

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN OF THE COMMISSION FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION FOR 2026–2029

1. Introduction and Situation Analysis

The Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (CPPD, the Commission), as an autonomous and independent body, pursuant to the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, responsible for the protection, prevention, and promotion of equality and non-discrimination, plays a crucial role in advancing human rights and ensuring equal access to justice for all citizens in North Macedonia, as well as persons under international protection and stateless persons. Although sex and gender are considered as grounds for discrimination that are integrated into the work of the CPPD, the analysis of institutional policies, procedures, and practices through the conducted Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) in 2024, showed that further systematic integration of the gender perspective is needed in both, the internal operations and external activities of the Commission. To this end, with the support of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, the Commission initiated the development of its first Gender Equality Action Plan for 2026-2029.

The process of developing the Action Plan for Gender Equality identified several challenges. At the institutional level, the CPPD previously lacked a comprehensive system for gender mainstreaming, formal mechanisms for coordination and monitoring of gender equality issues as well as developed monitoring and reporting tools with gender-sensitive indicators. Additionally, in terms of human resources and organizational culture, the findings indicated a need for further advancement of professional development policies, work-life balance, and systems for employee motivation and support.

Regarding the external operations, although the CPPD acts on complaints of discrimination based on sex and gender, further improvement of procedures is needed, mainly through the gender-inclusive and intersectional approach, as well as the systematic use of sex-disaggregated statistical data in analysis and reporting. Additionally, the use of gender-inclusive language is not applied consistently across all communication products and activities of the Commission, and public campaigns and educational activities in the field of gender equality are carried out without a long-term and systematic framework. This is mostly due to the lack of funds in the CPPD budget allocated for promotional activities; every year, the Commission files funding requests but these are not approved by the Ministry of Finance, which is why the Commission heavily depends on donor support for promotional activities.

These challenges highlight the need for a strategic and coordinated approach that will ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the institutional culture, policies, services, and communication of the CPPD, both externally and internally.

2. Proposed Solution

The Action Plan for Gender Equality of the CPPD for 2026–2029 represents a strategic framework for the integration of gender equality principles into all aspects of the CPPD operations. The plan provides for the establishment of institutional mechanisms, strengthening the capacities of members and employees, advancing the procedures for handling complaints, improving communication, and developing partnerships with institutions, civil society organizations, and international organizations.

By implementing the Plan, the CPPD is expected to ensure a systemic approach to gender equality, improve the quality and accessibility of its services, and contribute to more effective protection against discrimination, especially for women and individuals facing multiple and intersectional discrimination. This Action Plan incorporates a gender-transformative and intersectional approach.

3. Strategic and specific goals

Strategic Goal 1:

Establishing an effective and sustainable internal system for gender equality

This goal focuses on improving the management of complaints, development of partnerships, improvement of communication, and raising public awareness of gender equality and non-discrimination.

This strategic goal aims to ensure the full integration of the gender perspective into the policies, structures, procedures, and organizational culture of the CPPD.

Specific objectives:

- Strengthening policies, structures, and governance with a fully integrated gender perspective;
- Improving working conditions and organizational culture with a fully integrated gender perspective;
- Strengthening capacities and developing an internal framework for gender equality.

Strategic Goal 2:

Advancing external activities and services with an integrated gender perspective

This goal focuses on improving the management of complaints, development of partnerships, improvement of communication, and raising public awareness of gender equality and non-discrimination.

Specific objectives:

- Improving procedures and providing services with a gender-sensitive and intersectional approach;
- Gender-sensitive communication and language, raising awareness and education.

4. Key success indicators

By the end of 2029, the following results are expected to be achieved:

- Adopted and fully functional Action Plan for Gender Equality;
- Established institutional mechanisms for gender equality (coordinator, deputy coordinator, and working group);
- Revision of at least 50% of internal policies and procedures with an integrated gender perspective;
- Training of at least 80% of members and employees on gender equality and gender mainstreaming;
- Established system for sex-disaggregated statistics and gender-sensitive reporting;
- Roll out of gender-sensitive procedures for management of complaints and the application of an intersectional approach;
- At least three new partnerships per year with relevant stakeholders;
- Adopted guidelines for gender-inclusive communication and their application in at least 90% of official documents and publications;
- At least two national campaigns conducted annually and at least eight informative workshops in the planning regions of the country;
- Increased visibility and trust in the CPPD among the public and target groups.

