



PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS

Skopje
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Perspectives of women in rural areas

Baseline study of the status and livelihoods of women in rural areas
& recommendations for gender responsive policy responses

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Foreword

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ has made significant progress in advancing the implementation of national commitments to gender equality. Respect for women's human rights and a commitment to the advancement of gender equality are key principles and objectives for the Macedonian Government and are enshrined within the constitution and in numerous specific laws. Gender equality mechanisms have been established at national and local level, specific policies have been adopted and the legislative framework has been improved with the recent revision of the Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Recognizing that equality needs to go hand in hand with equity, the National Action Plan for Gender Equality for 2007–2012 stipulates that working towards “gender equality and coping with existing inequalities very often means working differently with men and women, admitting that women often have different needs and priorities, face different obstacles, have different aspirations, and contribute to development differently.” Despite the progress made in the institutional, policy and legal framework, however, gender gaps and inequalities continue to persist, especially among the most vulnerable.

In an effort to provide meaningful technical assistance to the implementation of national priorities, UN Women supported the research initiative leading to this study as a contribution to one of the key strategic objectives of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality—the effective realization of the rights of women, including women in rural areas.

The present study is intended to provide a comprehensive assessment of the status of women in rural areas in the country as compared with the status of their male counterparts in rural areas and with the population of both men and women in urban areas, thus providing a baseline with which to design concrete measures leading to the empowerment of women in rural areas.

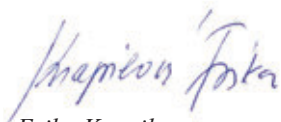
The study provides an analysis of existing legislative and policy frameworks and explores the extent of the social exclusion of women in rural areas, including their exclusion from the labour market, from local public and social life, and from participation in local decision-making processes. In addition to voicing the needs and challenges of women in rural areas and highlighting the gaps that need to be addressed to improve their status, the study identifies the available opportunities to challenge the barriers these women face.

This study thus encourages policy-makers to take stock of the disadvantages and challenges experienced by women in rural areas but also to look beyond these impediments and explore the potential these women have for their own advancement and for the development of their communities. The study offers insights into the needs and concerns of rural women and encourages local as well as national policy-makers and decision-makers to review community development from the perspectives of women in rural areas. It calls for local and national policies to be adapted to the realities faced by these women in order to remove the barriers they face on a daily basis. Last but not least, the study underlines the urgent need to ensure that rural women are included in key decision-making processes.

¹ “Pursuant to Resolution 817 of the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations provisionally refers to the country for all its purposes as ‘the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’.

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Investing energy and resources into creating an environment supportive for women in rural areas will not only ensure progress for such women but will also contribute to the overall development of the communities in which they live. As emphasized by Michelle Bachelet, the Executive Director of UN Women and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, the imperative to empower women in rural areas is clear: ‘We can no longer afford to leave women out ... the voices of women must be heard in decision making at all levels if we want to achieve lasting peace, democracy and sustainable development.’



Erika Kvapilova

Regional Programme Director

Central and South-Eastern Europe, UN Women

1. Introduction

Macedonia is a candidate country for EU membership and takes pride of its established mechanisms for equal opportunities that targets gender equality. Inspired by the common agricultural policy of the EU the country also reaffirmed its rural development policy. This is in particular important as 45% of the population in the country live in rural areas. Mainstreaming gender into the rural development policy as well as defining development priorities for rural women in other policy areas (such as education, health, social protection, and economy) becomes necessary as 49% of the rural residents are women.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was in 2006 particularly concerned about country lagging behind in progress on the status of rural women, as well as of ethnic non-majority women, particularly Roma and Albanian women. It concluded that in Macedonia rural women as well as women from ethnic minorities remain in a vulnerable and marginalized situation, in particular with regard to access to education, health, employment and participation in political and public life (CEDAW Committee, 2006).

While rural women have much in common with their urban counterparts, the spatial features of distance, low population densities and limited offer of public services that characterize rural areas, together with the mentality of rural societies, contribute to differences between rural and urban citizens of Macedonia. There is a growing need for focused research on rural women specifically because rural living and disadvantage impinge on them in ways different from men, associated with features such as their lesser access to transport, more women being in the elderly age groups, particular health considerations, more disadvantaged economic status, difficulties in access to the labor force, much greater family and caring responsibilities, lack of property rights, patriarchal family relations, relative invisibility in much agricultural and rural development programs and their under-representation in decision-making. Thus, as stated by Hughes (1997), there is need for the inclusion of women's subjective experiences as a legitimate tool of research in understanding the rural way of life.

Currently only two scientific studies exist to reveal some of the factors that facilitate the hard living and working conditions for women in rural areas. Dr. Jorde Jakimovski and Dr. Naum Matilov from the Institute for Social, Political and Juridical Research found that almost all rural women younger than 30 want to move to the cities, and that only 20 percent of older women want to stay in the village, but not work in agriculture. "The unemployment, bad communal infrastructure, and the insecurity of the agricultural markets were identified as the basic problems for women living in the countryside" (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002). Also the Union of the Women's Organizations of R. Macedonia came up with the study entitled "Gender Concept in the Rural Areas of Macedonia," where the general conclusion was that the rural areas are predominantly patriarchal; while politics and economy are reserved for the men, the role of women is mostly reproductive (Dimitrievska 2003). The Center for Research and Policy Making (hereinafter: CRPM) on the other side produced a study in 2008 that filled in the existing information gap on the role of women in the agricultural sector, later used to develop affirmative measures to make possible formalization of women's participation in agricultural production (CRPM 2008a).

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None of the aforementioned studies provided comprehensive information on which factors influence differences between rural and urban women and men in Macedonia neither provided quantitative and qualitative data for formulating sound policies that will recognize the specific needs of rural women. Therefore within its recent project, titled “Rural Women Study,²” CRPM team has developed research methodology to gather of quantitative and qualitative evidence for depicting the realities of rural women’s lives. For that purpose a Survey of rural women and men was conducted in rural areas in Macedonia and focus group discussions were held. The gathered data were cross analyzed with the official statistics, data from secondary sources (such as the mentioned studies) and background review of Laws, decrees and decisions, Annual reports from public bodies and reports from international organizations as well as civil society. All gathered data was analyzed and is presented in this baseline study. The study also analyzes different policy frameworks that respond, or do not respond, to the specific realities in which rural women live that have been depicted in the course of the project. Finally, the study offers policy recommendations that are expected to transform rural societies and improve livelihoods of rural women.

The study and the recommendations were consulted with number of institutions (state and non-state³). CRPM wants to acknowledge the financial and technical support from UN Women project office in Skopje provided to this project, particularly in the process of methodology development and finalization of the study.

2 The project “Rural Women Study” has been implemented by CRPM in period of February – May 2011. It was realized with financial support from UN Women, project office Skopje.

3 The approached peer reviewers included members of UN Human Rights and Gender Theme Group (including representatives of WHO, ILO, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UN Resident Coordinator Office – communications office, Human Rights officer), Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – Gender Equality Mechanism (Elena Grozdanova, Jovana Trencavska, Merdita Saliu), Ministry of Ministry of Agriculture, forestry and Water Management – gender focal point (Jovanka Margarita Deleva), and Vesna Jovanova, gender expert and UN Women Skopje Team.

2. Research methodology

Rural women in Macedonia and the socio-economic conditions in which they live has been scarcely researched so far. The State Statistical Office (hereinafter SSO) collects data that is rarely presented to facilitate the understanding of differences between the socio-economic status of urban and rural women. What is more, from the data regularly published by the SSO it is hard to analyze the relationships between age, ethnic belonging and socio-economic status of rural women. Yet considering the rapid changes that have affected the position and role of women in Macedonian society, primarily in urban areas, such generalization is likely to miss important differences between urban and rural women.

For this baseline study of rural women, we have combined several research methods. Firstly we base our analysis on the official and available statistical data from the State statistical office. We have learned and benefited a lot from reports of the government bodies that implement various policies and the research, analytical and monitoring work of several NGOs and academic institutions. In this context and in process of writing the background analysis we have identified, and in this study reflected upon, two independent studies that have been conducted on rural women in Macedonia in the last decade.

“The status and role of rural women” by Dr. Jorde Jakimovski and Dr. Naum Matilovis the first comprehensive study of this kind. The study is based on results of a survey of 800 women.⁴

The other study titled *“Gender concept in the rural environment in the Republic of Macedonia” by Dr. Vesna Dimitrievska* surveyed 1000 rural residents, of which half were women.⁵

For the purpose of writing this study we did not only use secondary sources, but generated and analyzed primary data. The research was designed to learn from and address the weaknesses of the other secondary sources in this field of study, but also to break grounds in areas not studied before. The research has been conducted in three phases using three different methodologies. In the first phase, implemented in the month of April 2011, we have conducted a field survey among men and women in 65 villages. Findings from this survey in the course of the Baseline study will be referred to as CRPM *Survey of rural women & men, 2011*. In the second phase, implemented in early May 2011, we have conducted 24 focus groups. Findings from the focus groups in the

4 The sample size ensures a large degree of precision (The precision of this study is equivalent to a confidence interval of 3.46% with a standard 95% level of certainty) and provides a good estimate of the parameters concerning the population of interest. The survey took account of the configuration of the village in which the women lived (i.e. whether it is located in the lowlands or in highlandous/hilly areas), thus ensuring a representative sample proportional to the number of women living in these two types of settlements. However, no consideration was given to the regional representation of rural women and thus depending on how the villages were chosen, the results might be under the influence of selection bias by the researcher (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002).

5 It also enables male-female comparisons and is representative of different regions, although not directly proportional to the regions' population size. An equal number of respondents were surveyed from 5 different areas (Skopje, Tetovo, Kumanovo, Probistip and Struga). This study has a high degree of precision with a confidence interval of 3.1% at 95% confidence level. However, unlike Jakimovski, this research did not distinguish between lowland and hilly/highlandous villages. This distinction would have possibly highlighted important differences between the two types of villages in terms of infrastructure, economic development, and modernization (Dimitrievska 2003).

course of the Baseline study will be referred to as CRPM *Focus groups of rural women and men, 2011*. Finally, we have interviewed number of policy makers in order to depict the capacity and support for transformative policies that may deliver for rural women.

2.1. Research sample

2.1.1. Survey research sample

The survey was conducted with a sample size of 602 respondents⁶ including both men and women, so as to allow for meaningful gender comparisons.

Our survey is representative in terms of the different statistical regions in the country, as well as the configuration of the villages (whether it is a highlandous-hilly village or located in the lowlands), proportional to the size of the rural population living in each region or type of village. The ethnic composition of the sample was also taken into account to correspond to the ethnic composition profile of the country's rural population. We defined villages above 800 meters altitude to be of the highland type (i.e. located in highlands areas) and those below this level we considered to be lowland type of villages (i.e. located in lowlands). The number of people surveyed was 10 per lowland village and 6 per highland village, having in total 480 people from lowlands and 122 respondents from highlands. In this respect, our study surpasses the limitations identified in the previous two studies.

In terms of demography, slightly more women were included in the sample compared to men that took part in the survey (279 men and 323 Women)⁷. The main reason for this was to allow for more comprehensive data on the reasons and factors that impinge rural women livelihoods that were used as a basis for this analysis. Over one third of the canvassing was conducted with women in the 36-55 age groups. The ethnic divisions and religious affiliations in the country were observed in order to have the sample reflecting them in representative manner as well. The detailed distribution of sample by demographic categories as well as confidence intervals are provided in annex on Methodological notes.

2.1.2. Focus groups research sample

To overcome the limitations coming out of the smaller sample size and to generate data on the perceptions and reasoning underlying peoples' perceptions and values, the team decided to apply focus groups discussions⁸ as additional methodological tool for the Baseline study. The total of 24 focus groups were organized; three in each of the eight statistical regions. In each region, two

6 In terms of sample size, *CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011* offers smaller degree of precision than the two previous ones, equivalent to a confidence interval (i.e. margin of error) of 3.99% at 95% confidence level (for a share of 50%). This means that if 50% of our 602 respondents choose the option 'unemployed' then we can claim with 95% certainty that the true number of unemployed people is between 46% and 54%. The confidence intervals are naturally larger for questions with smaller number of total respondents or questions analyzed based on a smaller sample size (such as the female sample analyzed separately). Detailed confidence intervals separately for men and women and for different shares of respondents are available in Annex 2.

7 Survey Questionnaire was prepared in Macedonian and Albanian version.

8 Focus group Scenarios were prepared for male and female groups, and in Macedonian and Albanian versions.

female and one male focus groups were held. Hence, total of 24 villages were visited holding 16 female and 8 male focus groups. Each group consisted of 7-10 participants, in total 144 of women and 74 men participated in the focus group discussions. The discussions lasted from 40 minutes to 90 minutes.

Six of the groups, held in predominantly Albanian villages (Ladorishte, Mislodezda, Shemshevo, Merovo, Stracinci and Zelino) were conducted in Albanian language, while the rest (18 groups) were conducted in Macedonian language⁹.

The detailed distribution of sample by villages where the focus groups were held, along with the statistical region they belong to as well as the gender composition of their participants is provided in annex on Methodological notes.

2.2. Research questions

The presented study aspires to channel the voices of the rural women about their needs and faced challenges while contributing to the increase of body of the knowledge on the roots of social exclusions of rural women in order to help define requirements for effective implementation of policies and actions that can contribute to greater social inclusion of rural women.

The report is foreseen to provide answers to the following research questions:

- a) who are the rural women?
- b) what are their capacities and their challenges with respect to men?
- c) what are the institutional framework that support them?
- d) are these policies corresponding to the capacities, needs and challenges with which rural women are faced?
- e) what are the gaps and how policies may transform lives of rural women?

2.3. Research limitations

A research of this kind inevitably faces a number of limitations that need to be taken into consideration when drawing relevant conclusions and drafting recommendations. Apart from the time limit to implement field research activities of this scope within 2 months, the delicate subject matter, and the mentality of the people in rural areas which is dominantly patriarchal, there are issues that arise from the methodological choices applied to the research, but also from the availability of primary data.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter the officially available sex disaggregated data are very limited in regard to presentation of urban / rural differences. The new web site of the State Statistical Office is commendable, but limits the liberty of the researcher to create hers/his own data basis, as it offers just the data basis available and already presented in SSO publications. And those are insufficient for analyzing the status of rural women.

⁹ All participants at the focus groups conducted in Albanian language had Albanian ethnic origin, all participants at the focus groups conducted in Macedonian language had Macedonian ethnic origin, except for the focus group in Staro Nagoricane where all participants were of Serbian ethnic origin.

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Regarding the primary data sources gathered for the purposes of this study we might note that there are several limitations. Firstly, the survey was conducted in the villages during the day, when many employed people were not available at their homes for surveying. As a result, some selection bias exists in the end results, which means that the real number of not employed people might be smaller than what our results indicate. To minimize this effect, we sought to conduct the biggest part of the survey during non-working days, including the weekend and one public holiday.

Another limitation was the lack of enforcement mechanisms to ensure that all questions are answered fully and consistently. This largely depends on the willingness of the respondent and enforcement is not recommendable in the course of the research. Since the questionnaire for the CRPM survey of rural women was extensive but there were cases when villagers could not answer fully all the questions in the survey. To minimize the impact of this occurrence during the analysis of our results we paid more attention to the percentage shares than the absolute numbers under each answer option.

The use of focus groups, for example, poses a number of problems: choice of participants (i.e. representativeness of the sample), choice of regions, reliability of information, factual knowledge of the participants regarding broader policy implications and others. We sought to minimize the negative aspects of this method through the use of specialist grass root organizations, such as OZO Sveti Nikole and the contacts we have gathered during the field survey. This allowed us to reach out to the target groups that have been researched.

In addition we utilized available secondary resources and statistical data where applicable, analyzed policy documents and last but not least, interviewed policy makers in order to depict the real situation and not ground it only on perceptions of the population surveyed or interviewed in the focus groups.

2.4. Structure of the study

In writing this report we embarked at firstly defining the rural women: who they are, where they live and what are their socio-economic characteristics. This is presented in chapter 3 of this study. Latter we try to depict the various factors that have an impact on the differences between urban and rural citizens in the country such as infrastructure (chapter 3), economy (chapter 4), and politics (chapter 5). The patriarchal family relations, the role of rural women in the family, their property rights and etc. are subject of analysis in the next Chapter 6. These factors especially show how rural living and disadvantage impinge on rural women in ways different from rural men. Finally analysis of the policy areas where rural women are direct beneficiaries is provided in Chapter 7. Conclusions are made in Chapter 8, followed by policy recommendations presented in Chapter 9.

3. Defining rural women

3.1. Who are the rural women?

Rural women represent the female population living in rural areas. According to article 24 of the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development (no. 134/2007) rural areas are defined as “geographic area that is defined by the following criteria: small number of population or low density of population; specific socio economic characteristics¹⁰”. The criteria are in detail defined in a Government’s ordinance, according to which a list of rural habitats is published in the Official Gazette. Cross-analyzing that list of localities with the official statistical data from the last available census from 2002, we have deducted that 45.2% of the total population (or 915,665 inhabitants) in Macedonia lives in rural areas. Correspondingly, the majority 54.8% of the population lives in urban areas.

According to the Jakimovski study which operates with data from the 1994 census the biggest number of **rural women are in age groups 40-49 and 30-39 years old**. The majority of rural men, on the other side, are in age group 20-29 and 30-39 years old.

Table 1: Rural women and men by age group and gender

<i>Age</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%	100%
0-19	5.9%	5.3%	8.1%
20-29	22.0%	23.2%	18.1%
30-39	21.6%	22.1%	19.8%
40-49	18.4%	17.4 %	21.9%
50-59	19.1%	18.9%	19.8%
<i>Unknown</i>	12.8%	13%	12.1%

Source: The status and the role of Rural Women, (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002)

It should be noted that the 2002 census presents the data per municipality and not village and since the ordinance of the Government defines the list of rural villages, we couldn’t deduct the same socio-demographic data as in Dr. Jakimovski and Dr. Matilov’s study. Nevertheless the CRPM Survey of rural women and men 2011 gathered data relevant for education of rural women and men. Other relevant data such as life-expectancy and health status are provisioned by the Institute of Public Health but do not present the rural/urban differences of the Macedonian population. Being not relevant for the focus of this research, this data are not presented in this study.

Rural women have lower levels of education compared to rural men and especially compared to urban women. The educational attainment of Macedonian women in rural areas is represented through percentage figures in the table below. Compared to rural men, vis a vis each educational categories, rural women have lower levels of education, having for example particularly more often then men completing no education or achieving only incomplete primary education, however the percentage differences for other levels do not seem very striking at first sight.

¹⁰ Specific-socio economic characteristics are defined in the “Decree for criteria for defining rural areas” (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia”, no. 137/2008). According to the decree a rural area is an area that has less than 3000 citizens, less than 51% employment, the areas which have only one economic activity (branch) and the surrounding area should have an agricultural physiognomy, meaning no streets, boulevards, housing, parks, economy, recreation and town squares.

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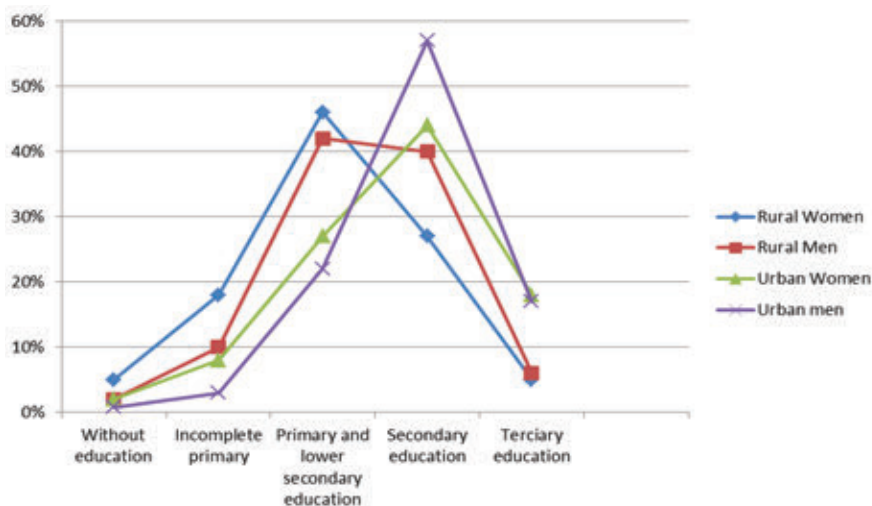
Table 2: Education attainment of rural residents per gender and in comparison to urban

<i>Educational attainment</i>	Rural Women	Rural Men	Urban Women	Urban men
<i>Without education</i>	5%	2%	2%	0.8%
<i>Incomplete primary</i>	18%	10%	8%	3%
<i>Primary and lower secondary education</i>	46%	42%	27%	22%
<i>3 years of secondary education y</i>	6%	11%	7%	13%
<i>4 years of secondary education</i>	21%	29%	37%	44%
<i>Higher education</i>	1%	2%	4%	4%
<i>University level education</i>	4%	4%	14%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Labour Force Survey 2009 (SSO 2010a)

The Chart below provides comparison for secondary and tertiary levels education. This method of presentation provides visual distribution with clearly defined means: we can argue that the average (or median) rural woman has only primary education, the average urban woman has secondary education, whereas the educational profile of the average rural male is between the two. In other words the chart shows how small differences among rural women and men cumulate particularly at level of secondary education, leaving rural women behind rural men significantly. However, there is one more notable difference between rural and urban women in regards to higher levels of education. As seen in the table above, but also clearly shown in the chart, three times more urban women (14%) have a university-level diploma compared to only 4% of rural women.

Chart 1: Education attainment of rural residents per gender and in comparison to urban



Source: Chart is based on Labour Force Survey (SSO 2009).

Note: Under tertiary education both, higher and university level education are considered, similarly for secondary level of education, which includes both 3 and 4 year long programs.

3. Defining rural women

According to the census data in 1994 (according to Jakimovski 2004), 46.6% of rural women were without or with incomplete primary education, 39.7% had finished elementary, 11.6% had secondary education and only 1.3% had higher or university education. Furthermore, 15% of rural women were illiterate and they were 3 times more likely to be illiterate than rural men. Comparing census and latest data presented above, it can be suggested there are positive improvements for all these categories from the situation 15 years ago. While number of women without or with incomplete education decreased by half (to 23 %) number of women completing at least primary education or secondary education increased significantly (46 % and 27 % respectively).

In the economic life of society, rural women represent the most excluded group, compared either to rural men or to their male and female urban counterparts. Activity rates recorded in recent years indicate unchallenged trends pointing to wide gender gap manifested with lowest activity for rural women. While 2 out of every 3 rural women are not actively looking for a job, it is only 1 out of 2 urban women and 1 out of 3 rural men that are not part of active labour force.

Table 3: Activity rates of population aged 15 years and over, by gender and urban/rural division

<i>Year</i>	<i>Urban Women</i>	<i>Urban Men</i>	<i>Rural Women</i>	<i>Rural Men</i>
2007	49	66	36	70
2008	49	67	36	71
2009	49	67	36	72

Source: LFS (according SSO 2010d)

3.2. Where they live?

Following the adoption of the Strategy for regional development 2009-2019 by the parliament, country was divided into 8 statistical regions in accordance with the EU's Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS-3 level). The division at this level is done for statistical purposes, while the primary administrative division is at Local Administrative Units (LAU-1) level, which counts 85 municipalities, incl. City of Skopje. The regions include: Skopje, Polog, Pelagonia, Vardar, the Eastern, Northeastern, Southeastern and Southwestern region.

Even though the Skopje region is statistically-wise the region with the largest absolute number of rural residents, the Polog region is the one with the largest proportion of its population being located in rural areas (69%). Skopje, on the other hand, is the second most urban region in the country from this perspective. The least rural region percentage-wise is the Pelagonia region (33.9%) followed by the Eastern region with 35% of the population living in rural areas, which is largely due to the dominance of small towns. The gender composition of the rural population is very close to 50%-50% due to the large statistical sample considered. According to some projections based on the same census, there is a slight dominance in numbers of males over females in all regions except the Skopje region, but in neither case is this difference bigger than 1%.

