-term Evaluation of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-partner Trust Fund pertaining to integration of the cross-cutting issue of gender equality and women's empowerment. It was developed in coordination and cooperation with the beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Contribution to the Roadmap Goals:

*The project intends to build upon and consolidate work on Roadmap implementation, by focusing on gaps and challenges identified under **Goals 2:** By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led, and **Goal 4** - By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy.*

The expected outcome entails the increase in capabilities of relevant authorities and actors in Serbia for integrating a meaningful gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies through the reinforcement of networking and empowerment of women in the security sector, as well as the enhancement of gender-responsive and evidence-based policymaking. More specifically, the project will contribute to Goal 2 by improving record keeping that will support evidence-based policy creation and evidence-based policy/enforcement response in practice. In addition, the project will contribute to Goal 4 through awareness, outreach and advocacy initiatives aimed at improved integration of the gender perspective into SALW/firearms control measures and policies, as well as improved representation of women to this end.

Project Background (situation analysis)

Recognizing that firearms misuse is a gender problem which continues to affect the lives of citizens of Serbia, leaving life changing injuries and deep trauma at the individual level, raising questions of the community level efficiency of and trust in institutional response and pointing to the still jeopardized right to a safe life, the project contributes to integration of the gender perspective of the Roadmap by bridging the gaps and challenges identified under specific Goals 2 and 4 of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap¹.

More specifically, the project contributes to decreasing the risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicides in Serbia, while strengthening the role of women as active participants of SALW control and Roadmap implementation, fostering collaboration and knowledge of relevant stakeholders with a view of restoring the feeling of safety in the wider community.

The primary beneficiaries are persons who are or may become victims of firearms misuse, either in the community, in the context of gender-based violence or in the context of suicide by firearms. The overall goal is to encourage changes of harmful social norms and reduce the risk of firearms misuse by persons who have access to firearms as civilians, or based on their occupation or hobby, as well as those who have access to illegal firearms.

This project builds on the findings and partnerships established in the previous two phases of the “Reduce Risk-Increase Safety” project, as well as recommendations of the Mid-term Evaluation of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-partner Trust Fund pertaining to integration of the cross-cutting issue of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

- According to the data of the Ministry of Interior from 2016, 996,501 pieces of firearms were registered in Serbia in legal possession (permits to hold weapons), of which 270,705 pistols and revolvers, 451,189 pieces of hunting weapons (rifles and carbines) and 91,588 sports weapons. 880 permits for carrying weapons for personal security were issued.²
- In 2017, 117,158 requests for permits were submitted for holding and carrying firearms, of which a total of 97,126 were positively resolved applications.³
- During 2018, a total of 1,898 firearms of different type were seized in Serbia and 49,380 pieces of ammunition of different calibers. During 2019, a total of 1,680 different weapons were confiscated and 30,960 pieces of ammunition of different calibers, two manual rocket launchers, 133 bombs, 45 kilograms of explosives and 207 explosive devices. In the period from 2003 to the end of 2019, a total of 141,507 firearms were destroyed.⁴
- Since the beginning of the implementation of the Law on Arms and Ammunition, more precisely since March 5, 2016, 146,028 weapons were re-registered.⁵
- Compared to 2021, a 25% decline in weapon seizures was recorded in Serbia in 2022 (163 in 2021, 117 in 2022). Of the number of weapon seizures in 2022 in Serbia, the majority (108) involved seizure of illegal firearms.⁶

¹ <https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/publications-salw-control-roadmap/Regional-Roadmap-for-a-sustainable-solution-to-the.pdf>

² Nasilje u porodici – šta govore podaci, UNDP Serbia 2021,

https://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/sr/home/library/womens_empowerment/Nasilje_u_porodici_sta_govore_podaci.html

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ In Focus – Armed Violence Monitor on Weapon Seizures in SEE in 2022, UNDP SEESAC, available at:

<https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Armed-Violence/In-Focus-Armed-Violence-Monitor-on-Weapon-Seizures-in-SEE.pdf>

- The majority of mass murders in Serbia in the previous years were committed with firearms, and their backgrounds were either tied directly to domestic violence or involved the killing of family members of the man's partner, ex-partner or wife.⁷
- Since 2000, eight mass shootings have occurred in Serbia. Five mass shootings were the direct result of domestic violence involving firearms or involved the murder of a family member or former/current partner. The beginning of May 2023 was marked by a school shooting in Belgrade, the most devastating event in the country's recent history. Based on information the Ministry of Interior released to the public⁸, the perpetrator was a 13-year-old male pupil, arrested shortly after the event in the school yard. Bringing his father's firearm to school, he killed eight classmates and the school guard, and injured six more pupils and a teacher. A day after this event, a mass shooting in a village near Smederevo and another village near Mladenovac occurred, when the 21-year-old male perpetrator opened fire and killed 8 people, injuring 14 others. He was arrested and the police found a significant amount of firearms and ammunition in his place of residence and holiday home.
- Following the two mass shootings that occurred in Serbia in May 2023, the Minister of Interior issued an [order on surrender of unregistered weapons and ammunition](#), lasting until June 8. In their statement, the Ministry announced that citizens surrendered 9.401 pieces of firearms and 884 explosive devices, since the beginning of the action (within the period from May 8 until May 12)⁹.
- In each of the above-mentioned mass shootings, the perpetrator was male. In total, fifty-seven people were murdered and forty-seven wounded in these incidents. Women and girls account for the majority of the victims of these mass shootings, which is significantly greater than the representation of women among firearm-related victims in general.
- 77% of all women killed with firearms in SEE in the period 2019-2021, were killed in the context of domestic violence, while the same holds true for 10% men killed with firearms. Within the context of domestic violence, women were most at risk of firearm misuse by their current or former intimate partners.¹⁰
- Inclusive of May 10, 2023, 16 femicides occurred in Serbia in 2023, 15 of them in the context of domestic violence and five (28%) of them committed with firearms (based on media reports). 25 femicides were committed in 2022 in Serbia. 32% of these femicides were committed with firearms.¹¹ In 2021, 20 cases of femicide were recorded by specialized CSOs. In only five of these (25%) violence had been previously reported to institutions prior to the murder of the woman¹².
- The total number of femicide cases committed with a firearm, as well as the number of those followed by the suicide of the perpetrator, varies. Out of the total number of femicides, the highest number of murders with a firearm was recorded in 2015 - 45.71%, and the lowest in 2018, when the share of these femicides was 20%. The share of such femicides followed by suicide was the highest in 2017 - 57.69%, and the lowest in 2016 - 18.16%.¹³

⁷ Gender and Small Arms in Serbia: Fast Facts, SEESAC, 2019, Gender and SALW in South East Europe, SEESAC, 2016

⁸ Ministry of Interior press releases available at: <http://www.mup.gov.rs/wps/portal/sr/aktuelno/saopstenja/086bb2b0-0751-4b31-b08b-0f95042fb1bb> and <http://www.mup.gov.rs/wps/portal/sr/aktuelno/saopstenja/701d2cf6-9ffd-4d7b-8a10-98adbc46f8bc>

⁹ https://www.seesac.org/News_1/here-is-what-you-should-know-about-firearms-surrender-in-serbia/

¹⁰ Firearm Incidents in the Context of Domestic Violence in South East Europe 2019-2021, UNDP SEESAC, available at: <https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Armed-Violence/In-Focus-Armed-Violence-Monitor-on-Firearm-Incidents-in-the-Context-of-Dom.pdf>

¹¹ Characteristics and Prevention of Intimate Partner Femicide – Suicide Cases committed with a Firearm, UNDP Serbia, 2023, available at: <https://www.undp.org/serbia/publications/characteristics-and-prevention-intimate-partner-femicide-suicide-cases-committed-firearm>

¹² Annual quantitative – narrative report on femicide for 2021, Women against Violence Network, available at:

https://www.womenngo.org.rs/images/femicid/FEMICID_Kvantitativno_-_narativni_godisnji_izvestaj_2021_godina.pdf

¹³ characteristics and prevention of INTIMATE PARTNER femicide-SUICIDE CASES committed with A firearm, UNDP Serbia, 2023

- The female partners of persons who have firearms as a result of their occupation or hunting, have a fear of weapons. Women whose violent partners have access to firearms are less likely to report violence.¹⁴
- In the period between 2018-2020, 178 (0,6%) perpetrators in reported domestic violence cases were police officers.¹⁵
- Crimes such as murder, attempted murder, as well as grievous bodily harm in a family context, were mostly committed with firearms in legal possession, while domestic violence in terms of threats with firearms to family member were committed in a number of cases with illegal firearms.¹⁶
- 883 suicides were recorded in 2021 in Serbia. Men are the majority of persons who committed suicide - 75%.¹⁷
- In both 2020 and 2021, Serbia was the highest-ranking country in the SEE region with regards to firearm-related suicides, however the number of reported suicides more than halved in 2021¹⁸ (14 cases), compared to 2020.¹⁹
- Women more than men in Serbia feel threatened by illegal possession and misuse of firearms in their neighborhood (35,3% men compared to 42,5% of women)²⁰.

Working on reducing the risk of firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicide in the previous period, UNDP in Serbia has conducted the following activities and identified gaps to serve as building blocks for further work²¹:

- *ENSURING A BASIS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING: In-depth analysis of the procedures and practices related to SALW license denial, removal and revocation in the context of domestic violence, as well as Analysis of data on SALW and domestic violence in the period 2017-2020 was developed focusing on existing data on domestic violence committed with firearms and on data that is currently not, (but should be) collected to monitor and enable better institutional response. With regard to this, the project established cooperation with the Republic Public Prosecutors' Office, to improve data collection in protection and prosecution of domestic violence committed with firearms. This partnership and cooperation aiming to further work on data collection practices was based on the analysis of administrative data collection practices on the misuse of SALW in domestic and intimate partner violence, also conducted within the project. It represents the first comprehensive analysis in Serbia that addresses difficulties related to case-management, exchange of data (including multi-agency data sharing) and statistical data on domestic violence, relevant for evidence-based policy development. Furthermore, an analysis of cases of femicides committed with firearms was conducted examining the circumstances prior to femicide, showing the importance of gender-sensitive data collection on SALW and domestic violence, contributing to the development of risk-assessment check lists.*

¹⁴ [Analysis of Cases of Femicides Committed with Firearms](https://www.undp.org/serbia/publications/domestic-violence-and-firearms-misuse) (UNDP, 2021), A study on the practice of institutions of the criminal justice system in response to domestic violence committed through misuse or threat of misuse of firearms (UNDP, 2021), available at: <https://www.undp.org/serbia/publications/domestic-violence-and-firearms-misuse>

¹⁵ Nasilje u porodici – šta govore podaci, UNDP Serbia 2021.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Deaths by violent death, origin of violent death, age and sex 2021, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://data.stat.gov.rs/Home/Result/18030304?languageCode=en-US>

¹⁸ Firearm related suicides in South East Europe in 2021, <https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Armed-Violence/In-Focus-Armed-Violence-Monitor-on-Firearm-related-Suicides-in-SEE-in-2021.pdf>

¹⁹ Fire-arm related suicides in South East Europe in 2020, https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/Armed-Violence/In-Focus-Armed-Violence-Monitor-Firearm-related-Suicides-in-SEE-in-2020_1.pdf

²⁰ SALW Control Roadmap 7th Regional Progress Report, <https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/7th-regional-progress-report/7th-Regional-KPIs-Report.pdf>

²¹ Activities were implemented as part of the projects: 1) "Reduce risk - Increase safety – Towards ending SALW misuse in domestic violence context", with the financial support of the Federal Foreign Office, Germany, and 2) "Reduce risk – Increase safety II" (completed at the end of May 2023), with the funding support of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund, contributing to the achievement of goals defined in the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to combat the illicit possession, misuse, and trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and related ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024;

- *IMPROVING PROTECTION PRACTICES*: Research on judicial practice and response of the criminal-justice system related to misuse of firearms in cases of domestic violence was conducted. The report developed provides an overview of the practices of prosecution and punishment of domestic violence cases committed with firearms and contributes to effectiveness of the criminal-justice response to domestic violence enabled by firearms. Access to continuous training for judiciary, police and other professionals was ensured through development and launch of e-learning available through official police and judiciary online learning platforms. Guidelines on the collection of evidence were developed to support adequate prosecution of cases of domestic violence.
- *PREVENTION AND AWARENESS RAISING*: Prevention activities contributed to deconstructing gender stereotypes and greater public awareness on the dangers of firearms misuse in the context of gender-based violence.
- *STRENGTHENING HEALTHCARE'S ROLE IN FIREARMS MISUSE PREVENTION*: Recognizing that the healthcare system is a key entry point for tracking changes in mental health, family dynamics and personal circumstances that could be triggers and risks for firearms misuse, the role of the healthcare system in the prevention of firearm misuse was further explored. This highlighted the ways healthcare professionals can be more involved in a multisectoral response to detecting and responding to risks of firearms misuse for violence and suicides. Possibilities for improvement of medical checks were explored, with a view of improving the detection of risks and drivers that could lead to fatal consequences of firearms misuse. Additionally, modalities to strengthen cooperation of the healthcare system with the Ministry of Interior and address the gaps, particularly cooperation with private health care facilities that carry out medical examinations related to carrying of weapons, were examined. Based on the direct questions and dilemmas from healthcare professionals, Guidelines for healthcare professionals were developed, to improve response to domestic violence through multisectoral approach established by the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence. Through stakeholder mobilization around the topic of firearms misuse prevention, a set of recommended and implementable measures and actions was drafted to improve capacities, knowledge and awareness of healthcare workers.
- *EXPLORING KNOWLEDGE-ATTITUDE-BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES REGARDING FIREARMS MISUSE FOR SUICIDES*: The various dimensions of suicide through firearms misuse have been explored, including their different patterns (including gender patterns) and ideas and practical information on how to approach and address the problem have been collected and documented to serve as basis for further action in this field. Specific fields of interests have been particularly explored, such as circumstances of firearms-enabled femicide followed by suicide of perpetrator and particular risks and opportunities for awareness raising and prevention targeting 45+ male population and firearms carrying professionals.
- *MENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION AND PREVENTION OF MISUSE BY PROFESSIONALS WITH ACCES TO FIREARMS*: Ministry of Interior professionals working on psychological activities were trained with the aim to enhance their capacities to recognize signs of trauma that potentially lead to firearms misuse and to provide psychological assistance to personnel.
- *WORK WITH MEDIA*: An analysis of media coverage of firearm misuse in violence against women committed by men was conducted. Based on the analysis Guidelines for Ethical and Gender-Sensitive Media Reporting on Domestic Violence Committed with Firearms were developed, as well as a complementary training module for the media, aimed at improving the quality of media reporting on cases of domestic violence committed with firearms. In addition to this, direct work with media houses was conducted to analyze concrete examples of reporting and provide recommendations for improving practices that lead to increased understanding and prevention of firearms misuse.
- *STAKEHOLDER MOBILIZATION AROUND THE TOPIC OF FIREARMS MISUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SUICIDES*: Over 250 representatives from the state, private sector and community organizations, experts and representatives of relevant institutions, have been networked in the previous period, through a

process analyzing and mapping challenges and opportunities for improving firearms misuse prevention. This process involved the participation of: Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, police officers, social workers, public prosecutors, health system representatives – general practitioners and occupational health doctors, Public Health Institute, psychiatrists, as well as civil society organizations, hunters' associations, media representatives.