5. Budget and funding sources

The total budget for the implementation of the Action Plan for 2026-2029 is estimated at 271,000 Euros. The budget is allocated by strategic areas and includes the following:

- Policy development and institutional mechanisms – €27,000
- Improving organizational culture and professional development – €14,000

- Training, mentorship, and capacity development – €85,000
- Advancement of procedures and services – €45,000
- Gender-inclusive communication and campaigns – €100,000.

The financing will be provided through:

- CPPD Budget;
- International donor support;
- OSCE Mission in Skopje support;
- EU Project support;
- Support from the Council of Europe, United Nations agencies, and other development partners;
- Project support (ongoing CERV project);
- Possible bilateral and multilateral support programs for gender equality and human rights.

6. Partnerships and Support

The successful implementation of the Action Plan will depend on the continuous cooperation with domestic and international partners. Key partners include the OSCE Mission to Skopje, the Council of Europe, the European Union, United Nations agencies, the academic community, civil service organizations, Equinet – European Network of Equality Bodies, state institutions, municipalities, the media, trade unions, and Chambers of Commerce.

The partners will contribute by providing expert support, training, exchange of good practices, financial support, and joint implementation of activities to promote gender equality and non-discrimination.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the CPPD Action Plan for Gender Equality for 2026-2029 represents an integral part of its implementation. The Equal Opportunities Coordinator, the Deputy Equal Opportunities Coordinator, and the Gender Equality Working Group, established in the second half of 2026 by a decision of the Commission, will be responsible for tracking the implementation of measures and activities.

A system will be established for the regular collection of gender-disaggregated data, tracking indicators (at the activity and outcome levels), and preparing annual progress reports. An internal assessment of the achieved results will be conducted once a year, while a mid-term

evaluation will be carried out during the first half of 2028. In early 2030, a final independent evaluation of the impact of the Action Plan for Gender Equality will be conducted.

The findings from the monitoring and evaluation will be used to update activities, improve institutional policies, and ensure the sustainability of the achieved results beyond the designated time frame for implementation of the Action Plan, as well as for the development of the new CPPD Action Plan for Gender Equality for 2030-2033.

Annex 1: Tabular overview of the Action Plan for Gender Equality for the period 2026–2029

ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY

COMMISSION FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION (CPPD)

2026 – 2029

Strategic goal 1. ESTABLISHING AN EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE INTERNAL SYSTEM FOR GENDER EQUALITY									
Specific objective 1.1: Strengthening policies, structures and governance with a fully integrated gender perspective									
Starting point: - The CPPD has not adopted an Action Plan for Gender Equality and has not established a systematic approach for integrating the gender perspective into all policies, procedures and strategic documents. - No formal structure has been established within the CPPD for coordination and monitoring of gender equality related issues. - Existing internal documents and procedures have not been analyzed from a gender perspective and do not contain gender-sensitive indicators for monitoring and reporting. - The employees and members of the CPPD have limited guidance and tools for the systematic mainstreaming of the gender perspective into their work.									
Desired goal (target): - By the end of 2029, the CPPD will have adopted a functional Gender Equality Action Plan. - Institutional mechanisms for gender equality have been established, including a coordinator, deputy coordinator and a working group. - At least 50% of internal policies, procedures and strategic documents have been reviewed and aligned with the principles of gender equality. - A monitoring and reporting system with gender-sensitive indicators has been established.									
Result	Measure	Activities related to Measure	Score level indicators	Activity level indicators	Responsible departments /persons	Partners	Time frame	Budget and source of financing	PRR recommendation
Strengthened gender-sensitive policies and strategic documents	1.1.1: Development and adoption of gender-sensitive policies and strategic documents	- Establishing a working group to develop Gender Equality Action Plan - Training for the working group - Development of Gender Equality Action	Number of documents analysed and full gender mainstreaming of Commission policies The degree of integration of	- 10 people trained - 1 Gender Equality Action Plan adopted - 1 SOP or checklists adopted - % of revised internal documents that fully include	CPPD, employees and members	OSCE	First half 2026	Budget: 20,000 Euros Source: CPPD and OSCE	2 4 7 10 26