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Table 4: Population data per region and gender

Statistical regions	Total population	Percent women	Urban population	Rural population	Percent rural pop.
Eastern	203,208	49.4%	132,191	71,017	34.9%
South-Eastern	173,326	49.3%	77,632	95,694	55.2%
South-Western	219,701	49.9%	103,960	115,741	52.7%
Pelagonia	238,136	50.0%	157,467	80,669	33.9%
Polog	289,117	49.7%	88,762	200,355	69.3%
North-Eastern	172,787	49.2%	92,324	80,463	46.6%
Skopje	578,144	50.6%	366,948	211,196	36.5%
Vardar	149,993	49.2%	89,463	60,530	40.4%
Total	2,024,412	49.9%	1,108,747	915,665	45.2%

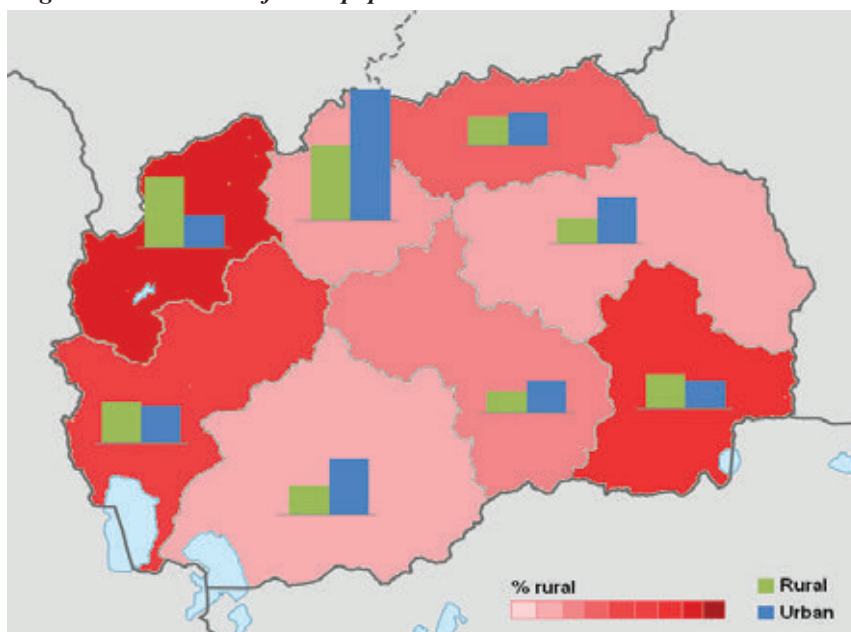
Source: Population Census 2002 (SSO 2004); own calculations. Regions of the Republic of Macedonia 2009 (SSO 2010b).

Notes: “Percent rural pop” refers to proportion of rural population in total population.

“Percent Women” refers to proportion of women in the total population

We can infer a very similar pattern for the rural population, and thus the percentages of women given above in total population are also representative of the rural female population. Consequently we might conclude that **rural women predominantly live in the rural regions of Polog, the South-eastern and South-western region**, as shown on the map below.

Map 1: Regional distribution of rural population in Macedonia



Source: CRPM, 2011

Note: Bars refer to population size in absolute numbers, while red color refers to percentage proportion of the rural population within each region.

3. Defining rural women

For rural women availability of certain infrastructures is of great importance. While roads enable access to public spaces and services or resources that are not available in close proximity of rural neighbourhoods (incl. education or employment opportunities, spots for marketing rural production or health care services), electricity, water supply or sewage have high significance of local importance. Electricity or water supply improve quality of life, reduce the workload related to child or house-care responsibilities, or provide essential inputs for economic activity conducted from home. Telephone and broadband internet availability enables women to be connected to broader networks of family, friends or other potential business partners and communities even when traditional norms bound them to their domestic environment. In this perspective, it is important to look beyond factual availability and explore voices and perspective of rural men and women in regards to their needs for improvement of available infrastructure and services.

In overall, rural residents are not content with the availability of basic services and infrastructure as they face the impact of their limited availability on everyday basis. An earlier study (Jakimovski 2004) revealed that rural residents in highland areas identify lack of availability in the following areas: centers for social protection (91%), cultural institutions (90%), medical institutions (88.6%), secondary schools (87%), courts (85.5%) and municipal government centers (68.7%), followed by elementary schools and shops. Whereas, villages located at lower altitudes have better access to services and infrastructure, most notably access to healthcare. Residents of these villages mostly identify lack of cultural (68%) and judiciary (67%) institutions, followed by secondary schools (58%), social protection centers (57%) and municipal government centers (45%, *ibid*). When asked about priorities, in the same study, residents of highland villages most frequently point to building communal infrastructure, easier access to healthcare and easier access and improvement of education as the most popular solutions to their problems, whereas residents of villages located in lowlands think that economic and agricultural development, as well as improved communal infrastructure would solve most effectively their concerns. In another study (CRPM 2009a: 80), rural residents cite road infrastructure (24.3%) and improvement of water supply/electric power grid (15.8%) as problem areas that should be improved the most, followed by educational (5.0%) and health institutions (4.7%).

Another survey, conducted in 2001 and approaching rural women only showed that when women were asked to prioritize the most major problem in their villages bad communal infrastructure, lack of money and unemployment hit the top spots being emphasized by every 5th or 4th woman (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 23). Infrastructure was particularly emphasized by women living in highland areas (36,4% against 21,2% of women from lowlands) while lack of employment opportunities was problem more often prioritized by women in lowlands (28.3 % against 20 % of women from highlands). Other prioritized problems included healthcare provision (emphasized by 8.7 of women from lowlands and 9.1 % of women from highlands) and social insecurity (8.4 % and 9.1 % respectively). Last but not least, 5.3 % of women emphasized gave priority to inadequate access to educational, cultural and other types of institutions.

Thus in following sections, assessment of status of infrastructure and services will be accompanied with perspectives of rural residents gained from CRPM Survey of rural women and men 2011.

3.2.1. Essential infrastructure and services supporting accessibility for rural men and women – analysis from a gender perspective

3.2.1.1. Water supply

In rural areas comparable water supply with urban areas is observed, but with limited volume to satisfy the needs and low quality of water. The percent of the rural population with public water pipeline installation is 72.3%, as compared to 87.7% of the total population, 18.7% have access to water under pressure from cisterns (compared to 8% of the total population), and 8.96% of the rural population lack water supply installation (4% for total population). The state of water supply, is not satisfactory in terms of: (i) insufficient quantities of high quality water, particularly noticeable in the highly populated areas of the East region; (ii) poorly equipped waterworks; and (iii) insufficient protection of the water springs and hygiene¹¹. Improvement of the water supply is in competence of four ministries Environment, Transport, Local self-Government and Health. The coordination of the planning and implementation is therefore difficult. However, improvement of water supply systems and irrigation in the north-eastern part of the country for seven municipalities is underway - Kratovo, Probistip, Zletovo, Lozovo, Stip, Karbinci and Sveti Nikole.

In the CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011 improvement of water supply was identified as high priority. However, considering the traditional roles in the family of both rural men and rural women and taking in account the survey results that show water supply as more of a priority of men living in lowland villages (38% of men as compared to 16 % of women) it can be indicated that water supply improvements are viewed are more needed in regards to agricultural production rather than to support domestic activities (washing, cooking, cleaning, personal hygiene etc.).

3.2.1.2. Sewage system

Sewage systems exist only in the cities. Rural areas have septic tanks that are not controlled and therefore are threat for the health of the rural citizens. The share of rural population with a public sewage installation is low and is estimated at 17.7% (for total population it is 60.1%). Total rural population without any installation for sewage is 8.9% (total population 4%)¹². There are no initiatives to construct sewage system in the rural areas.

The CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011 revealed needs for improvement of the sewage system often desired, by both male (67%) and female (68%) rural residents as many of the villages where the surveyed, do not have sewage system at all. This was especially the case with the villages located in highland areas.

3.2.1.3. Electricity

No great urban/rural disparities in terms of electricity supply are observed. The supply of electrical power is available to 99.75% of rural population and provided through transmission and distribution network with sufficient capacity of electric energy sources (1,430 MW). However, the electric network inside the rural dwellings is not modernized to sustain the regular uninterrupted supply of the energy to the domestic appliances (according to National program for agriculture and rural development 2007-2013).

¹¹ IPARD - National programme for agriculture and rural development 2007-2013

¹² IPARD - National programme for agriculture and rural development 2007-2013

The CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011 indicates overall content of rural residents with this relatively positive situation. Only 16 % of women and 25 % of men expressed the need for improvement of electricity infrastructure in their village. Lowlands inhabitants were a bit more satisfied (only 19 % desired improvements) than highlands villagers where every fourth of them claimed there is need for improvement of electricity (upgrade from mono-phase to two and three phased power supply).

3.2.1.4. Mobility - Roads infrastructure and use of transport services

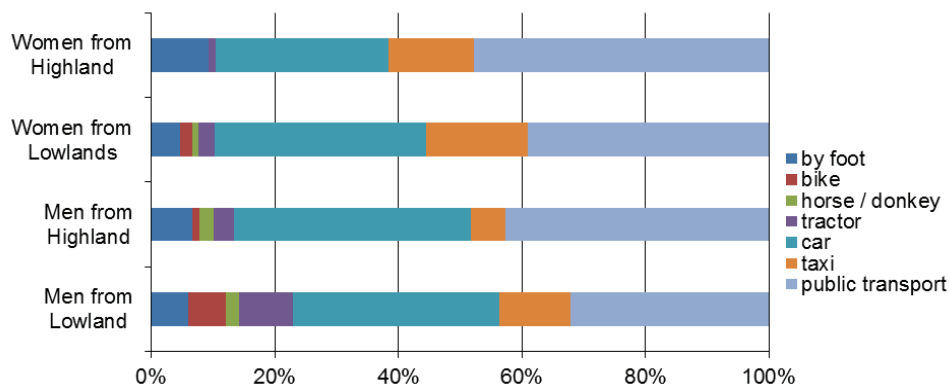
The road network in rural areas is poorly developed and without regular maintenance. According to the Law on Public Roads, the road network of the Republic of Macedonia administratively is divided on national, regional and local roads. National and regional roads are maintained from central level, whereas the local roads are maintained by the municipalities. The national road network is of the highest administrative classification and has importance for international links of the country, whereas the regional road network is of less administrative importance as it interconnects with the national road network and is of crucial importance to the municipalities. The total length of the road network is 13.186 km, out of which 909 km are national roads, 3.781 km are regional and 8.496 km are local roads (according to Operational program for regional development 2007-2009). Around 50% of the local roads are either soil based or unimproved at all and regular maintenance and extraordinary repair are a problem¹³. Recent years have been witnessing increasing trends in efforts to improve roads infrastructure.

However, according to *CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011* need for improvement of road network in rural areas is highly emphasized priority both in villages located in lowlands (51%) as well as highlands (54%). Need for improvement of road was more often emphasized by male respondents (59 %) than by women (45%) which might be indicating that men are in greater need of using public spaces and services beyond villages proximity than women whose responsibilities are still traditionally more bound to domestic environment.

Closely interlinked with roads infrastructure is use of transport services and means, be it public or private providers or own means of transport. As it will be shown later, number of services and opportunities (including education, employment opportunities or services, banks, posts etc.) are not available in close proximity of rural areas and thus use of transport services represent essential mean to reach those services. **According to the survey, public transport is available more in lowland rather than in highland rural areas and is more frequently used by women.** In terms of usage, the CRPM survey of rural women we have asked what kind of transport rural people use; and if they use public transport? The chart below compares use of public and other transport means. It shows public transport is especially important for women in the highlands but also in lowland areas. In both sub-areas, women use it more often than male counterparts living in same highlands or lowlands areas.

13 IPARD - National programme for agriculture and rural development 2007-2013

Chart 2: Usage of public transport



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

In this regard, it is also important to look at the capacity to use privately own means of transport. Gender stereotypes in terms of driving still exist. Women drive cars less than men and operating heavy agricultural machinery is not a ‘womanly’ activity. On national level, only about 25 % of driving licenses were issued to women in 2007 (according National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion 2010-2020). Though detailed data for rural/urban division is not available, focus groups findings presented below show that for some women it is still not socially acceptable to drive car. However, due to lack of available public transport, in rural areas, as the chart below shows the car represents the most often used vehicle for transportation, both for lowland and highland areas, followed by a taxi. Considerable gender differences might be observed in regard to the use of tractor as a means of transport. As it is used for agricultural activities and considering the traditional roles in the family driving a tractor is perceived as a male skill.

Rural Voices 1: Driving a car not for a rural woman

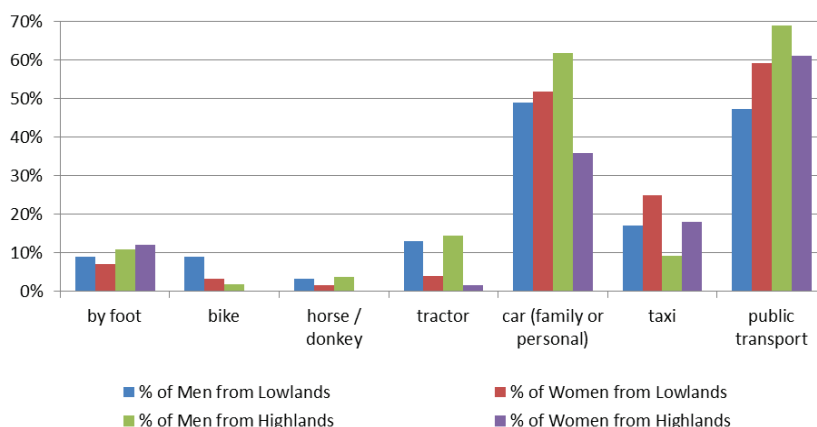
„In our community, women don't drive a car, only men do. I don't drive and don't want to learn because I'm afraid.“

Albanian woman
(Mislodezda village)

Operating heavy machinery culture-values-wise is not considered as womanly. Only a small number of women (all from Macedonian ethnic background) drive a car, while almost all men drive. Although women consider that nowadays it is normal for women to drive, things were different before, and since they mainly stayed at home, this skill was not necessary. The majority of women in focus groups point out the fear as the main factor for their lack of driving skills. This makes them quite dependent on the male family members, especially when it comes to performing chores outside of the village, such as: going to the doctor (especially specialists), going to the Employment Agency, the bank etc. Albanian women are more affected, since in their communities it is still considered as inappropriate for women to ride in a bus on their own.

Chart 3: Transport means per gender and habitat

Percentage of men and women from respective group using selected mode of transport (groups defined according to location & gender, respondents could have multiple answers)



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

3.2.1.5. Networking - Communications infrastructure and capacity for its use

The telephone network (both fixed lines and GSM) covers the whole territory and use of internet is rapidly increasing. What is more interesting the latest National Human Development Report (hereinafter NHDR) reports that “more than 60% of households own a computer or cellular phones and they are wide spread especially among households with children or young people” (UNDP 2011). The internet penetration has also had amazing increase in the last ten years from 1.5% in 2000 to up to 51% in 2010.

Table 5: Internet users in Macedonia

YEAR	Users	Population	% Pop.	Usage Source
2000	30,000	2,016,060	1.5%	ITU
2002	100,000	2,016,060	5.0%	ITU
2006	392,671	2,056,894	19.1%	SSO
2010	1,057,400	2,056,894	51.0%	ITU

The PC literacy of rural women is however not commandable, since just 25.2% use computers independtly, whereas 28.9% need help to use computers, or 45.9% do not use computers at all. In regard to this question there is no significant difference whether the rural population lives in lowland or highland areas. The comparative data with rural men shows that rural women are more disadvantaged as 41.5% of men are independtly using computers. PC literacy is important specifically for empowering women and increasing their employability.

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

Table 6: Rural women and men knowledge to use a computer

Do you know how to use computer?

Answers by gender	Yes, independently	Yes, with help	No	Total
Male	115 (41.5%)	59 (21.3%)	102 (37.2%)	277 (100%)
Female	80 (25.2%)	92 (28.9%)	146 (45.9%)	318 (100%)
Total	195 (32.8%)	151 (25.4%)	248 (41.8%)	595 (100%)

Source: CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011

The same capacity is reflected in terms of using internet, as only 23.7% of rural women use internet independently as compared to 41.2% of rural men. Majority of rural women 54.6% do not use internet at all. Using internet might connect the rural women more with the community and allow for exchange of information which is pertinent for development.

Table 7: Rural women and men use of internet

Do you know how use Internet?

Answers by gender	Yes, independently	Yes, with help	No	Total
Male	114 (41.2%)	54 (19.5%)	108 (39.4%)	277 (100%)
Female	75 (23.7%)	69 (21.8%)	173 (54.6%)	317 (100%)
Total	189 (31.8%)	123 (20.7%)	281 (47.5%)	594 (100%)

Source: CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011

3.2.2. Basic services available in rural areas and capacities to use them from gender perspective

The survey and focus groups looked at the public services which are available and used by rural people in Macedonia. The analysis below allows for generalization and conclusions on two levels: (i) for rural population living in lowlands and (ii) rural population living in hills/highland areas. In this section we closely look at the basic services necessary for the well-being and empowerment of rural women: education, health, culture and social protection.

3.2.2.1. Education

Education is crucial for development of societies, improving life of an individual as well as enhancing economic and social development at local and national level. When discussing education several issues appear to be important: is schooling adequately available in rural Macedonia; and are these schools accessible to rural population? Both primary and secondary education is universal and compulsory in Macedonia since 2007¹⁴. Therefore accessibility is assessed in terms of the proximity of schools to the place of habitat and the expenses related to education.

¹⁴ Secondary education (14-18 years of age) became compulsory for all children who have completed primary education, from the academic 2008/09. The families of children that do not enroll into secondary school or terminate the schooling early are fined with monetary fines.

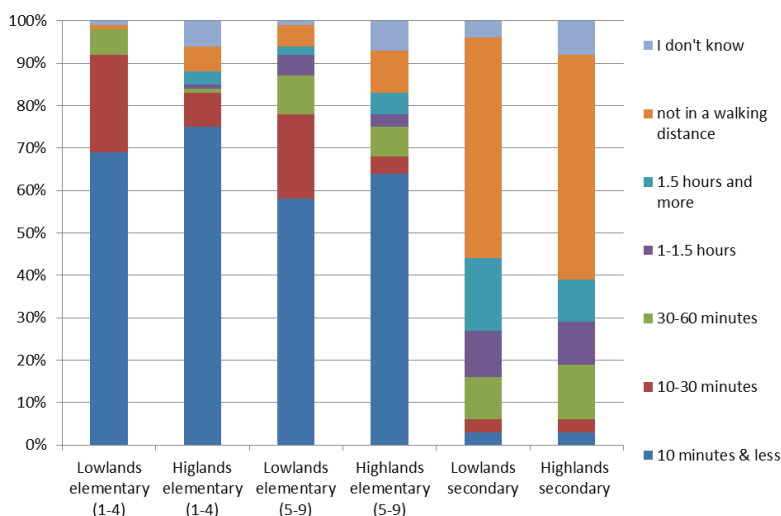
In rural Macedonia there are many small schools. Namely, “4 municipalities have only one school, and 9 have more than one school but fewer than 100 students in total, and average class sizes under 12. Moreover, almost 38 percent (47) of all jurisdictions have schools that teach on average less than 100 children per school, and 22 percent (27) of all jurisdictions have school systems that average less than 15 pupils per class” (Levitas, 2002). When the decentralization of education started (2005), consultants working on the reform proposed to the Ministry of education that the rural schools with small number of children to be closed and children from these schools to be transported. However, the Ministry of education adopted a measure with which municipalities were given the right to not only establish, but also to close a school and were transferred management over the schools. All municipalities were given budget for the existing school network to be maintained. The methodology for capitation financing in education regulates a coefficient (ponder measure) related to population density where up to 20 residents per square meter is awarded with 1.4 points, from 20-35 residents per square meter with 0.8 points, and from 35-70 residents with 0.6 points. This additional funding for schools in areas with low population density was considered significant for maintenance of the existing school network in rural areas.

The new approach for rural education in Macedonia envisages “less schools, better education conditions”. In 2010 the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter MoES) has initiated process for rethinking the strategy for delivery of education in rural areas. In March 2011, MoES presented a cost-benefit, needs assessment for the rural schools that proposes out of the 108 schools, 44 to be demolished, 24 to be reconstructed¹⁵ and the rest to be closed. With this the Ministry plans to improve the educational conditions in the areas where there are at least 30 school-age children.

Elementary schooling is made available in the villages or in their proximity. In most lowland and highland areas (see Chart 4) schooling from fifth to eight grade is offered in less proximity compared to education up to 4th grade, but nevertheless there is no significant difference between the highland rural areas and those in lowlands. More important commonality is in reference to the offer of secondary schooling where one might observe that there is no significant difference among the different rural areas.

15 Otovica, Elovo, Svetomitrani, Drachevica, Noshpal, Berovci, Galichani, Chepigovo, Dedino Crnilishte, Glishtich, Mojanci, Volino, Panichari, Novo Selo, Selce Keche, Marena, Edernikovo, Karamani, Krklino and Trapchin Dol.

Chart 4: Availability of primary and secondary schools by walking distance



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

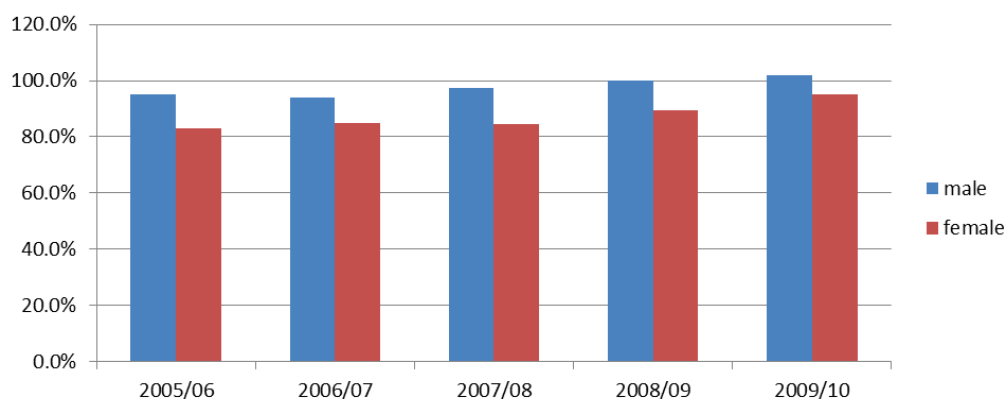
Contrary to elementary schooling, to reach secondary schooling, people need to commute to an urban center. The chart above depicts that that is in most cases (over 70%) is more than one hour and a half away (walking distance) from their residence. Again there is no significant difference between the highland and lowland rural areas or answers of men and women. The distance of secondary schools might influence on its accessibility, as access is usually challenged by economic barriers related to transportation costs to the nearest secondary school.

Accessibility of secondary schooling is pertinent to regular provision of transportation of students which is evidenced to have been problematic. One of the measures that accompanied the introduction of secondary education as universal and compulsory for all was the provision of transport to the secondary schools, The municipalities are provided additional funding and given responsibility to organize transport of students to secondary schools. However, another recent CRPM research (2009) on the implementation of the secondary compulsory education shows that “it doesn’t pay out for schools to organize transport for 2-3 children alone, especially considering that in certain cases transport should be organized with a special vehicle adjusted to terrain conditions”. Even though the problem could be solved through awarding rooms in school dormitories, in case of some cities/municipalities (such as Tetovo for instance) this is not possible, because there aren’t any dormitories in this city (CRPM 2009b).

Rural children do not attend secondary school regularly.. UNICEF’s survey points out that the majority of children and young people not attending secondary school regularly come from rural areas, mainly from the Eastern region and about 73% of them belong to the Roma or Turkish ethnic community (UNICEF 2009). While the problem with access to school is relatively minor when it comes to primary school (especially lower primary), it becomes more prominent when these students face transition to secondary school. One of the major reasons is the infrastructural problem in villages of the highland areas, which can be rather isolated, and inaccessible especially in winter.

Transition of girls to secondary education is improving. Participation of girl students in education is of specific concern, since on one hand, they tend to be less included in education (especially in secondary education), while on the other, once enrolled they tend to dropout less than boys and have better achievement (UNICEF 2009). The transition of girls to secondary school is mostly challenged by traditional norms according to which girls are expected to marry young and are not expected to socialize with boys once in puberty (ibid). However, according to the official data from the State Statistical Office (Chart 5), the situation with the enrollment of girls into secondary education is changing since the adoption of the new policy measure for compulsory secondary education.

