

BASELINE REPORT

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDICATORS

BURREL - ULEZ



This project is funded by the European Union

This Project is implemented by:



Gender Alliance for Development Centre



Counseling Line for
Women and Girls

This report was prepared by the Gender Alliance for Development Center, under the project **“Women empowerment: Building capacities to improve access economic opportunities with a special focus to victims of domestic Violence”**, based on the contract between ADC and EC, no. 2011/278-135.



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List of acronyms

MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
NEA	National Employment Agency
GADC	Gender Alliance for Development Centre
CLWG	Counseling Line for Girls and Women
EC	European Commission
UN women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
DA	Different Ability
LG	Local Government
NEA	National Employment Agency
NPO	Non Profit Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was prepared by Gender Alliance for Development Center and Counseling Line for Girls and Women on the frame of the project “*Women empowerment: Building capacities to improve access economic opportunities with a special focus to victims of domestic Violence*”, financed by the European Commission.

The proposed action aims at promoting equal participation of women and men in the social and economic life, by enhancing the empowerment of women, gender equality and respect of their human rights. The specific objectives of the proposed project relate to two main areas:

- Improving women’s position in the labour market and
- Specifically targeting more vulnerable groups of women, especially those at risk of poverty and or victims of domestic violence; with counselling, training and awareness activities not only on labour market access, but also on issues of domestic violence and access to available social services as well.

Activities towards these two specific objectives will be complemented by awareness and advocacy activities, aiming at:

- Increasing general awareness within target groups – including but not limited to women, but also public sector and potential employers – on social benefits of active women participation in social life; employability of women; but also antidiscrimination policy. Awareness activities will be both national and local scale, through TV and radio events as well as other communication instruments; and
- Improving social attitude towards the role of women in society through information and communication actions; counselling and non-conventional means - Networking with grassroots NPOs; business associations; women and change agents in the community will also be used; including development of school curricula to target young people at an early age.

The following are some of the outputs of the proposed action:

- An analytical report, containing an updated analysis of the current situation of women in Albania, focusing on their integration in the labour market as a crucial mean for woman empowerment; as well as identify the current situation with of vulnerable

- women, in particular victims of domestic violence and the extent of spreading of the phenomenon. The report will also identify possible partners and explore networking opportunities in order to achieve results.
- Identification of a local network/working group of organizations involved in gender, woman empowerment and domestic violence issues, with the participation of experts, public institutions and business organizations.

Indicators related to economic development:

- Percentage of men and women who run businesses
- Percentage of women and men employed and paying social insurance
- The number of new businesses started by migration of men and women
- Payment of insurance as a farmer (women and men)
- Number of women and men who participated in vocational training and their employment after the course
- The level of recognition of rights in the labor market by women
- Number of initiatives by local structures for women's employment

Indicators relating to domestic violence:

- Quality and appropriateness of services provided to victims of domestic violence
- The number of battered women who have received services from local offices as per law
- Training on the law against domestic violence
- Addressing gender issues in local media
- The number of cases of domestic violence reported to the police and reported to the court

Indicators related to social services

- The number of women in need
- Socio-economic situation of Roma women and Egyptian
- Quality of social services in the area

Indicators related to women's participation in decision-making

- Respect for gender quotas by political parties
- Percentage of women and men participating in meetings to draft municipal budget

2. Methodology

2.1 Sampling

Regarding Burrel Municipality, as part of this research (baseline), representatives of the various state and local organizations were interviewed. The interviewees were selected based on the information they possess and the role they play in relation to the four indicators (participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

A focus group with 10 people from the Ulez community (6 female and 4 male) was also conducted. The participants discussed and made their evaluation on local governance (in terms of indicators: participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and services social).

2.2 Instruments

During this research semi-structured interviews and community Score Cards were to evaluate local governance (related to indicators: participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

2.3 Limitations

In terms of sampling, the data of this study are not very representative in quantitative terms. This is particularly valid for the section on Local Governance Evaluation (related indicators: participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

However, the statistical and qualitative data gathered during semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders play a very important role in relation to the four indicators. (participation of women in decision-making, domestic violence, economic development and social services).

3. Actual situation

3.1 Summary of the main findings

Based on the situational analysis of women's rights in Burrel, several problems were identified in regard to the four components analyzed, being women's participation in decision making, economic development, domestic violence and social services.