The above-described work yielded established partnerships, improved skills and expertise of stakeholders and beneficiaries, as well as accumulated knowledge, all serving as inputs for further interventions and initiatives.

Partnerships with implementing national partners were strengthened, especially with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice, the National Institute for Public Health "Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut", as well as those with civil society organizations (CSOs) specializing in prevention of domestic violence, femicides and suicides. Cooperation especially intensified with the Ministry of Interior – Department of Psychological Activities, which was supported in improving their capacities to provide psychological assistance to personnel, especially those working on cases with elements of violence, with a view of prevention of negative consequences of occupational trauma that also involves the risk of violence and suicide (including trauma caused by firearms misuse). The partners' long-term cooperation, motivation and readiness to continue collaboration represent a solid basis and entry point for continuing joint efforts.

Through the previous work, the following gaps and challenges have been identified, to be prioritized in upcoming work.

- **Moving beyond commitment is necessary for gender responsive evidence-based policymaking.**

Although the gender dimension of small arms and light weapons possession, use, misuse, and effects are addressed in strategic documents regulating SALW, moving beyond the commitment necessitates prioritization. Despite the inclusion of firearm-enabled violence in the strategy for combating gender-based violence in Serbia for 2021-2025, which was adopted in the Spring of 2021, implementation of the strategic measures has not yet been ensured, given that neither the action plan nor the funds for implementation have been secured.

Evidence-based policymaking that takes gender dimensions of SALW into account remains constrained by the lack of gender and age disaggregated data, as well as its use for analytical assessment that would lead to better prevention and intelligence-led policing. At present, not all internal data of the Ministry of Interior is disaggregated by gender and age, hindering the establishment of (gender) trends and effective evidence-based response to firearms misuse. Some of the areas requiring improvement include the possibility of disaggregation of data by age and gender, records on femicides and murder-suicides and relationship between perpetrator and the victim. Also, while there is data on illegal/legal firearm possession, weapons seized and number of suicides, this data is not disaggregated by gender, nor is there existing data on weapons returned to owners and reasons for their seizure.

Data and research on femicide that are publicly available are based on an analysis of cases reported in the media. This trend, aside from the fact that it lacks multi-sectoral analytical assessment, which would then allow for synthesis of lessons learned and improvement of institutional practices; undermines public trust in institutions.

The inclusion of women, women's organizations, and the articulation of gender perspectives is still lacking, due to the traditional perception of SALW control as a predominantly male expertise. Investing in a greater representation of women in technical roles, as well as strengthening women's leadership in SALW control, needs to be prioritized. Women's organizations and women in general are insufficiently involved in the decision-making and policy-making processes pertaining to SALW control, except when it comes to knowledge of violence, an area in which women's groups have extensive expertise, which consequently "shapes the way an issue is addressed."

- **Limitations of screening procedures and practices pertaining to security of SALW license applicants and holders**

According to Mol data, 83% of firearms license applications are approved.²²

The main law governing the acquisition, possession, and carrying of weapons is the Law on Weapons and Ammunition, but the general provisions regarding the conditions and procedures followed when applying for license issuance are also found in other laws, primarily the Law on Police and the Law on Game and Hunting. The Law imposes many requirements, including the condition “to have a justifiable reason to possess firearms.” Additionally, the assessment whether an individual is fit to carry a firearm involves the examination of their place of residence, employment, and education, which is obtained through direct conversation with the person being checked, direct observations by the police officer performing the security check. The police officer performing the security vetting will collect data through direct conversations with other persons, through insight into public data, official records, and data kept by competent authorities and institutions, as well as data obtained through international police cooperation and, if necessary, by analyzing data through other security services in compliance with the Law. Although the Law on Police offers a wide range of sources of information for security vetting procedures, it is the police officer performing the security vetting who should choose which source to use. Furthermore, there is no uniformity in the security facts and circumstances that must be verified during community security checks and should inform the minimum requirements for vetting (e. g. there is no obligation for police officers to get the opinion of family members on potential possession of firearms in the household, nor to question potential conflicting and dysfunctional family relationships). Considering the discretion that is given to the police officer to choose the source of information, there is no certainty that the data gathered will be analyzed and taken into consideration. Similarly, standard procedures do not include checking the eligibility of other family members who may misuse the (potential) license holder's firearm²³.

The current method and content of health examinations is not reliable enough to make a more detailed assessment of whether someone is fit to carry a weapon or not, i.e. whether there is a risk of firearm misuse.

Important limiting factors have been collected through focus groups with health-care workers²⁴, and include short examination time (10-15 minutes per a single psychiatric examination), lack of hetero anamnesis, shortcomings of information provided by the patient's chosen physician, inadequacy of the applied questionnaire, absence of psychologists in the health examination team, and the inability for different level health institutions to access the patient's medical record and lack of communication between state and private medical institutions. Additional challenges and potential problems arise from the fact that patients with a mental problem that would prevent them from obtaining a firearm license seek treatment privately, the data of which is not shared with the state healthcare institutions' patient records. Also, not all data related to patient treatments is entered into the records of state healthcare institutions. Furthermore, if a more detailed examination is ordered, patients often stop the examination in one and go to another healthcare institution, and there is no legal basis for informing the Ministry of Interior about it. Medical personnel have also experienced pressure by patients to issue a positive medical report. According to focus group observations, the procedures for examining a patient's health condition and changes are more strictly prescribed in relation to driver's licenses than firearms licenses.

Although, screening and filtering high-risk individuals is mandated by law, the number of firearm-related incidents and murders indicates the need to reevaluate how screening and filtering are implemented in practice and identify potential gaps and inconsistencies that allow high-risk individuals to pass through the filtering process. The

²² Nasilje u porodici – Šta nam govore podaci, UNDP Serbia, 2022 <https://www.undp.org/sr/serbia/publications/nasilje-u-porodici-%C5%A1ta-govore-podaci>

²³ Small arms and light weapons, gender-based violence and domestic violence: analysis of regulatory framework and practice, UNDP Serbia, 2021: <https://www.undp.org/serbia/publications/small-arms-and-light-weapons-gender-based-violence-and-domestic-violence-analysis-regulatory-framework-and-practice>

²⁴ As part of the “Reduce Risk – Increase Safety II” project, a series of focus groups were conducted with healthcare professionals from throughout Serbia to discuss their perspective on violence prevention including that committed with firearms misuse and response of the healthcare system to concrete cases of violence. In addition to this focus groups were also conducted with psychiatrists from state and private clinics who participate in the process of medical checks for weapons permit issuance.

existing procedure is detailed, but there are inconsistencies and gaps that can be misused by individuals to obtain the mentioned permit despite posing a security risk and being at risk of committing gun violence. The digitalization of healthcare presents an opportunity for improved networking and integration of data collected through medical administrative processes. The analysis of the current situation demonstrates the need for additional efforts to facilitate data harmonization, link different existing data within the system, and improve transparency and accessibility. These enhancements are essential for optimizing the use of data for screening and filtering purposes.

During the previous phase of the project, obstacles that prevent physicians from making appropriate decisions regarding the medical fitness of individuals to possess or carry a firearm were identified. In terms of data presentation and accessibility, the lack of uniformity in local medical data tracking systems is one among the obstacles. As an example, the current practices reveal that some local systems inform physicians in a transparent manner about whether a patient possesses a firearm permit, whereas in certain healthcare facilities, this information is only available in paper format, limiting the utilization of this data. It is necessary to include information on firearm ownership as a required and prominently displayed part on the first page of a patient's electronic medical record, where applicable, in order to proactively consider this information when assessing the risk of violence and filtering individuals based on their psychological and physical fitness to possess and/or carry firearms.

A team within the office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, among the others, is currently working on healthcare digitalization and the digital networking of private and public healthcare institutions. As part of the previous project, deficiencies in the existing system have been identified, and proposals to improve relevant data sets within the e-health process have been developed. These modifications aim to better identify the risk of firearm misuse in the context of domestic violence and during evaluations of firearm permit applicants. The findings and recommendations have been communicated to the Prime Minister's team, and the need for relevant enhancements has been brought to the attention of the President's office, ensuring visibility of this issue and opportunity to engage the project in the field of healthcare digitalization.

There is no practice or procedure that requires all adult family members of a weapon permit applicant to be informed about the submitted request or issued permit. This duty could fall within the responsibilities of police officers as they are required to conduct background checks on weapons owners (at home, at work, etc.). Equally, this could be the duty of healthcare workers, as they conduct medical checks. Adult family members would also benefit from receiving basic information on how to recognize changes in behavior or circumstances that may indicate a risk of weapon misuse, as well as instructions on how and whom to contact in specific situations.

- **Awareness, knowledge, exchange of experience and partnership among different stakeholders to prevent firearm misuse and deal with its consequences is insufficient or lacking, undermining effective discovery, prevention, and protection of domestic violence.**

When it comes to detection of risk of firearms misuse for violence, research into firearm-enabled femicide-suicide cases conducted by UNDP, has revealed that in most femicide-suicide cases committed with firearms, the perpetrator had not been reported to institutions for committing violence prior to committing femicide. Three patterns were identified in relation to the (non)reporting: 1) 'under the radar' - cases that went unnoticed by everyone (perpetrators were not seen as capable of committing a crime), which institutions cannot identify; cases in which family members and friends observed the perpetrator's 'sick' and 'obsessive' jealousy, violence or alcoholism, where the partner left the perpetrator, etc., but no one reported the violence to the relevant institutions. These are cases in which the community knew the perpetrators well, the perpetrators obsessively pursued their partners, and the centers for social work often knew the perpetrator's /victim's family member, and still the domestic/partner relationship violence was not reported to the institutions. 2) 'Red flag' cases are cases of violence which stem from jealousy and obsessive stalking within current or previous relationships; or the perpetrators' serious psychological problems. In these cases, even though the partners left the perpetrators,

violence continues and has been repeatedly reported to the institutions. The institutions intervene, but there was no mutual agreement among institutions regarding risk assessment nor were there any defined protection measures, which resulted in femicide-suicide. and 3) 'Profession as a risk' cases are cases in which the perpetrator's job involves carrying a firearm - police officer, gamekeeper, hunter, etc. These were also simultaneously identified to be 'under the radar' and 'red flag' cases, as well.

Representatives of institutions (police officers, public prosecutors, social workers) interviewed through the research have emphasized **the importance of experience, in addition to using the 'risk assessment list' for the assessment of security risks in reported cases of violence against women and domestic violence**. A specialized training for professionals and authorities to provide tools and skills for working with this phenomenon exclusively, would enable better performance.²⁵

Regarding other relevant systems, **although the health care system is identified as an important stakeholder in the prevention of firearms misuse, knowledge gaps have been identified as a hindering factor for effective recognition and response to identified risk of firearms misuse** or risk of surviving firearms-enabled violence.

Healthcare workers lack knowledge to recognize that their patient is at risk of being a victim of domestic or gender-based violence or of committing firearms related violence or otherwise misusing firearms. Due to fluctuation within the healthcare system only about 40% of healthcare workers were trained on the phenomenon of domestic violence and legal procedures²⁶, while training on the risks of firearms misuse is not available at all. Exploration of specific circumstances of violence, such as the presence of legal or illicit firearms and information exchange between institutions, such as prosecution and Ministry of Interior fails due to lack of knowledge on the phenomenon, legal obligation and lack of cooperation. Healthcare workers who participated in UNDP's previous activities note that they lack knowledge of what to do in situations when they discover domestic violence, how to ensure safety of victims and with whom to share information.

A significant challenge has been identified when the doctor notices indicators that could lead to the denial of the right weapon holder's right to continue possessing firearms, before the expiration of the five-year period for assessing their health capacity, as stipulated by the Law on Weapons and Ammunition. Additional gaps in knowledge noted are when the chosen doctor suspects that a person has acquired or intends to acquire a weapon illegally, and healthcare workers are unsure what to do and whether they should do anything at all. In practice this results in the fact that such information is rarely shared among the health care institutions and Ministry of Interior and public prosecutors' offices, leaving the risk of misuse unaddressed.