Chart 5: Percentage of male and female students enrolled into secondary school (out of the ones that have completed primary) 2005-2010



Source: State Statistical Office, Schools and students at the beginning and the end of the school year; 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009; authors' calculations

Gender differences in education remain to be determined by ethnic/cultural background. Girls of Roma, Turkish and Albanian ethnic background are in least favorable position, especially when it comes to attending secondary school, although the situation has been gradually improving over the last decade (Table 7). The key challenges these girls face are linked to traditions putting lower family expectations on girls to finish high school and bigger pressure to marry at young age. However, religious beliefs also play their role, raising specific concerns for girls such as attending school together with boys or being transported to/ from school alone or when it is dark.

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

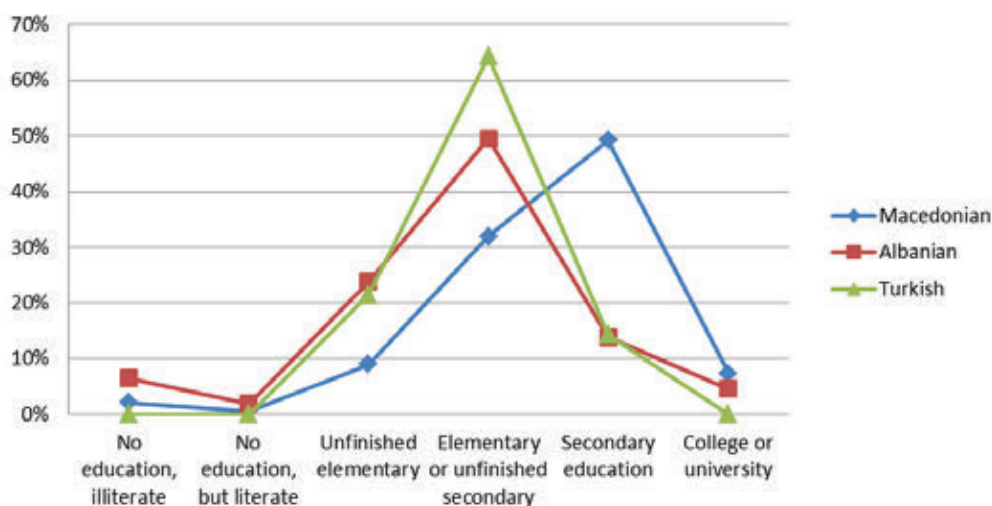
Table 8: Percentage of girls (based on ethnic background) in secondary school out of the total number of students in secondary education

	Macedonians	Albanians	Turks	Roma
1999/2000	51%	41.1%	36.8%	39.8%
2000/2001	50.8%	42.1%	38%	43.3%
2001/2002	50.7%	43.8%	42.3%	37.4%
2006/2007	49.7%	42.0%	40.7%	44.4%
2007/2008	49.7%	44.3%	41.8%	46.4%
2008/2009	50.1%	43.7%	42.8%	46.3%
2009/2010	49.9%	46.2%	45.8%	47.1%

Source: State Statistical Office: elementary and secondary schools at the end of school years 2001, 2002, 2003, 2008,2009, 2010, 2011 authors' calculations

The CRPM survey of rural women shows that ethnic Macedonian women record higher educational attainment compared to ethnic Albanian and ethnic Turkish women. There are significant differences with regard to the level of education attained among women from deferent ethnicities. Specifically, while the majority of Macedonian women have completed at least secondary school education (over 50%), the majority of Albanian and Turkish women (over 50%) have primary education or less.

Chart 6: Level of education of rural women per ethnic group



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Gender stereotypes revealed in preferred field of study between rural men and women.

Regarding the level of specialization of those with completed secondary and higher education, the CRPM survey of rural women & men 2011 detected that social and medical sciences remain the main interest of female respondents (about 40% of women, compared to 22% of men have degrees in these areas) in contrast to the male respondents who dominate in the technical/technological areas (45%, compared to 20% of women). However, similar percentage of men (12%) and women (11%) has education in agricultural sciences. This indicates gender stereotypes affecting choice for field of study still prevail showing tendency for women to be more often specialized in sciences and professions related to care and social work. However, ethnic differences do not exist.

The presented educational data opens a discussion of internal migration induced by education. As higher education opportunities are more available in urban centers, thus women and men originally from rural areas in order to pursue higher education, move to urban areas and their chances to stay in urban area with more available employment opportunities are increasing. As the CRPM internal migration study points out in Macedonia 89.5 % of the people do not internally migrate (never had migrated internally, nor have intended to migrate). Those that actually migrate (move from one to another municipality) do this together with their family 6.6% and mostly because of economic reasons 4.5%, looking for better employment opportunities.

Rural Voices 2: Study and marry in the city

„Mothers encourage their daughters to leave the village. They tell them: Go and study in the city and try to get married there“

Macedonian man (Dolino Disan village)

„There is no future for us [women with university education] in the village. We all seek work in the town (Kriva Palanka or Kumanovo), but it is very difficult to find one.“

Woman (Dlabocica village)

The higher the educational attainment is, the more interested rural residents are in getting additional (non-formal) education. In general, less than 20% of the respondents of CRPM *Survey of rural women & men, 2011* have participated at trainings for improving their skills or acquiring new knowledge. While a small majority of them are men, the gender differences are not noticeable within Macedonian respondents, but only within Albanian and Turkish. As expected, the higher the educational attainment is, the more frequent the additional education is. On the other hand, among those not participating at trainings, as main reasons for not getting involved, both men and women state their disbelief in the usefulness of such trainings (42% of Macedonians, 57% of Albanians and 46.7% of Turks), as well as the distance from the place where trainings are being held (33.6% of Macedonians, 14.5% of Albanians and 23.3% of Turks). About 14% of Albanian and Turkish women as a main reason stated their husband's disagreement with them visiting such trainings.

Table 9: Education level and future upgrade

		<i>No education or incomplete primary</i>	<i>Primary and incomplete secondary</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Tertiary and higher</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Would you like to learn specific skills (for work, business, for yourself)?</i>	Yes	13	67	134	35	249
		5.2%	26.9%	53.8%	14.1%	100.0%
	No	77	142	108	20	347
		22.2%	40.9%	31.1%	5.8%	100.0%
	Total	90	209	242	55	596
		15.1%	35.1%	40.6%	9.2%	100.0%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

In the 2011 CRPM Survey of rural women and men, Albanian men turned out to be more frequently bilingual (83.3% speak Macedonian), compared to Albanian women, 64.2% of whom speak Macedonian. This is no surprise since men tend to go out of their community more often. However, this might be indicative why women are more reluctant when it comes to communicating with state institutions. Since one third of them do not speak the official state language, they might need help from men to perform such activities as actively look for a job, go to the doctor's office etc. To complete picture of bilingual capacities, only 3 % of Macedonians claimed to speak Albanian.

The CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011 indicates limited content of rural residents with availability of schools. Almost every fourth woman (24 %) and 17 % of men expressed the need for improvement in availability of schools. In concordance with limited availability in highlands regions, residents of these villages more often expressed the need for improvement in this area (23%) in comparison to those living in lowlands (20%). The gender differences can be explained by the fact that women are more responsible for taking care of children and know better the challenges of schooling conditions.

3.2.2.2. Child care services

Child care facilities are not available in the rural areas. The network of child care facilities is made of 54 kindergartens that are unevenly distributed on the Macedonian territory. One can see that the urban regions: Skopje and East have the biggest number of kindergartens and subsequently groups in which pre-school education is delivered to bigger number of children than the other regions. The rural region of Polog has 9 times less child care facilities (only two, one in Tetovo and one in Gostivar) compared to Skopje. At the same time, this region has smallest share of children aged up to 7 years in kindergartens, only 2.5 %. Skopje has as many children in kindergarten as all other regions together in absolute numbers. Skopje together with East region score with highest in the perceptual share of children aged 0-7 years in kindergartens.

Table 10: Child care facilities per region

Regions	Number of kindergartens	Number of buildings (branches)	Number of groups in kindergartens	Number of children	Share of children aged 0-7 in kindergartens (%) *
Vardar	5	16	103	1,939	13.9%
East	9	29	147	2,572	19.5%
Southwest	6	12	69	1,312	6.5%
Southeast	5	23	107	1,873	11.9%
Pelagonia	6	21	99	1,951	9.9%
Polog	2	8	52	915	2.5%
Northeast	3	10	61	1,455	7.5%
Skopje	18	67	528	11,140	17.9%
Total	54	186	1,166	23,157	Country: 11.9%

Source: State Statistical Office, 2009

* Latest coverage data available from 2008 (SSO 2010b: 18)

The rural municipalities do not raise initiatives for establishment of child care services. According to the Law on Social care (2009) that regulates the system and organization of social care, the social care rights, financing and execution of social care rights, it is the Government responsibility to determine the network of public institutions for social care (Article 8) that can be established by private and public entities (Article 85). Municipalities, in this respect are allowed to follow the preferences of their constituencies and establish additional public institutions for institutional and extra institutional care. However, the question is if constituencies who could raise the need for these services as a critical priority (e.g. women burdened with care responsibilities) are represented adequately in processes of local planning or if their voices are consulted at all (see later chapter on political participation). Additionally, since the existing institutions within the network determined by Government for providing social care services receive central budget financing through the block grants, the revenues for the new/additional ones to be established by Municipalities should be raised by the municipalities themselves which puts the municipalities in unequal position to enforce the same function and deliver child care services to their citizens (Risteska 2010).

Accessibility of existing child care services is limited. According to the CRPM Survey of rural women and men the child care facilities are not offered in proximity of the rural villages. Only 10% of the villages located in lowlands have kindergartens which is even not the case with those located in the highland areas. Kindergartens are mostly offered in a walking distance of hour and a half from rural villages (in up to 90% of highland villages and 70% of villages in lowland areas).

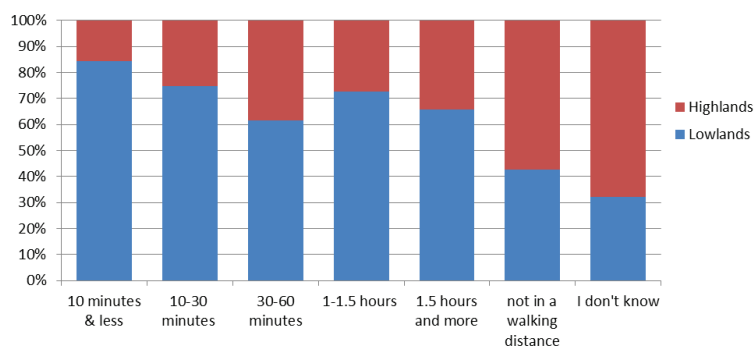
Rural Voices 3. No day care center - no employment for women

„I have no one to look after my children, and there is no kindergarten nearby, so I can't look for work.“

Macedonian woman
(Izvor village)

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Chart 7: Accessibility of child care facilities in rural areas



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

This severely impacts the possibilities of rural women to seek economic opportunities or be involved in public life of the community. As it will be showed later, child care responsibilities are still traditionally ascribed to women, thus lack of such services or additional time needed to commute to the child care center limits women opportunities to be involved or pursue other activities in public life. As illustrated by quote above, resignation to inactivity is often rather a choice enforced by situation limiting her options than women's own decision on balancing between family and work.

3.2.2.3. Healthcare services

3.2.2.3.1 Healthcare services specific from family perspective

Rural residents need access to health care related services across the entire continuum of care, from birth, immunization, to child care and education, through general health care, up to wellness to palliative (hospice) care provided towards the end of life. Logically, not all health care related services (such as surgery supported by high technology and teams of specialists) are available in rural areas. In this section we look at basic health care services coverage; and accessibility of these health services to rural citizens (including emergency and gynecologist).

Healthcare services accessibility in the cities is better than healthcare services accessibility in the villages. Under the Law on Health Protection the primary healthcare services are provided through a network of general practitioners who have concluded contracts with the Health Insurance Fund (hereinafter HIF). The 2011 data from HIF¹⁶ show that there are 298 contracts with medical units located in rural areas, of which 154 have permanent doctor(s) and 133 have part-time medical staff. The urban centers are covered with 988 GPs. This allows for a conclusion that 45.2% of the rural country's territory is covered with 23% of the network of

¹⁶ Data available at: <http://www.fzo.org.mk/default.asp?ItemID=3BF51913E7E24847A37C15229E0A8D2B> I (web site last visited 20/01/2012)

primary health services, whereas the 64.8% of the territory is covered with 77% of the primary health network. Donev argues that despite the rapid growth of expenditure in last decade in this sector, this hasn't been translated to the improved access to basic healthcare which remains inefficient and inequitable distributed particularly in regards to rural areas where access to basic services is limited and of poor quality (Donev 2009: 37).

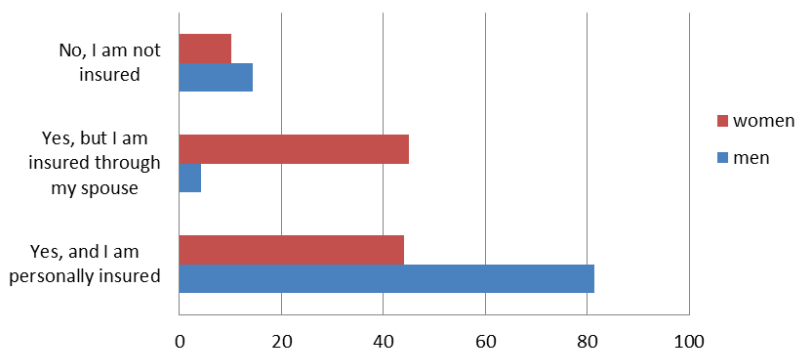
Rural residents visit medical professionals less frequently than urban residents. On average, each doctor in rural areas receives 1.7 visits daily, as opposed to 3.6 visits in urban areas (according to RIHP 2003: 57). But even though village doctors receive less visits, they are responsible on average for more people than doctors in urban areas: 3080 end-users per rural doctor versus 1147 users per doctor in urban areas (according to RIHP 2003: 58). This means that rural residents visit medical professionals less frequently than urban residents, which might indicate lower health awareness among the rural population, but may also be the result of barriers in accessing healthcare services (such as costs, distance or combined). Nevertheless, policy encourages the rural doctors to remain in rural areas despite the smaller number of patients and visits by the changes in the Regulations for payment of health services in primary healthcare (OG, 48/2001 and 31/2003, Article 7; and OG 62/2011 (Art.2 referring to Art.8a) which regulates for a access to primary health physician in rural areas¹⁷ through increase of points for capitation (financing mechanisms in the primary health sector referring to patients registered with respective doctor) i.e.: those that have less than 100 points to be paid as 1100 points; those that have between 100 and 300 points to receive capitation as if they have 1200 points; those that have between 300-350 points to be paid as if they have 1300 points; those that have between 350 and 700 points are paid as if they have 1400 points whereas those with over 700 points are paid as they have 1700 points. Beyond 1700 points, the capitation refers to respective actual number of patients.

Rural residents are aware of the universal coverage of the health insurance system in Macedonia. However, the CRPM survey of rural women and men 2011 shows that there is certain number of rural inhabitants that are not informed that health coverage extends to everyone no matter their work status. The chart below also depicts that more men have individual insurance than women who in bigger number remain dependent on the insurance of their spouses. This is partly resulting from the policy framework in place that promotes family-shared insurance. Namely, apart from covering the active insuree (bearer of the insurance) the health insurance also covers for his/her close family members – spouse and children up to age 18 or 26 respectively, if these are students enrolled in education (Donev 2009: 33). The policy sets for perceiving children and spouse as dependants even in case of insurance provided by state to unemployed person registered at Employment Agency or pensioners when the insurance of registered unemployed persons (or pensioners) covers the (inactive) spouse and children as well. Since men are still considered to fulfill the role of the main breadwinners, they are more often economically active and thus more often titular of the health insurance while their wives (mostly economically inactive) are predominantly insured through them. However, the Health Insurance Fund cannot provide data on how many citizens are insured through their spouses. This particularly manifested in the 2011 rural survey as indicated above. Needless to say, such policy strengthens the dependence of women on men and limits their self-sufficiency.

17 The Health insurance Fund also regulates the rural areas with a decision available at: http://www.fzo.org.mk/WBStorage/Files/Odluka_utvrduvawe_na_oddaleceni_ruralni_mesta.pdf (last visited 20/01/2012)

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

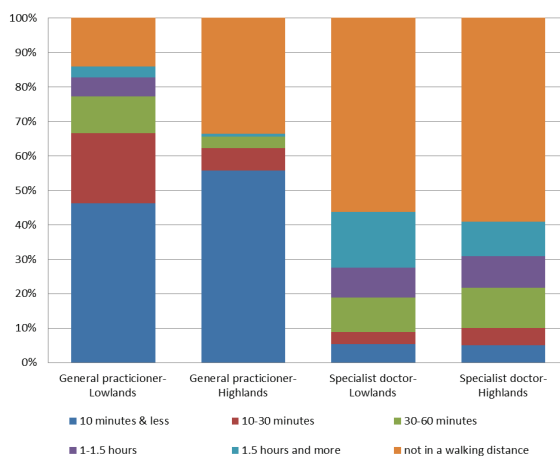
Chart 8: Health insurance coverage per gender - Do you have health insurance?



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Although Macedonian law guarantees universal access to health protection for its citizens, our research has identified that rural population is sometimes deprived of access to health protection. Primary-care is provided locally in majority of rural areas (about 50% for highland villages and 60% of lowland villages can reach general practitioner (hereinafter GP) within 10 min walking distance). In the remaining villages one might observe considerable difference among the two habitats as health services are more offered in proximity of residents of villages located in lowland areas (around 30% of villagers have access to primary health within 10 minutes and one hour), whereas 35% of villages located in highland areas have access to GP hour and a half away walking distance from their residence. This suggests that despite the policy to decrease disparities and offer health services in all rural areas the provision of primary health is better in lowland rural areas than in highland rural areas. As for the specialist services as expected they are provisioned in urban areas mostly and in 70% of cases are more than one hour and a half (walking distance) away from the rural habitats of both levels. There were no differences indicated between answers of men and women

Chart 9: Accessibility of generalist and specialist doctors in rural areas

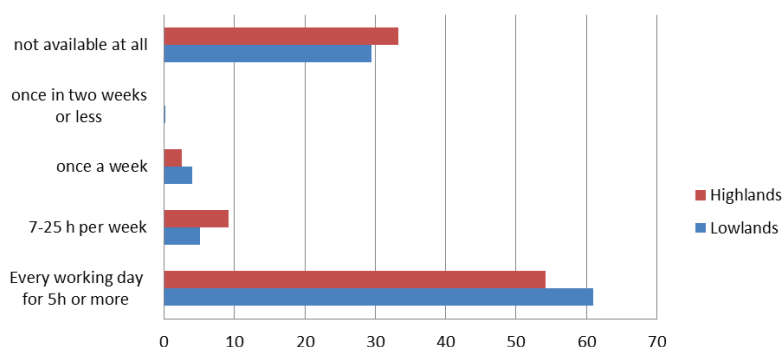


Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

According to the CRPM survey of rural women and men 2011 doctor is available in lowland villages 5 hours per day, which is not the case with the highland villages. In the majority of villages (except the ones located in distant highland areas) there is a GP's office. However, the focus group discussions revealed that the doctor predominantly comes several days a week and often does not stick to the prearranged office hours. Hence, only in rare villages do people go to the local GP when in need of medical care. The village GPs are mostly used by the elderly rural inhabitants who are not capable of traveling. Others usually go to an ambulance in the nearest town or larger village, since they are better equipped, they can find pharmacies nearby, they are closer to the medical centers if there is a need for additional analyses.

On availability of the doctors in the rural areas the survey showed significant difference between the villages located in the lowlands and those in the highland. As the chart below depicts in the vast majority of the first type of villages (located in the lowlands) the doctor is available 5 hours per day, whereas this is a case only in half of the second type of villages (located in the highland). In almost half of the later the doctor is not available at all.

Chart 10: Availability of generalist doctors in rural areas



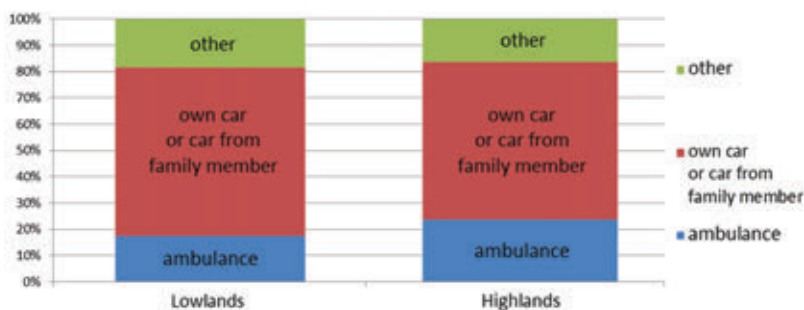
Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

This inevitably has an impact on unpaid care work for ill family members on women. Using a time-use survey, CRPM research team in 2007 showed that the care-work burden is undertaken by female family members mostly (women spend 5 hours a day compared to men who take care of the ill family member only two and a half hours a day). CRPM assessed that this care work provided by the family members has a value of 10,000 denars a month and substitute the provision of health and social services where they are unavailable.

No one waits for the emergency service in rural Macedonia. The distance of the urban centers where the specialist health services and emergency rooms are located affects the promptness of the ambulance to respond and reach the rural habitats. The chart below shows focuses on accessibility of this type of health service to inhabitants of rural areas. Namely, the most used option in a case of an emergency is not ambulance but a private vehicle (own car or car from family member). There were no differences among answers from men and women.

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

Chart 11: Accessibility to emergency health services- Vehicle preference in case of Emergency



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

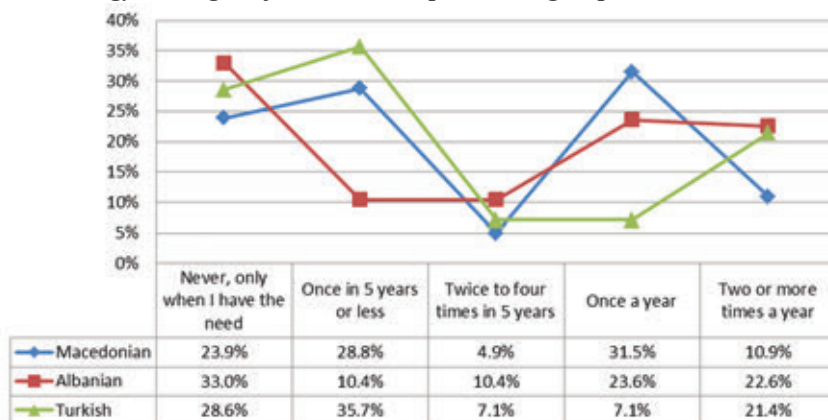
According to the *CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011*, significant proportion of rural residents is not satisfied with availability of healthcare services. Almost every third men (33%) and almost every third women (31 %) expressed the need for improvement in availability of healthcare services. Not surprisingly, this need is more often emphasized by people from highlands villages (37%) than residents of villages living in lowlands (31%), still in both categories of rural areas, approximately every third citizen, regardless of gender, thinks there is not sufficient availability of health care services.

3.2.2.3.2 Healthcare services specific for women

Ethnic differences might be observed in the rural women's practices of visiting a gynecologist.

Though recommended to happen at least once a year, 30% of Macedonians do this as opposed to 23% Albanians and 7% of Turkish women that visit gynecologist. However considerable number of Turkish and Albanian women goes to the gynecologist twice or more times per year (see the chart below). Alarming is the fact that considerable number of Macedonian and Turkish women do not visit the 'women's doctor' regularly (28.8 % Macedonians and 35.7% Turkish go to the doctors every 5 years or less) or never visit the gynecologist.

Chart 12: Visits to gynecologist of rural women per ethnic group?



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Note: % refers to number of women from respective ethnic group

Gynecologist and pediatric visits are determined by awareness, tradition, culture and proximity of doctors' offices. Since none of the villages has a pediatric or a gynecologists office, the inhabitants have to travel to the nearest town for this type of examinations. When it comes to visiting pediatric doctor with children, there are differences between Macedonian and Albanian families. According to the evidence gathered through focus groups, while in the case of former, the parent who is available at the time (mainly the mother) takes the children to the doctor's office (by taking a bus or a taxi); in the latter case, both parents are involved in this, since women are not recommended to travel alone (or with children) in a bus, so husband (father) usually accompanies them and/or drives.

In addition to the survey data, the 2011 CRPM focus group discussions show that the majority of women, especially in the Albanian villages, have perception that they do not go regularly or at all to gynecologist, although some are aware of the need to go more often. As the main reasons for this they emphasize the distance to the nearest gynecologist's office, the costs involved, as well as cultural norms. The majority agree that gynecologists' visits are nothing to be ashamed of, although they were considered as shameful in the past. However, there are women which admit that the shame as a factor still plays its role.