Some of the main findings worth mentioning are¹:

- A municipality structure, responsible for issues related to domestic violence, was established in June 2012. The Office against Domestic Violence is part of the Human Resources and Social Services sector and it was established in the frame of a common project undertaken by Burrel Municipality and UNDP Albania.
- The Referral System is in place but it requires better coordination and further capacity building of human resources.
- Participation of women in the local elections is satisfactory, as observed from the lists of the local candidates, and the same can be concluded on participation of women in the decision making process (the Mayor of Burrel Municipality is a woman).

3.2 Main findings regarding women's participation in decision making

According to the perceptions of the interviewed community members, women's participation in the decision making levels is satisfactory. Moreover, several representatives of the local government institutions said that gender equality is an already established fact, respected in all the decision making levels.

Likewise, the interviewees said that women's political forums are very active during the political campaigns. Nevertheless, they do not play a significant role in empowering the participation of women in decision making. Women are active as a result of their personal initiative and also due to the support they receive by their family and friends, based on their skills and experiences.

Important facts regarding women's participation in decision making:

- The main role of women in the political forums is to recruit voters for the respective party.
- The women's representativeness in the Burrel Municipality Council is low; there are only 2 females (11.8%) out of 17 members in total.
- The public administration is composed of a considerable number of females, including women in leadership positions.
- Out of 11 sectors in the Burrel Municipality, 5 are led by females (45.5%). Moreover, the Mayor of the Burrel Municipality is a female.
- Positive initiatives have been undertaken by the civil society (UNDP Albania) on participatory budgeting. More concretely, civil society representatives have lobbied for participatory budgeting during the meetings of the Burrel Municipality Council.

¹Below you will find a more detailed description of the findings, based on each respective indicator.

However, in the commune of Ulez, such interventions are insignificant and almost inexistent.

According to the interviewees, having a female Mayor has had a positive impact on achievement of gender equality. Yet, the low rate of women's involvement in decision making remains a problem in the rural areas like Ulez commune.

3.3 Main findings regarding domestic violence

According to the local government institutions' representatives, the community in Burrel is well informed about the Law against Domestic Violence. Despite the fact that a short time has passed since the establishment of the local Office against Domestic Violence within the Municipality, informative and awareness raising meetings have been organized in schools, as well as with local stakeholders, aiming at awareness raising among community members regarding the negative impact of the domestic violence on women in particular and the whole society in general.

Asked to identify the causes of domestic violence, the answers received from the interviewees and the local government institutions' representatives converge significantly:

- Economic difficulties (the high rate of unemployment among women and men, lack of professional skills required to find and maintain a job, lack of employment opportunities etc.)
- Spouse jealousy (there are many such cases and in almost all of them it is the husband's jealousy targeting the wife)

Referring to the data from the local Office for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence, the number of the cases reported to this office in 2012 is 4, and all the victims of domestic violence reported are females. However, it is very difficult to have the cases reported to the Police Office and proceeded in court. Some of the main reasons why domestic violence cases are not reported to the Police Office are:

- Fear of social prejudices. Despite the fact that the Albanian society has been undergoing a serious process of emancipation, social prejudices against women remain one of the main barriers that prohibit them to report the domestic violence.
- Fear from the perpetrator
- "Protection of family" due to involvement of children is also an important factor which affects the reporting of domestic violence.

Important facts regarding domestic violence:

- A municipality structure, responsible for issues related to domestic violence, was established in June 2012. The Office against Domestic Violence is part of the Human

Resources and Social Services sector and it was established in the frame of a common project undertaken by Burrel Municipality and UNDP Albania. It is foreseen that, by the end of the project implementation, the local Office against Domestic Violence will be professionally and financially sustainable and under the full supervision of the Burrel Municipality. At the moment, this structure is functioning in its full capacity, although the number of the reported cases is not high.