		Plan - Integration of the gender perspective into all internal policies and procedures - Development of checklists or SOPs for gender mainstreaming in documents - Developing gender-sensitive indicators and a monitoring and evaluation system	the gender perspective in documents (through internal or external evaluation)	gender mainstreaming (minimum 50%)					
CPPD has an established system and policies for gender equality.	1.1.2: Establishing institutional mechanisms for gender equality	- Appointment of a coordinator and deputy coordinator for equal opportunities (within the systematization act, a description of the position of coordinator or deputy coordinator for equal opportunities should be included in one	Level of participation in the decision-making process (minimum 60%) Effectiveness of coordination (through internal or external evaluation)	- Appointed coordinator and deputy coordinator for equal opportunities - Adopted internal policy and Job Description of the coordinator and deputy coordinator positions - 1 working group on gender equality established - A mentoring	CPPD, employees and members	OSCE	Second half 2026	Budget: 7,000 Euros Source: CPPD and OSCE	3 5

		of the relevant job positions) - Adoption of internal policy and job description of the coordinator and deputy coordinator positions - Establishing a working group on gender equality (composed of a coordinator and deputy + GS + 1 employee + 2 members of the CPPD) - Mentoring support program for the coordinator and deputy coordinator		support program for the coordinator and deputy coordinator					
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Specific objective 1.2: Improving working conditions and organizational culture with a fully integrated gender perspective

Starting point:

- The CPPD does not have formalized policies on flexible working hours and remote work.
- There is no established system of stimulating and supporting professional development that takes into account aspects of gender equality.
- Gender-disaggregated data on the use of internal measures and benefits are not systematically collected.
- Further improvement of organizational culture and work-life balance is needed.

Desired goal (target):

- By the end of 2029, the CPPD will have adopted operational policies for flexible working hours and remote work.
- At least 50% of employees have access and the opportunity to use flexible measures in accordance with the established criteria.

- A training and professional development fund has been established with clear criteria and a gender-sensitive approach. - Regular monitoring of employee satisfaction and the effects of measures is ensured through gender-disaggregated data.									
Result	Measure	Activities related to Measure	Score level indicators	Activity level indicators	Responsible departments/ persons	Partners	Time frame	Budget and source of financing	PRR recommendation
Adopted policies for flexible working hours and remote work	1.2.1: Introducing flexible working practices	- List of criteria for using the policy - Making a decision specifying clear conditions for remote work (new Regulation or Decision) - Adopted Rulebook on Flexible Working Hours - List of criteria for using the measure - Revised Collective Agreement	% of employees using the measure - Employee satisfaction survey and perception of work-life balance (to be conducted every two years)	- Adopted procedures/ policies for flexible working hours and remote work % of employees using the measure (minimum 50%) - collection of data on submitted requests/notifications on submitted and approved requests for use of the measure	CPPD, employees and members		Second half of 2026 through to the end of 2029	Budget: 5,000 Euros Source: CPPD	16
An incentive system has been established in the CPPD through training and award fund.	1.2.2: Introduction of incentive/ stimulation systems	- Establishing a fund for adult training and learning, including gender equality - Providing financial resources to the Fund on an	Satisfaction survey on the implemented measure	1 Fund established and budget provided on an annual basis - Collection of gender-disaggregated data on submitted and approved requests	CPPD, employees and members		First half of 2027 through to the end of 2029	Budget: 3,000 Euros per year, total: 9,000 Euros Source: CPPD	25 15

		annual basis - Establishment of a Commission to decide on requests for the use of the fund, taking into account the criteria for gender equality and adequate and fair gender representation - Introduction of criteria for awarding employees, including the criteria for fair and appropriate gender representation or within the existing performance assessment system of administrative officials, in addition to the already established criteria, adding the criterion for fair and		- Collecting gender-disaggregated data on rewarded employees on an annual basis						
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		appropriate gender representation							
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Specific objective 1.3: Strengthening capacities and developing an internal framework for gender equality

Starting point:

- There is no systematized plan for continuous capacity building of members and employees for gender equality.
- The gender perspective is not fully integrated into the personnel policies, human resources procedures and operational tools of the CPPD.
- There is a lack of manuals, checklists and guidelines for the practical application of gender mainstreaming.
- Mechanisms for systematic monitoring of the impact of gender policies and measures have not been established.