The cultural differences between the people living in rural areas are especially obvious when analyzing the responses of female respondents on the question who accompanies them when they visit the doctor. While most male respondents from all ethnic groups visit the doctor unaccompanied by other family members, the chart below shows differences between female respondents belonging to the various ethnic communities. Macedonian and Serbian women visit the doctor by themselves (or go alone) according to the research data, whereas the Albanian and Turkish women are prevalently accompanied by their husbands for going to the doctor's check up. One reason for this might be if the non-majority women do not speak the language of the majority that is usually spoken in hospitals (Macedonian language). However, the research team cross-analyzed these results with the determinant knowledge of Macedonian language¹⁸ and did not find significant inter-linkages between the two. Therefore, data suggest this pattern may be anchored in the traditional values of the conservative communities from Albanian and Turkish origin.

Rural Voices 5: Language barriers

„You see, my GP is located nearby and luckily he is Albanian and my wife can go alone. But when she needs to go to a Health Clinique where she would need to speak Macedonian, then I come with her because she doesn't speak Macedonian. The same goes to my children.“

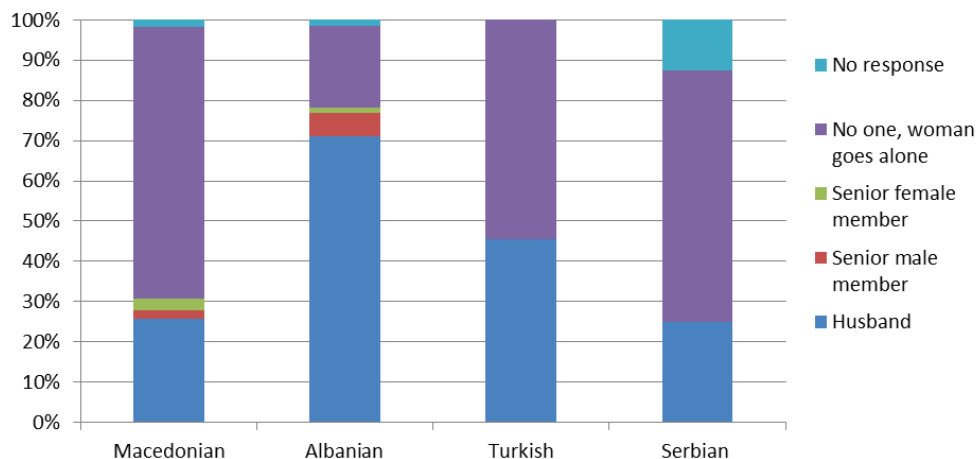
Albanian men (Zelino village)

¹⁸ As indicated earlier (subchapter on education) only 64.2 % of Albanian women speak Macedonian (while 83,3 % of Albanian men are bilingual). Thus, more than one third of ethnically Albanian women are depended on others, mostly men to communicate with public services providers if they don't speak Albanian

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

Chart 13: Cultural aspects in utilization of health care services in rural Macedonia- When You visit the doctors, who usually accompanies you?

Women respondents (by ethnic affiliation)



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

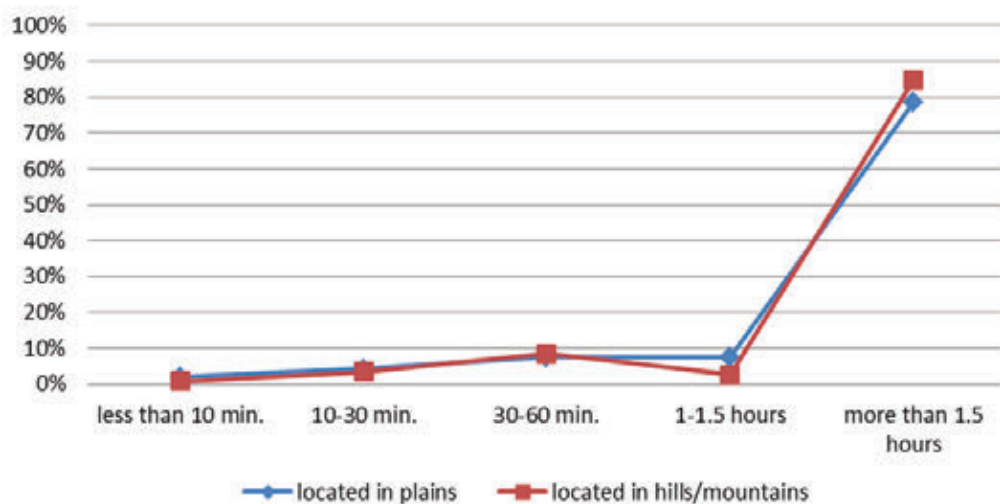
3.2.3. Other services

3.2.3.1 Employment services and Municipality representatives

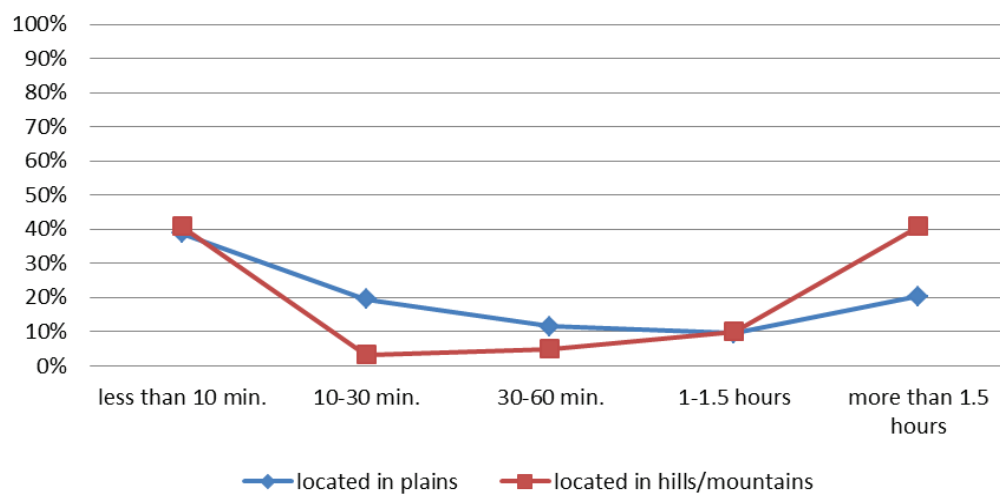
Both Employment Agency and Municipal Representatives are not easily available in proximity of rural villages both in highland or located in the lowlands. In 80% of cases nearest branch of employment agency is more than hour and a half away from rural residents. Municipal representation seems to be deployed in more villages located in the lowlands (60% of such villages have the municipal representation up to half an hour away) rather than those located in the hilly and highland areas (40% of which have the municipal representative on more than hour and a half walking distance).

Chart 14: Availability of Employment Agency and Municipal Representatives

14a: Employment agency



14b: Municipal Representative



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

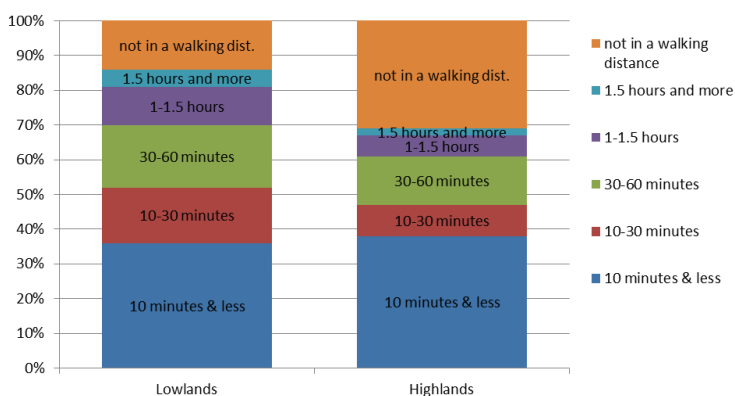
Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

3.2.3.2. Post office

Contrary to previous public services, the post offices are in turn much better deployed in rural areas, though they have degraded in the recent years and small villages are often uncovered (according to “Postenska mreza” website).

According to findings from *CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011*, the lowland villages have post offices located in close proximity as over 30% of them indicated the post to be within 10 minutes walking distance, 20% up to 30 minutes and another 20% have it an hour away. On the other hand, only 40% of residents living in highland villages have the post service located in near by proximity (10 minutes of walking distance) while 30% of the same have it located more than hour and half away. Answers of men and women were similar.

Chart 15: Accessibility of post office in rural areas by walking distance and locality



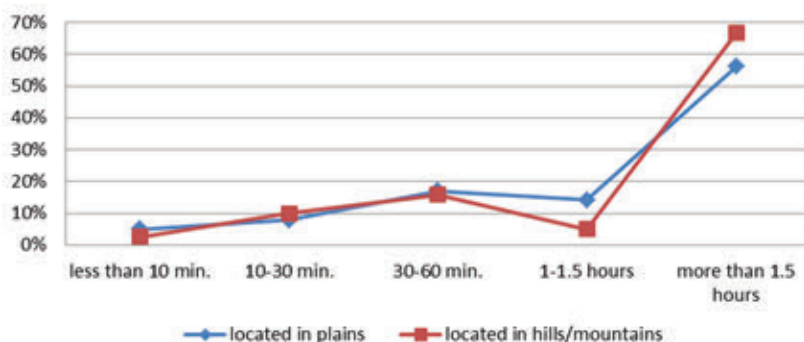
Source: *CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011*

3.2.3.3 Banks

Banks are not easily accessible for women and men living in rural areas due to limited availability of their local branches in their neighborhood. Comparison of distribution of bank's branches across cities that are considered to be rural, showed that bank's coverage of rural areas is ranging from 14% to 64 % for selected banks (see detailed comparison in annex table **A2.1**). Out of 22 cities that are considered to be rural, according to the list defined by the Minister of Agriculture, Komercijalna banka has branches in 14 of them (or 64% coverage), Tutunska and Uni banka both cover 13 cities (or 59% coverage), Stopanska banka covers 12 (or 55% coverage) and Pro credit banka covers only 3 cities that are rural. The banks do not publish data on clients that would be sex disaggregated so one can not deduct number of male and female clients in these branches located in rural areas.

The respondents of *CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011* indicated that the nearest bank for 60% of lowland villages is located in more than hour and a half of walking distance. This situation is reality to 70% of highland villages.

Chart 16: Accessibility of banks in rural areas by walking distance

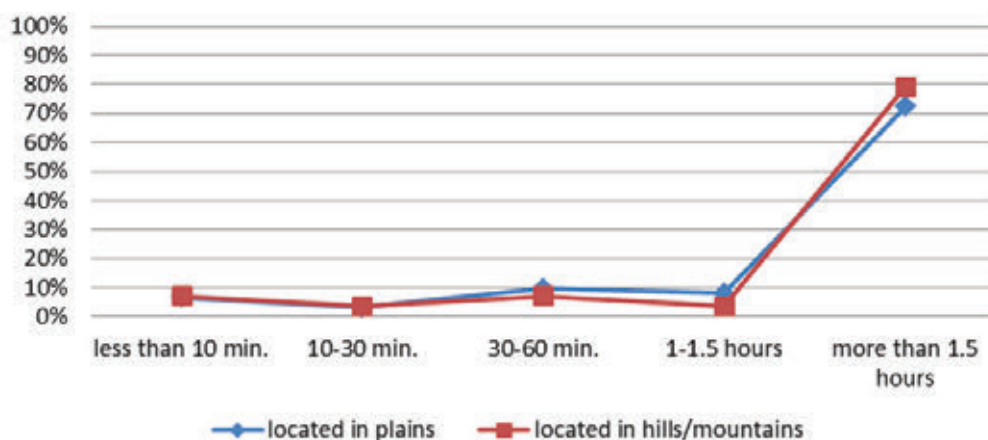


Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011. Red indicates highlands and blue lowlands

3.2.3.4. Cultural services vs. Shops

Cultural facilities are not available in proximity of rural villages both in highland or located in the lowlands. In 80% of cases these facilities are more than hour and a half away from rural residents.

Chart 17: Availability of Culture facilities



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011. Red indicates highlands and blue lowlands

In this perspective, it is important to note the available data indicate **limited public support to cultural activities in rural areas**. Data indicate that urban centres receive more public support

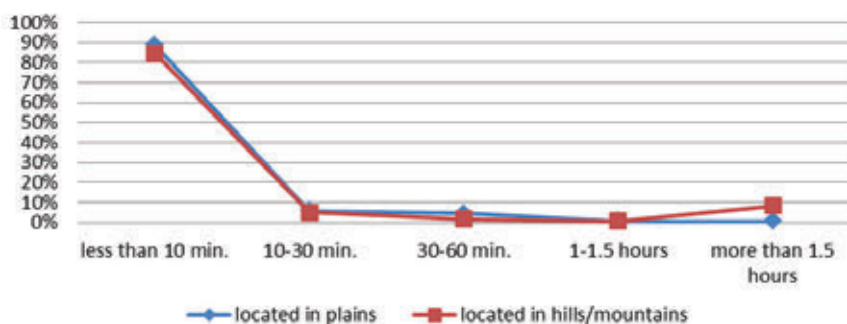
Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

for cultural activities than rest of the country. Analysis of the Annual Programmes for 2009 and 2010 shows that there is a significant difference between the number of public supported projects financed by the Ministry of Culture in the capital Skopje, as compared to other areas of the country. Almost two hundred more cultural projects were implemented for Skopje in this period than for the rest of the country. The majority of this total number of projects, however, was related to publishing, where Skopje enjoyed 5 times more public funding in 2009 and in 2010 than the rest of the country. Information on private culture activities is not available.

According to *CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011*, rural resident indicated limited content with availability of cultural activities. This is jointly viewed by men and women: 27 % of women emphasized the need for improvement in this area and 29 % of men. Surprisingly despite the greater distance barriers, people in highlands regions expressed this need less often (25%) than those living in lowlands (29%).

On the other hand, this is not the case with **shops** which maybe find 10 minutes away from rural residents in 90% of both highland and villages located in lowlands. It is not surprising that only shops are available in all rural areas within reasonable walking distance as they represent not only private type of service but also perspective economic opportunity for local inhabitants fueled by local demand.

Chart 18: Availability of Shops



Source: *CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011*

3.3. Summary of chapter 3 - Defining rural women

Rural women and men are facing with underdeveloped infrastructure and limited offer of public services. The water is with limited volume to satisfy their needs and of low quality; the sewage systems do not exist; and the road network is poorly developed and without regular maintenance. Public transport is available more in lowland than in highland rural areas and is used by women, though gender stereotypes in terms of driving still exist. Women drive cars less than men and do not operate heavy agricultural machinery. This puts rural women in a tough

3. Defining rural women

and rather disadvantaged position having limited mobility (cannot go to doctor alone, cannot bring children to nearest kindergarten, cannot go to employment agency to seek for job and be regularly updated and etc.).

Child care facilities are not available in the rural areas and rural municipalities are not interested to establish child care services as they will need to generate funding on their own for this, as opposed to the urban municipalities that benefit from central budget transfers. Healthcare coverage in the rural areas is worse than that offered in the cities. As a result rural residents visit medical professionals less frequently than urban residents. Though aware of the universal coverage of the health insurance system in Macedonia, our research has identified that rural population is sometimes deprived of access to health protection. Mainly this is result of the fact that the doctor is less available in rural areas. There are ethnic differences in the rural women's practices of visiting a gynecologist, which are determined by awareness, tradition, culture and proximity of gynecologist offices. All this influences on the increasing vulnerability of rural women compared to rural men and urban women.

The secondary schooling is not offered in proximity to the place of residence which is not the case for the time being for elementary schooling. However, the new strategy for rural education might have potential to change this and is expected to make accessibility to primary schooling more pertinent to regular provision of transportation of students which is even now evidenced as problematic.

Rural women have lower levels of education compared to rural men and especially compared to urban women. The CRPM survey of rural women and men 2011 shows that ethnic Macedonian women are better off at the level of educational attainment compared to ethnic Albanian and ethnic Turkish women. The study shows gender stereotypes in the choice of field of study between rural men and women, where women is evidence to choose areas related to their socially prescribed roles of care providers. There is a significant improvement in the educational attainment level of women living in rural areas compared to earlier periods. This includes specifically substantively decreasing number of women without or with incomplete education and increasing the share of women with university level degrees in the active labor force. The increasing educational attainment is influencing on the growing interest of rural residents to get additional (non-formal) education.

The recent commendable education results are expected to influence rural development in two ways: (i) it will create additional pressure on the state to offer policies that will create jobs to be occupied by the educated rural residents; (ii) it will increase internal migrations in the country as evidence show that women that acquire education in urban centers do not go back home to the villages.

4. Rural women and economy

The process of transition from centrally-planned to market economy proved to have quite severe impact on Macedonia economy which predominantly based its growth and exports on the primary sector (such as agriculture and mining). Huge job losses, massive closure of companies, coupled with enormous annual inflation rate of 230 percent in 1993 and a so-called inner privatization were all characteristics of the country's transformation (Risteska & Pulejkov 2008). During the period of transition, pretty similar to the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe and particularly the Balkans, the country had to undergo fluctuations in the levels of economic growth, as well as high inflation markedly at the beginning of the 1990s. As a result of the economic and political shocks, the rise in unemployment there appeared a problem of high poverty incidence, increased job insecurity, increased unpaid-job creation especially in the primary sector (agriculture and mining) with very low productivity rates, decline in the consumption and a rise of the number of the working poor (World Bank Report 2009:4).

This chapter looks at the economy in the rural areas, the activity rates as well as the employment and unemployment rates of rural residents. It provides urban/rural comparative analysis as well as gender sensitive analysis of the afore-mentioned issues. It aims to depict the different characteristics of the rural economy, the vulnerability and opportunities of rural women.

4.1. Rural women and employment

4.1.1. Do rural women face barriers to enter labour market?

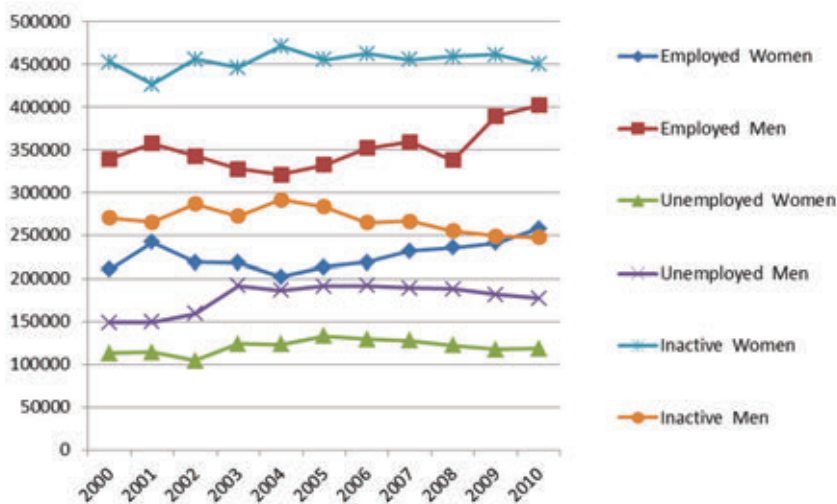
Macedonian labor market indicators show that important progress has been achieved since 2004. Labor force participation increased from 60 percent in 2004 to 64 percent in 2009 and employment rates increased from 37 percent in 2004 to 43 percent in 2009. Moreover, unemployment rates decreased from 38 percent in 2004 to 33 percent in 2009.¹⁹

Nevertheless as the chart below comparing trends over the last decade with particularly attention to the gaps between men and women shows, these improvements haven't resulted in closing the gender gaps disfavoring position of women in the labour market. What remains particularly striking, is the gap in inactivity which tends to slightly open up as number of inactive men decreased but decrease in number of inactive women haven't been improving that much. Additionally to that, particularly in last years, while employment rates of men increased significantly, same rates for women grew at much more slower pace, resulting again in rather widening of gender gap than its closing.

¹⁹ Labor market indicators are for the working age population as defined by ILO and Eurostat (i.e. individuals 15 to 64 years of age).

4. Rural women and economy

Chart 19: Trends in Employed, Unemployed and Inactive population in absolute numbers, divided by gender, from 2000 to 2010.

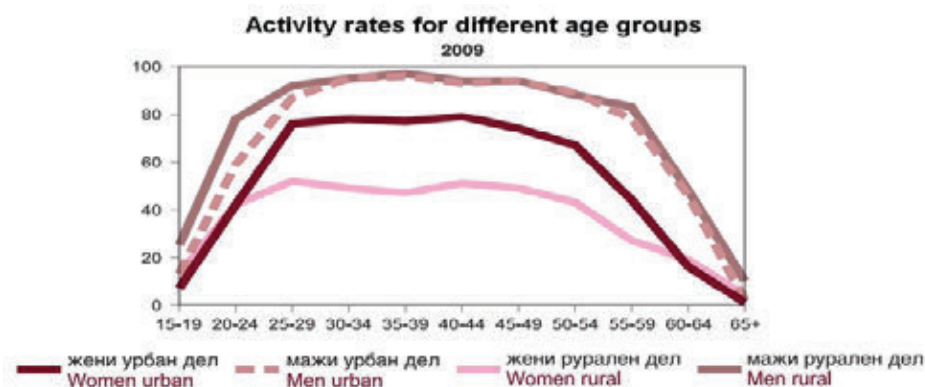


Source: State Statistical Office (SSO 2000-2006, SSO 2008b, SSO 2010d, SSO 2011a)

As showed earlier, rural women represent the most excluded group from the active economic life when compared to rural men, as well as urban counterparts. Activity rates in 2009 for urban men was 67 %, for rural men even lightly higher 72 %. On the other hand, activity rate of urban women was 49 % while activity rate of rural women scored lowest at 36 %. (SSO 2010d). From the graph below depicting activity rates for the rural population by age, we can see that a ratio of twice higher activity rates for men (both urban and rural) than for rural women is consistent for nearly all age groups. Another interesting observation is that urban women from the ages 25-60 are more actively involved in the workforce than rural women. Such difference does not exist for urban vs. rural men however. This suggests that rural women face more challenges that impede them to access labor market. Beside lower education attainment and limited employment opportunities as such, additional barriers may include transportation challenges, lack of child care facilities, limited access to information on employment opportunities and access to credits, loans for agricultural activities etc. Last but not least, patriarchal traditions and stereotypes play their role too.

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

Chart 20: Activity rates in rural areas per gender and age group



Source: Labour Force Survey, 2009 (according SSO 2010d, incl. chart visual)

As economically active population further divides into employed and unemployed population, rural women remain the most excluded group from labour market, be it among employed as well as among those failing to enter labour market though actively trying (i.e. unemployed) .

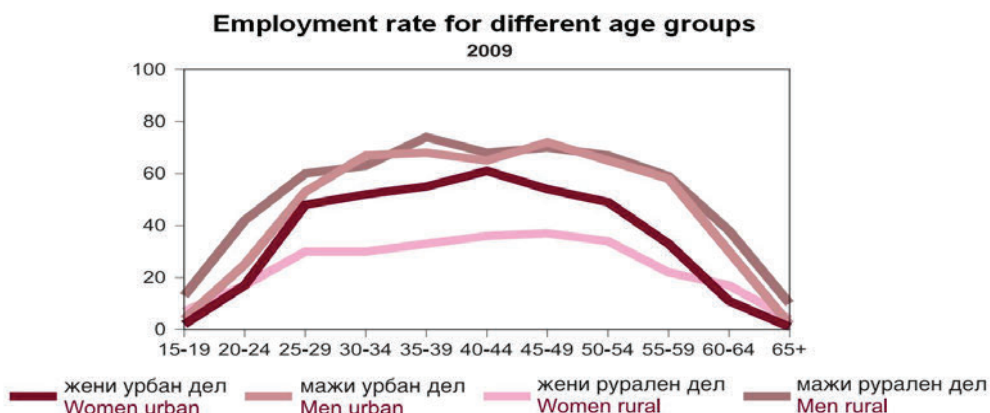
Table 11: Employment rates of the population aged 15years and over, by gender and urban / rural division

Year	Urban Women	Urban Men	Rural Women	Rural Men
2007	31	41	24	48
2008	32	43	25	50
2009	33	45	24	50

Source: LFS (according to SSO 2010d)

Young women living in rural area particularly struggle with breaking through to the labour market. As chart below shows, employment rates of young rural women starting from the age of 20 start to divert negatively from those of urban women. The gender gap remains widely open through the whole life time between rural men and women and closes again only at the age of 65 and more.