- **Stigmatization of mental health issues**

Although the suicide rate has been steadily declining over the years, the percentage of suicides involving firearms remains above 10%, having ranged between 11 and 16 percent in the last decade. Men committed 95% of all suicides with firearms between 2012 and 2021. And this group can be further narrowed down to men over 45 years old, which shows that men in this age group are accountable for 80% of all firearm suicides in the last ten years. This in part stems from the general availability of firearms to men, the masculinities of professions that require weapons, the participation of men in weapons-related hobbies (hunting, archery, etc.); wartime experience, and cultural heritage. Also, the stigma associated with mental health persists in the male population, where having mental health issues and seeking help is viewed as a sign of weakness. Among the main solutions to these challenges, which were identified by male firearms owners during UNDP's previous activities were:

²⁵ Characteristics and prevention of intimate partner femicide-suicide cases committed with a firearm, UNDP Serbia, April 2023,

<https://www.undp.org/serbia/publications/characteristics-and-prevention-intimate-partner-femicide-suicide-cases-committed-firearm>

²⁶ Assessment of capacities of healthcare workers and health institutions to respond to gender-based violence, UNFPA, 2022, available at: https://serbia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/086_publicacija_sida_istrazivanje-v011.pdf

improved availability of information, education, anonymous support, and support within healthcare institutions to increase tolerance and not ostracize people with mental health risks²⁷.

Data reviewed show that general practitioners and other non-psychiatric medical staff were in contact with 45% of patients who committed suicide within 30 days of that contact and 77% of patients who committed suicide within 12 months of contact. These percentages are twice the contact rates mental health professionals have had with these two groups of patients in the same period. This suggests that interventions involving primary healthcare professionals have the potential to significantly affect suicide prevention and that activities including the training of non-psychiatrist physicians will have a higher impact on the prevention of suicides than the impact that would be generated by further training psychiatrists. Furthermore, research also shows that follow-up check-ups or other contact (e.g. via telephone) with patients after a suicide attempt reduce the likelihood of another suicide attempt by 45%²⁸. Representatives from the health sector, particularly general practitioners involved in the previous project, stated that their capacities to deal with these cases should be strengthened through continuous training, to enable them to be the first line of defense for patients' mental health, ahead of specialists such as psychiatrists. As the subject of mental health carries a significant cultural stigma, it is recognized that persons at risk of suicide need to indirectly communicate mental health care without condemnation.

Police officers are frequently exposed to occupational trauma and, consequently, are at a higher risk of adverse mental health outcomes. Besides incidental situations during service, the need for psychological support also stems from situations outside of professional activities, such as divorce, domestic violence, child custody issues, threats of or attempted homicide or suicide and many other circumstances. Refusal or lack of financial resources to seek support privately remain as obstacles in maintaining police professionals' mental health. Uniformed personnel of the Ministry of Interior are those who most frequently decide to seek psychological support and are more open to such support compared to criminal police²⁹. Seeking expert assistance appears to be unacceptable to this group because it contradicts their value system and understanding of how a person should deal with problems. The collective fear of stigma is dominant. Prejudice exists that this is a threat leading weapon confiscation and job loss. As a result, the majority of security sector employees seek help from colleagues, friends, religious leaders, and family members who are understanding. Typically, the circle of support is small, consisting of a few people who share similar experiences. This increases the likelihood of greater understanding of their feelings and behavior, while decreasing the likelihood of professional assistance³⁰.

Sensationalist and inappropriate media reporting on mental health issues or inappropriate connection of firearms misuse with mental health disorders contributes to further stigmatization of persons with mental health diagnoses, and further decrease readiness for seeking help regarding mental health issues or crises, as well as contribute to existing prejudice regarding mental health problems.

- **The current social context demands decisive multisectoral action against firearms misuse through wide stakeholder engagement**

The mass murders that occurred within just two days at the beginning of May 2023, demonstrated the need for deeper prevention, more knowledge, and the development of mechanisms that will be made available to the community to deal with trauma. These are needed both immediately following the events as well as for long-term coping. Additionally, mechanisms to prevent contagious effects should be developed. These tragic cases also identified that there is a need for stronger efforts regarding protection of mental health, especially among the

²⁷ Research on relevance of firearms in lives of individuals aged 45+ and self-help strategies in crisis situations, UNDP 2023 – manuscript

²⁸ Mann, J. J., Michel, C. A., & Auerbach, R. P. (2021). Improving suicide prevention through evidence-based strategies: A systematic review. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 178(7), 611–624.

²⁹ According to interview with head of Department of Psychological Prevention and Selection: <https://paragraflex.rs/dnevne-vesti/050516/050516-vest15.html>.

³⁰ Research on relevance of firearms in lives of individuals aged 45+ and self-help strategies in crisis situations, UNDP 2023 – manuscript

male population, raising their awareness on the dangers of misuse of SALW/firearms, as they account for majority of perpetrators and victims of firearm related incidents. Also, there is a need to further work with media, as knowledge on reporting in preventive manner is still lacking. Although civil society organizations play an important role in providing assistance to individuals at risk of domestic violence or suicide, they are still not viewed as partners of institutions, despite the fact that they could be a significant resource helping institutions and could actively participate in multisectoral cooperation.

In response to the above mass shootings, the Government of Serbia adopted a series of measures³¹ including the following:

- *Urgent preparations of amendments to the Law on Weapons and Ammunition, which would tighten the conditions for keeping and carrying short firearms, and those who do not meet the strict conditions will have to sell the firearms. This has been suggested in order to reduce the number of short firearms in the possession of legal and natural persons by 20%.*
- *Amendments to the Law on Arms and Ammunition will include mandatory checks of persons who are allowed to possess weapons (including hunting weapons), which would include medical, psychiatric and psychological examinations, as well as a mandatory test for psychoactive substances. These checks will be carried out every six months and every year.*
- *A moratorium measure on the issuance of licenses for the possession and carrying of short firearms, was adopted on 4 May 2023. Also, the Ministry of the Interior will take all measures within its competence to ensure a moratorium is introduced on the issuance of permits for the possession and carrying of hunting weapons for two years.*
- *The Ministry of the Interior has issued a public invitation to persons who illegally possess weapons and explosive devices to surrender them within a month without consequences in the period of May 8 – June 8, 2023.*
- *The Ministry of Justice, within the framework of the existing Working Group for the amendment of the Criminal Code, will prepare amendments to the law, which will tighten the penalties for criminal offense of “unauthorized production, possession, carrying and trafficking of weapons and explosive substances” from Article 348.*

UNDP’s efforts could play a significant role in accelerating the impact of and complementing the above suggested measures, with a view of a comprehensive approach to firearms misuse prevention and building overall safety in the country. In addition to this, through the envisaged approaches, the project also contributes to the implementation of the Law on Weapons and Ammunition, Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, National Strategy for Combating Domestic Violence, as well as National Strategy on SALW Control 2019-2025.

National Ownership

Ministry of Interior

National ownership builds on and represents a continuation of the strong partnership established with the Ministry of the Interior during the development and implementation of the project's earlier phases. The Ministry of the Interior was actively involved in the previous phases of the Reduce Risk-Increase Security project's implementation, which contributed to the implementation of the Road Map. In addition, a consultative meeting was held with selected representatives of the Ministry of Interior, to discuss the objectives and sub-objectives of the Roadmap, with a view of implementing them through the partnership between UNDP Serbia and the Ministry of Interior in order to promote a greater integration of gender equality in SALW control. It was concluded that

³¹ Statement of Government on May 5, 2023: <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/en/206322/government-adopts-measures-proposed-after-crime-in-mladenovac.php>

additional efforts are required to incorporate gender perspectives into the strategies and action plans related to the control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). In addition to recommending a gender component for the new strategic document related to the control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Action Plan, the proposal is to involve the Network of Women in the Police in the Republic of Serbia in this process. Moreover, it's crucial to establish a connection with other security services in order to foster the development of a new, larger women's network and strengthen women's leadership.

National partners also suggested that the following be taken into consideration and addressed during new proposal development: a) the improvement of coordination and data exchange between institutions (e.g., the health sector lacking feedback from the Ministry of Interior during the process of assessing health status for issuing firearms licenses and health sector informing the Ministry of Interior regarding changes in the health status of patients who hold firearm licenses) and b) the identified gaps within the healthcare system (such as psychiatrists lacking necessary data to take decisions and patients finding ways to circumvent the system). In this regard, it is important to consider the planned amendments to the Rulebook on the medical capacity of individuals for firearms possession.

Ministry of Interior also confirmed the significance of seizing the opportunity to enhance data management and ensure that records kept by the Ministry of Interior are available with regards to gender and age.

It was also discussed to explore opportunities to develop a curriculum on gender aspects of SALW control, particularly on domestic violence and educate students of the secondary police school and Police Academy. All police officers need to be made more aware of the issue of domestic violence. It was suggested that training be provided for multi-sectoral local groups for cooperation and coordination, such as the police, public prosecutors' offices, social welfare centers, health-care institutions, and civil society organizations, on the joint processing of cases of domestic violence. This would not only contribute to improvement of knowledge but would facilitate practical experience exchange and would build cooperation among representatives of different systems. In accordance with this suggestion, the project will work to enhance the healthcare system's capacities to prevent and respond to firearms misuse, through a multi-sectoral approach. Particularly, it will improve healthcare's collaboration with other institutions, especially public prosecutor's offices and Mol, in order to strengthen the management of domestic violence cases, through work of local groups for cooperation and coordination. At community level, institutions participating in the work of local groups for cooperation and coordination, together with local civil society organizations, will be further networked through learning sessions and information exchange meetings aimed towards improved domestic violence case management and security vetting to reduce the risk of firearms misuse.

In order to increase awareness, a campaign targeting both young men and women and highlighting the value of gender-responsive SALW control strategies is required. Support is needed to strengthen the capacities of the Mol's Department for Psychological Activities to improve the prevention of police officer burnout, which leads to domestic violence and suicides. Also, efforts will be focused on building capacities of the Ministry of the Interior for public communication and trust building, media appearances and to continually inform the public on its activities and results that ensure and maintain citizens' safety and increase the visibility of the commitment of the Mol.

The project proposal ensured endorsement by the Ministry of Interior.

Network of Women in the Police of the Republic of Serbia

Along with the long-standing partnership with the Ministry of Interior, the project will utilize cooperation with the Network of Women in the Police of the Republic of Serbia. This Network is dedicated to strengthening the role and significance of women in the police, empowering them for performing all jobs and career advancement and to the improvement of the safety of women in society. The Network's establishment is envisaged by the

“Guidelines for the Implementation of Measures for the Establishment of Gender Equality in the Ministry of Interior through the System of Human Resource Management”, adopted by the minister in 2018.

To foster regional cooperation and expand networking of women in security forces, the Network in Serbia will be supported to build cooperation with its two sister networks in Bosnia and Herzegovina (the “Network of Women Police Officials” encompassing women police officials from all police agencies at all levels in BiH, except for the Republika Srpska Ministry of Interior, and “RS Ministry of Interior Women Police Officials Network” that gathers women police officials employed in the RS Ministry of Interior). These have had a crucial role in advocating for the rights of female police officials and have been recognized for their important work through previous project interventions. There is need to further empower and support these associations in their work, to support them to grow and enhance their organizational structures and mandates. There is a need for the development of a platform for them to exchange best practices, for them to learn from each other, as well as to create a supportive environment for them to work in and to contribute to the development of gender-responsive national strategies for SALW control. By supporting these associations, gender equality and the rights of female police officials will be promoted, female police officers will be empowered and sustainable practices will be identified, contributing to the long-term improvement in these fields in the region.

Ministry of Justice

Given that the project prioritizes inter-agency collaboration, particularly in the context of domestic violence, it has collaborated with the justice system since its first phase. Notably, the project has actively engaged with prosecutors, involving them in trainings and other activities that have a multisectoral focus. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice has played an important role in a number of project-related activities, particularly those related to the implementation of the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention. This collaboration included the creation of an online training program available through Judicial Academy, the creation of guidelines for prosecutors, and the presentation and discussion of research findings to the criminal-justice professionals. The project proposal has been discussed with the Ministry of Justice, with special emphasis on the importance of organizing dialogues with civil society organizations regarding the Criminal Code amendments. The Ministry has expressed strong support for training initiatives aimed at improving inter-agency collaboration. Cooperation with the Ministry of Justice will be continued through supporting the prosecutors in facilitating efficient multi-sectoral case management, implemented in accordance with the existing legal framework, focusing especially on implementation on the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence³². This will ensure long term protection and support to survivors of domestic violence. In addition to this, cooperation with also be related to the review of efficiency of existing legal measures to protect victims of firearms related domestic violence and communication of recommendations to improve future and ongoing processes of amending of laws regulating domestic violence.

Local stakeholder’s and community engagement and ownership

During previous phases, the project also worked with women's non-governmental organizations and the civil sector on analytical and research work. The collaboration was established in particular with women's organizations that work with survivors of domestic violence, such as the Autonomous Women's Center, the

³² According to the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, all reported cases of domestic violence undergo case management through multisectoral groups. These groups, chaired by prosecutors, involve the participation of police and social welfare centers. Health-care institutions, civil society organizations, and educational institutions also participate in case management if the cases are reported through or involve these sectors in protection measures for victims. The Ministry of Justice holds the main responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Law.

At the ministerial level, the Government has established the Council for Combating Domestic Violence. The Council's mandate includes monitoring of the implementation of the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, improving coordination among relevant state authorities, institutions, and other entities, and enhancing the effectiveness of preventing domestic violence and protecting individuals from such violence. The Council is chaired by the Ministry of Justice and operates in accordance with the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence.

Women's Support Center, and Femplatz, as well as the SRCE suicide prevention center. This collaboration helped shed light on the data and phenomena of firearm-related suicides and domestic violence, as well as data on institutional and judicial practices in these cases, yielding valuable recommendations for improving prevention and protection. The project aims to encourage institutions to collaborate more closely with local women's organizations and the civil sector, taking their activities and knowledge of the community situation into account. Cooperation with the civil sector is also important for detecting and preventing cases that are not reported to institutions, restoring community trust in institutions, and better informing SALW control policies. This collaboration also contributes to increased citizen awareness of firearm misuse and the availability of local support services in response to the consequences of domestic violence, including firearm suicides. CSOs involved in suicide prevention are an important ally to the health sector. Increased collaboration, connection, and networking among health institutions and non-governmental organizations would result in a closed circle of care for people at risk of suicide or violent behavior. Through mutual cooperation, non-governmental organizations can provide resources that would alleviate the health-care system's burden.