Desired goal (target):

- By the end of 2029, at least 80% of members and employees will have completed training on gender equality and gender integration.
- The CPPD has adopted manuals, checklists and operational tools for applying the gender perspective in daily operations.
- The gender perspective is integrated into key personnel policies and procedures.
- A functional system for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the effects of gender mainstreaming has been established.

Result	Measure	Activities related to Measure	Score level indicators	Activity level indicators	Responsible departments/ persons	Partners	Time frame	Budget and source of financing	PRR recommendation
The CPPD systematically and continuously develops its own capacities regarding gender equality.	1.3.1: Continuously upgrading the capacities of employees regarding gender equality	- Development and adoption of a plan for capacity building of employees regarding gender equality - Conducting training for members and employees on gender equality and recognizing	- Increased knowledge (pre and post training testing) - System of transfer of knowledge acquired during trainings - % of employees who apply the	- Number of training cycles (minimum 3 per year) - % of trained staff (minimum 80%) - keeping gender-separated statistics on the number of people who attended training	CPPD, employees and members	OSCE, Council of Europe, EU, UN	Second half of 2026 through to the end of 2029	Budget: 70,000 Euros Source: CPPD with donor support	13 14 18 21 22 23 24

		gender stereotypes - Conducting training for members and employees on anti-discrimination based on sex and gender - Conduct training on identifying gender-based violence - Conducting training on gender responsive budgeting for members and employees - Implementation of two advanced trainings on gender mainstreaming - Regular monitoring of the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting - Training for	acquired knowledge (through external evaluation)						
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		members and employees on recognizing and using gender-inclusive language - Specialized trainings (human resources, finance, coordinator and deputy coordinator, projects and M&E and work with vulnerable groups)							
The CPPD has developed operational tools and personnel policies with gender aspects included.	1.3.2: Development of operational tools and personnel policies for integrating the gender perspective	- Development of a Manual and guidelines for gender mainstreaming - Development of checklists for personnel policies with gender perspectives included - Adoption of regulation on workplace harassment, integrity, etc., including	-Survey/ assessment of the practical applicability of the tools and improved compliance (through internal evaluation)	- Development of three rulebooks with a fully mainstreamed gender perspective - Mainstreaming gender perspective in at least three personnel issues - Creating a checklist - Development of a manual and a guideline for gender mainstreaming	CPPD, employees and members		Second half of 2027 through to the end of 2029	Budget: 15,000 Euros Source: CPPD	11 17 27 33

		gender perspectives - Inclusion of gender aspects in job advertisements, selection of volunteers, formation of advisory bodies of experts, realization of business trips, as well as in the Rulebook on jobs' systematization - Establishing mechanisms for continuous monitoring of the impact of gender policies in projects, taking into account the intersectional approach. - Developing gender-sensitive indicators for M&E and ensuring regular gender-sensitive reporting on progress in all		- Establishing mechanisms for continuous monitoring of the impact of gender policies in projects, taking into account the intersectional approach. - Developing gender-sensitive indicators for M&E and ensuring regular gender-sensitive reporting on progress in all areas of the CPPD's work, including in the area of gender equality.					
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		areas of the CPPD's work, including in the area of gender equality.							
Risk: • Insufficient institutional and financial support for the implementation of the planned measures and activities. • Limited human resources and increased workload that may affect the timely implementation of activities. • Insufficient knowledge or resistance to the integration of the gender perspective among some employees and decision-makers. • Changes in the organizational structure, management or legal framework that may affect the continuity of the implementation of measures.									
Assumption: • The CPPD management and members will provide continuous support for the implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan. • Adequate financial and human resources will be provided for the implementation of the planned activities. • Employees will actively participate in training, planning processes and implementation of gender equality measures. • Support from international organizations and partners will continue to strengthen institutional capacities for gender equality.									