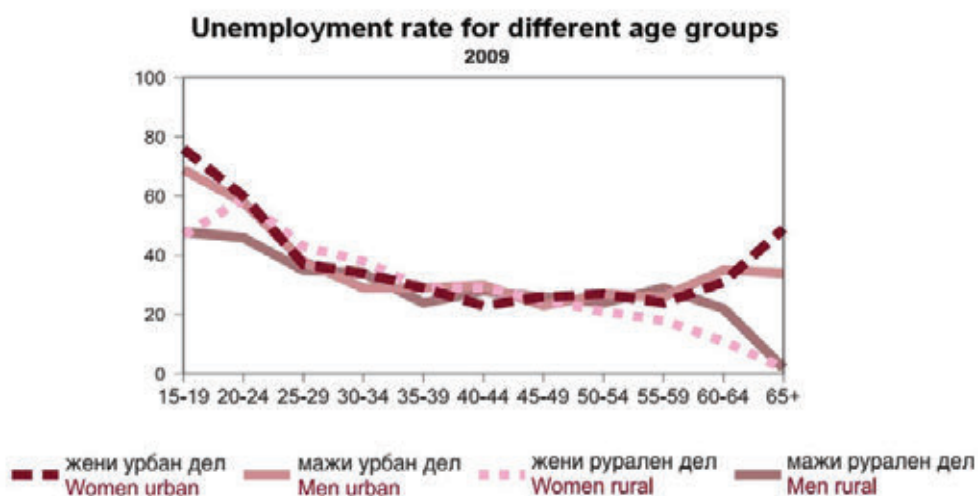
Chart 21: Employment rates in rural areas per gender and age group



Source: Labour Force Survey, 2009 (according to SSO 2010d, incl. chart)

When looking at the unemployed group (i.e. those who are not successful in entering the labour market despite actively searching for a job), again rural women of young age particularly struggle most. As chart below depicts, while urban men (with difference of elderly age) have similar unemployment rates in comparison to their urban male counterparts, the young women from rural areas have higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts with particular gap opening at the age of 20 and slowly closing only towards late 30ies. In elderly age, contrary, the opposite gap opens for rural women which can be, indicating elderly women being less active in searching for job in general. In retirement age, gender gap closed again.

Chart 22: Unemployment rate in rural areas per gender and age group



Source: Labour Force Survey, 2009 (according SSO 2010d, incl. chart visual)

Closer look focusing only at the working age female population living in rural areas show that the young rural women though willing to enter labour market, at the same time are particularly struggling to enter it. The overall unemployment rate, that reflects those who actively look for a job, among rural women is very high at 34% but it especially hits younger women between 20-34 years (for group of 20-24 years it goes almost double 59%). These young women have both the highest absolute number of unemployed women and the highest rate of unemployment as a percentage of the economically active population.

On the other side, the table also clearly shows that younger rural women have significantly lower inactivity rates²⁰ than all rural women in average, and complementary to that, elderly women living in rural areas have higher inactivity rates. This might indicate lower interest (or resignation) to labour market among elderly women living in rural areas. It also suggests prevalence of gender stereotypes seeing particularly younger women as less desired workers by employers. Such stereotype is anchored in predominating role expected from women of being main care giver in the family which implies that employers tend to expect from women in their reproductive age to be absent from work when they become mothers by using maternity leave of up to 9 months and sick leave whenever the children are sick. Such expectations of absence from work are not put on young men who in their reproductive age also potentially become fathers. Such stereotypes could be partly challenged by a recent adoption of a policy measure which introduced the option to use parental leave by the father (OG 158/2010 Art.167), but only if the mother does not use the maternity leave as regulated in Article 165 of the same Law. Since this right is just transferable without requirement for compulsory parental leave for both parents it is not expected to significantly transform the Macedonian society, nor is foreseen to lead to a shift in stereotyped gendered roles about care responsibilities. Details on care work distribution among men and women are elaborated in chapter 6.

Table 12: Working age female population living in rural areas by economic activity and age

<i>Age groups</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Active population</i>		<i>Inactive population</i>
		<i>Employed</i>	<i>Unemployed (rate from active pop.)</i>	<i>Inactive (rate from total pop.)</i>
15-19	34,825	2,307	2,051 (47%)	30,468 (87.5%)
20-24	34,358	5,931	8,431 (59%)	19,995 (58%)
25-29	33,832	9,988	7,603 (43%)	16,241 (48%)
30-34	33,249	10,006	6,206 (38%)	17,037 (51%)
35-39	31,922	10,622	4,287 (29%)	17,012 (53%)
40-44	32,691	11,885	4,756 (29%)	16,050 (49%)
45-49	28,660	10,477	3,586 (26%)	14,598 (50%)
50-54	27,210	9,349	2,429 (21%)	15,433 (57%)
55-59	22,554	5,005	1,092 (18%)	16,458 (73%)
60-64	17,644	3,021	371 (11%)	14,253 (81%)
65 and more	42,261	1,832	42 (2%)	40,388 (96%)
Total women	339,207	80,421	40,854 (34%)	217,932 (64%)
Total men	354,425	178,012	78,867 (31%)	97,546 (27.5%)

Source: Labour Force Survey (SSO 2009)

20 High inactivity rate of the youngest women have to be considered in context of compulsory secondary education, thus most of these women are still in education process.

4. Rural women and economy

It is important to note, however, that official data include the unpaid family workers under the employed persons following Eurostat standards. In 2009 out of 64 349 unpaid family workers 60 % were women, however the rural – urban division is not available.

The CRPM survey of rural women and men 2011, used a different type of classification than the one used in the Labor force survey, according to working status (see table below), and we asked a separate question altogether to determine in what ways people who are not employed contribute to the family budget. Our findings indicated that in rural Macedonia 3 out of four women (78.4%) are not included in the labor market as opposed to every second man (56.2%).

Table 13: Working status of rural residents

<i>What is your working status?</i>	<i>Men total (% of men)</i>	<i>Women total (% of women)</i>	<i>Overall (% of total)</i>
Formally employed (receive wages from an employer and registered)	74 (26.8%)	46 (14.4%)	120 (20.2%)
Informally employed (receive wages from an employer, but not registered)	21 (7.6%)	9 (2.8%)	30 (5.0%)
Self-employed (owning a registered business or registered farmer)	26 (9.4%)	14 (4.4%)	40 (6.7%)
Not employed (includes everyone else)	155 (56.2%)	250 (78.4%)	405 (68.1%)
Total	276 (100%)	319 (100%)	595 (100%)

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Consequently, there are smaller percentages of women than men that are considered employed as well, which is in accordance with the data from the State Statistical Office. Respondents within the groups of self-employed and not employed were further classified into categories according to the nature of their occupation.

Table 14: Structure of the self employed and the unemployed

<i>Self-employed</i>	<i>% of men</i>	<i>% of women</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Business owners or business license holders	82.8%	84.2%	83.3%
Registered farmers	17.2%	15.8%	16.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Not employed</i>	<i>% of men</i>	<i>% of women</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Student	5.6%	4.7%	4.9%
Retired	25.7%	17.8%	20.5%
Unregistered farmer	13.9%	1.7%	6.8%
Actively looking for work	41.7%	25.4%	31.9%
Inactive	13.2%	50.4%	35.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

While statistical data do not provide economic activity information data vis a vis **ethnic minorities disaggregated by gender**²¹ our research enables to provide these comparisons.

Rarely ethnic Macedonian women in rural areas are employed and if so they usually work in the textile sector, whereas ethnic Albanian women stay at home and take care of children and household. The majority of female focus group participants were not formally employed. While none of the Albanian participants was employed, the Macedonian women who are employed mainly work in textile factories (especially in the villages in the Vardar and Eastern regions), other factories/industries which are close to their village or as saleswomen in grocery stores. In certain villages (e.g. Blatec, Capari), more women are formally employed compared to men. This is due to the large number of textile factories near the villages, where women are considered to be the main workforce because of the traditional divisions of work (in Macedonia, traditionally only women are thought sewing, cutting, ironing and dressing skills).

Ethnic Albanian men have up to three jobs whereas ethnic Macedonians with no jobs are not actively seeking one. Since the majority of Albanian women from the rural communities are not expected to work, men are contrary expected to take on two-three jobs in order to provide for the basic financial needs of the family. They frequently work as seasonal agricultural workers and construction workers and sometimes combine this with the domestic farming activities. In contrast, almost all of the Macedonian male participants which were not formally employed (except the elderly ones) stated they are looking for a job and they are prepared to do anything, but there are no jobs available. They are doubtful they could find a job and many are not actively seeking for one. Still, they do not consider the farming as a potential long-term business activity.

4.1.2. What are the barriers for rural women to enter labour market?

There is no evidence that shows that more educated women have lesser chance of being unemployed. To get more insight into the problem of exclusion of rural women from labour market, we can look at the (un)employment and inactivity rates cross-referenced with the level of educational attainment.

As the table below shows, **the level of education has a very high inverse correlation with the inactivity rates, which means that rural women with lower educational attainment, being aware about the low availability of jobs, choose to stay out of the labor market more often than women who choose to pursue more ambitious educational goals.** While the more educated rural women tend to be less inactive, at the same time surprisingly, there is no evidence that they have a lesser chance of being unemployed. Quite the contrary– unemployment rate for college-educated rural women and those holding a high-school diploma is 40%, whereas of those with incomplete primary education only 22% are unemployed. Rural women with primary and lower secondary education actively seeking jobs also stand a lower chance of being unemployed

21 The officially available LFS reports do not provide ethnically divided data, however a study from 2009 indicated that female participation in the labour market is low particularly among ethnic minorities such as Albanians and Roma. The study refers to LFS from 2000 as the only LFS providing ethnically divided data, according to which participation rates of women from Albanian and Roma speaking communities were 11 % and 36 % respectively, in comparison to 51 % rate among Macedonians. Significant economic inactivity has been recorded in later survey among Roma women. (Euro – Balkan Institute 2009). See further text.

4. Rural women and economy

(32%) than women with higher levels of education. The most striking is the fact that the most educated rural women (those with a university diploma) have it more difficult to get a job than even less educated rural women. This indicates very few opportunities for educated women in rural areas that could be encouraging them migrate to urban centers where their chances might be higher.

On the other hands, the data suggest that the most common status for rural women is to finish education at primary level of education and to stay out of the labor market – as many as 117,000, or nearly one third of all rural women, fall into this category (inactive women with completed primary education). If we combine this group together with women with incomplete or no education, we will have a group of 180 960 rural women. This way we get group representing more than half of rural women population (53 %) with educational level below compulsory secondary level (that was introduced only recently). In this specific group, 3 out of 4 women end up being economically inactive.

Table 15: Working age female population living in rural areas by economic activity and educational attainment

<i>Educational attainment</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Employed</i>	<i>Unemployed (rate of unemployment)</i>	<i>Inactive (rate of inactivity)</i>
Without education	17,440	737	118 (14%)	16,586 (95%)
Incomplete primary	60,745	10,560	2,998 (22%)	47,187 (78%)
Primary and lower secondary education	156,912	27,157	12,592 (32%)	117,163 (75%)
3 years of secondary	20,583	8,709	5,861 (40%)	6,013 (29%)
4 years of secondary	69,550	25,834	14,798 (36%)	28,918 (42%)
Higher education	2,061	1,098	285 (21%)	678 (33%)
University level education	11,915	6,326	4,202 (40%)	1,388 (12%)
Total women	339,207	80,421 (23 %)	40,854 (34%)	217,932 (64%)

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2009, State Statistical Office

In CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011, as mentioned earlier, more than 3 out of 4 rural women (78 %) stated they do not work (while only every second man doesn't work). However, only 25 % of rural women who are not working are actively searching for job and more than half indicated they are inactive. The rest were mostly retired (18 % of non-working), few were still studying and even less worked as unregistered farmer.

Families and unpaid home work turned out to be the main reason for inactivity of rural women. In the CRPM 2011 survey, for the largest number of inactive rural women (43%) the reason for staying out of the workforce despite having a desire to work are their duties in the household, which for men is not the case – only 14% of inactive men feel the same. It is very indicative that only a small share of the inactive rural residents (17%) answered that the reason for being inactive is that they do not want to work (more often stated by inactive men - 26 % than inactive women 15%). Contrary, for men, the main reason for not registering at Employment agency, is that almost half of the inactive men do not believe the Employment agency can help them find job. A significant proportion of inactive women believe the same (39%).

Table 16: Reasons for inactivity

<i>If you're not employed and not looking for work, what are the reasons you're not registered at the Employment agency?</i>	<i>% of men</i>	<i>% of women</i>	<i>% of total</i>
I don't believe I could find a job there	49%	39%	41%
There's too much effort involved in staying registered	11%	3%	5%
I don't want to work	26%	15%	17%
I want to work, but I have other more important responsibilities as mother/father and housewife	14%	43%	37%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Another reason for rural women might be resignation, as they seem to be more vulnerable to long-term unemployment.

Among those that are considered unemployed and are actively looking for work, long-term unemployment (more than 6 years) prevails in the majority of cases and it is more common among rural women (77%) than among rural men (56%).

Rural Voices 6: Traditional family roles and economic activity of rural women

„We are housewives, not seeking for work, at the time being there is not work for the men, they are unemployed, and for us who have so many tasks at home: to wash, to cook for the family, chores..... “

“I just seat at home with my domestic chores and work nowhere. We the women, also need to work but there is nothing to do, and if there are jobs for us I do not think the husbands will let us work”.

Women (Meslodeshti village)

“I sometimes work in the private sector, and always work on the field; my father is a teacher, whereas my mother and wife are at home taking care of the household and the children”.

Men from (Zhelino village)

“There are women who go to work in factories, textile producing, even in Valandovo. As long as it pays well....”

Woman (Novo selo village)

Table 17: Length of unemployment

<i>How long have you been looking for work?</i>	<i>% of men</i>	<i>% of women</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Less than a year	8.8%	7.1%	7.9%
1-3 years	16.3%	10.2%	12.9%
3-6 years	18.8%	6.1%	11.8%
6-10 years	7.5%	18.4%	13.5%
10 or more years	48.8%	58.2%	53.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

The common assumption is that inactive people are dependent on social welfare support and do not work at all. However, the survey showed different, more heterogeneous picture indicated that they are occupied with side activities, such as farming or other, but particularly **subsistence farming is not really considered as a work for rural women and men**. When we asked people that are not employed about any work they do, less than half of them showed truly dependent and inactive. Contrary, more than half of them showed to be involved in activities to generate sources for family income. These men and women either work on the family farm (up to 27% in total, yet they do not consider themselves unregistered farmers) or work occasionally for others (11%). However, only 13% (or 11 of the 82) of those who replied that they work on the family farm view themselves as unregistered farmers. The type of work differs between the sexes too. The majority of men who do occasional work are seasonal agricultural workers, whereas women cite baking, sowing, hair cutting services, cleaning services as types of work they do occasionally for others. In addition, making handcrafts seems to be an exclusively female occupation.

Table 18: Work done by people that are not employed

<i>If you are not employed, do you work anything at all?</i>	<i>% of men</i>	<i>% of women</i>	<i>% of total</i>
I work on the family farm	52%	49%	27%
I make handcrafts	0%	100%	14%
I work occasionally for others	62%	38%	11%
I don't work anything	37%	63%	48%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women, 2011

Even though, it is about half less likely for rural women (4.4%) to be self-employed than for rural men (9.4%), similar shares of self-employed men and women are registered as farmers. However, due to the small absolute numbers overall, a survey of this scale cannot give precise results about the number of registered farmers. The percentages correspond to similar numbers of students and retired people among rural residents for both men and women. But there are many more men unregistered farmers than there are women. As we mentioned earlier, this does not mean that women do not participate in farm work, but they tend not to consider themselves as registered farmers but rather as helpers.

The focus group discussions also revealed that while all women, regardless of whether they are formally employed or not perform farming activities, only women from two villages (Izvor-Vardar region and Germijan – Pelagonija region) declared themselves as farmers. The latter stated they are registered as individual farmers and use the benefits for women farmers.

4.2. Rural women and income

4.2.1 Source of income for rural women and their families

Some of the rural residents, particularly those not working, depend on remittances from abroad and social welfare. All of the respondents were asked about any additional sources of income (see table below). Every tenth rural family receives remittances from family members from abroad. 7% of all rural families receive social welfare money, followed by another 4% who receive financial help from friends, family or humanitarian organization within the country.

Table 19: Sources of income for rural residents

<i>Additional sources of income</i>	<i>Replies</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Rent from land or property	20	3%
Remittances from abroad	58	10%
Social welfare	42	7%
Help from friends, family or humanitarian organizations	25	4%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

However, most significant income is generated from production and selling of agricultural products. Home-produced agricultural products are another important source of income, either direct through selling of the surplus agricultural production on the market, or indirect through saving family income by consuming foods grown on the family farm or garden. As many as 32% of all surveyed villagers reported income from agricultural production. The table below shows the break-up of utilizing the food produced on farm. It indicated that majority of respondents use it mostly for consumption while selling the rest (41 %), about every fourth person stated they partially consume the food and partially sell it while every third stated the produced food is mostly sold on market.

Table 20: Usage of the food produced by rural people.

<i>If you are a farmer or work on a family farm, how do you use the food you produce?</i>	<i>Replies</i>	<i>% of replies</i>
Most of it (80% or more) is sold on the market	66	34%
Part on the market, part for home use	48	25%
Most of it (80% or more) is for home use	79	41%
Total	193	100%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Pensions, salary of a family member and seasonal work detected as another sources of income in focus group discussions. The access to finances is the largest problem identified by participants, regardless of the village area they come from or their gender, ethnic or educational background. They manage by a combination of different means:

- 1. Pensions from the parents/grandparents.** This is often the only steady source of income for a family. However, some are afraid that once the pensioners pass away, their financial situation will become even tougher.
- 2. Salary of one family member.** Typically, one member of the extended family is employed. In the Macedonian villages it can be either the husband or the wife, while in Albanian families only the male family members are formally employed.
- 3. Agriculture.** While all grow agricultural products for the personal use of their family, some also sell them if they have a good crop. Still, this is not considered to be a stable source of income, since the crops are sometimes destroyed because of weather conditions and also the purchasing prices are not guaranteed.
- 4. Seasonal work.** Usually during summer, there is a chance for additional income through picking forest fruits or mushrooms. Almost all villagers from the north-eastern region use this as an additional source of income during the summer months, especial because of the relatively infertile soil in this region which does not guarantee a steady crop.

Contrary, while many claim to have relatives living abroad, almost none reported it is possible to live from the money they send. It seems rather complementary and often more occasional income.

Rural Voices 7: Living with no income from formal employment is tough

"You gather some money and repay the debt to the store, but from the next day on you start making another one."

Macedonian woman (Staro Nagoricane village)

"They [relatives living abroad] would send 10 \$ once and then say that they don't have money for themselves and that their life is also difficult"

Macedonian woman (Dlabocica village)

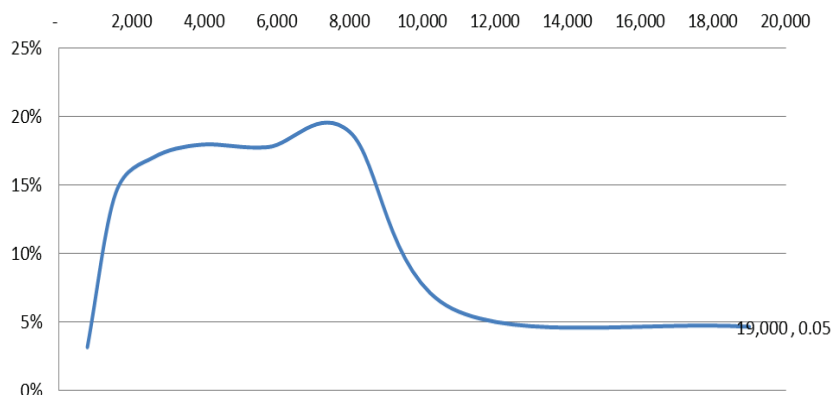
'We mainly live from our parents or grandparents pensions. In 10-20 years there won't be any pensioners, and we don't know how we are going to manage then'

Man from (Dolno Disan village)

4.2.2 Level of income and its sharing between men and women

The standard of living in rural residents is 5 times smaller than the average standard of living in the country. By dividing the reported monthly family income by the number of family members dependent on that income (excluding children younger than 7) we have calculated an approximate indicator of standard of living. The distribution for the rural population is represented in the chart below. The average standard of living in rural families is 5424 denars/month, as compared to 25771 denars available to be spent on average by Macedonian citizens (according to the 2009 living standard data of the State Statistical Office). Nevertheless, rural families also live from subsistence farming, while urban families do not do that.

Chart 23: Distribution of living standard among rural families
Living standard (income family / person)

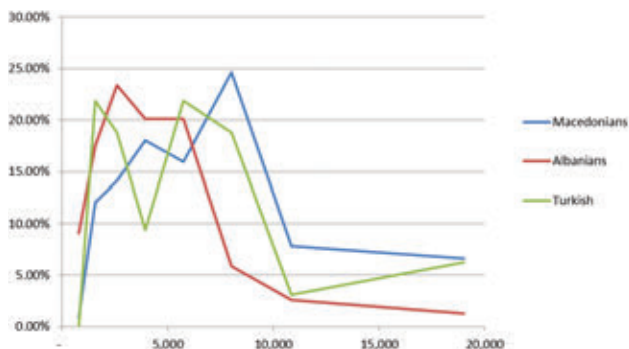


Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

Extended rural families have lowest standard of living. If we analyze the family living standard against the ethnic background, we notice that Albanian families have a lower standard of living, which is mostly due to the larger number of people dependent on the family income. Turkish and Macedonian families have a more similar distribution. The average standard of living for Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish families is 6135, 3813 and 5585 denars per month per family respectively.

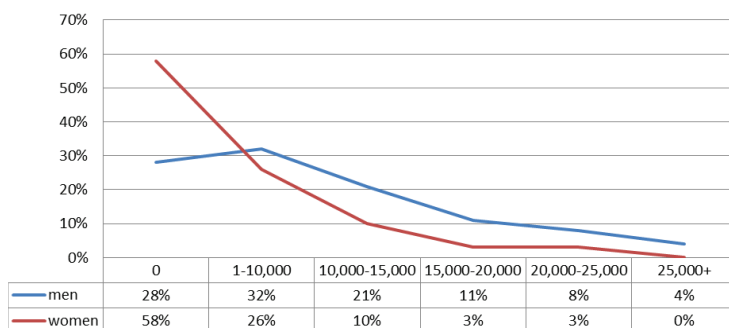
Chart 24: Distribution of living standard per ethnic group



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

To examine financial independence of individuals, there is a need to compare the personal income individuals have at their disposals. **Comparing rural men and rural women, survey proved that rural women mostly remain with no personal income at all.** An important indicator of the economic empowerment of women is the level of personal income in addition to the working status. The distribution of reported personal income for rural men and women in our survey is given in the chart below. 58% of all rural women receive no personal income at all, compared to 1/4 of the men. For every income range, there are more men than there are women in that range and the disparity grows even further the higher the income levels are. The derived average personal income for men is 8,873 denars and for women less than half of that – 3890 denars. Note that this includes all women and men, so that explains partly why it is much lower than the official average salary of 21,000 denars calculated only for paid salaries.

Chart 25: Personal income distribution per gender



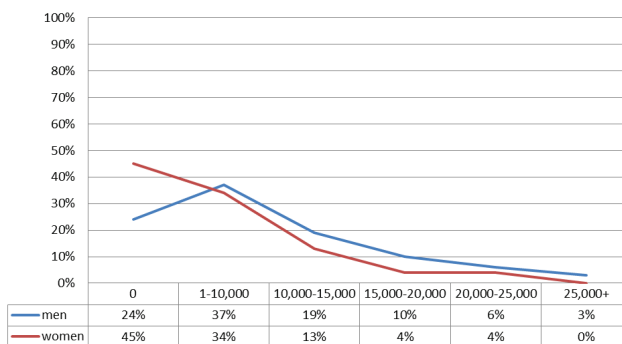
Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

4. Rural women and economy

This gender-based inequality is much more pronounced among the Albanian rural population, where striking almost 3 out of 4 women (74%) receive no personal income while only 45 % of ethnic Macedonian women are positioned in the same situation (see chart 21 and 22 for comparison).