- The community in Ulez is acknowledged about the Law against Domestic Violence but the community members expressed their distrust in its implementation and provision of a safe environment for women in their private life.
- The lack of trust among Ulez community members regarding the implementation of the Protection Order is a result of the existing mentality of the people living in small communities, where they usually know each other and often the perpetrator has a positive or highly appreciated social reputation, contrasting his domestic behavior. One of the female participants from the Ulez community during the focus group meeting said that “There have been cases when the woman went to the Police Office to report the case and the policeman made fun of her due to the positive reputation her husband enjoyed among community members”.
- The Local Referral Mechanism has already been established by the Burrel Municipality to address the cases of domestic violence. Also a multidisciplinary group has been established with the support of the common project undertaken by UNDP Albania and Burrel Municipality. The multidisciplinary group is composed of lawyers, psychologists and other professionals who are consulted based on the specific needs of each case. The group is coordinated by the Coordinator of the Group against Domestic Violence in Burrel Municipality.
- It is necessary that the local referral system widens including other relevant local actors in order to provide multidisciplinary solutions and have a more significant impact on the accountability of the local institutions, such as Police Office, Labor Office, Municipality Council, etc. Such inclusiveness will assist the Burrel Municipality in achieving the sustainability required to professionally and financially supervise and support the reported cases of domestic violence.
- There is a written agreement between the local actors, such as Municipality, Court, Police, Hospital, etc. However, efficient coordination of these institutions is necessary in order to define the concrete steps each of them must undertake in order to support the reported cases of domestic violence.
- Other than the free Police numbers (126/129), there is no free call line to report or ask for assistance in case of domestic violence.
- Professional and financial support is available for the reported cases of domestic violence, provided by the common project of UNDP Albania and Burrel Municipality. The cases are supported on a needs-based assessment, including transportation, safe sheltering, and clothing and food packages.

- The municipality representatives reported that UNDP Albania has undertaken initiatives for gender sensitive budgeting. As a start, the UNDP Albania project staff has participated in the periodical meetings of the Burrel Municipality Council.

3.4 Main findings regarding economic development

According to the Burrel Municipality data, in Burrel district there are no social services assisting the professional formation and/or development of women. There is no formal professional training center. However, several worth mentioning initiatives have been undertaken by the local organization “Alternativa në dobi të gruas” (Alternative to the woman’s benefit), which target the marginalized women and children. This NGO has established a daily center to support the marginalized women and children.

Important facts regarding the economic development of women in Burrel:

- The number of employed persons paying social security has declined significantly from 2011 to 2012 (Fig. 1).
- The responsible institutions do not have gender segregated data on employment.
- There are several initiatives on behalf of civil society organizations to support the professional formation of marginalized women. Such initiatives include cooking courses, tailoring courses etc.
- Women have undertaken several business initiatives but there are no fiscal facilities foreseen to support them financially. One of the representatives of the local government institutions in Burrel stated that “Businesses established and led by women survive thanks to their leading skills; otherwise the circumstances, especially the high taxes, are not in their favor”.

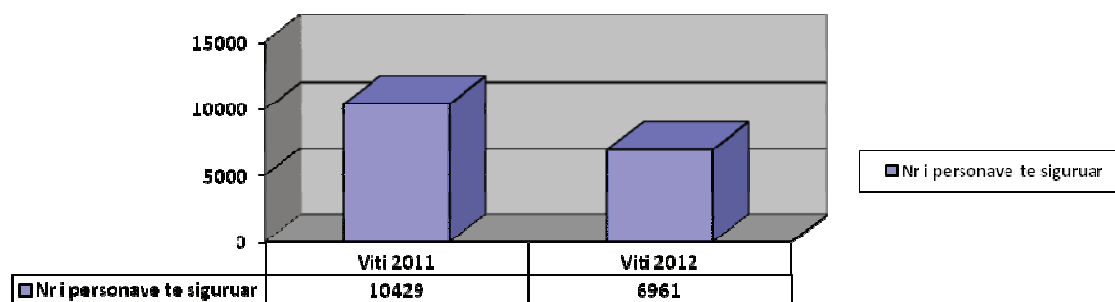


Figure1. Number of persons who paid social security in 2011 and 2012

According to the data from Tax Office, since January 2012 to October 2012, 27% of the registered businesses are headed by women. If we compare this to the data from 2011, there is a

slight increase by 1.5% during 2012. Compared to the data from 2010, in 2011 there is a slight increase by 2.5% as well (Fig. 2).