National Institute for Public Health “Dr. Milan Jovanovic Batut”

The National Institute for Public Health “Milan Jovanovic Batut” was established by the Government of Serbia and is responsible for activities in the domain of public health. The National Institute coordinates the activities of three regional institutes (Novi Sad, Nis and Kragujevac) and 20 local institutes for public health. The mandate of the Institute is prescribed by the Law on Public Health, Law on Health Protection, the Law on Health Insurance and strategies relevant for health protection and for the improvement of health conditions of specific categories of citizens. The mandate of the Institute refers, among others, to a) Monitoring, assessment and analysis of the public health, including research on health risks and problems and proposing measures to address them; b) Monitoring, evaluation and analysis of the work of the healthcare system and proposing measures for its improvement; c) Proposing of policy measures, participation in development of law and by-laws, as well as proposing measures for the improvement of public health; d) Conducting applied research in the field of public health and using the results of that research in proposing measures and making decisions; e) Cooperation and development of partnerships in the local community on the identification and solution of health problems of the population and on health education, and support for the development of programs in the community; f) Coordination and monitoring of the work of the network of regional and local public health institutes.

During the previous phase of the project, the Institute was actively involved in activities that were carried out with the health sector, including focus groups and trainings intended for the health sector professionals on the dangers and risks of the misuse of firearms and finding solutions, as well as those that focused on establishing cooperation between violence prevention teams at health institutions and public prosecutors' offices, enabling safe reporting and exchange of information in cases where violence is discovered in the health care system. It has been demonstrated that these activities must continue, and that the health sector is highly motivated to participate in the prevention of domestic violence. As the institute has formally endorsed the project proposal, cooperation and partnership will continue.

UNDP also communicated with the Prime Minister's Cabinet, which is responsible for developing e-health initiatives to improve electronic connectivity and digitize healthcare. The feedback obtained from health care professionals revealed significant difficulties in assessing license eligibility, primarily due to the need for improved information exchange within both public and private health institutions.

This feedback was communicated to the team working on health digitalization for the Prime Minister, along with recommendations on how to improve the existing system and address the gaps in essential information regarding a person's health status and firearms. Therefore, Cabinet representatives were presented with opportunities to enhance data exchange, which is essential for preventing the misuse and abuse of firearms.

Journalists against Violence Group

The Journalists against Violence Group advocates that in media reports of violence against women, this issue must be presented, treated, and examined as a social problem – to point out its causes, clearly condemn any form of violence, and call to account the perpetrators of violence and the institutions responsible for protection against violence.

The group was formed in 2017 by the United Nations Development Program – UNDP and the B92 Fund to improve media coverage of violence against women in Serbia, with the aim of providing citizens with objective information, devoid of sensationalism, about this prevalent social problem. Although the Group is informal, it is comprised of over seventy female journalists and media editors who advocate for journalists to respect the code of their profession and the dignity of the individuals they write about. Through responsible reporting, they aim to support women who have survived violence and to encourage society to view violent behavior as absolutely unacceptable. Since the group's establishment, UNDP Serbia has provided strong support and active collaboration. This collaboration has resulted in significant accomplishments, such as the creation of a monitoring and analysis practice for media reporting on violence against women, particularly incidents involving firearms.³³ In addition, [guidelines for ethical media reporting on violence against women](#) have been developed, ensuring that such incidents are covered responsibly and sensitively. In addition, in the first phase of the project Reduce Risk-Increase Safety, an [analysis of media reporting on firearms-related violence against women](#) was conducted, along with recommendations on how to report on this subject in a preventive manner.

In a previous phase of the project, Reduce Risk - Increase Safety II, the Group also developed [Guidelines for ethical media reporting on suicide](#). These guidelines are intended to assist journalists in contributing to a better understanding of the complexities surrounding suicide and to promote preventive mental health actions. The guide offers recommendations for reporting concrete cases in an educational and preventive manner, as well as ethical reporting of suicides involving firearms and cases of femicide followed by the perpetrator's suicide.

These in-depth analyses and guidelines served as the basis for developing and implementing journalist training programs. As a result, according to the [Group's three-year comparative analysis](#), there has been a significant increase in media reports that approach violence against women ethically and preventively.

Support of UNDP to this group of women journalists and editors will continue through this project, building on previous long-standing partnership and support, bearing in mind capacities of the group to monitor media reporting and provide guidelines and training on ethical reporting on firearms misuse for violence against women and for suicides. Furthermore, the group is active in calling out inappropriate media reporting, as well as mobilization of different stakeholder groups (e.g. photographers) around the topic of ending violence against women, including through firearms misuse.

Project Objective and Theory of Change

The project intends to build upon and consolidate work on Roadmap implementation, by focusing on gaps and challenges identified under Goals 2: By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led, and Goal 4 - By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy.

The objective of the project is to bridge the gaps identified under specific Goals 2 and 4 of the Roadmap, with a specific focus on reducing the risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicide in Serbia, while strengthening the role of women in SALW control policies, fostering collaboration and knowledge of relevant stakeholders, and

³³ A summary of the group's work is available on its website <https://novinarkeprotivnasilja.org/en/about-us/>

enhancing community response to firearms-related crises and trauma with the goal of restoring safety and trust in institutions. The overall goal of the project is to contribute to meaningful integration of gender perspective into the SALW control policies.

Outcome 1: Increase in capabilities for integrating a meaningful gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies through the reinforcement of networking and empowerment of women in the security sector, as well as the enhancement of gender-responsive and evidence-based policymaking

More specifically, the project will contribute to Goal 2 by improving record keeping to support evidence-based policy creation and evidence-based policy/enforcement response in practice. In addition, the project will address the limited integration of the gender perspective, which hinders the efficiency of SALW/firearms control measures, as well as the underrepresentation of women, which impedes the integration of the gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies.

Output 1.1 – Gender and age data collection practices reviewed, and lessons learned used to facilitate evidence-based policy making and mainstream firearms risks into domestic violence regulations.

Activity 1.1.1 – Provide technical and consultative assistance in analyzing current data collection methodologies related to gender and age and revision of missing gender and age-related data

The project aims to support the MoI in enhancing its administrative data collection processes, with a focus on addressing missing data sets and improving data classification related to gender and age. Currently, records are generated based on criminal offenses, which leads to the exclusion of important information and results in perpetrators being counted multiple times within the system. Additionally, the data does not include records on femicide or murder/suicide, as this data is manually extracted and verified. The existing records include information on illegal/legal weapons, confiscated weapons, and the number of suicides. The aim is to improve data collection to include a gender context, e.g. information on seized or returned weapons in the context of domestic violence. By addressing these issues, the project aims to promote a more comprehensive and accurate data management system within the MoI.

Timeframe: This activity includes technical and consultative assistance to MoI in analyzing current data collection methodology related to gender and age, and relevant for gender-responsive evidence-based policy making and revision of missing gender and age-related data. The period of implementation is November 2023 - November 2024.

Activity 1.1.2 – Development of evidence-based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing risk of firearms misuse in gender-based violence

The project will organize a task force of experts working on domestic violence prevention and protection, including representatives of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, public prosecutors' offices, judges, social welfare system, healthcare system and civil society organizations to evaluate the efficacy of current legal solutions and measures related to domestic violence. This will be accomplished by learning from cases in which the system failed to protect victims of domestic violence involving firearms in order to propose more effective prevention and protection measures. Professionals from the criminal justice system, civil society, the healthcare system, and social protection will assess whether alternative measures would result in the safety of those who have reported domestic violence. Also, the project will organize a discussion between the Ministry of Justice, professionals, and women's organizations regarding the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code and announced amendments of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence. During the process of amending the Criminal Code, there were multiple initiatives by professionals and women's organizations to include femicide in the Criminal Code. Also,

efforts exist to revise the definition of aggravated murder to include all femicides, and strengthen the legal protection of women against gender-based violence. In this context, the project aims to facilitate meaningful discussions and dialogue between the working group of the Ministry of Justice that has been created to deal with all the above-mentioned amendments and the proponents of the initiative seeking amendments to the Criminal Code pertaining to aggravated murder and femicide. The activity is a follow up to research of legal regulations and verdicts in domestic violence cases involving firearms, conducted during the project's first phase. The project identified critical legal gaps, obstacles in the implementation of existing laws, and institutional gaps in the understanding and awareness of the relation between firearm misuse and gender-based violence among professionals. Additionally, it revealed cases of lenient punishment policies. This dialogue aims to foster an understanding of the available options for effectively addressing these issues. These options may include amendments to the Criminal Code, subordinate legislation, or other suitable measures. The goal is to ensure that these concerns are adequately and appropriately addressed. In addition, the screening will identify the missing bylaws and procedures that could facilitate a more effective application of laws in practice. The outcomes of the lessons-learned initiative will be presented to stakeholders, primarily from the criminal justice system, including judges.

Timeframe: The task force will be initiated during 2023. In at least four sessions during 2024 it will analyze selected cases, and hold one meeting in 2025 to present the lessons learned identified/recommendations developed. The meeting on lessons learned/developed recommendations will engage at least 50 professionals.

Output 1.2 – Networking and capacity building of women to actively participate in SALW control policies enabled

To support greater integration of the gender perspective into SALW control policies, the project will contribute to the efforts to improve the meaningful inclusion of women in SALW control and strengthen further networking of women professionals in security forces. Networking among women in the security sector will promote collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and advocacy. It will lead to greater incorporation of gender into security policies. By leveraging their collective expertise and influence, women from the security sector can drive positive change, contribute to more inclusive and effective SALW control frameworks, and actively participate in their implementation.

Supporting the networking of women in the security sector, by connecting the Network of Women Police Officers from Serbia with women from other security sectors and from the region and other countries, will facilitate the exchange of their experience, challenges, and best practices. This knowledge and expertise exchange will contribute to a greater understanding of gender-related issues and facilitate the development of inclusive SALW control-related policies. In addition, networking will enable women in the security sector to form alliances and to join forces in advocating for gender-responsive policies, share resources, and amplify their collective voices, which will result in more effective and consequential outcomes. Lastly, networking will enable women in the security sector to increase their visibility and influence within decision-making processes, raise awareness about the significance of the integrational of the gender perspective in relevant policies but also about gender dimensions of SALW misuse, provide evidence-based arguments, and highlight the advantages of inclusive SALW related policies.

This is also in line with the findings and recommendations of the Mid-term evaluation of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund, stating that: “Action on gender must be incentivized. Whilst there are numerous commitments to tackling gender equality in the MPTF and its projects, these have yet to have a significant effect on the ground on equality in a practical sense. This is partly due to the deep-rooted and systemic challenges related to gender norms in society.”

Activity 1.2.1 – Enabling networking of women in the security sector, facilitating their participation in the development, policy advocacy and implementation of gender-responsive SALW control policies

The project will specifically support the Network of Women in the Police of the Republic of Serbia in their efforts to strategically plan future actions, identify missing and build capacities for gender mainstreaming of SALW control policies. Through joint training and establishment of a platform for mutual discussions, the Network will be supported in promoting the exchange of knowledge and experience with women from other national security institutions and organizations and in advocacy activities to raise awareness of gender dimension of security.

Up to four capacity building activities will be implemented and two meetings of women from security sector in Serbia supported, gathering at least 50 participants, two advocacy and awareness raising activities and two annual conferences of the Network gathering 100 participants.

Timeframe: This activity will include up to four capacity building activities and two meetings. Two capacity building activities are planned to be held in the first year of the project implementation and two in the second. It is envisaged that there will be at least 30 participants per capacity building event/activity. The two meetings are planned to be organized one each year with at least 25 participants per meeting. Furthermore, two annual conferences are planned to be organized with an expected attendance of up to 100 participants. Advocacy based activities will be implemented during 2024 and 2025, in accordance with the plan developed by the Network within the project.

Activity 1.2.2 – Continued support to associations of women police officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia facilitating regional experience exchange and networking around the topic of SALW misuse prevention (joint activity of UNDP CO Serbia and UNDP CO BiH)

Associations of women police officials operating in BiH have played a significant role as pioneers in promoting the rights of women police officials in terms of having equal labor rights and opportunities in police agencies in BiH. There is currently one association in Serbia called “Network of Women in Police of the Republic of Serbia” and two associations existing in BiH - Association “Network of Women Police Officials” encompassing women police officials from all police agencies at all levels in BiH, except for the Republika Srpska Ministry of Interior, and RS Ministry of Interior Women Police Officials Network that gathers women police officials employed in the RS Ministry of Interior. The project intends to support the work and activities of the associations from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina through several activities, with a view of their regional networking and cooperation. One of the activities will include enhancing the capacities of associations to participate in and advocate for the development and implementation of gender-responsive national policies for SALW control. Another activity will focus on exchange of best practices and experiences between associations themselves and their further capacity development in terms of their mandates, organizational structure and potential improvement of legal regulations guiding the work of these associations, including the exchange of experiences and best practices related to SALW misuse prevention. Finally, the project will organize a study visit for these associations to one of the women police official association existing and operating in EU country in order to have first-hand insight into their work and organization, including learning about SALW misuse prevention efforts and successful practices.

Timeframe: Up to four meetings between associations of women police officials from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia will be organized, two in Bosnia and Herzegovina and two in Serbia, in 2024. Up to 100 participants in total will have participated in these meetings, with up to 25 from each association. Furthermore, one study trip for up to 7 members from each association will be organized for associations from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia to a “sister” organization in one of the EU countries in 2025. Each CO will cover their respective participants' costs during the study trip.

Outcome 2: Firearms misuse for violence and suicides is prevented and addressed through multisectoral engagement of institutions and involvement of civil sector

Under the Roadmap Goal 4 it is stipulated that the aim is to significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy, by 2024. The project will contribute to this goal utilizing existing partnership with different stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and exchange of information, as well as to develop a multisectoral response to risk of firearms misuse, particularly in the context of domestic violence. The project will work on enhancing capacities of the institutions of the healthcare system, improving the filtration of persons at risks to misuse firearms, and their collaboration with other institutions, particularly MoI and public prosecutors' offices, to enhance the management of domestic violence cases, taking into account the victims' safety.