Chart 26: Personal income distribution by gender and ethnicity

26a: Personal income distribution - Macedonians



26b: Personal income distribution - Albanians



Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Looking at self-sufficiency (comparing individual vs. family incomes) men are financially more self-sufficient, whereas rural women are dependent on their husbands. From the data about living standards and personal income, we can construct a variable which will show us whether a person is self-sufficient financially, i.e. whether that person earns at least the amount of money he or she consumes from the family income (assuming all family members above the age of 7 consume about the same). This variable of self-sufficiency shows us the degree of economic independence a person has. Not surprisingly, a bigger percentage of men are self-sufficient than women (73% vs. 41%). Of those interviewed, about half of the Macedonian women were self-sufficient, one fourth of the Albanian women and none of the Turkish women. Overall, this pattern confirms the idea about the husband as the traditional and main breadwinner in the family, with this tradition being most present in Muslim families.

Table 21: Financial self-sufficiency

	% of men	% of women
<i>Self-sufficient</i>	73.5%	41.1%
<i>Not self-sufficient</i>	26.5%	58.9%
Total	100%	100%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

The more educated the rural women are, the more financially self-sufficient they are. Analyzed against the educational background (see table below), self-sufficiency is positively correlated with the degree of education, i.e. the more educated the woman, the more likely it is she is financially self-sufficient. Women who received no education exhibit a small irregularity in the data, but this may be due either to the low absolute number, which causes great uncertainty and low representativeness in the results.

Table 22: Self-sufficiency for women based on education level

	No education	Unfinished primary	Primary education	Secondary education	Higher education
Self-sufficient	50%	27%	29%	54%	79%
Not self-sufficient	50%	73%	71%	46%	21%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

4.3. Rural women and agriculture

4.3.1 Position of women in agriculture sector

Economic participation of rural women is mainly limited to agricultural activities and while their participation in the individual/family type of agricultural businesses is balanced with that of men, their participation in companies is lower than that of men.

According to the Census of agriculture conducted in 2007, there were a total of 192,675 individual agricultural enterprises, which basically includes family owned farms (for detailed and complete definition, refer to the Census' methodology, SSO 2007). A total of 471,069 household members were said to work on individual agricultural holdings. Of those, 202,325 are women, which puts female participation rate at almost 42.8%. However this is only average rate for women being engaged in agricultural activities. As table below indicates, women have higher participating rates in the groups referring to most productive age between 35 up to 64 years. These groups together comprise almost 60 % of the total women's labor force in the agricultural sector or 25 % of the total labor force in the sector (men and women).

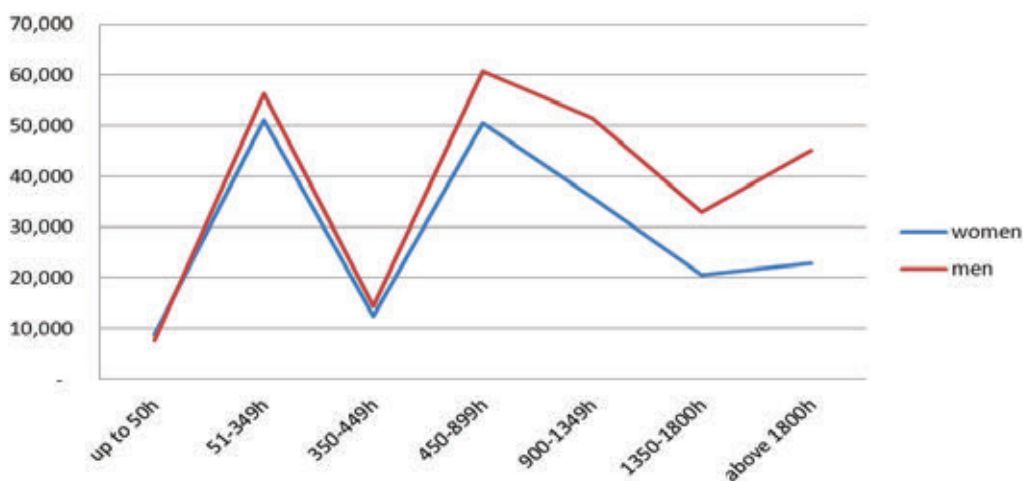
Table 23: Gender structure of households and companies that perform agricultural activities

Age groups	Households Members & Businesses			Households members only			Businesses only		
	Total	women	%	Total	women	%	Total	women	%
< 25	59902	24210	40.4	59801	24176	40.4	101	34	33.7
25-34	72883	30287	41.5	72341	30147	41.7	542	140	25.8
35-44	93018	41712	44.8	91352	41209	45.1	1666	503	30.2
45-54	102492	44984	43.9	100160	44329	44.3	2332	655	28.1
55-64	78745	34636	44	77917	34503	44.3	828	133	16.1
> 65	69573	28002	40.2	69498	27962	40.2	75	40	53.3
Total	476613	203831	42.8	471069	202326	42.9	5544	1505	27.2

Source: Agricultural Census (SSO 2007)

However, women spend less working hours in individual agricultural enterprises than men.

The actual participation of women by working hours is actually lower than 42.8%, because of higher percentage of women spending less time working on family agricultural holdings than men (see chart below). Simply put, men work more hours on the farm than do women. This might be influenced by the fact that women are more actively engaged with other tasks at home such as taking care of the household and the children (more on the issue is elaborated in chapter 6).

Chart 27: Agricultural activities per gender per working hours

Source: Census of agriculture (SSO 2007).

The Labor Force Survey has a narrower definition of agricultural workers and considers only those whose primary occupation is agriculture, resulting in a much lower number of people working in agriculture (107,500 in 2007) than those registered in the agricultural census (471,000 in 2007). Both the absolute number and the share of women as percentage in the total number of agricultural workers have been fluctuating in recent years. Thus, the number of

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female workers dropped in 2007 and 2009, but increased again in 2008. The share of women in agriculture remains below levels indicated in Agricultural Census, but still maintains a high level of participation at 38% (2009). Of the total number of agricultural workers, about 111,489, or 95.6% (SSO 2010a: 32), work in a privately owned enterprise and there is little variation across genders here.

LFS indicates one more possible concern in regard to women. The total number of employed includes 64 349 of unpaid family workers – and women represent almost 60% (38 403). At the same time, vast majority of unpaid family workers works in agriculture, hunting and forestry (55 712 or almost 87 %). Even though gender disaggregated data are not provided at this level (e.g. how many unpaid family workers in agriculture are women) one can assume the ratio would be either same or similar. This indicates that if there is 43 786 of women working in agriculture, significant proportion of them might be actually working as non-paid family workers.

Table 24: Employed persons in agriculture by gender, 2006-2009

<i>Employees in agriculture, Hunting and forestry</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Percent women (%)</i>
2006	70,125	44,360	39 %
2007	67,444	39,989	37 %
2008	72,976	46,521	39 %
2009	72,815	43,786	38 %

Source: Women and Men in the Republic of Macedonia (SSO 2008b, SSO 2010d)

Women do not equally participate in different activities in agricultural enterprises. They have the highest level of participation in management and administration (43%), however there are no registered women in the agricultural services branch. A breakdown of the agricultural enterprises is given in the table below.

Table 25: Employed women in agricultural enterprise, 2009

<i>Employees in agriculture, hunting and forestry</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Percent women (%)</i>
Crop production	712	203	22 %
Fruit growing	132	14	10 %
Viticulture	525	29	5 %
Livestock husbandry	584	102	15 %
Primary processing of agricultural products	167	91	35 %
Services	45	0	0 %
Management and administration	312	240	43 %
Total	2,477	679	22 %

Source: State statistical office (SSO 2010d: 107)

Being engaged in management of the agricultural enterprises women that work in agriculture are mostly economists by profession. Of those people employed in agricultural enterprises, the majority are qualified professionals with secondary, higher or university education. Most of them are agronomists, but there are also veterinarians, economists and other vocations. The highest female participation ratio is among the economists. 72% of the total number of economists with secondary education working in agricultural enterprises are women, compared to 59% women

of those economists with higher or university education. The lowest participation rate is among veterinarians (only 5% and 7% respectively); however, the total number of veterinarians is also pretty small, so it may be unrepresentative. The vast majority of agronomists are men: 82% of those with secondary and 84% of those with post-secondary education are males.

Table 26: Skilled employees in agricultural enterprises by gender and education, 2009

<i>Employees in agricultural enterprises</i>	<i>Secondary education</i>			<i>Higher or university education</i>		
	men	women	% women	men	women	% women
Agronomists	249	53	18%	282	54	16%
Veterinarians	21	1	5%	14	1	7%
Economists	32	82	72%	35	50	59%
Other	447	181	29%	67	61	48%
Total	749	317	30%	398	166	29%

Source: State Statistical Office, (SSO 2010d: 107)

The above findings suggest the substantive part of agriculture work (linked to agronomy professions) is still considered primarily a male vocation even though the share of women in the agricultural sector in total is at a reasonable level (38%). As the next table shows, significant proportion of people employed in agriculture are seasonal workers. While this table indicates business entities tend to hire female seasonal workers more often, in absolute numbers, vast majority of seasonal workers are hired at individual farms where 2 out of seasonal workers farms are men. Thus even among seasonal workers, in overall women do not represent more than 38 % of the workforce.

Table 27: Seasonal workers in Macedonia by gender and type of enterprises

<i>Seasonal Workers (by type of enterprises)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>% of Women from Total</i>
<i>Macedonia (in total)</i>	109606	67686	41920	38 %
Individual	103187	65337	37850	36.7
Business	6419	2349	4070	63.4

Source: Agricultural census 2007 (SSO 2008a)

Another critical gender concern is the growing gender pay gap in agricultural sector according to latest available data. The analysis of net wages in shows that despite the fact that salaries have been increasing for both women and men, in many sectors the gender pay gap did not close

Explanatory box: What is gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap refers to the difference between the wages earned by women and by men. The EU indicator for monitoring the employment guidelines take the earnings of men as point of reference, the unadjusted gender pay gap is thus calculated as the difference between men's and women's average gross hourly wage as a percentage of men's average gross hourly wage. In that case, the gender pay gap indicates how many percentage points the earnings of women have to increase in order to be equal to those of men.

Although collective agreements and minimum wage laws are in principle gender-neutral, women still end up earning less than men

(Source: Eurostat, Labour Market Policy database, 2006).

period from 2002 to 2006.²² Contrary raise of salaries in some sectors actually contributed to widening of the gender pay gap including agricultural sector where gap widen from 22% to 33%, or the hotels and restaurant sectors being of important relevance for agro-tourism with gap jumping from 15 to 50% (details on gender pay gap in all sectors in provided annex table A2.2).

Table 28: Gender pay gap calculations in selected sectors based on average net wage

Average salaries in denars in selected sector	2002			2006		
	Women	Men	Gender pay gap	Women	Men	Gender pay gap
Agriculture	5308	6775	22%	6014	8935	33%
Hotels and restaurants	8628	10170	15%	10129	20126	50%

Source: State Statistical Office (2003, 2008), authors' calculation (Gender pay gap is % difference between women salary against men salary)

4.3.2 Future perspectives of rural women & men in agriculture

Agricultural work is used as a way to increase ones living standard in rural areas. In a study²³ by Moellers and Heidhues in 2004, 120 Macedonian villagers were asked about their attitudes towards agricultural work. Although the study cannot be considered representative on a national level due to the small sample surveyed, its results are indicative especially of the qualitative aspects of the questions concerning the status of agricultural work among rural households. When asked about their motivations for farming, respondents named maximizing income and securing a living standard as most important factors. Second in importance was the objective to provide for the next generation in the family and last was the desire to enjoy a rural lifestyle. Likewise, the number one motivation behind the possible decision to leave farming was the desire to change lifestyles, followed by increasing household income and reducing the work load. This suggests that there is a kind of stigma, or reserved attitude at least, towards farm work, that goes beyond the low profitability and demanding work load that are normally associated with it.

According to findings from CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011, as indicated earlier, 41% of those who produce food on farm use it mostly for home consumption and sell only the surplus, while only 34 % produce mostly for selling and consume 20% or less. In other words, **farming is perceived mostly a coping mechanism which enables them to make it through the month by saving on certain products for their daily use and if possible earn some extra income by selling the extra production.** This was also confirmed within

Rural Voices 8: Agriculture as a coping mechanism

"Agriculture is not profitable. The oil is expensive, the seasonal workers are expensive, and they do not pay the money we are promised to receive. The subventions are given only to individuals. That is why young people try to find a way to get away from the farming."

Macedonian woman (Grdec village)

²² Unfortunately the State statistical office did not publish more recent gender disaggregated wage data per sector and therefore recent trends cannot be depicted.

²³ Diversification decision in the rural non-farm sector of transition economics: the case of Slovenia and Macedonia, 2004, Moellers and Heidhues

CRPM focus groups discussions. Additionally, the focus groups also indicated, that even though every family grows certain crops, less than half of the respondents reported to sell the products. They generally grow vegetables for their personal use, and in case of larger crop the family may decide sell the excess production.

Similarly to survey results, only rarely participants in the focus groups considered the farming activities as an employment and a way of life. This might be related to the size of land they own allows for just subsistence farming, but inevitably this is one of the reasons why the vast majority were not registered as farmers. The other main reason they point out refers to the high expenses for maintaining the registered firm (taxes, monthly benefits for at least one employee, etc.) which are difficult to be paid on a regular bases due to the seasonal nature of the work and the variations in the crops and the placing of products.

Explanatory box:

Registered individual farmers – Conditions and Benefits

Conditions to be registered as farmer,

- applicant should own agricultural land, or have the land on lease;
- applicant cannot be pensioner, trader or any kind of economic preprocessor;
- applicant should be healthy
- applicant cannot have criminal record

Application for being added in the registry of individual farmers, should be submitted to Ministry of agriculture.

The benefits of being registered as farmer are following:

- economic and legal security;
- access to finance; right to be given agricultural land on concession;
- access to the funds through the Program for agricultural support;
- right to pension and disability insurance

Criteria for registering for insurance pension as farmer in the Pension and Disability Fund are three:

- evidence of ownership of agricultural land, or
- purchase contract or lease contract for agricultural land; or
- certificate of property / concession from the Cadastre

The registered farmer contributes to the Fund with minimum pension contribution in value of 20% of the average salary (1090 MKD) or more.

The high wage taxes are the main reasons for not registering as farmers. The CRPM focus group discussions on rural women show that although farmers were not much informed on the benefits of being registered as a farmer (**see explanatory box**), all emphasize the costs involved as the main de-motivating factor for registering (for men and women as well), and base their claims on examples of people they know, which are registered but find it hard to cover the expenses and leave some money aside.²⁴

As it will be shown in chapter 6 the ownership of the assets represents barrier for women to register as farmers. Although male descendants are usually preferred in inhering the family

²⁴ In this context, the Farmers federation of Macedonia protested on the introduction of the gross salary system in 2009 as with it the wage costs for the farmers were raised from 1600 denars to 8000 denars

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

assets, in many families the assets have not even been legally transferred from the father or the grandfather, although they have passed away. The costs for transferring the assets are relatively high and people cannot afford to register them on their name.

While there is in total more men entitled to agricultural pensions (due to the fact that more men work in agriculture), evidence show that women tend to dominate among recipients of minimal agricultural pensions registered by the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund. This is mainly due to the fact that women in large live longer and receive survivors (family) pensions. The data show that there are 904 female, compared to 36 male recipients of such pensions. The minimal agricultural pension in December 2010 was 3,774 denars per month. The situation is reversed for the regular agricultural pensions with a monthly worth of 6,282 denars (also for December 2010). It need to be emphasized that this type of pension is not only of almost double worth but also it is being enjoyed by 8 times more recipients than the minimum pensions, in total by 13 264 men and 1851 women, which leaves only 12% of people entitled to regular agricultural pensions to be women. This means there is only 1 women receipient of regular agricultural pension for every 7 male recipients. A detailed breakdown by gender for each type of pension is given in the table below.

Table 29: Agricultural pensions distributed by the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, December 2010

Basis for pension	<i>Minimal agricultural pension</i>			<i>Pension for individual agricultural workers</i>		
	men	Women	% women	men	women	% women
Age	493	384	44%	7569	1674	18%
Family	36	904	96%	5153	84	2%
Disability	n/a	n/a	n/a	542	93	15%
Total	529	1288	71%	13264	1851	12%

Source: Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, 2011

4.3.3 Gender division of roles in agriculture

The more educated women are the more equally they decide on agricultural production.

The degree of inclusion of women in agriculture can also be evaluated through the decision-making arrangements that exist in agricultural households. When asked about who decides for agricultural production, 35.4% of rural women said both the husband and the wife make those kinds of decisions, 24.1% said it's the husband, compared to 5.4% who said it's the wife (according to Jakimovski & Matilov 2002). The CRPM Survey of rural women and men also depicts that in 18.9% households all the adult members of the family participate in the decision-making. For the rest of the participants this question is inapplicable as their households are not involved in any kind of agricultural production. Not surprisingly, more educated women tend to have a more democratically organized decision-making process whereby all family members participate – 25.6% of women with higher or university education said this is the case in their households. Similarly, 20% of these women allow their husbands to make the decisions, the lowest such percent across all education categories.

The study Gender balance in the agricultural sector (CRPM 2008a) shows that there is gender segregation of jobs in agriculture.

Every family has a yard where they grow vegetables and some have larger fields. Regardless of the fact that both men and women from Macedonian ethnic background are willing to be formally employed, the gender segregation of jobs is vast. While the farming activities are more equally divided between male and female family members, there is still a division of activities. The men are generally responsible for the physically more challenging tasks, such as: digging, irrigation, harvesting, while both women and men work on planting, picking, packaging, etc. When it comes to taking care of the cattle, women mainly deal with feeding the animals and milking. Men typically sell the products to the market and bargain for the prices. They believe that these are activities that require skills such as assertiveness, which, according to them are more dominant in men. Children are also involved in the farming activities. They learn to perform them when they are quite young by observing the older family members. Many of the jobs typically performed by men are not considered as suitable for women and they do not even consider the option of performing them. Women indicate different reasons concerning the gender specification of farming activities. While some claim that women could not do the traditionally 'male' tasks because they lack the physical strength to do that, others argue that they could perform them, but if they take on those activities as well, nothing would be left for men to do. However, there are ethnic differences regarding the gender specification of agricultural activities. While, Macedonian men and women jointly work in the field, Albanian women mainly perform the agricultural activities near the house, i.e. in the yard, while men typically work outside of the house.

Rural Voices 9: World of 'Male jobs'

"When I think about it, it is better to be a man, since there are more jobs for them, in construction, while we after finishing education sit at home and wait for charity. I would rather work and carry woodwork (gredi) than sit at home waiting for a job."

Macedonian woman (Dlabocica village)

"If a woman goes to the purchasing point (otkopenpunkt), they would laugh at us... Even if a woman knows better than the men, you can say that at home, not in public."

Macedonian woman (Murtino village)

4.4 Summary Chapter 4 - Rural women and economy

In rural Macedonia majority of women is not included in the labor market, which is not the case with the rural men. Rural women remain economically inactive for the whole of their lives as they are not expected to find jobs. This is in particular characteristic for ethnic Albanian women. For the rest, the study shows that the level of education has a very high inverse correlation with the inactivity rates, which means that rural women with lower educational attainment, being aware about the low availability of jobs, choose to stay out of the labor market more than women who choose to pursue more ambitious educational goals. Families with affiliation to patriarchal values and unpaid home work are the main reason for inactivity of rural women.

Perspectives of Women in Rural Areas

The study also concludes that rural women are more vulnerable to unemployment than rural men, as well as more vulnerable than urban women. The unemployment rate among rural women is very high and especially hit are younger women. Rarely ethnic Macedonian women are employed and if so they usually work in the textile sector, whereas ethnic Albanian women tend to stay at home occupied with child-care and household chores. Ethnic Albanian men have up to three jobs in order to feed their multi-children families. The ethnic Macedonians with no jobs are not actively seeking one. Those rural women that pursue to look for jobs are vulnerable to long-term unemployment. Subsistence farming is the only form of income producing activity they do though most of them do not regard this as work. However, half less rural women choose to be self-employed (and mainly they register as farmers), than rural men.

Agricultural work is used as a way to increase ones living standard in rural areas and is less paid. More men work in agriculture according to official statistics, however unpaid and undeclared work remains hidden from those records. Evidence show that there are more women recipients of minimal agricultural pensions registered by the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund than there is men, mainly because they inherit pensions as survivors of their husbands. On the other hand, in absolute numbers there are 8 times more recipients of regular agricultural pensions among whom the vast majority is received by men. To receive agricultural pension and other benefits one must be registered as farmer. There is little number of registered farmers in Macedonia the main reason being the high wage taxes. Women are also less represented in individual agricultural enterprises than men and those that work in these enterprises usually hold management positions. However, the rest work on family farms as unpaid family worker, occasionally as low paid seasonal workers or pass as officially unrecognized workforce but contributing as collaborating family members.

Farming is perceived mostly a coping mechanism which enables them to make it through the month by saving on certain products for their daily use and if possible earn some extra income by selling the extra production. The more educated women are the more equally they decide on agricultural production. There is gender segregation of jobs in agriculture. The men are generally responsible for the physically more challenging tasks, such as: digging, irrigation, harvesting, while both women and men work on planting, picking, packaging, etc.

5. Social life and participation of rural women in society and politics

Macedonia is a country with advanced progress on decentralization reform that allows for discussion and debate about a community's needs, priorities, and resources at local level. The Law on local self-government provisions compulsory public consultations (art. 42) in decision making. This is practiced in almost all municipalities, though the extent of participatory approach by municipalities and awareness among citizens for such practices differs. Although decentralization brings decision-making and resources to the local level, it also brings them into family space, areas where women already are and where they exercise some influence. In addition, because of the productive and reproductive roles in rural areas, women are key actors and most familiar with daily concerns and local problems. Women know both the needs of their children with respect to health, and education and the problems of agriculture and commerce. Therefore involvement of rural women in local decision making and in politics in general is very important. However, abundance of evidence show that the level of women's involvement in the decision making processes and especially politics is dependent on multiple factors from traditional division of household activities, to societal gender stereotypes that push women out of public spaces and lack of free time to engage in societal activities such as decision making. Therefore, in this section we will discuss the activities and social life of rural women as well as their participation in society and politics.

5.1. Rural women and their daily activities

Domestic activities are main occupation of the rural women and an area where gender disbalance is most pronounced. Rural women spend 4:17 hours on domestic activities, which constitute a form of unpaid work, and this is considerably more than the 1:21 hours that rural men spend doing the same. Men compensate by spending more hours doing paid work (3:21 hours/day versus 1:22 hours/day for rural women), although not entirely as they are left one extra hour which they spend on free time activities mostly. There is little difference between urban and rural women in patterns of time usage. Most notable is that urban women spend 3:43 hours daily doing domestic activities, about half an hour less than rural women who spend 4:17 hours per day (SSO, 2010c).

Table 30: Average time used per day by activities for persons aged over 10

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Rural area Men</i>	<i>Rural area Women</i>	<i>Urban area Women</i>	<i>Urban area Men</i>
Sleeping	8:29	8:34	8:30	8:36
Free time activities	5:15	4:36	4:54	6:05
Domestic activities	1:21	4:17	3:43	1:14
Employment	3:21	1:22	1:49	2:43
Eating and drinking	2:13	2:15	2:03	2:04
Other personal care	1:09	1:10	1:12	1:07
Travelling	1:22	0:52	1:00	1:24
Study	0:47	0:52	0:43	0:42
Volunteer work and informal help	0:02	0:02	0:04	0:04
Other	0:01	0:01	0:01	0:01
Total	24:00	24:00	24:00	24:00

Source: *Time Use Survey 2009 (SSO 2010c)*

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Rural men and urban women have more time for socializing than rural women. The most popular choice from free time activities across all groups is watching TV and video. Rural women spend 101 minutes daily watching TV which is a bit less than urban women and rural men. Percentage-wise, i.e. compared to other alternatives, resting and social life are more common activities among rural women than among other groups, whereas sports are least common. Time spent on computer activities has increased most notably for all groups since the previous time use survey in 2004.