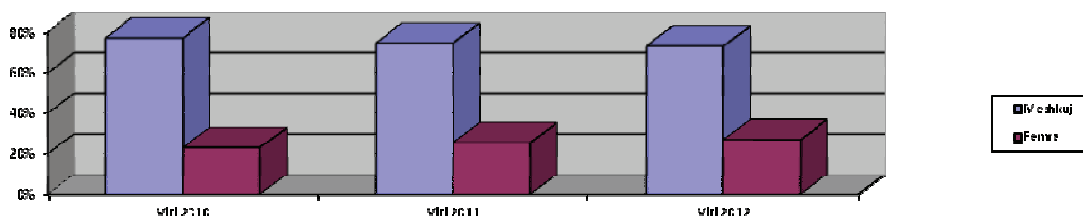


Figure 2. Percentage of businesses headed by men and women during the last 3 years in Burrel

According to the data from Social Security Agency, in 2012 a total of 1233 women in Burrel district paid the social security, 56 of which were from Ulez commune. (Fig. 3)

The statistics from the Social Security Agency are not gender segregated. If we compare the figures from 2011 and 2012, there is a decrease in the number of persons registered as farmers during 2012 (2038 farmers registered in 2011 whereas in 2012 the total number of registered farmers decreased to 1233 during the January – October 2012 period).

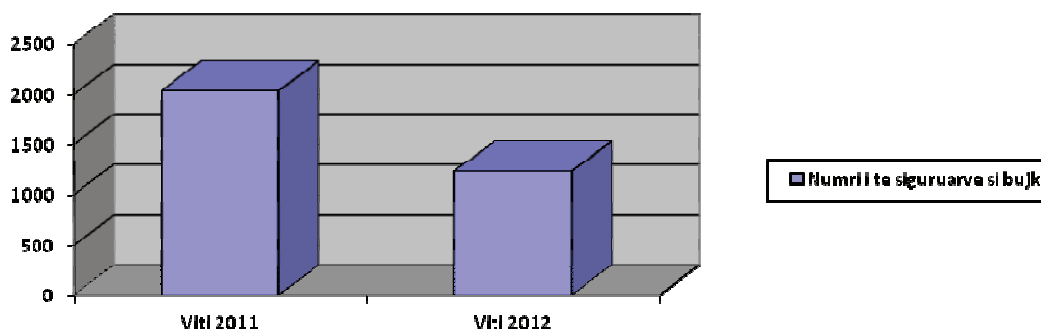


Figure 3. Social security paid by farmers during 2011 and 2012 (till the end of October 2012)

3.5 Main findings regarding social services

➤ Social Centers at local level

- Economic assistance

According to the statistics of the Economy Office of Burrel Municipality, a total of 516 families in Burrel receive economic assistance, in 16% of which the head of the family is a female

(widow, divorced etc.). According to the law on economic assistance, the later can be received only by the head of the family.

<i>Neighborhood</i>	<i>Total no. of beneficiaries</i>	<i>Female beneficiaries</i>	<i>% of female beneficiary</i>
Burrel Municipality	800	120	15%

At present, in Burrel there is also a daily center which offers services and support to women and children in need, established by “Alternativa në Dobi të Gruas” organization (Useful Alternative to Women). Moreover, the Burrel Municipality, in cooperation with the Austrian Embassy, established a Youth Center, designed to offer encouraging premises to young people and support their initiatives in promoting social and cultural values. A new Daily Center for the Third Age is also being established, as an initiative of Burrel Municipality in cooperation with Soros Foundation and Peace Corps.

- *Persons with disabilities*

According to the data from Burrel Municipality, there are 159 persons with mental and physical disabilities, 54.1% of which are females and 40.9% males. The remaining part is children. The number of blind persons is 69, 25 of which are females (36.2%) and 40 males (58%). The remaining part is children. In the tetra-paraplegic category, the total number of beneficiaries is 30, 16.7% of which are female, 66.7% male and the rest are children.

Kind of disability	No. of persons	No. of females	No. of males
Mental and physical	159	86	65
Blind	69	25	40
Tetra-paraplegic	30	5	20

➤ Infrastructure of crèches, kindergartens and schools

At present, in Burrel there are: 1 crèche, 3 kindergartens, 3 basic education schools and 2 general high schools. The conditions in schools are relatively good in terms of infrastructure. However, teaching and learning process needs further improvement as there is a lack of opportunities to generate an interactive learning environment, including lack of laboratories where different subjects can be taught by practical, easy-to-understand techniques.