Strategic goal 2. IMPROVING EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES WITH A GENDER PERSPECTIVE									
Specific objective 2.1: Improving procedures and providing services									
Starting point: • The CPPD acts on complaints related to discrimination, but there are no fully developed gender-sensitive procedures for monitoring and analyzing cases. • Gender-disaggregated statistical data and analyses are not used systematically in planning and reporting. • Further improvement of cooperation with institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders in the area of gender equality is needed.									
Desired goal (target): • By the end of 2029, all relevant procedures for handling complaints will contain a gender-sensitive approach. • Gender-disaggregated data on the CPPD cases and services and for the recognition of intersectional and structural discrimination are collected and analyzed. • Sustainable partnerships have been established with institutions, civil society organizations and international organizations to promote gender equality. • The availability and accessibility of services for all groups of citizens, especially vulnerable categories, has increased.									
Result	Measure	Activities related to Measure	Score level indicators	Activity level indicators	Responsible departments/ persons	Partners	Time frame	Budget and source of financing	PRR recommendation

The CPPD applies a gender-inclusive and intersectional approach in complaint management and protection against discrimination .	2.1.1: Improving complaint management procedures	- Analysis of existing procedures for complaints' management from a gender perspective and an intersectional approach (both from an internal and external perspective). - Introduction of new functions in the DMS (from an internal aspect) for recording and monitoring cases based on sex, gender and other grounds of discrimination for which information is presented externally. - Development of standards and guidelines for applying an intersectional approach when reviewing complaints. - Inclusion of a	- % of cases processed using an intersectional approach - Quality of opinions produced with a gender-transformative approach (external expert analysis) - Regular use of gender-disaggregated data in analysis and reporting.	- Advanced DMS with intersectional and gender-transformative approaches included - Gender-transformative Annual Report - At least two guidelines/ procedures for gender-sensitive treatment have been developed. - At least 80% of members and employees trained in applying an intersectional approach.	CPPD, Statistics, Protection Department, members	OSCE, Council of Europe, EU, UN	Second half of 2026 and 2027	Budget: 25,000 Euros Source: CPPD with donor support	31 34
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		gender perspective in the analytical part of the Annual Report of the CPPD. - Training and mentoring support for members and employees for preparing opinions and recommendations with a gender-transformative approach. - Development of gender-sensitive procedures for monitoring, analysis and reporting on cases. - Establishing a practice for regular collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data on complaints.							
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The CPPD has established inclusive and sustainable partnerships to promote gender equality and non-discrimination .	2.1.2: Developing inclusive partnerships and collaboration	- Development of gender-inclusive criteria for selecting partnerships - Mapping of relevant institutions, civil society organizations and networks working on gender equality and non-discrimination - Establishing and regularly updating the database of partners and collaborators. - Evaluation of the contribution of the partnerships - Memorandums of Understanding with relevant stakeholders in the field of gender equality - Establishing an informal partnership network for	- The quality of cooperation with the partners (internal and external evaluation of cooperation) - Stakeholder inclusiveness from the mutual partnerships (internal and external evaluation) - Established functional partnerships with relevant organizations and institutions - Improved inter-institutional cooperation on equality issues	- Number of established partnerships (minimum 3 per year) - Number of signed Memorandums of Cooperation (minimum 2 per year) - Number of implemented joint activities and events with partners (minimum 4 per year) - At least 50% of joint activities include representatives of vulnerable and marginalized groups. - Developed and updated register of partners and networks.	CPPD, members and Prevention Department	Regional networks, Equinet, institutions, civil society organizations and, International organizations	2026-2029	Budget: 20,000 Euros	28 29 30
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		information exchange and coordination of activities. - Implementing joint activities with partners with the involvement of affected groups							
Specific objective 2.2: Gender-sensitive communication and language, awareness raising and education									
Starting point: - Gender-sensitive language is not consistently used in all internal and external communications of the CPPD. - Additional guidance and tools are needed for implementing gender-sensitive communication. - Activities to raise public awareness about gender equality and gender-based discrimination are implemented occasionally and without a systematic framework.									
Desired goal (target): - By the end of 2029, gender-sensitive language is integrated into all official documents, publications and communication products of the CPPD. - Guidelines for gender-sensitive communication have been adopted and are being regularly implemented. - Regular information and educational campaigns on gender equality and prevention of discrimination are conducted. - The level of public awareness about gender equality and the role of the CPPD in protection against discrimination has increased.									
Result	Measure	Activities related to Measure	Score level indicators	Activity level indicators	Responsible departments/persons	Partners	Time frame	Budget and source of financing	PRR recommendation
The CPPD uses gender-inclusive language in its communication and work.	2.2.1: Introducing gender-inclusive language	- Development of a Glossary with the Departments of Macedonian and Albanian Language at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje	- Increased use of acquired skills and knowledge (with internal evaluation) - Consistency in gender-inclusive communication	- Glossary created - Guidelines for gender-inclusive communication developed and adopted. - Updated website with gender-inclusive	CPPD, members and Employees	Department of Macedonian Language, Department of Albanian Language, OSCE, Council of Europe, EU,	2027 and 2028	Budget: 20,000 Euros Source: CPPD with donor support	32 35