Table 31: Average time used per day for free time activities for persons aged over 10

<i>Free time activities (in minutes)</i>	<i>Rural area Men</i>	<i>Rural area Women</i>	<i>Urban area Women</i>
TV and video	113	101	110
Resting	78	79	68
Social life, visits, feasts, phone	51	52	50
Sports, walking, hiking	30	14	25
Computer and video	8	4	3
Other computing	12	9	18
Reading books, magazines	7	7	9
Religious activities	6	4	4
Hobbies and games	6	2	3
Radio and music	3	4	3
Entertainment and culture	1	0	0

Source: Time Use Survey, 2009 (SSO 2010c)

Women despite the quality of rural life. 53.6% of rural women surveyed in 2001 consider their economic and social situation to have worsened over the last 10 years, and only around 10% evaluated their situation better than 10 years earlier (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 22). While more optimistic were educated women employed women in non-agricultural sectors, on the other hand women from purely agricultural households had more pessimistic view about their economic and social well-being. More pessimistic were also women residents of highlandous villages, and those with no occupation or those working in agriculture. Not surprisingly, in the same survey, **rural women confirmed they would like to remain living in the villages, but conditioned in with preference of finding work outside agriculture.** Overall, 52.4% of rural women in 2001 wanted to stay in their village, but preferred to find a job outside agriculture, while one out of four women wanted to move to the city and live and work there (scenario mostly preferred by younger and more educated women)

The prophecy of this pessimistic scenario partly fulfilled. As showed earlier, neither men nor women consider agricultural activities nowadays as main income generating strategy. Moreover, educated women are encouraged to use any possible opportunities for staying in urban centers (be it job or marriage). As we will show later (in chapter dedicated to private life), there are numerous cases of single men who cannot marry because of the lack of women in the village (or nearby villages). Women tend to prefer leaving the village and move to the cities where they either get married and/or find job. According to recent data (SSO 2010d) the internal migration rate of women between 15-29 years is 11.61 which is ten times higher than the rate for men in same age group and the highest rate from all ages groups.

5. Social life and participation of rural women in society and politics

More jobs, developed agricultural production and better schooling as ways out of this situation. In 2001 study, rural women were asked to specify the most important life need of their household and the following answers were given: 39.9% of them chose improving the economic standing of their family as the most important, 22.0% securing employment, 12.8% development of agricultural production, for 11.0% the schooling of their children is the most important, 7.8% securing house care and help for themselves and 5.5% said better housing conditions are most important (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 34). Needless to say, pertaining gaps in employment opportunities identified in this report, indicate these needs remain high priority for improving the situation of rural women and men.

5.2. Participation in decision making

Social involvement and participation by rural women via membership in various organizations is very limited. The biggest number of women in 2002 indicated they were involved in political parties (14% of those questioned), but compared to the high 45% rate of membership characteristic for rural men, it is evident that the level of social involvement of women falls behind that of men. For all other types of organizations (such as sports clubs, cultural, ecological, agricultural associations, humanitarian organization, religious organis, profesional organisation and others), female membership rates are less than 10%, but the situation was very similar for rural men as well with the exception of sport clubs where ¼ of men indicated membership (Dimitrievska 2003: 30-35).

This is seconded by the CRPM survey of rural women which shows that only 25% of rural residents are active in any kind of social organization, of which only 7% are rural women. Biggest interest of rural women civic activisms is identified in membership and participation in religious groups and civil society organizations. This is opposite from their male counterparts who are members of / or active in primarily sports clubs, farmers associations and business associations. The results correspond with the situation identified and analyzed above where male rural residents are employed, or working in agriculture and have more leisure time than female rural residents.

Table 32: Rural residents participation in social organizations

Do you participate in activities or you are member in the following organizations?	Yes		No		Not available	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Business/trading organizations (except farmers/agriculture)	13	2	237	296	27	17
Farmer/Agriculture Associations	20	1	240	305	18	15
Sport clubs or groups	26	3	213	285	38	32
Culture clubs or groups	5	7	226	279	46	34
Civil society organizations	8	10	222	274	47	36
Syndicate	15	5	217	275	45	39
Local religious group or networks	16	15	240	282	21	24
Informal groups or networks	3	1	246	295	24	22
Other	5	1	227	270	22	18
TOTAL	111	45				
% of total	18%	7%				

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

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An 2001 study indicated that rural women are less involved than men in solving the everyday problems in their community. While only 5% of rural women claimed to be fully involved and 20.5% were partially involved, on the other hand, 15% of men stated to be fully involved and 36% partially involved. As a rule, the more educated rural residents are, the more involved in solving their communities' problems they tend to be. (Jakimovski 2004: 72).

The CRPM survey of rural women & men 2011 indicated higher levels of participation in community level decision making. From the respondents who answered the question only 13.6 % participate in decision making on community level, while 86.4% do not participate at all. This suggests that decentralization might have some influence on increased awareness for participatory democracy in rural areas. The gender gap however indicates that involvement of women remains low even in 2011 as only 5.5 % of women participate in political life of their community besides voting.

Table 33: Participation in decision making at community level

<i>Do you besides voting participate in the political life of your community?</i>	<i>Total answers Per (sub)group</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>% of positive answers per (sub)group</i>
Men	272	210	62	22.8 % of men
Women	309	292	17	5.5 % of women
Total	581	502	79	13.6 % of total answers

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

The most frequent ways to participation in community decision making is party activism and municipal meeting/debates/public hearings. The vast majority of participants in focus group discussions (men and women alike) were not aware of the possibilities and the modes of participating in the local decision-making. The general conception is that you need to be a member of a political party (typically higher in the hierarchy) to be able to participate.

Table 34: Ways of participation

<i>If answer is yes [to the previous questions] in what way do you participate?</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Party Activism	35	10
Municipal meeting/debates/public hearings	23	6
Other	3	1
Total	61	17

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Men are 3 to 4 times more active in community level decision making in comparison to women. Most of the citizens that live in rural areas are informed through word of mouth, while few of them 0.99% are informed through the internet. However, the focus group discussions revealed that men are more involved in the local decision-making, since they are expected to have more time to spend on these type of activities as compared to women who are expected to stay at home. Only women from the village of Capari were reported to participate at local meetings.

Nevertheless, all women agreed that they need to be more represented in the local level decision making, but mechanisms should be made to enable their participation. They may not be able to travel longer distances (e.g. to the municipality center) or spend time in the local community

5. Social life and participation of rural women in society and politics

offices (Mesna zaednica), but if they are invited in some woman's home and asked their opinion on certain issues, they would be happy to participate. Albanian women have lower confidence to participate primarily because of their low levels of education and the disbelief they could contribute. The perception that one needs to be educated enough to be able to get involved when decisions concerning his/her everyday living are being carried is very strong within them.

There is reluctance of participating in these types of meetings, since they don't believe anyone would accept their suggestions.

When asked why they not participate in the political life 44.4% of rural women and men have answered that they do not believe that such participation will bring them any benefits. Around 5.3% have stated that they do not have sufficient information in order to actively participate, 1.8% said that the timing does not suite them at all. Others have answered that they do not have faith in the politics, some of them are not interested or don't have time at all.

Rural Voices 10: Politics? Not a tradition for a woman to participate

"One basic thing when it comes to decision-making in our village is that men decide. Whenever a meeting is organized, the information reaches women and men, but women do not organize themselves and don't go. No one prevents us, but there isn't a tradition."

Macedonian women (Grdec village)

"No one has asked us or gathered us to discuss local problems. Why not gather like here today and give our ideas."

Macedonian woman (StaroNagoricane village)

"They do not organize anything... just when there are elections villagers are gathered and asked and still there is nothing for us, our women seat at home and on the fields. They do not know how to discuss, our women are uneducated."

Albanian woman (Stracinci village)

Table 35: Reasons why not to participate

<i>If answer is No²⁵, what is the reason for you not to participate?</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
I do not have sufficient information	17	15
I don't believe that I can benefit from them	117	150
I would like to but the time of the meeting is a problem	5	6
My spouse/family won't let me	3	6
Other	22	30
Total	164	207

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

The municipalities put small efforts to raise awareness on public participation, or such efforts are not noticed by rural residents. In some instances the municipality needs to consult with its citizens in order to fulfill their needs. Form the survey 18.3% of the male respondents and 12.8% of the female respondents have stated that they are aware of cases where the municipality has asked for the opinion of its citizens. Contrary to this 40.86% of the female respondents have no recollection of the matter of consultation, similar 27.7% of the male respondents are not familiar with such cases. This suggests two things: either the rural residents are unaware of the participation efforts of the municipality or the municipalities themselves do not reach out to rural

25 Refers to previous question "Do you beside voting participate in the political life of your community?"

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areas or have limited record of fostering citizens participation.

Community related issues, problems and policies are not at all consulted with rural women.

Finally the CRPM survey of rural women identifies that 88.5% respondents are not aware of cases when municipality would consult with female members of their community. From this 41% are male while 47.5%. In this perspective, one may not have high expectations from municipalities in regards to making gender responsive decisions in defining development priorities or local policies that would be adequately reflecting on perspectives of rural women.

Rural Voices 11: They won't listen to us

"If we are called to participate, we would not mind sharing our thoughts."

Macedonian woman (Staro Nagoricane village)

"Whatever we say, won't be accepted. You go there, they speak, we listen, when they finish we leave. They don't ask for your opinion and often you can't speak up."

Macedonian woman (Novo Selo village)

Table 36: Consulting women

<i>Are you familiar with cases when the municipality consulted the female members of the community?</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>
Men	33	247
Women	36	286
Total	59	533

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

5.3. Participation of rural women in politics

Politics in Macedonia still tends to be considered a "male profession". The fact that at present, only one woman is president of a political party and that in the Government we have only two female ministers and one vice prime minister (13%),²⁶ but no woman is incumbent of a mayors office, nor ever has been elected as President of the country partially confirm this claim. In a representative democracy one would expect all of the segments of society to be represented in government and in political life in general.

5.3.1. Rural Women, national elections and political leadership

From its independence in 1990 until 2011, there were seven parliamentary election cycles held in the country, of which five were regular parliamentary elections and two were early elections. Different election models were used in this period, which had greater or smaller influence over the representation of women in Parliament.

Table 44 below presents an upward trend in the number of women candidates for members of

²⁶ Liljana Popovska leads DOM party. In the government formed after early elections in June 2011, Ms. Teuta Arifi from DUI holds post of Vice-premier for European affairs, Ms. Gordana Jankulovska serves as Minister of Internal Affairs and Elizabeta Kanceska Milevska as Minister of culture from VMRO_DPMNE.

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parliament (hereinafter MPs) in the period after the 2002 when Law on Elections introduced the mandatory provision of involving the less represented gender on candidate lists. Unfortunately, the *State Election Commission* does not provide rural / urban divisions of data to allow for analysis if the affirmative action taken in 2002 has any impact on the opportunities for rural women.

Table 37: 1990-2006 Candidates for Members of Parliament

<i>Elections</i>	<i>Total No. of candidates</i>	<i>No. of Men</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>No. of Women</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
1990	1158	1099	95 %	59	5 %
1994	1766	1640	92. %8	126	7.2 %
1998	614	561	91.4%	53	8.6 %
2002	3060	1952	63.7%	1108	36.3 %
2006	2700	1745	64.6%	955	33.4 %
2008	1540	1006	63.3 %	534	34.7 %

Source: State Election Commission and State Statistical Office (SSO 2008c)

Initially, political parties took advantage of weakness in the legal provision on a minimum 30% representation of both genders, by putting their women candidates on non-winning positions on the candidate lists. Thus, in spite of the introduction of positive measures, representation of women in the National Parliament has not increased satisfactorily. The minimum threshold of 30% representation of women has been achieved, i.e. women in parliament get a representation of 30% after the Law on elections was changed in 2006 (namely specifying that every third person on the list must but of less represented sex), and the participation of women increased to 35% in 2008, but dropped to 31 % in 2011 elections.

Table 38: Elected MPs by gender in 1990-2015 period

<i>Election period</i>	<i>No. of female MPs</i>	<i>% of women from the total</i>
1990-1994	5	4 %
1994-1998	4	3 %
1998-2002	9	8 %
2002-2006	21	18 %
2006-2008	36	30 %
2008-2011	42	35 %
2011-2015	38	31 %

Source: National Parliament website (www.sobranie.mk)

Note: Until the 2011, the parliament had 120 members. As of 2011 early elections the size of parliament was increased to 123 (3 mandates voted by diaspora members living outside of the country)

Until early elections in 2011, women were holding 42 out of 120 the **seats in parliament** which accounted for 35% female participation at national level. After the 2011 early elections, women hold 38 out of 123 mandates which accounts for 31% participation. However, besides number of mandates taken by women, it is important to look at women in key leading positions. In the parliament operating from 2008 to 2011 early elections, 8 women were appointed to the

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leadership positions in parliamentary bodies which accounted for 28 % of key leading positions, including Chairperson, Deputy Chairpersons, Chairpersons of Council and Committee bodies. After early elections in 2011, women MPs were appointed to hold nine leading positions, accounting for 32 %.²⁷

Albanian parties have more women in top party management as compared to Macedonian political parties. Parties have their management structure which decides about the ideology, political values and party program. The analysis of the Charters as basic documents regulating their operations, shows that what all parties share the same or similar structures.²⁸ The presence of women in highest leading positions shows Albanian parties have more women on vice-president positions (two from four vice presidents i.e. New Democracy; one of two i.e. DUI; one of three i.e. DPA), while main Macedonian political parties have significantly less (one of three).²⁹ Only two of these women on top party positions come from rural areas: Silvana Boneva (from Strumica) and Mirjana Kraja Sejdini (from Vrapchishte), however both of them cannot be portrayed as rural women and representing rural women needs, as they have not raised any issue for debate that is related to the rural women's life (i.e. lack of child care facilities). **Similarly, analysis of share of men and women in the Management/Executive/Central Board of the largest parties shows Albanian party leading in highest female participatory rates followed but some of the Macedonian parties** (for example Democratic Party of Albanian has 25 % women in Management/Executive/Central Board, SDSM has 21.8 % and other parties fall below 20%). Rural women presence was hard to detect, mainly because neither political parties, nor the state electoral commission publishes urban/rural statistics.

Rural women remain out of active politics. As indicated earlier, **very few rural women are involved in party activism** (only 10 rural women in the CRMP 2011 Survey indicated so and 14 % stated membership in political party in survey from 2002). For them the most frequent way of political participation is voting on elections. The CRPM survey on rural women & men 2011 shows that 42.5 % of rural men as opposed to 48.8% of rural women vote on elections. The difference in 6% in favor of women is a positive change for the democratic process and their political participation in the community.

Table 39: Voting on elections

<i>Do you vote on local/national elections?</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Male	256	21
Female	294	29

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

27 Until 2011 early elections, women MPs were holding following leading positions: one serves as vice-president (1 out of 3), 2 chaired Councils bodies (out of 3) and 5 out of 21 hold chairing positions in Committees. After 2011 early elections parliament, women are occupying these leading positions: two serve as Vice-presidents, two chair the Councils bodies and 5 out 21 are chairing the Committees.

28 They have Party President, Vice-Presidents (from two to four Vice-Presidents), Secretary General and Executive Board (in some parties called Central Board/Committee).

29 In the three larger Albanian parties, i.e. Democratic Party of Albanians (hereinafter, DPA), Democratic Union for Integration (hereinafter, DUI) and New Democracy (hereinafter, ND), one can notice women's participation in the top managerial structures, since all the three of them have female Vice-Presidents (in the case of New Democracy, two female Vice-Presidents out of four Party Vice-Presidents), which for instance, is not the case with the three larger parties of the so called Macedonian Block, i.e. VMRO DPMNE, SDSM and LDP

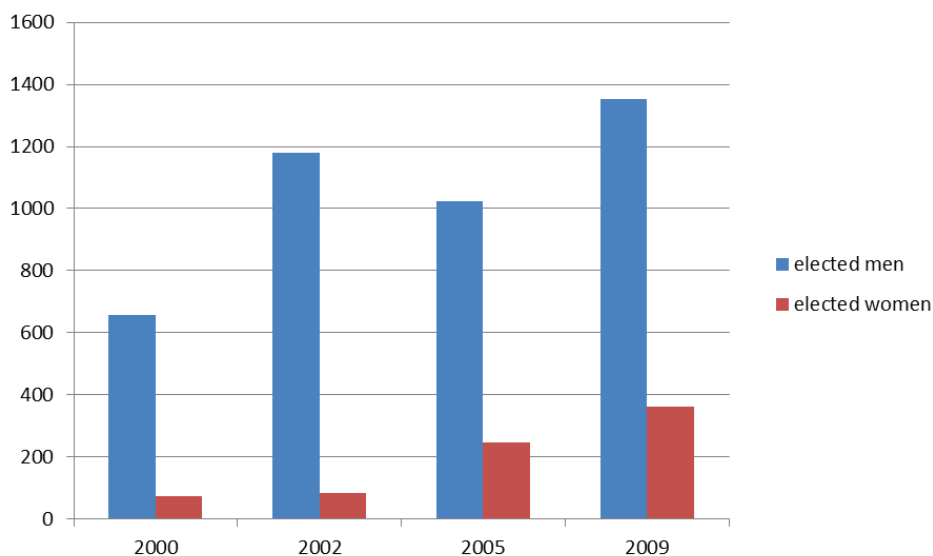
5. Social life and participation of rural women in society and politics

Proxy and family voting recorded in rural areas are affecting rural women autonomy to decide and vote for preferable party options. According to the analysis conducted for the Strategy against proxy and family voting of the State Electoral commission, proxy and family voting is reported by the civic association MOST and SEC to occur frequently in the regions located in the western part of Macedonia (Tetovo, Tearce, Zelino, Debar, Rostuse, Struga etc.). This document claims that the current condition impairs the free exercise of the election rights of particular group of citizens - mostly marginalized women from the rural parts in western Macedonia. The institutional response to these circumstances have so far been evaluated as limited in reaching out to the most marginalized groups of women, so it is not clear if the persons covered with the activities against proxy and family voting are in fact members of such groups. The informative materials that are distributed as flyers or printed messages on items are often in written form, what hinders the message to get through to the illiterate, who are most affected with this problem. Also, they usually speak to the women, underestimating the role of men as instigators of the problem.

5.3.2. Women and local governance

The territory of Macedonia is divided into 85 local self government units or municipalities (incl. City of Skopje). The Mayor and the Municipal Council are executive bodies of these municipalities. In every municipal council, council members are representatives elected through direct elections. Given the experience with Parliamentary elections and the lessons learned with respect to the introduction of quotas in the electoral law of 2002, the same mistake was not made with the changes of the Law on local elections (OG 54/2011) where the women's under-representation at the local level was tackled with the following amendment: 'Minimum of 30% of [the] under-represented sex [is] to be on the first half of the list for the local elections and 30% of [the] under-represented sex [is] to be on the second half of the list'.

Chart 28: Elected municipal councilors by gender

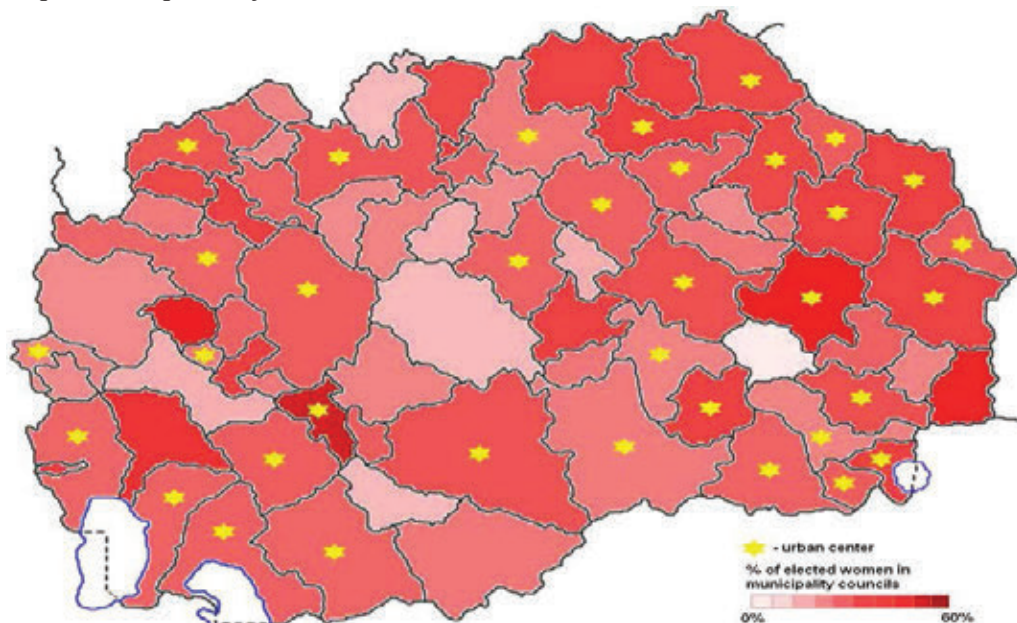


Source: State electoral commission 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009 and author's calculations

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The chart above shows that in local elections also the affirmative action for less represented gender is effective as women increase their representation in municipal council in last three rounds of local elections. After 2009 elections, out of 1391 council members, 373 elected councils were women or 27% (see details illustrated in the map below). In the capital women participate with 19% in the City of Skopje, while in the municipality of Konche it is 0%. Overall 1/3 of municipalities (29 out of 85) have councils in which women are above 30% of all members. The municipality of Krushevo has the highest percentage of female council members, 54.5%, and is the only municipality where women are in majority in the council. In 3 municipalities (Novo Selo, Radovish and Zajas) the share of women council members is between 40% and 50%. On the other hand, higher proportion of municipalities (42 % or 36 out of 85) have less women councilors than the average.. There is a statistically insignificant difference between women's representation in rural and urban areas. In urban areas 27.8% of women seat in the municipal council as compared to 26.5% of women that seat in the municipal council in rural areas.

Map 2: Participation of women in local councils



CRPM, Local elections, 2009

Though the above described situation is a result of the positive discrimination of women in the election law, it is important to note that none of the current mayors are women. This is pertinent to the fact that the Law on Local elections empowers the parties to nominate candidates for Mayors as well as accepts nominations supported by (at least 10.000) citizens. However, the fact that women are not participating importantly in party's governing bodies, the parties rarely nominate women as candidates for mayors. Historically speaking, parties nominated women for the mandate (2005-2009). In this term women were elected to govern the municipalities of Krushevo (Lefkija Gadzovska from SDSM), Centar (Violeta Alarova from DPA and later from VMRO-DPMNE) and Oslomej (Sanije Sadiku from DPA). Non-partisan women candidate rarely take initiative to run for Mayor supported by citizens. The electoral campaign is expensive and

5. Social life and participation of rural women in society and politics

considered rather exhausting and sometimes even tiresome, while also the general perception in the country is that individual candidate and especially women can rarely mobilize voters as compared to political parties and men in particular. One of the reasons being the fact that on electoral campaigns on the grass root level party activists are engaged and since women are less likely to be active party members they have limited opportunities to reach out to voters.

5.4. Summary of chapter 5 - Social life and participation of rural women in society and politics

Rural women are less involved than men in solving the everyday problems in their community, even though they increased participation in community level decision making. The most frequent ways to participation in community decision making is party activism and municipal meeting/debates/public hearings. However, men are 3 to 4 times more active in community level decision making in comparison to women. There is reluctance of participating in community level decision making and there is small awareness on public participation efforts by the municipality, or such efforts are unnoticeable to rural residents. As a result community related issues, problems and policies are not at all consulted with rural women. This suggests that also policies, instruments for their implementation and finally modes of governance in individual policy areas do not necessarily reflect the needs of rural women, as they are not involved in any phase of the policy development process.

Politics in Macedonia still is considered a “male domain”. The affirmative action for the less represented gender taken in 2002 has improved participation of women in national and local politics but the impact of this measure on the opportunities for rural women remains unidentified. *State Election Commission* does not provide rural / urban divisions of data to allow for such analysis. The study shows that Albanian parties have more women in top party management as compared to Macedonian political parties. The results are similar when the participation of women in Management/Executive/Central Board of the largest parties is analyzed.

Rural women remain out of active politics. As indicated earlier, very few rural women are involved in party activism. On elections in some areas in western Macedonia proxy and family voting is reported where victims are usually non-majority women.

6. Rural women and private life

The Macedonian society is rather conservative with pertaining patriarchal traditions that strongly affect the position of women in the society, imposing particularly specific role of women as primarily mothers and care-givers being tight to private sphere. In the 2011 CRPM survey of rural women and men 75% of the surveyed rural women were married, 16% were not married and 1% were divorced.³⁰

The vast majority of married rural women are also mothers. The average age of the mother for overall births in rural areas is 27.1 years, compared to 28.4 years for mothers in urban areas. First time births for rural mothers occur at 24.8 years of age, whereas urban women give birth for the first time when they are 26.8 years old. In both cases, rural women become mothers at an earlier age (SSO 2011b).