Output 2.1 – Conditions for improved detection of potential firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides and comprehensive prevention support ensured

Activity 2.1.1 – Improving healthcare workers' capacity to identify risks and effectively implement procedures for reporting and addressing suspected risk of firearms misuse.

The project will work to improve the health system's ability to identify individuals at risk of firearm misuse and to collaborate with other institutions, particularly the police and public prosecutor's offices, to manage cases of domestic violence reported by the health system while ensuring the safety of the victims. Through education within the health system, with the participation of representatives from the police and public prosecutor's offices, the project will enable doctors, medical and non-medical staff (lawyers of health institutions) to be trained to effectively implement procedures for reporting suspected changes, or documented changes, psychophysical condition of a person with a license for weapons, and procedures for reporting suspected violence. Built on findings from the previous phases, the project will provide input/recommendations on this matter in the process of the development of the new Rulebook on Determining Natural Persons' Ability to Hold and Carry Weapons.

Timeframe: Six trainings will be held for domestic violence prevention teams within health institutions to detect and manage cases of violence in collaboration with the police and prosecutor's office, three in each year of project implementation. Two training sessions for lawyers in health institutions on the duties set by law for institutions to exchange information with other institutions, one per year, four trainings for psychiatrists and psychologists on indicators of domestic violence and the further processing of these cases in the system, two in each year of project implementation, and one training for trainers within health institutions to further distribute and use the acquired information. Participation of at least 180 health care professionals is envisaged by the activity.

Activity 2.1.2 – Assistance to healthcare digitalization to enable better insight into patients' health status and firearms possession

The project will keep track of and participate in the current process of healthcare digitalization, which, among other things, envisages the establishment of interconnectivity of databases and data sharing between state and private healthcare institutions, to gain better insight into patients health status and firearms possessions, to enable healthcare workers to thoroughly and professionally assess the risk of firearms misuse for violence or suicide, and react promptly according to the law, should they suspect an increased or escalating risk. **It is imperative to conduct a comprehensive review of all forms used in the procedures for issuing health certificates for firearm permits, identifying potential changes in the psychophysical condition of permit holders, and reporting suspicions and incidents of violence. With this activity, based on inputs and recommendations of the previous project phase, the project will contribute to the ongoing process particularly in the following domains:**

- Recording and displaying information about firearm possession in electronic medical records and across all patient information systems in public and private healthcare systems in a clear and transparent manner.
- Increasing the availability of relevant information on patients' health status, particularly conditions that are contraindicated for firearm ownership and represent risk factors for violence and suicide.
- Optimizing the collection and documentation of the afore-mentioned relevant information across all levels of the healthcare system.
- Facilitating the dissemination of these data throughout the healthcare system by means of local, interlocal, and supralocal information networking systems.
- Implementing a risk factor monitoring system and communicating risk assessments within the healthcare system, along with notifying the Ministry of Interior automatically about identified risks.

The activity includes expert support on firearms-related risks from a healthcare perspective to the Prime Minister's working group for healthcare digitization, as well as assistance during the work on the solution architecture, so that healthcare digitization improves the availability of information to doctors who work with individuals who apply for or have firearms licenses. Consultations with a diverse group of potential users in the health care system are also part of the activity, ensuring that solutions address current challenges in availability of information related to firearms holders.

Timeframe: During 2023 and 2024.

Activity 2.1.3 – Preparation of recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons within healthcare system

The Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons governs the detailed conditions that must be met by a health institution in order to conduct medical examinations to determine physical fitness to hold and carry weapons, as well as the detailed conditions that must be met by natural persons who hold and carry weapons in terms of health fitness to hold and carry weapons. During the previous phase of the project, health workers communicated numerous flaws in practice that make assessing the health of those with firearms licenses difficult. The activity will center on mapping obstacles and developing recommendations with healthcare workers in a collaborative process, as well as communicating perceived deficiencies and recommendations to relevant ministries (Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior).

Timeframe: A taskforce of healthcare professionals will be formed in 2023, with the task of mapping the existing limitations of the Rulebook by early 2024 and collecting inputs and drafting recommendations for the development of the new Rulebook during 2024 through a participatory process.

Activity 2.1.4 – Organize exchange of knowledge, dialogue and learning on the implementation of gender-responsive security vetting and reporting of firearms license holders to prevent misuse of firearms in domestic violence context

Based on the findings of research in the community, especially with women exposed to domestic violence, the project will support exchange of information to encourage implementation of recommendations to improve security vetting in the community for firearms possession. The project will also enable learning and exchange of knowledge of professionals working on the cases of domestic violence and those working on security vetting to reduce the risk of firearms misuse among legal firearms owners. To address cases that are 'under the radar', the project will support the work of women's organizations in the community work and strengthen their collaboration with institutions.

Timeframe: This activity will be accomplished through at least six consultative meetings and learning sessions attended by at least 150 professionals, with three meetings/sessions held in each year of project implementation.

During 2024 and 2025, four civil society organizations will be supported through low-value grants in developing and implementing community-based actions targeting women whose family members have access to firearms, as well as organizing collaborative meetings with institutions.

Output 2.2 – Information on the harmful effects of underlying practices and attitudes leading to firearms misuse and supportive mechanisms preventing suicides available

Activity 2.2.1 – Support Mol communication activities to prevent firearm misuse in the community and domestic violence context

The project will support the Ministry of Interior's preventive activities, according to the Ministry's identified needs, and will provide support in activities aiming to improve communication with citizens, especially through media and media activities. Focus will be on crisis communication strategies and utilizing communication channels to prevent firearm-related violence in the domestic violence context and community. The activity will strengthen capacities at the police district level for informative/educational information dissemination, as well as the development of media and communication activities, media training and the design and implementation of two campaigns aimed at prevention of firearms misuse for domestic violence. The activity will build upon a successful campaign focused on domestic violence committed with firearms, implemented during the project's first phase. It will be conducted with a more active participation of Mol, complementing ongoing OSCE and SEESAC initiatives in the country, and broadening the reach of efforts to increase public awareness of the risks associated with firearms.

Timeframe: During 2024 and 2025.

Activity 2.2.2 – Support to institutional capacity building and implementation of activities to prevent firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides among police officers

The project will support the activities of the Ministry of Interior's Department of Psychological Activities to reduce negative consequences of professional trauma, including those affecting mental health, experienced by professionals involved in violent events with firearms. The activity responds to the Mol's request to reduce the risk and prevent firearms related incidents committed by police officers in the context of domestic violence and suicides.

Timeframe: During 2023 and 2024, the project will support the Mol Department to learn about effective strategies for the prevention of suicide and domestic violence, the triggers of which can be the professional exposure of police officers to violent events, and to develop strategies to strengthen trust and enhance the informing of police officers about the possibilities of support and prevention of professional burnout. The Department will be supported to develop and implement adequate activities aimed at informing and organize workshops with members of the Mol on support mechanisms and prevention of negative consequences of exposure to cases with elements of violence.

Activity 2.2.3 – Support to learning and community-based activities to prevent firearms misuse for suicide

Through cooperation with the healthcare and civil sector, the project will focus support to change mindsets and debunk prejudices that prevent men from seeking mental health support, to deter the misuse of firearms for violence and suicide. This support will be provided by enabling the health system to detect risks and provide effective response to suicide risk. This will be done through the development of a curriculum and training of trainers from the healthcare system, that will further disseminate the knowledge received on how to recognize and provide adequate support to persons at risks of committing suicide. The support will include the development of informative materials promoting mental health prevention and targeting men at risk, development of media

content and media appearances of professionals reaching out to the population at risk of committing suicides with firearms. The cooperation with and engagement of civil society that works on suicide prevention will be supported with the view to particularly reach out men.

Timeframe: Curriculum development and the organization of a training of trainers for 15 participants in total will take place in the first half 2024, and the organization of at least 5 trainings of healthcare workers within healthcare institutions is planned to take place during 2024 and 2025. Informative material and outreach campaign development and launch will take place in 2024 and 2025.

Output 2.3 – Best practice sharing with professionals, media and academia on effective mechanisms for prevention of future firearms related incidents enabled

Activity 2.3.1 – Identification of international best practices on post-tragedy/mass shooting community reintegration and improved mass shooting prevention.

It is of crucial importance to learn from tragic events, enable communities' reintegration and restoration of safety and to facilitate increased trust in institutional response in these cases. The project will map the effective practices that have been implemented internationally, aimed at changing masculine stereotypes that lead to harmful incidents with firearms. The two most recent mass murders that occurred in Serbia require swift action. Learning from these incidents and other similar incidents that have occurred internationally and the response provided, will help facilitate healing and contribute to more effective prevention of future occurrences. In this way, the project will allow academics and professionals to learn from the experiences of countries that have gone through similar situations, in terms of emergency support programs and long-term community reintegration, as well as measures that have proven effective in preventing occurrence of similar cases in future.

Timeframe: In 2024, the project will map the best practices from other countries stemming from similar mass shooting experiences, including those that have occurred in schools, as well as effective preventive programs that target the male population at risk of committing firearms related violence and tackle harmful masculinities. During 2025, the project will organize two learning sessions with the participation of international experts, to facilitate learning and collaboration. The events will gather at least 200 participants.

Activity 2.3.2 – Continued support to the group Journalists against Violence in its efforts to mobilize national and regional media and promote learning and partnerships that leads to ethical and preventative media coverage of incidents involving SALW.

The most recent mass shooting cases in Serbia and the reporting in the media on the two crimes have emphasized the need for further work with media, as sensationalist reporting contributed to spreading of panic, rather than educating the public and acting to prevent future firearms misuse risks. The group Journalists against Violence will be supported to analyze media reporting on firearms-related incidents in the context of domestic violence, suicides and mass shootings to identify violation of the media code of ethics and ethical reporting standards and will propose alternative reporting methods that contribute to prevention. At least 4 tailor-made trainings will be organized for selected media. A study trip to a European media hub will be supported for up to ten journalists, to exchange specialist knowledge on the most challenging of media issues and encourage media networking related to ethical reporting on violence and trauma. A conference will be organized to gather at least 50 participants of regional media to encourage preventive reporting related to firearms-enabled gender-based violence, including mass shootings. A gathering of least 40 participants, women journalist from the region, will be organized to encourage regional networking and knowledge exchange of women journalists.

Timeframe: The analysis of media reporting on firearms-related incidents will be initiated in 2023. At least 3 tailored made trainings will be organized in selected media during 2024 and one in 2025. One study trip to a

European media hub to exchange specialist knowledge on the most challenging of media issues and encourage media networking related to ethical reporting on violence and trauma will be organized in 2024. One conference gathering regional media to encourage preventive reporting related to firearms related gender-based violence, including mass shootings will be organized in 2024 and one gathering of women journalist from the region will be organized in 2025.

Development challenge:

Firearms misuse for (domestic) violence and suicide leads to tragic consequences leaving life changing injuries and trauma to individuals, fostering lack of security and trust in institutions in the community and increasing the general risk to people's safety and wellbeing in society.

Assumptions:

- Stakeholders from the healthcare and justice sector are willing and motivated to participate in activities related to networking with other systems and improving procedures in response to firearms-misuse
- MoI remains interested to improve the response to firearm-misuse and accelerate activities targeting the wider public to restore trust in institutional response to firearms-enabled violence

Risks:

- Lack of political will of stakeholders to participate in project efforts
- Insufficient operational capacities and resources among the health, justice and law enforcement stakeholders to effectively participate in project activities
- Lack of will of local stakeholders to participate in project efforts or to collaborate locally (e.g. local CSOs and institutions)
- Low sustainability/dissemination of knowledge gained through the project

Root causes:

- Gender inequality affects participation of women in processes that are viewed as masculine, e.g. SALW control
- Insufficient perception of the significance of gender in monitoring trends and policy making related to firearms misuse prevention
- Prejudice and stigma prevent persons to seek help in case of mental health problems that may lead to firearms misuse
- Firearms misuse prevention is hindered by inefficient medical and security assessments and lack of networking and data exchange among relevant stakeholders.

National priority or goal according to CPD³⁴:

- Enhanced human capital that ensures prosperity, well-being and cohesion of Serbian society (National Priorities for International Assistance);
- Enhancing multisectoral cooperation and strengthen the capacities of institutions to address gender-based violence (National Strategy for Combating Gender-Based Violence)

³⁴ <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-06/CPD%20Serbia.pdf>

Overall impact according to the UNDP CPD Output:
Enhanced human capital that ensures prosperity, well-being and cohesion of Serbian society; and Enhancing multisectoral cooperation and strengthen the capacities of institutions to address gender-based violence

Project impact: Bridging the gaps identified under specific Goals 2 and 4 of the Roadmap, with a specific focus on reducing the risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicide in Serbia

Outcome 1 - Increase in capabilities for integrating a meaningful gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies through the reinforcement of networking and empowerment of women in the security sector, as well as the enhancement of gender-sensitive and evidence-based policymaking

Outcome 2 - Firearms misuse for violence and suicides is prevented and addressed through multisectoral engagement of institutions and involvement of civil sector

Output 1.1 - Gender and age data collection practices reviewed, and lessons learned used to facilitate evidence-based policy making and mainstream firearms risks into domestic violence regulations.