		- Development and adoption of Guidelines for Gender-Inclusive Communication of the CPPD - Updating the website with gender-inclusive language - Preparation of templates for announcements, opinions, reports and publications with gender-inclusive language	n (external evaluation)	language included - Harmonized acts (minimum 80%) - Ready-made templates with gender-inclusive language included - Minimum 90% of new publications and documents aligned with the guidelines.		UN			
CPPD regularly conducts campaigns and educational activities aimed towards gender equality or with a gender-inclusive approach.	2.2.2: Campaigns and educational activities	- Development of an annual communication plan with a gender perspective. - Celebration of relevant international days (March 8, November 25, December 10, etc.). - Implementation of national campaigns (at	- Increased visibility of the CPPD (through external evaluation) - Increased public awareness with a special focus on target groups (surveys)	- Annual communication plan adopted - At least 2 surveys to measure public awareness, conducted by 2029 - Number of participants covered by the activities (at least 500 in person and 100,000 online impressions)	Members, Prevention Department, Sector for International Cooperation and Statistics	AAAMU, municipalities, MRTV and local TV stations, CSOs, Chamber of Commerce, Trade Unions, OSCE, Council of Europe, EU and UN	2026-2029	Budget: 20,000 Euros per year, total: 80,000 Euros Source: CPPD with donor support	36 39 40

		least 2) - Development of videos and promotional materials with a gender-inclusive approach - Guest appearances on national and local TV stations and shows - Broadcasting of videos on national and local television stations - Organizing open days with citizens - Social media posts - Informative workshops with institutions and partners - Preparation of success stories of CPPD cases and activities related to gender equality and intersectional discrimination where sex and gender intersect		- Number of conducted campaigns (minimum 2) - Number of organized informative workshops (minimum 8, one in each planning region of the country) - Number of videos and promotional materials (minimum 3 videos, 1000 copies of promotional materials printed in different languages) - Number of guest appearances on national and local TV stations and shows (minimum 8) - Number of open days with citizens (minimum 8, one in each planning region)					
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		with other grounds - Publishing a Handbook on Gender Inclusion, including recommendations for action intended for institutions, distributed at the promotional activities of the CPPD		of the country) - Increasing social media reach by at least 20% per year - A Handbook on Gender Inclusion with recommendations for action intended for institutions has been developed.					
Risk: • Insufficient awareness or interest by the public and target groups on issues related to gender equality and discrimination based on sex and gender. • Limited cooperation or insufficient coordination with institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders. • Lack of quality and gender-disaggregated data for analysis, planning and monitoring of the effects of measures. • Emergence of negative public narratives, stereotypes or misinformation related to gender equality that can reduce the impact of campaigns and activities.									
Assumption: • Relevant institutions, civil society organizations and international partners will continue to actively cooperate with the CPPD. • There will be a willingness among target groups to participate in consultations, campaigns, trainings and other awareness-raising activities. • The CPPD will have access to relevant data and information needed to create gender-sensitive policies and services. • Continuous support will be provided for communication and educational activities aimed at promoting gender equality and non-discrimination.									