➤ Road and Electricity Infrastructure

The road infrastructure has improved significantly, especially the city roads and the ones connecting Burrel to other cities.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Women's participation in decision making

Based on the situational analysis' findings on the actual situation of women's rights and their participation and representativeness in decision making levels, we can conclude that it is necessary that women play a more active role in decision making, especially in decisions that directly affect the situation of women in this area.

Some concrete steps that can be undertaken to empower the role of women in decision making are:

- Empowerment of the Local Office against Domestic Violence through exchange visits among existing local structures which have positive records in protection and promotion of gender equality and management of cases of domestic violence. These exchange visits can contribute to the awareness raising of the stakeholders in decision making levels as well as in drafting participatory budgeting, sensitive to achievement of gender equality.
- Awareness raising in community through local media in regard to the role of women in decision making.
- Meetings with community women from Ulëz and Burrel to encourage their participation in the decision making process, for example in the meetings of the Municipality Council. Such meetings can be organized together with the female members of the Municipality Council. Male members can also participate in these meetings.
- Workshops with community members (female and male) can be organized on the importance of the participation of women in decision making, discussing the social profits that equal gender participation brings to the community.
- Forums with women and men from the community can be organized, where positive examples and cases of success can be discussed. The experiences discussed can be from their own community, the region or the country and other countries as well, focusing on their positive impact on the respective families and communities.

4.2 Domestic violence

Recommendations on possible interventions to eliminate domestic violence:

- Awareness raising in community by working with small groups (families for example) on family values, reciprocal respect and roles and responsibilities of the family members.
- Community working groups can be trained to train community members on topics of domestic violence and gender equality, related laws and the protection that legislation offers to victims of domestic violence. This measure would also help to prevent domestic violence and also to promote the family values and improve couple relationships.
- Continuous training of police officers who assist, coordinate and follow the reintegration of the victims of domestic violence on the importance of confidentiality, case management and interviewing techniques with victims of domestic violence.
- Establishing an emergency center from 24 to 72 hours for temporary sheltering of victims of domestic violence in cases when the victim is removed from the house and is waiting for a long term shelter arrangement.
- Establishing a free call line to facilitate the reporting of domestic violence cases and once it is established, to promote it to the community.
- Workshops with local actors (representatives of Labor Office, Police, Court, NGOs, Municipality, psychologists, lawyers etc.) to improve their knowledge and skills to identify, report and manage cases of gender equality and domestic violence.
- Capacity building of local actors on issues regarding domestic violence, in particular reporting cases of domestic violence to the Local Referral Mechanism or Multidisciplinary Group established by Burrel Municipality and UNDP Albania's common project.
- Meetings with Burrel Municipality Council can be organized as advocacy and lobbying activities to achieve gender sensitive budgeting.
- Advocacy and lobbying activities can also be organized with Burrel Municipality Council to support the sustainability of the local Office for Gender Equality and against Domestic Violence through allocation of regular budget for the working staff and professional assistance for cases of domestic violence.
- Collaboration with the local Media can be established, as a key factor in increasing public awareness in regard to gender equality and fight against domestic violence. Collaboration with Media can also help to launch positive messages regarding gender equality in general, and against domestic violence in particular.
- Meetings with children in schools (primary to high school) can be organized to inform them on the importance of respect and protection of gender equality and fight against domestic violence.
- Meetings with health personnel on the importance of reporting the cases of domestic violence and preserving the confidentiality of the cases.
- Serious legal measures (such as imprisonment sentences) must be undertaken by the responsible structures towards the perpetrators in cases of violation of the Protection Order.
- Organization of regional forums at district level, where each district (municipality/commune) can bring on its success stories, positive experiences, and challenges faced in regard to management of domestic violence cases. Part of these forums can be actors from the

multidisciplinary groups, as well as representatives of Police Office, Court, NGOs, Gender Equality and Domestic Violence Local Structure, Social Services, and also Head of Commune, Mayor.

- Programs aiming at women empowerment can be developed, targeting the economic and social reintegration of female victims of domestic violence.
- Gender mainstreaming must be carried out to the long and short term policies and strategies at Municipality and also District levels.