Output 1.2 - Networking and capacity building of women to actively participate in SALW control policies enabled

Output 2.1 - Conditions for improved detection of potential firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides and comprehensive prevention support ensured

Output 2.2 - Information on the harmful effects of underlying practices and attitudes leading to firearms misuse and supportive mechanisms preventing suicides available

Output 2.3 - Best practice sharing with professionals, media and academia on effective mechanisms for prevention of future firearms related incidents enabled

Activities:
 1.1.1: Provide technical and consultative assistance in analyzing current data collection methodologies related to gender and age and revision of missing gender and age-related data
 1.1.2: Development of evidence-based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing risk of firearms misuse in gender-based violence

Activities:
 1.2.1: Enabling networking of women in the security sector, facilitating their participation in the development, policy advocacy and implementation of gender responsive SALW control policies
 1.2.2: Continued support to associations of women police officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia facilitating regional experience exchange and networking

Activities:
 2.1.1: Improving healthcare workers' capacity to identify risks and effectively implement procedures for reporting and addressing suspected risk of firearms misuse.
 2.1.2: Assistance to healthcare digitalization
 2.1.3: Preparation of recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons within healthcare system
 2.1.4 Organize exchange of knowledge, dialogue and learning on the implementation of gender-responsive security vetting and reporting of firearms license holders to prevent misuse of firearms in domestic

Activities:
 2.2.1: Support MoI communication activities to prevent firearm misuse in the community and domestic violence content
 2.2.2: Support to institutional capacity building and implementation of activities to prevent firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides among police officers
 2.2.3: Support to learning and community-based activities to prevent firearms misuse for suicide

Activities:
 2.3.1 Identification of international best practices on post-tragedy/mass shooting community reintegration and improved mass shooting prevention
 2.3.2: Continued support to the group Journalists against Violence in its efforts to mobilize national and regional media and promote learning and partnerships that leads to ethical and preventative media coverage of incidents involving SALW.

Development challenge: Firearms' misuse for (domestic) violence and suicide leads to tragic consequences leaving life changing injuries and trauma to individuals, fostering lack of security and trust in institutions in the community and increasing the general risk to people's safety and wellbeing in society

Risks:	Assumptions:
Lack of political will of stakeholders to participate in project <u>efforts</u>	Stakeholders from the healthcare sector are willing and motivated to participate in activities related to networking with other systems and improving procedures in response to firearms- <u>misuse</u>
Lack of will of local stakeholders to participate in project efforts or to collaborate locally (<u>e.g.</u> local CSOs and institutions)	MoI remains interested to improve the response to firearm-misuse and accelerate activities targeting the wider public to restore trust in institutional response to firearms- <u>enabled violence</u>
Low sustainability/dissemination of knowledge gained through the <u>project</u>	
Insufficient operational capacities and resources among the health, justice and law enforcement stakeholders to effectively participate in project <u>activities</u>	

Root cause: Gender inequality affects participation of women in processes that are viewed as masculine, e.g. SALW control

Root cause: Insufficient perception of the significance of gender in monitoring trends and policy making related to firearms misuse prevention.

Root cause: Prejudice and stigma prevent persons to seek help in case of mental health problems that may lead to firearms misuse.

Root cause: Firearms misuse prevention is hindered by inefficient medical & security assessments, lack of networking and data exchange among relevant stakeholders.

Sustainability of Results

Key strategies for achieving sustainability include:

- **Strategic partnerships with key stakeholders**, including governmental bodies and institutions such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Institute for Public Health “Dr. Milan Jovanovic Batut” focus on contributing to implementation of the existing framework on prevention of firearms misuse, ending domestic violence and preventing suicides and measures announced following the mass shootings in May 2023 in Serbia. More specifically the implementation of measures is aligned and prescribed by the Law on Preventing Domestic Violence, Law on Weapons and Ammunition, National Strategy for Combating Domestic Violence, and the Program on the Protection of Mental Health of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2019-2026;

- **Full ownership by key stakeholders** over the project activities through a national implementation modality. The project will support national institutions that are, based on several laws and strategies, responsible to conduct preventive measures to ensure firearms are not misused. The project will contribute to the effective implementation of existing laws and strategies, improving practices identified to need improvement. It will support national stakeholders to fulfill their responsibilities stemming from the legal and strategical framework.

- **Involving different groups of stakeholders** will ensure a long-term impact by the project and will give them ownership over the project results. Through gathering different stakeholders and strengthening established partnership and motivation for engagement, the project will create a space for improving responses to highly complex, structural, interconnected, and increasingly unpredictable challenges. It will be based on lessons learned from previous stages of the project on what works and what does not at the intersectoral level. The project will foster establishment and strengthening of cooperation, exchange of practices and experiences and provide a space for concrete multisectoral networking. With this approach, the focus is placed on strengthening a complex multistakeholder system that can become a driver of and enforce substantial and transformational change. It assumes and anticipates that the previous intersectional learning and momentum for concrete action will be utilized, connections strengthened between multiple stakeholders to contribute to this complex ecosystem beyond the project.

- **Based on experiences of previous project phases**, the project will gather different types of stakeholders across Serbia including state institutions, private entities, communities, and individuals relevant for the prevention of firearms misuse for violence and suicides (such as chosen physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists responsible for examination of mental health and medical conditions of firearms license holders, including civilians and professionals firearms license holders, from public and private health care institutions, teams for prevention of domestic violence within healthcare system, representatives of the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior, Institute for Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut”, body of authority issuing licenses to medical institutions for medical examination of firearms license holders, and representatives of civil society organizations and professionals working on prevention of domestic violence and suicides). All these stakeholders are involved in the process of assessment of medical conditions and prevention of firearms-related violence, with specific focus on domestic violence and suicides.

- **Networking and broadening of scope of stakeholders** mobilized around the problem of firearms misuse will be applied to ensure knowledge and experience exchange, but also to strengthen cooperation related to firearms misuse prevention even after project completion. This will serve to establish platforms of mutual discussions between different stakeholders, including those at community level, and foster cooperation of state and civil sector stakeholders, with a view of recognizing strategies for stronger comprehensive response to firearms misuse prevention, involving both institutional and community action. As a proven strategy in women’s empowerment, networking will especially be significant for efforts to strengthen women’s role in SALW control, through creation

of safe spaces for women exchange experience and transfer knowledge on effective operation strategies, so that women's voices are better heard and integrated in relevant policies. Bilateral collaboration of women also serves as an opportunity for establishing a basis for future regional advocacy actions with a view of gender mainstreaming of SALW control efforts. Networking will also be applied in work with media, to foster exchange of identified best practices in reporting ethically on firearms misuse with a view of prevention and public awareness raising.

- **Responsibilities of stakeholders embodied in relevant legislation** will increase the chance that they will continue to perform and disseminate gained knowledge and planned actions after project completion. As the process will be participatory, gained knowledge on risks of firearms misuse for suicides and domestic violence and prevention strategies gained by the target groups will be transferable and replicable.

- The project will also contribute to acceleration and enforcing effective implementation of the legal framework, including **development of operational procedures**.

- All **knowledge products** will be made widely available to serve for future knowledge improvement and know-how support to different stakeholder, including those in other countries.

- **ToT** will be applied to ensure the availability of (human and material) resources beyond the duration of the project, in addition to the utilization of knowledge products and training materials.

-Taking into account that the project is envisaged to support implementation of the Roadmap developed by the Western Balkans authorities with SEESAC's technical support, the project has a potential for **multiplier effect** and for extension of activities and good practices in other Western Balkan countries committed to the achievement of the Roadmap goals.

Risk Identification and Management

1. Potential lack of national ownership may present an obstacle to successful implementation

Risk mitigation modality: National ownership has been addressed from the start of project development, through establishment of partnership, strong support and endorsement of the project by the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia and the National Health Institute Dr. Milan Jovanovic Batut. The project focuses on responsibilities of different stakeholders prescribed by relevant laws and strategic documents. and contributes to their effective implementation and corresponds with measures in response situation after the May mass shootings in Serbia, providing a basis for interest for an active stakeholder involvement. Ownership will further be ensured through a national implementation modality, as well as involvement of different and relevant stakeholders in project implementation, to ensure long-term impact of the project.

2. Lack of will of local stakeholders, to participate in project efforts or to collaborate locally (e.g. local CSOs and institutions)

Risk mitigation modality: Potential lack of local ownership and lack of willingness of local stakeholders to mutually collaborate will be overcome by building their cooperation around the current social context and legal obligations regarding prevention and combating of firearms misuse. The project envisages to provide multiple opportunities for experience exchange and networking of different local stakeholders and will focus on identifying the concrete situation of local communities, challenges in provision of comprehensive prevention of firearms misuse and support in response to traumatic firearms-misuse related events. The project will pinpoint possible solutions to overcoming the challenges recognized and work to strengthen complementarity of different stakeholders, so that a lasting partnership is enabled with a view of multiplying prevention and response strategies, and sources of support in cases of trauma related to firearms-misuse.

3. Low sustainability/dissemination of knowledge gained through the project

Risk mitigation modality: The entire knowledge collection process is planned to be participatory, so that the knowledge on risks of firearms misuse for suicides and violence and restoration of safety and trust in institutional response gained by the various stakeholders is transferable and replicable. To ensure the sustainability of this knowledge, training will be provided to trainers from relevant institutions. This strategy aims to empower professionals with ownership of the knowledge and ensure that it is stored within institutions, making it accessible for use beyond the duration of the project. Furthermore, the acquired knowledge builds upon the existing responsibilities of stakeholders as outlined in relevant legislation. This strategic alignment enhances the potential for the knowledge's application and dissemination beyond the project's timeframe, contributing to the long-term success of the initiative.

Cross-cutting Issues

The project will fully adhere to UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES), with the aim to enhance positive social and environmental opportunities and benefits, as well as to ensure that adverse social and environmental risks and impacts are avoided, minimized, mitigated and managed. Furthermore, the project fully complies with the overarching policy and principles related to human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment and environmental sustainability. The project will not have any harmful practices with regards to Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management, Standard 2: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, Standard 4: Cultural Heritage, Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement, Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples. The project will contribute to improved conditions in relation to Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions and Standard 7: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency.

The project is based on the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy through the integration of the gender perspective into SALW control policies with a view to increase the safety of boys and girls, women and men in Serbia. The core elements of gender mainstreaming have been integrated in the project design through country ownership in terms of alignment with national legal framework, policies and priorities; gender assessment in terms of linkage of SALW presence and domestic violence and suicides also recognized as a gender-related problem, particularly by showcasing the relation of gender norms on SALW misuse and its consequences on women's and men's lives; building a gender-sensitive approach in project design and implementation arrangements; envisaging and establishing partnerships to ensure gender relevance of project activities and results; determination of how the project can respond to the needs of men and women in view of gender-based violence and issue of men as majority of persons who commit suicide and identification and design of drivers of change required to achieve gender-responsive project results.

All stages of the gender mainstreaming process (gender analysis, gendered actions and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation) will be implemented within all components of the project by application of the following tools – setting the base for gender sensitive data collection on SALW misuse in the context of domestic violence and suicides, gender analysis and gender impact assessment of the policies and practices related to SALW and domestic violence and gender sensitive approach to suicides, consultations with gender stakeholders for a gender-sensitive transformation of institutional practices, development of gender-sensitive knowledge materials, workshops and tools and implementation of gender-related awareness raising activities through collaboration with the media as well as local community stakeholders.

Communication and Visibility

The project will include already proven communication strategies to ensure that communication reaches the intended target groups of the project in time (i.e. policy makers, representatives of relevant institutions, professionals, CSOs, media) while raising awareness of the impact of SALW misuse for (domestic) violence and suicide.

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE 1: Relevant stakeholders have knowledge of UNDP Serbia project results, findings, knowledge base developed within the previous project phases and knowledge developed through the current project, collaboration opportunities and activities and are aware of the donors' assistance in delivering project results.

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE 2: Relevant media publish stories about project findings, results, partners and the target groups and engage in a dialogue with partners, stakeholders and target groups about the linkage between SALW misuse, violence, suicides and the importance of prevention and need for stronger community response.

The project's communication plan will be used: a) to communicate project- and sector-specific messages to target audiences in order to benefit the implementation of the project; b) to promote the role of beneficiaries (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Institute for Public Health "Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut", CSOs and institutions working on the prevention of domestic violence and suicides) and their work in this area; c) to promote the work of the donor in the specific field of this project; d) to showcase how this project demonstrates the broader partnership of international organizations, governmental bodies, institutions, private and public entities, academia, CSOs and media; e) to communicate the key message with the wider public, national and international community through social media and media and communities of practice; f) to ensure that the beneficiaries are aware of the donor's assistance in delivering project results.

MAIN COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES:

- Project promotion via UNDP CO Serbia's profiles on social media;
- Knowledge products available to stakeholders;
- Visibility materials during the workshops with stakeholders;
- Social media posts via UNDP CO Serbia's profiles on social media;
- Partnering with media to report on project activities and issue addressed by the project;
- Sharing project-related lessons learned and experiences through UNDP global Community of Practice and through regional networking;
- Development of knowledge products reflecting the process of stakeholder involvement and approach to issue solutions.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS:

1. Social media: UNDP Serbia uses Twitter to provide short updates about meetings, activities and to raise awareness on the issue the project deals with. UNDP Serbia also uses Facebook and Instagram to communicate the same stories as on websites and Twitter, to reach a wider audience.
2. Awareness raising social media posts: a) to increase awareness among general public on dangers of misuse of firearms in the context of gender-based violence and suicides, risks recognition and reporting; b) to promote the work of institutions and professionals in prevention of firearms misuse in the context of (gender-based) violence and suicides (i.e. human interest stories, success stories on good practices related to cooperation), c) to highlight significance of women's participation in the security sector and importance of integration of gender in SALW control efforts.
3. Information material: a) project knowledge products for distribution to stakeholders by email, on site and as additional material during workshops.

4. Websites: UNDP's website <https://rs.undp.org> will have a one-page project fact-sheet.
5. Press releases: a) UNDP communicates about major project achievements through direct distribution of press releases to media, on UNDP's website and social media and partners with the group Journalists against Violence to develop stories in relevant media. Additionally, media will be invited to participate in workshops and consultative meetings organized through the project. The project team will publish occasional articles in media such as national newspapers and on-line news agencies like Beta and Tanjug - together with partners' communication units - to promote project activities and increase awareness on SALW and gender-based violence and suicides and project efforts related to these topics.
6. Workshops, consultative meetings and networking activities: UNDP will ensure the donor's visibility during workshops and consultative meetings, e.g. by having roll-up banners and project logos on visual presentations and materials.
7. UNDP Community of Practice - UNDP facilitates its global Communities of Practice (CoPs), of which UNDP has a rich history, to promote and support knowledge flows within and across the Global Policy Network areas of work and enrich UNDP's global policy and program functions. The CoPs is an inclusive, flexible approach taking advantage of existing networks, both internal and external to UNDP, to build inclusive communities around UNDP's main thematic areas of work.
8. Donor visibility will be ensured in all communication tools, in compliance with the Trust Fund Visibility Guidelines.