4.3 Economic development

Recommendations regarding the economic development area:

- Advocacy and lobbying with Ministry of Labor, Social Issues and Equal Chances and the Ministry of Economy to create fiscal facilities for women entrepreneurs in order to support women's business initiatives.
- Capacity building of local structures' representatives (Municipality, Labor Office etc.) to facilitate participation of women in labor market by evaluating the local market demands and women's potential.
- Potential programs and projects must be drafted by the local government and civil society aiming at economic empowerment of women based on market demands, as well as evaluation of the marginalized women's needs.
- Establishment of a Professional Formation Center in Burrel district to build the professional capacities of women and men in specific professions, identified from the market demands' evaluation, in collaboration with the local Labor Office.
- Programs aiming at economic and social empowerment of women can be prepared in order to support the successful reintegration of women in the public life.

4.4 Social services

There are several aspects of the social services' sector where immediate intervention is necessary.

Some suggestions and recommendations to improve the social services are as follows:

- Increase of the monthly amount of economic assistance is essential in order for the beneficiaries to be able to fulfill the family's basic needs (food, clothing, education etc.).
- According to the law, economic assistance can be received only by the head of the family. An amendment to this legal item is necessary in order for women to have the same right as men to receive the economic assistance provided for their families.

- An Emergency Center for victims of domestic violence must be established, available to shelter victims of domestic violence from 24 to 72 hours, as a transitory shelter in cases when the victim is removed from the house and is waiting for a long term shelter arrangement.
- A Daily Center for children with mental and physical disabilities must be immediately established in order to support these children and their families.
- More investments must take place in schools in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning process, such as establishing laboratories, to facilitate the interactive learning process of students.

Annex I.

Evaluation of community on local governance through "Score Card Methodology"

Scores: 1 – 5

1 – Very bad 2 – Bad 3 – Neither good nor bad 4 – Good 5 – Very good

AREA	INDICATOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
Women's participation in local decision making	Implementation of gender quota by the political parties in the local elections	2	<i>The gender quota is generally respected but this is not always the case. However, women's representation in Ulez Commune Council is satisfactory.</i>
	Role of Women's Political Forums in increasing the representation of women in important public decision making	1	<i>Women in our community do not have an active role. There are no Women's Forums, so women are voluntarily organized among themselves.</i>
	Community participation in general and women's participation in particular in local decision making	4	<i>According to the participants, community members participate in the planning of the budget and women are a part of it. Community members are called by the village leaders and they contribute with ideas and suggestions on budget planning.</i>
	Women representation in important public decision making	3	<i>Women and men are equally involved in decision making. In Ulez Commune Council, there are 5 females out of 11 members in total. The Head of Commune Council and the secretary are also females.</i>
Addressing violence against women	Informing the community in general and women in particular on the law against domestic violence	3	<i>They have knowledge about the law but it is difficult to have the cases of domestic violence reported.</i>
	Addressing of violence by the local structures	2	<i>It is the duty of the Economic Assistance Office to report cases of domestic violence. However it is very difficult to report the cases as they might become public</i>

AREA	INDICATOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
			<i>when reported to the Police.</i>
	Awareness raising campaigns organized by local structures to address issues regarding domestic violence	1	<i>There have been no such campaigns. Several meetings and trainings with women have been organized by one organization.</i>
	Specific policies in place which guarantee reintegration of female victims of domestic violence	1	<i>There are no specific policies in place which guarantee the reintegration of female victims of domestic violence.</i>
Economic situation	Initiatives undertaken by local structures which support and promote employment of women	1	<i>There are no such initiatives as the commune's budget is very small and the employment chances are almost inexistent.</i>
	Existing local services which help and improve professional formation of women	1	<i>There are no local policies offering fiscal facilities to support and promote women's businesses. SNV offered several professional courses while active in Peshkopi, but no such courses are available anymore.</i>
	Local policies in regard to fiscal facilities which support and promote women's businesses	1	<i>No information available</i>
Social services and local infrastructure	Social centers at local level	1	<i>No information available</i>
	Economic assistance		
	Infrastructure of crèches and kindergartens		
	Infrastructure of schools		
	Infrastructure of roads		



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