LANGUAGE: The project is primarily focused on the national level, with an additional regional component to be implemented in cooperation with the UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina CO. This collaborative effort offers a significant opportunity for promoting and disseminating good practices. As a result, the project content will be communicated in both BCMS (Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian) and English languages to ensure effective communication and wider reach.

Knowledge Management

The key steps of knowledge management of the project relate to ensuring that knowledge is developed, utilized and shared during and beyond the project. These steps include establishing key stakeholders' ownership over knowledge management and the systems that support it; implementing mechanisms for finding external knowledge and making it relevant internally; disseminating key findings and lessons learned from the project; encouraging regional knowledge exchange and documentation of learnings based on networking; structuring and storing knowledge so that it can be accessed easily and available to beneficiaries after the project completion; ensuring the knowledge is used effectively; documenting knowledge exchange channels to serve for future continuous knowledge sharing.

The following knowledge products will be elaborated within the project:

- a) recommendations based on lessons learned on effectiveness of legal solutions to prevent and reduce the risk of firearms related gender-based violence to inform future legislation and mainstream firearms risk into legislation relevant for domestic violence;
- b) documentation of best practices in planning strategic actions, advocacy and awareness-raising on gender dimensions of security, as well as identifying missing capacities for gender mainstreaming of SALW control policies and best capacity building approaches;
- c) successful practices in networking of women in the security sector and strengthening their capacities for participation in gender-responsive SALW control policy development and implementation;

- d) recommendations for enabling effective implementation of procedures for reporting suspected or documented health changes and psychophysical conditions of a weapons license holder, and procedures for reporting suspected violence;
- e) recommendations based on learning from previous project phases and through consultative process with health workers, on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons, taking into account perceived deficiencies and solutions in practice;
- f) a summary of effective mechanisms and procedures for detecting risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicide – for professionals;
- g) a summary of lessons learned on implementing gender-responsive security vetting and reporting of firearms license holders to prevent misuse of firearms in the domestic violence context;
- h) a summary of lessons learned on effective strategies to prevent negative consequences of professional trauma among police officers who are involved in violent events in the field;
- i) a map of effective practices aimed at changing masculine stereotypes that lead to harmful incidents with firearms;
- j) strategies and measures to rebuild community safety and increase trust in institutions – for professionals;
- k) strategies for improved community responses to and prevention of traumatic events involving firearms misuse, based on lessons learned from recent incidents in Serbia and from experiences of other countries with similar situations, focusing on emergency support programs and long-term community reintegration;
- l) analysis of media reporting on and guidelines for ethical media reporting on traumatic events involving firearms misuse including violence and suicide.

Project Management Structure

A **Project Board** will be formed with representatives of the donors, UNDP, Ministry of Interior, National Institute for Public Health, media and civil society organization, as illustrated in the diagram below. The Project Board is the group responsible for making management decisions by consensus for a project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for approval of project plans and revisions. Project Board decisions should be made in accordance with standards^[1] that shall ensure best value in terms of money, fairness, integrity transparency and effective international competition. Project reviews by this group are made at designated decision points during the running of a project, or as necessary when raised by the Project Manager, but at least once a year. This group is consulted by the Project Manager for decisions when tolerances (normally in terms of time, budget and quality) have been exceeded. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the project or negotiates a solution to any problems between the project and external bodies.

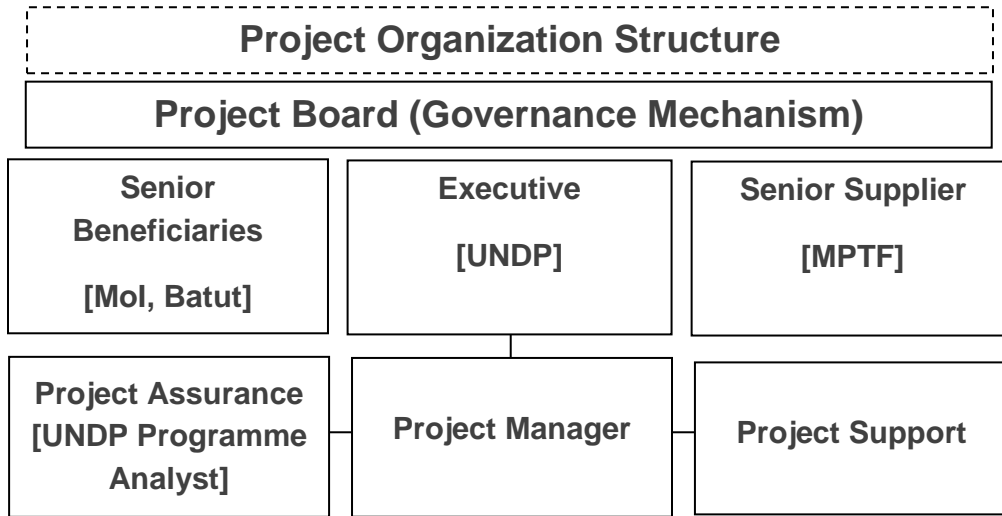
Project Assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member; however, this role will be delegated to UNDP Programme Analyst to perform on behalf of the Project Board. The Project Assurance role supports the Project Board by carrying out objective project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures that appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed.

The **Project Manager** has the authority to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board, within the constraints laid down by the Board. The Project Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management

^[1] UNDP Financial Rules and Regulations: Chapter E, Regulation 16.05: a) The administration by executing entities or, under the harmonized operational modalities, implementing partners, of resources obtained from or through UNDP shall be carried out under their respective financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP. b) Where the financial governance of an executing entity or, under the harmonized operational modalities, implementing partner, does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, that of UNDP shall apply.

and decision-making for the project. The Project Manager’s prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost.

The **Project Support** role provides project administration, management and technical support to the Project Manager as required by the needs of the individual project or Project Manager.



Annex 1: Project Detailed Budget

Project Proposal Budget					
Title of Project Proposal: Reduce Risk - Increase Safety III					
		Activities	Description of expense	UNDG Budget Category	Total
Outcome 1: Increase in capabilities for integrating a meaningful gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies through the reinforcement of networking and empowerment of women in the security sector, as well as the enhancement of gender-sensitive and evidence-based policymaking	Output 1.1 Gender and age data collection practices reviewed, and lessons learned used to facilitate evidence-based policymaking	Activity 1.1.1 Provide technical and consultative assistance in analyzing current data collection methodologies related to gender and age and revision of missing gender and age-related data	Engagement of Technical Advisor to provide assistance to MoI.	Contractual Services	\$ 10,000
		Activity 1.1.2 Development of evidence based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing risk of firearms misuse in gender-based violence	Engagement of experts and organization of 4 sessions to analyze selected cases. Organization of 1 meeting to present lessons learned identified (50 participants).	Contractual Services	\$ 30,000
		Total Output 1.1			\$ 40,000
	Output 1.2 Networking and capacity building of women to actively participate in SALW control policies enabled	Activity 1.2.1 Enabling networking of women in the security sector, facilitating their participation in the development, policy advocacy and implementation of gender-responsive SALW control policies	Organization of 2 capacity building activities per year (30 participants), 1 meeting of women from security sector per year (25 participants), 2 annual conferences (up to 100 participants), advocacy based activities	Contractual Services	\$ 75,000
				Travel	\$ 5,000
		Activity 1.2.2 Continued support to associations of women police officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia facilitating regional experience exchange and networking around the topic of SALW misuse prevention (joint activity of UNDP CO Serbia and UNDP CO BiH)	2 meetings between associations in BiH and Serbia (25 participants). Study trip for 7 persons in 2025.	Travel	\$ 31,500
				Contractual Services	\$ 20,000
	Total Output 1.2			\$ 131,500	
	Total Outcome 1			\$ 171,500	

Outcome 2: Firearms misuse for violence and suicides is prevented and addressed through multisectoral engagement of institutions and involvement of civil sector	Output 2.1 Conditions for improved detection of potential firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides and comprehensive prevention support ensured	Activity 2.1.1 Improving healthcare workers' capacity to identify risks and effectively implement procedures for reporting and addressing suspected risk of firearms misuse	Engagement of experts in 2023. Organization of 3 trainings for domestic violence prevention teams per year, 1 training session for lawyers per year, 2 trainings for psychiatrists and psychologists per year, and 1 training for trainers in 2024 (15 participants).	Contractual Services	\$ 68,500
				Travel	\$ 5,000
		Activity 2.1.2 Assistance to healthcare digitalization to enable better insight into patients' health status and firearms possession	Engagement of experts	Contractual Services	\$ 10,000
		Activity 2.1.3 Preparation of recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons within healthcare system	Engagement of experts in 2023, mapping limitations and drafting recommendations in 2024.	Contractual Services	\$ 6,500
		Activity 2.1.4 Organize exchange of knowledge, dialogue and learning on the implementation of gender-responsive security vetting and reporting of firearms license holders to prevent misuse of firearms in domestic violence context	Organization of 3 consultative meetings and learning sessions in each year (25 participants). 4 low-value grants for 4 CSOs.	Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	\$ 100,000
			Contractual Services	\$ 20,000	
		Total Output 2.1		\$ 210,000	
	Output 2.2 Information on the harmful effects of underlying practices and attitudes leading to firearms misuse and supportive mechanisms preventing suicides	Activity 2.2.1 Support Mol communication activities to prevent firearm misuse in the community and domestic violence context	Engagement of experts in 2023, communications and media activities, organization of 1 media training and 2 campaigns.	Contractual Services	\$ 42,000
				Travel	\$ 2,000
		Activity 2.2.2 Support to institutional capacity building and implementation of activities to prevent firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides among police officers	Organization of 2 workshops for police officers (30 participants).	Contractual Services	\$ 22,000
				Travel	\$ 2,000
		Activity 2.2.3 Support to learning and community-based activities to prevent firearms misuse for suicide	Curriculum development, organization of 1 training for trainers (15 participants) and 5 trainings for healthcare workers. Informative material design and outreach campaign.	Contractual Services	\$ 52,000
			Travel	\$ 4,000	
		Total Output 2.2		\$ 124,000	

Output 2.3 Best practice sharing with professionals, media and academia on effective mechanisms for prevention of future firearms related incidents enabled	Activity 2.3.1 Identification of international best practices on post-tragedy/mass shooting community reintegration and improved mass shooting prevention	Engagement of national/international experts. 2 learning sessions in 2025 for 200 participants.	Contractual Services	\$ 23,500
			Travel	\$ 3,500
	Activity 2.3.2 Continued support to the group Journalists against Violence in its efforts to mobilize national and regional media and promote learning and partnerships that leads to ethical and preventative media coverage of incidents involving SALW	Analysis of media reporting. Organization of 4 media trainings, conference for regional media (50 participants), study trip to European media hub (10 participants) and gathering of 40 women journalists.	Contractual Services	\$ 54,500
			Travel	\$ 16,500
	Total Output 2.3			\$ 98,000
Total Outcome 2			\$ 432,000	
Total Outcome 1+2			\$ 603,500	
Project Management	Project management costs	Management costs for Programme Analyst part-time (24 months)	Staff and other personnel costs	\$ 57,360
		Management costs for Project Manager 70% (24 months)	Contractual Services	\$ 52,500
		Sitting costs for project team, IT & email costs, telephone charges, miscellaneous expenses	General Operating and Other Direct Costs	\$ 10,400
		Project team travel	Travel	\$ 1,600
	Total PM:			\$ 121,860
TOTAL costs of activities & PM			\$ 725,360	
GMS 7%			\$ 50,775	
TOTAL Budget (GMS included)			\$ 776,135	

Annex 2: Project Budget by UNDG categories

Budget per UNDG categories
Title of Project Proposal: Reduce Risk - Increase Safety III
Implementing entity: UNDP Serbia
Project implementation period: October 2023 - October 2025

UNDG Budget Category	TOTAL
1. Staff and other personnel costs	57,360
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	-
3. Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture including Depreciation	-
4. Contractual Services	486,500
5. Travel	71,100
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	100,000
7. General Operating and Other Direct Costs	10,400
Total Direct Costs	725,360
Indirect Support Costs (7%)	50,775
Grand Total	776,135

Annex 3: Project Results Framework

Objective³⁵: To bridge the gaps identified under specific Goals 2 and 4 of the Roadmap, with a specific focus on reducing the risk of firearms misuse for violence and suicide in Serbia, while strengthening the role of women in SALW control policies, fostering collaboration and knowledge of relevant stakeholders, and enhancing community response to firearms-related crises and trauma with the goal of restoring safety and trust in institutions.				
Result³⁶	Indicators³⁷	Baseline	Target	Means of verification (MoV)
Outcome 1: Increase in capabilities for integrating a meaningful gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies through the reinforcement of networking and empowerment of women in the security sector, as well as the enhancement of gender-sensitive and evidence-based policymaking				
Output 1.1: Gender and age data collection practices reviewed, and lessons learned used to facilitate evidence-based policy making and mainstream firearms risks into domestic violence regulations.	1.1.1 The data collection practices of the Ministry of Interior (Moi) related to firearms misuse in the context of domestic violence reviewed to incorporate missing sex and age disaggregated data.	1.1.1. Existing Moi's data collection practice does not include sex and age sensitive data	1.1.1. YES Recommendations for improved data collection to include sex and age sensitive data	Report on consultations for improved data collection Report on improved data collection List of participants at consultations Interviews with Moi
	1.1.2. Evidence based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing the firearms risk in gender-based violence developed and endorsed	1.1.2. No evidence-based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing the firearms risk in gender-based violence	1.1.2. YES Evidence based recommendations to improve the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing the firearms risk in gender-based violence developed	Recommendations for the improvement of the effectiveness of legal solutions for preventing and reducing the firearms risk in gender-based violence (Report)
Output 1.2: Networking and capacity building of women to actively participate in SALW control policies enabled	1.2.1. No of women police officers, including members of the Network of Women in the Police capacitated to mainstream gender into SALW control policies and actively participate in SALW control	1.2.1. SALW control policies do not adequately involve women and women's participation in SALW control is limited	1.2.1. At least 50 women from security sector trained on issues relating to development and implementation of gender sensitive SALW control policies	List of participants
	1.2.2. Improved regional experience exchange and networking of the women police officials in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on gender mainstreaming in SALW control policies and SALW control.	1.2.2. No regular interaction or knowledge sharing among the regional networks of women police	1.2.2.a Up to 100 participants at the regional experience exchange and networking meetings 1.2.2.b Up to 21 members of the regional networks are introduced to different international best practices during a study visit to a sister network in an EU country	List of participants at events List of study visit participants; study visit agenda and report
Outcome 2: Firearms misuse for violence and suicides is prevented and addressed through multisectoral engagement of institutions and involvement of civil sector				

³⁵ As per the project proposal.

³⁶ Please add or delete outcome or outputs, as per the project proposal.

³⁷ Please add or delete indicators. Limited number of key indicators is recommended per output.

Output 2.1 Conditions for improved detection of potential firearms misuse for domestic violence and suicides and comprehensive prevention support ensured	2.1.1. No. of healthcare professionals trained to identify risks and effectively implement procedures for reporting and addressing suspected risk of firearms related domestic violence.	2.1.1. Healthcare professionals have little to no knowledge on how to identify risks and effectively implement procedures for reporting and addressing suspected risk of firearms misuse	2.1.1. At least 180 health care professionals trained to better detect and manage cases of violence in collaboration with the police and prosecutor's office	List of participants at events
	2.1.2. Recommendations on improved connectivity and data sharing between state and private healthcare institutions for the Prime Minister's working group on eHealth developed and considered by the working group.	2.1.2. No connectivity or data sharing between state and private healthcare institutions	2.1.2. YES Recommendations on improved connectivity and data sharing between state and private healthcare institutions for the Prime Minister's working group on eHealth developed and considered by the working group.	Recommendations on improved connectivity and data sharing between state and private healthcare institutions for the Prime Minister's working group on eHealth (Report)
	2.1.3. Recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons within healthcare system developed and endorsed by Mol.	2.1.3. In the previous phase of project, numerous flaws within the existing Rulebook have been identified	2.1.3. YES Recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons within healthcare system developed	Recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry weapons within healthcare system (Report)
	2.1.4. Exchange of knowledge, dialogue and learning on the implementation of gender-sensitive security vetting and reporting of firearms license holders to prevent misuse of firearms in domestic violence context facilitated	2.1.4. No exchange knowledge, dialogue and learning on the implementation of gender-sensitive security vetting and reporting of firearms license holders to prevent misuse of firearms in domestic violence context exists	2.1.4.a up to 150 professionals take part in the dialogues/ knowledge exchange/ learning sessions	List of participants at events Pre and Post participant surveys Interviews with participants
			2.1.4.b up to 4 CSOs supported to develop and implement community-based actions targeting women whose family members have access to firearms and collaborate with institutions	List of participants at events CSO reports on community based actions held targeting women whose family members have access to firearms
Output 2.2 Information on the harmful effects of underlying practices and attitudes leading to firearms misuse and supportive mechanisms preventing suicides available	2.2.1. Mol media communication capacities and campaigns to prevent firearms misuse in the community and domestic violence context in place	2.2.1. Low level of awareness related to firearms misuse for domestic violence and gender-based violence across most Mol sectors, departments and bodies	2.2.1. YES At least 20 media reports containing information about the consequences of firearms misuse as well as critical reviews of firearms (mis)use for domestic violence and gender-based violence	Media outlet reports, links to and reports on campaigns
	2.2.2. Professionals providing psychological support within Mol capacitated and police officers informed on supportive	2.2.2. Low level of information and utilization of services to prevent negative	2.2.2.a At least 25 professionals from Mol's Department of Psychological Activities trained 2.2.2.b	Report on activities to strengthen trust and enhance the informing of police officers about the possibilities of

	mechanisms to prevent negative consequences of professional trauma.	consequences of professional trauma of professionals involved in violent events with firearms	YES - informative activities conducted by the Department among different police units	support and prevention of professional burnout within MoI
	2.2.3. Development of a training curriculum, as well as the training of trainers, aimed at strengthening healthcare system capacities to identify and support individuals at risk of suicide.	2.2.3. No adequate information and knowledge of general practitioners to recognize and provide further support to persons at risks of committing suicide	2.2.3.a YES ToT curriculum developed on how to recognize and provide further and adequate support to persons at risks of committing suicide	Curriculum on how to recognize and provide adequate support to persons at risks of committing suicide (Report)
			2.2.3. b up to 15 trainers from the healthcare system trained on how to recognize and provide adequate support to persons at risks of committing suicide	List of trainers participating at the training Pre and Post participant surveys Interviews with participants
Output 2.3. Best practice sharing with professionals, media and academia on effective mechanisms for prevention of future firearms related incidents enabled	2.3.1. International best practices on post-tragedy/mass shooting community reintegration mapped and shared with professionals, media and academia	2.3.1. Professionals, media and academia have little knowledge on prevention of firearms related mass shooting incidents	2.3.1. a Effective practices that have been implemented internationally, aimed at changing masculine stereotypes that lead to harmful incidents with firearms mapped.	Report on mapped effective practices that have been implemented internationally, aimed at changing masculine stereotypes that lead to harmful incidents with firearms
			2.3.1.b at least 200 participants participate at the best practices and knowledge sharing conference and are introduced to best practice mechanisms for firearms related incidents	Lists of participants Copies of materials presented Participants pre and post conference surveys.
	2.3.2. Number of journalists with increased capacities and networking opportunities to engage in preventive and ethical reporting on firearms-enabled gender-based violence, including mass shootings	2.3.2. Sensationalist reporting continues to thrive in Serbia, contributing to spreading of panic, rather than educating the public and acting to prevent future firearms misuse risks	2.3.2.a Analysis of media reporting on firearms-related incidents conducted	Analysis of media reporting on firearms-related incidents (report) Interviews with journalists
			2.3.2.b up to 10 journalists participate in a study trip to a European media hub to exchange specialist knowledge on the most challenging of media issues and encourage media networking related to ethical reporting on violence and trauma will be organized	List of study visit participants Study visit report
			2.1.2.c up to 100 participants/ women journalists from the region participate in events that encourage networking, preventive reporting related to firearms-enabled gender-based violence, including mass shootings	List of participants

Annex 4: Project Risk Matrix

#	Description	Category	Impact & Likelihood	Risk Treatment/ Management measures	Risk Owner	Current status [July 2023]
	<i>Brief description of the risk, including potential future event and its cause</i>	<i>Social and Environmental, Financial, Operational, Organizational, Political, Regulatory, Strategic</i>	<i>Impact: effect on the project if the risk were to occur on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (critical) Probability: estimate of the likelihood of the risk occurring on a scale of 1 (not likely) to 5 (expected)</i>	<i>What actions have been taken/will be taken to counter this risk. Indicate if the risk has been consulted with the SALW Commission and how the authorities will be engaged in the management and mitigation</i>	<i>The person or entity with the responsibility to manage the risk.</i>	<i>Implementation status of risk management measures and their effectiveness and relevant changes in context</i>
1	Risk 1 Potential lack of national ownership may present an obstacle to successful implementation of recommendations.	Political	[This risk needs to be considered during implementation, as it may hinder successful implementation. Overall, the risk is probable, but mitigation measures have been taken during the project drafting, as well as in previous phases of project.] I =2 P = 3	Using the current social context and accumulated momentum of stakeholders in previous project stages for further strengthening the institutional response within each of the responsible national partners, while assuring that all the initiatives are well positioned within the institutional and organizational structures. UNPD experience has shown that having a wider range of stakeholders is beneficial for delivering sustainable results and ownership.	UNDP/MoI	N/A
2	Risk 2 Lack of will of local stakeholders to participate in project efforts or to collaborate locally	Operational	[Even though the probability of this risk is low, as the project has been designed in line with previous stage results and the local stakeholder needs and priorities, its impact on project implementation is high, as the project cannot be implemented without the participation of local stakeholders.] I =5 P = 1	Building local cooperation around the current social context and legal obligations regarding prevention and combating of firearms misuse. The project envisages to provide multiple opportunities for experience exchange and networking of different local stakeholders and will focus on identifying the concrete situation of local communities, challenges in provision of comprehensive prevention of firearms misuse and support in response to traumatic firearms-misuse related events. Also, the project will regularly hold consultations and share information with senior management and decision-makers, to facilitate continual communication and collaboration through the established high-level working groups to foster stakeholder involvement. Opportunities for other ways to engage senior management and continually make them an integral part of the project will be identified and used. The project will pinpoint all possible solutions to overcoming the challenges recognized and work to	UNDP	N/A

strengthen complementarity of different stakeholders, so that a lasting partnership is enabled with a view of multiplying prevention and response strategies, and sources of support in cases of trauma related to firearms-misuse.

<p>3 Risk 3 Low sustainability of knowledge gained through project</p>	<p>Strategic</p>	<p>[This risk will be continually taken into consideration, to ensure that the knowledge gained continues to be shared with new employees, creating a smoother onboarding process and is part of the institutional memory of local stakeholders, enhancing their effectiveness and contributing to the continual growth and stability of progress made in SALW control policies.</p>	<p>Responsibilities of stakeholders embodied in relevant legislation will increase the chance that they will continue to perform and disseminate gained knowledge and planned actions after project completion. As the entire process will be participatory, the knowledge gained through the project will be documented and will be available to serve as input for further transferring/developing successful practices and procedures. Knowledge products will be well structured and stored and will remain available to beneficiaries after project completion.</p>	<p>UNDP/MoI</p>	<p>N/A</p>
		<p>I=4 P=2</p>			

Annex 5: Project Multi-Year Work Plan

		Multi-year Work Plan																													
		Title of project proposal: Reduce Risk - Increase Safety III																													
	Activities	Sub-activities	2023			2024										2025					Key partner / beneficiary institution <i>(per Output if one, or per activity if multiple under the Output)</i>										
			Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct			
Outcome 1: Increase in capacities for integrating a meaningful gender perspective into SALW/firearms control policies through the reinforcement of national and sub-national authorities	Output 1.1: Gender and age data collection practices reviewed, and lessons learnt																														Ministry of Interior
	Activity 1.1.1 Provide technical and consultative assistance in	Contracting experts for services provision Analyzing data collection methodology																													
	Activity 1.1.2 Development of evidence based recommendations to improve the	Contracting experts for services provision Conducting sessions for case analysis Presentation of lessons learned																													Ministry of Justice, criminal justice system
	Output 1.2: Networking and capacity building of women to actively participate																														
	Activity 1.2.1 Enabling networking of women in the security sector, facilitating their participation in the development, policy advocacy and	Contracting experts for services provision Capacity building activities Meetings of women from security sector Annual conferences Advocacy based activities																												Network of Women in the Police of the Republic of Serbia	
	Activity 1.2.2 Continued support to associations of women police officials in Bosnia and	Contracting experts for services provision Meetings of women police officials Study visit to the EU association																													Associations of women police officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia
	Output 2.1: Conditions for improved detection of potential firearms misuse for																														
	Activity 2.1.1 Improving healthcare workers' capacity to identify risks and effectively implement procedures for reporting and addressing suspected risk of firearms misuse	Contracting experts for services provision Six trainings for domestic violence prevention teams Two training sessions for lawyers Four trainings for psychiatrists and psychologists One ToT within health institutions																													
Activity 2.1.2 Assistance to healthcare digitalization to	Contracting experts for services provision Expert support and consultations																														Government, Prime Minister's working group
Activity 2.1.3 Preparation of recommendations for the new Rulebook on determining natural persons' ability to hold and carry	Contracting experts for services provision Mapping limitations and drafting recommendations for the new Rulebook Presentation of recommendations																														Ministry of Interior, Institute Batut/Ministry of Health
Activity 2.1.4 Organize exchange of knowledge, dialogue and learning on the implementation of gender-responsive security	Contracting experts for services provision Consultative meetings and learning sessions Designing and publishing a call for proposals Implementation of grants by four CSOs																														Civil society organizations
Output 2.2: Information on the harmful effects of underlying practices and																															
Activity 2.2.1 Support MoI communication activities to prevent firearm misuse in the community and domestic	Contracting experts for services provision Media and communication activities Media training Prevention campaigns																														Ministry of Interior
Activity 2.2.2 Support to institutional capacity building and	Contracting experts for services provision Workshops for police officers																														Ministry of Interior's Department of Psychological Activities
Activity 2.2.3 Support to learning and community-based activities to prevent firearms misuse for suicide	Contracting experts for services provision Development of a curriculum on suicide prevention within health system ToT for healthcare professionals Trainings within health system Development of informative material Conducting outreach campaign																														Health institutions
Output 2.3: Best practice sharing with professionals, media and academia on																															
Activity 2.3.1 Identification of international best practices on post-tragedy/mass shooting community reintegration and improved mass shooting	Contracting experts for services provision Mapping best practices on effective preventive and post-tragedy programs Two learning sessions with international experts																														Professionals and academia from health and social care, education and criminal-justice system
Activity 2.3.2 Continued support to the group Journalists against Violence in its efforts to mobilize national and regional media and promote learning and partnerships that leads to ethical	Contracting experts for services provision Conducting media analysis Trainings for selected media Study trip to a European media hub Conference with regional media presence Gathering of women journalists																														Group Journalists against violence