6.1. Rural women and family

Rural women have the freedom of choosing own husbands despite the strong social expectations and patriarchal norms. Many rural women today have much more freedom of choice in choosing who to marry than it was the case in the past. Nevertheless, social norms and expectations still exert a strong influence on women's decisions about marriage and choice of spouse. Often these social norms translate into personal preferences and act as factors of varying importance in choosing a husband. When rural women were asked about the importance of the level of education, wealth, the ethnic and religious background of their potential spouse in 2002, the results showed ethnicity and religion were most important factors for choosing a spouse for vast majority of rural women (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 61-64). Though these factors were more often important to ethnic Albanian women than to ethnic Macedonian women, still in both cases, at least four out of five women regardless of their ethnicity, considered them very important.³¹ The results from **2011 Survey confirmed the pattern, showing that ethnically and religiously mixed marriages are still a rarity among the rural inhabitants.** The CRPM survey of rural women and men depicted that vast majority of respondents (81%) are married to a person with the same ethnic and religious background as theirs. In only 2.6% of the cases, there is occurrence of marriages between people with same religion, but different ethnicity, typically within the Albanian and Turkish population.

Thus the results suggest that rural communities are ethnically and religiously homogenous. Religious and ethnic background is much more important factors of consideration than the social and class background of the potential spouse. The already mentioned study from 2002 showed that education and wealth were considered as very important by only one out of three rural women, however there were significant ethnic differences: Almost 86% of Albanian women consider the wealth of their husbands to be of great importance and 82% of them think the

30 The CRPM survey of rural women results are similar with those presented in "Gender Concept in the rural environment in Macedonia", a research carried out in 2003 (Dimitrovska 2003: 2)

31 For example, all of the Albanian women surveyed (100%) said that religion is very important, compared to 84.8% of the Macedonian rural women. Similarly, for 96.5% of Albanian women ethnicity is very important factor, as opposed to 80.6% of the Macedonians (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 61-64)..

same about the educational level, compared to 21% and 23% of ethnic Macedonian women respectfully (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 61-64)

An early study also claimed that traditions and stereotypes characterize rural women's lives, showing that valuing women's role of a mother remains important. Firstly, the study showed that on average, all rural women want to have 2.2 children, while at the same time desired average number of children was a bit higher among older women, women from agricultural households and over 3 children for ethnic Turkish and Albanian women. At the same time, 81% of Macedonian women thought the husband should not leave his wife under any circumstances if they can't have a child, compared to 58.5% of Albanian rural women (Jakimovski & Matilov 2002: 42).

In the CRPM survey of rural women and men 2011, vast majority of the married couples had children (87.7%). Most of the Macedonian families have two children (76.7% of the total number of families with two children), whereas most of the Albanian families have three children (46.8% of the total number of families with three children).

The common belief that rural inhabitants usually live in extended families (three-generational family) is seconded by the data from CRPM survey of rural women & men 2011. The data indicates that this is valid for slightly more than half of rural families (56.9%) while the rest (43.1%) reported to live separately (although not necessarily far away from other family members). Most commonly, Turkish rural inhabitants live in an extended family (70%), characteristic for about 40% of the Macedonian and Albanian families. The focus group discussions also showed that vast majority of the participants live in an extended family. Typically, the (youngest) son continues to live with his parents and look after them, and once he gets married, his wife comes to live in the house as well. Women live with their parents by the time they get married, and in case they don't marry, they stay in the same house and live with their brother/s and sister/s-in-law.

However, numerous examples of single men over 30-40 years of age were noticed through focus group discussions. These men cannot marry because of the lack of women in the village (or nearby villages). Women are more likely to leave the village to move to the cities where they get married. One reason why they migrate more easily is the fact that women do not own property and have nothing to lose if leaving the village. In contrast, women from the cities are reluctant to come and live in a village, especially if it is economically undeveloped area. In response to the lack of women, a relatively new practice emerged from discussions of focus groups: in different predominantly Macedonian villages participants mentioned practice of 'buying' wives from Albania. As explained by discussants, this practice is constituted of paying the bride's family (that has Christian tradition) from rural and underdeveloped region in Albania certain amount of money (usually 500 euros), so that she will be married with a Macedonian men that lives in a rural underdeveloped area.

Rural Voices 12: Women abandon villages, leaving men on their own

'Only women from the town who are poorer than us would think about coming to live here. Otherwise, no one wants to come. The rural life is hard.'

Macedonian man (Luke village)

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Rural women remain to be the main persons responsible for providing child care within the family. According to latest time use survey, rural women spend in average twice more time on childcare then rural men. Though urban women seem to spend on same tasks a little more time then rural women, but not significantly, they seem to share these type of tasks more fairly with their urban male counterparts, yet they still they devote more time to child care than men from cities on daily average.

Table 40: Average time used per day of persons aged over 10, by child-care activities only for persons who carried out those activities (urban/rural and women/men)

<i>Child-care activities (time used per day in minutes)</i>	<i>Rural area</i>		<i>Urban area</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Child-caring total average	71	120	91	129
Physical care and supervision of children	55	94	61	95
Teaching, playing with children	69	80	76	80
Other Child care	39	39	37	43

Source: Time Use Survey 2009 (SSO 2010c: 94)

If we look at additional activities that are also related to child-care (e.g. household chores often beneficial for spouse or other family-members as well), such as preparing the food, cleaning dishes, ensuring everyone has clean cloths as well as transporting the kids whenever needed (schools, doctors etc.), the picture is again more pessimistic for rural women. They spend extra time especially for food preparation and ironing, where rural men contribute little or nothing. They spend also significantly more time on these activities than urban women (more details related to other domestic activities are analyzed in next subchapter).

Table 41: Average time used per day of persons aged 10 by selected additional activities related to child-care (and other family members care), only for people who carried out those activities

<i>Additional activities related to child-care (time spend per day in minutes)</i>	<i>Rural area</i>		<i>Urban area</i>	
	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Food preparation	53	122	49	95
Laundry	58	60	52	50
Ironing	0	60	32	52
Transporting a child	28	33	40	38

Source: Time Use Survey 2009 (SSO 2010c: 94)

6.2. Rural women and household activities

Gender segregation of domestic activities in rural households is observed. Based on the time usage survey, a clear pattern of male and female dominated domestic activities emerges, which remains consistent for both urban and rural areas. Food preparation, dish washing, cleaning of the house and the physical care and supervision of children are primarily female activities as they spend in average more time on this than men, together with doing laundry, ironing and production of handicrafts and textiles being exclusively women's responsibilities. On the other hand, only construction and repairs and taking care of domesticated animals constitute primarily men's responsibilities, but considering the time spent, they are certainly not enough to even

out to an equitable division of labor. Shopping and services and other household upkeep are predominantly neither female nor male activities, whereas playing with the children is also done by both parents, but mostly by the mother.

Some activities do not subscribe to gender divisions, but rather to an urban-rural lifestyle. Thus, rural residents of both sexes spend considerably more time gardening and tending domestic animals than do urban residents. The conclusion is that the place of residence does not have much influence on the unequal division of labor and gender norms still remain deeply entrenched in our society governing many aspects of our everyday lives. Urban women are typically thought of as more emancipated than rural women, but as far as division of unpaid work goes, this opinion does not seem to have much factual support.

Table 42: Average time used per day of persons aged over 10, by activities, in urban and rural areas (gender divided), only for people who carried out those activities.

Domestic activities	Rural area		Urban area	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Food preparation	53	122	49	95
Dish washing	31	62	31	54
Cleaning of the dwelling	55	72	49	68
Other household upkeep	80	50	71	45
Laundry	58	60	52	50
Ironing	0	60	32	52
Handicrafts and production of textiles	126	133	68	122
Other care for textiles	57	12	33	19
Gardening	134	106	120	81
Tending domestic animals	101	80	81	36
Caring for domesticated animals	39	28	35	18
Walking the dog	83	66	52	70
Other gardening and pet care	214	100	119	0
Construction and repairs	117	50	107	135
Shopping and services	56	39	42	37
Physical care and supervision of children	55	94	61	95
Teaching, playing with children	69	80	76	80
Other child-care	39	39	37	43

Source: Time Use Survey 2009 (SSO 2010c: 94)

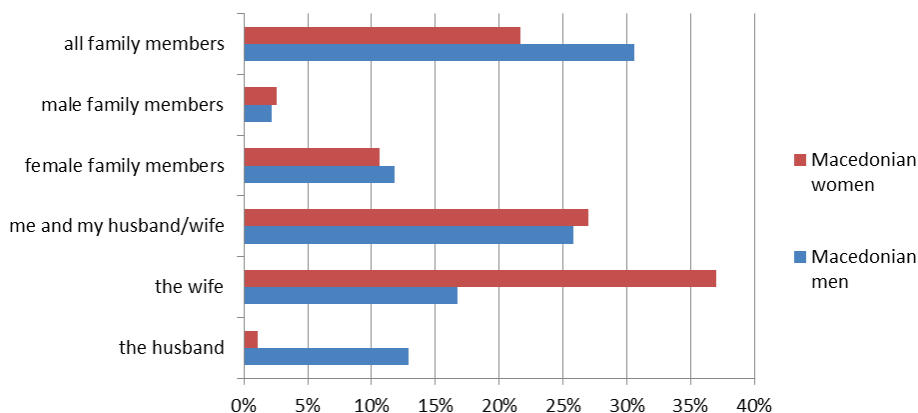
Though latest Time Use Survey do not provide for deeper analysis of times spend on domestic and child care analysis, earlier studies conducted among rural population indicated that **education and ethnicity might be factoring traditional stereotyped understanding of gender divisions' in house work**. When rural residents of both sexes were asked whether they make distinction between activities that are performed by male and female members of the family, more than half of the questioned people (58.3%) proclaimed that they do not make such distinction. The opinions given did not differ significantly with respect to gender, age or professional occupation. However, less educated people (50%) and Albanians (77%) reported that they do in fact make

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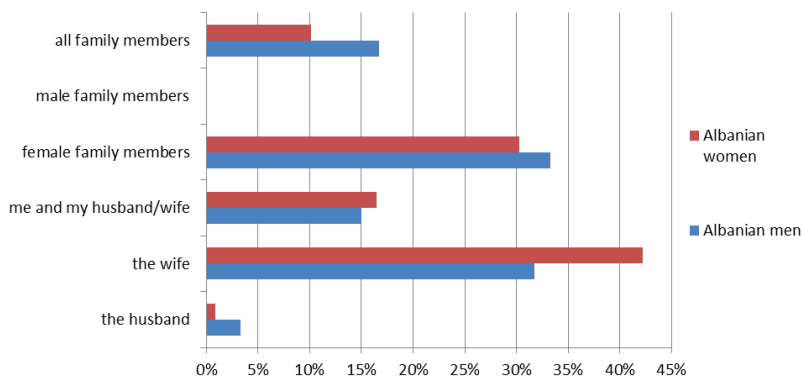
distinction between male and female activities. The results of actual division of household work in that study however confirmed **that a male-female division of activities de facto exists in the vast majority of rural families, even though many of them said they do not recognize such distinction** (Dimitrievska 2003).

The CRPM survey and focus group discussions with rural women confirm these findings. Typically, the housework (cleaning, cooking) is performed by women, although within certain Macedonian families, in rare cases husbands can help, usually if the wife is employed, and the husband is unemployed. However, when women are employed, they take on the domestic chores as well and perform them before going and after returning from work. This keeps the complete burden on maintaining the household falling on women, accompanied with performing the day-to-day agricultural activities. On the other hand, men are mainly responsible for the activities that require physical strength, such as chopping and carrying wood, carrying groceries etc. They are also mainly responsible for transportation of the family members, since they are the ones that drive.

Chart 29: Performing of domestic chores between men & women per ethnicity
29a: Macedonian women and men



29b: Albanian women and men



CRPM survey on rural men and women, 2011

Note: The bars refer to the percentage of respondents from the respective ethnic group

In Macedonian ethnic group a shift in the conception of male and female domestic activities might be observed. The CRPM focus groups discussions on rural women, evidence that the concept of sharing the domestic chores is more dominant in Macedonian households, where about half of the respondents (male and female alike) said that the husband and wife or all family members share the domestic chores. Interestingly, in the survey on the other hand, 13% of Macedonian men stated that they perform these chores, although women from the same ethnicity do not agree with this statement. Perhaps there is a shift in the conception of male and female chores within Macedonian men or they just attempt to present themselves as more involved in this area.

Rural Voices 13: 'Male' and 'Female' household activities

"My wife works while I'm at home with a sick daughter. It is not difficult for me to make lunch and the care for my daughter is on me."

Macedonian man (Volkovo village)

"Women perform male and female tasks, while men only do male tasks."

Macedonian woman from village of Germijan

"For the unemployed it is easier to divide the chores, but if they are employed, then the woman has more domestic tasks."

Macedonian woman (Grdec village)

Performing of domestic chores remains to be seen as predominantly female activity in Albanian and Turkish families. The other ethnic communities mainly consider that these are still female activities. In contrast, in the more traditional Albanian households, over 65% of respondents (65% of male and 72% of female respondents) agree that the performing of domestic chores remains to be a predominantly female activity. In the Turkish households, on the other hand, there are major differences in the opinions of men and women. While men are more prone of stating that they share the domestic chores with women (59% said so), 52% of women believe that these tasks are still mostly performed by them only.

In the Albanian families, since women are not formally employed, they are responsible for the domestic chores, while men work outside the house, mainly as seasonal workers. In the majority of cases, women are allowed to work in the frames of the village, perform the domestic chores or certain type of work which can be performed from the house (e.g. sawing). While both men and women are involved in looking after the children, women are main care givers take on the chores of feeding, dressing, helping with the schoolwork and upbringing. However it should be noted that all household work is time and energy consuming and that those that perform it (women mostly) are doing it for free, while seasonal and other type of in/formal (outside of the home) work is paid. This is valid across all ethnic communities.

6.3. Rural women's decision making power in households

Rural women remain to be submissive in household decision making. Traditionally in rural households, women were assigned a submissive role and did not have much say in making the most important decisions affecting the family. The table below shows that the main decision making power in Macedonian families have the men. Analyzing the results, we can conclude that rural women's influence in the decision-making process in the family is smaller than that of

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men. The only matter on which they have more deciding power than their husbands is assigning working tasks to the children, which is consistent with the idea of the woman as a housewife and main child care giver. It is encouraging however, at least in principle according to the answers given, that in the majority of households both women and men make the important decisions equally in all areas. It is also important, especially for young girls, that in most rural families decisions which affect them personally are made by the children themselves, such as who to marry (75%) and where to go to school and what to study (51%). These are positive trends which certainly would not have been observed 50 years ago or even more recently.

Table 43: Decision-making in rural households according to rural women & men

<i>Who decides in your family about following things?</i>	<i>Male family members</i>	<i>Husband</i>	<i>Me and my spouse together</i>	<i>All family members</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Female family members</i>	<i>Children/ young</i>	<i>Total</i>
Spending the monthly earning	7	28.7	33.4	20.7	8	1.2	1	100%
Buying new expensive products	5.1	23.9	37.4	21.4	9.9	0.7	1.5	100%
Agricultural production or business decisions	10.9	33.9	31.2	14.8	6.7	0	2.3	100%
If you want to work outside home	1	42.6	28.9	10.7	15.3	0.3	1.2	100%
Whether to attend training / or learning certain skills	0.7	44.3	27.1	8.7	18.1	0.3	0.9	100%
Whom to vote in elections	1.5	42.3	11	13.5	29.2	0.2	2.4	100%
Education of your children	1.3	16.3	44.1	10.9	4.2	0.2	23	100%
Whom your children get married to	0.4	9.5	6.1	4.1	1.4	0	78.6	100%
When your children get married	0.4	8.6	5.9	9.7	2.9	0.2	72.3	100%

Source: CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011

The answers given are consistent across gender, which means that male respondents, gave the same answers as rural women. What is more surprising however, is that for the monthly budgeting decisions, neither education, age, nor working status influenced significantly women's power in family decision making. These independent variables were not examined unfortunately for the other questions, but they suggest nonetheless that the traditional concept about the role of women in rural households is deeply rooted in the culture and is independent of economic status.

The CRPM survey of rural women and men 2011 depicts that in Albanian families not husbands, but the men decide about household budgeting. Ethnic background does affect the results – in 82% of Albanian families the male members in the family decide about budgeting of the monthly income, compared to 15% of Macedonian households with similar deciding structure. The authority of the father/husband is also more pronounced in Albanian and Turkish families when it comes to buying more important products, whereas the influence of the children is diminished. The focus groups in addition revealed that the final decision in conservative Muslim families are made by the eldest male family member.

Macedonian men do not object on their wives/daughters working. The male family members decide on this issue in Albanian rural communities. Focus groups showed that Macedonians are encouraging their wives and daughters to work in order to provide additional income for the family. The majority of Albanian families differ in this regard. If the woman is more educated, they consider the employment as a normal step, however in case of less educated women, the employment is usually not considered as an option. Even if a woman has a motivation to seek for a formal employment, the final decision is predominantly left on the men (husband, father). In case of more liberal families, where women are allowed to work, they still do no search for a job, believing they would not be able to find one. Perceiving the difficulties men face when seeking for a job, women consider it would be even more difficult to find appropriate employment for them.

Rural Voices 14: Decisions related to employment

"Why shouldn't he support you, you'll bring money at home."

Macedonian woman (Germijan village)

"In our village, men decide whether we work or not. In certain families even if there is work for women, they are not allowed to work, it is the mentality."

Albanian woman (Merovo village)

In the Macedonian families the decisions regarding marriages are carried by the future marital partners, whereas in some of the Albanian families the practice of the two families deciding on marriages remains a tradition. Everyone agrees that the times when the families decided on behalf of the partners are long gone, and nowadays even if the family is not very happy with the choice, they do not interfere with the decision.

Table 44: Decision-making on marriage in rural households according to rural women & men

<i>Who decides in your family about following things?</i>	<i>Male family members</i>	<i>Husband</i>	<i>Me and my spouse together</i>	<i>All family members</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Female family members</i>	<i>Children/young</i>	<i>Total</i>
Families composed of ethnic Macedonian adults.								
When your children get married	0	8.7	4.4	3.2	4.1	0	79.3	100%
Whom your children get married to	0	9.9	4.9	3.2	1.7	0	90.8	100%
Families composed of ethnic Albanians.								
When your children get married	0.6	10.4	7.3	23.8	0.6	0	57.3	100%
Whom your children get married to	0.6	10.3	7.3	6.1	1.2	0	74.5	100%

Source: CRPM Survey of rural women & men 2011

However, there are differences when it comes to mixed marriages, especially among different religious backgrounds. In cases of older bachelors, neither the religion, nor the ethnic background is important. Since finding a bride is difficult, men, and his family as well would not object taking a

wife of different ethnic and religious background. Within Albanian families, there are differences. While some have surpassed the tradition of the two families deciding on the marriages in certain families this tradition is still dominant.

The decisions on education of children, as demonstrated in the table earlier, are generally carried by the parents. All villages have a nearby primary school. Since the secondary education became mandatory, the number of children not enrolling into secondary school has rapidly declined, regardless of the location of the village and its ethnic composition. All participants of CRPM focus groups 2011 confirmed that there are school buses/vans organized for transportation to the nearest

secondary schools, and children also use the benefits of a free dormitory accommodation. The participants agreed that nowadays there are no distinctions made between the male and female children. In certain villages (DolnoDisan, Dlabocica, Germijan, Novo Selo, Petrovec) female

children are more educated compared to male. The only visited village where a situation where girls were not treated equally when it comes to education was Merovo, a highland village near the town of Tetovo.

Rural Voices 15: Decisions on marriages

"In some villages they take catholic brides from Albania, and that I approve; but if they were Muslim, I would not approve"

Macedonian man (Volkovo village)

"My son is 31, and if he decides to get married I don't care who he chooses, as long as he marries"

Macedonian woman (Sopot village)

"The young decide on their own when it comes to marrying, and then consult with us. In my family there won't be pressure neither from me nor from my husband, we have a mutual understanding. The time when our fathers decided for us is passed."

Albanian woman (Dolgozde village)

"In our village, the male family members mostly decide on marriages. But still they allow for the children to see each other before."

Albanian woman (Merovo village)

Rural Voices 16: Decisions regarding education

"Girls usually continue to university after completing secondary education while men often start working after secondary school."

Macedonian woman (Dlabocica village)

"In our village girls don't continue their education; it is too far for them. Only the boys go. This is the tradition."

Albanian woman (Merovo village)

6.4. Rural women and property

Women are not owners neither are eager to have property on their name. This is reflected in patterns of possession in which the male members in the family, whether it will be the father or the husband, are almost exclusive owners of property and assets.

Table 45: Ownership of assets in rural families

Who owns	Real estate (house) where you live	Field or farm on which you work	Machinery for farm	Savings
Husband	56.9	43.7	27.6	26.8
Father of husband	23	18.5	6.8	3.5
Wife	3.7	1.9	0.7	0.5
Mother of husband	2.2	1.5	0.5	0.2
Other	12.7	11	7.8	3.5
Does not possess	1.5	23.4	56.7	65.6
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: CRPM Survey of Rural Women & men 2011

The above results show that the husband is the person in the family with biggest claims on property. Next in importance is the father (assuming they live in the same household), followed by the wife and lastly, the mother. Only 5% of the households surveyed reported the wife as holder of ownership of the house and this percent was higher than for all other types of assets.

The CRPM focus group discussions on rural women also evidence that ethnic differences decisions regarding the use of property exist. Within Macedonian families, though property is predominantly owned by men the decisions how to use it is generally made jointly in consultation between all family members, mainly the husband and the wife. Within the Albanian families, the elderly male family members are the predominant decision-makers, while women adhere to their decisions. Still, if the husband and wife live on their own, there is an increasing trend of joint decision-making between the marital partners.

Rural Voices 17: (non) Inheritance of property

“Everything my father-in-law owns belongs to my husband, we live together and that is ours. There was no need to transfer the property to the woman.”

Macedonian woman (Germijan village)

“There is no point to fight with my brother for this piece of land. It would be better if he respects me enough to give me a kilo of potatoes or something from the field when I come, rather than to look at each other with anger every day.”

Macedonian woman (Dlabocica village)

“After my father passed away, my two sisters gave up on inheriting part of the property and it was divided between me and my two brothers. The same situation was with my wife. When her father passed away, she gave up on the property and left it for her brothers.”

Macedonian men (Blatec village)

In regard to inheritance of property the dominant tradition in all communities is for men to inherit the property. Rarerly women, mostly widows, claim to have some property in their name. The majority don't see anything discriminatory in this tradition. They have accepted it as something normal, and adhere to it without objections. It is considered that the woman will 'take away' the property she inherits into another house when she gets married and the assets won't stay in the family. The tradition demands that even if a woman is offered part of the property, she should decline it.

However, traditions regarding inheritance rights appear to be slowly changing in the Macedonian families. Participants of the CRPM Focus groups 2011 stated that there is increasing number of cases of daughters receiving a significant part of the property, especially when it comes to wealthier families. However, most believe that this tradition is difficult to be completely changed in the near future. Within Albanian families, the tradition of inheriting the property on the male side is even more dominant. Although, as one participant mentioned this is in contrast to the Islamic tradition.

**Rural Voices 18:
Islam and inheritance of property**

"From the religious point of view, this is not correct. According to Islam, when the property is divided, the men should inherit two thirds, while the woman one third of the assets."

Albanian man (Zelino village)

6.5. Summary of chapter 6- Rural women and private life

Domestic activities are main occupation of the rural women and an area where gender misbalance is most pronounced. Rural women spend most of their time on domestic activities, which constitute a form of unpaid work, while rural men compensate by spending more hours doing paid work, although not entirely as they are left one extra hour which they spend on free time activities. Rural men and urban women have more time for socializing than rural women. Social involvement and participation by rural women via membership in various organizations is very limited.

Rural women remain to be in disempowered position in household in regard to decision making and for the monthly budgeting decisions, neither education, age, nor working status influences significantly women's power in family decision making. This suggests that the traditional concept about the role of women in rural households is deeply rooted in the culture and is independent of economic status. This study also depicts that in Albanian families not husbands, but the oldest male decides about household budgeting. In the Macedonian families the decisions regarding marriages are carried by the future marital partners, whereas in some of the Albanian families the practice of the two families deciding on marriages, even though in decline, still exists..

Women are not owners neither are concerned to have the property on their name. evidence that ethnic differences decisions regarding the use of property exist. Within Macedonian families is generally made jointly in consultation between all family members, mainly the husband and the wife. Within the Albanian families, the elderly male family members are the predominant decision-makers, while women adhere to their decisions. In regard to inheritance of property the dominant tradition in all communities is for men to inherit the property.

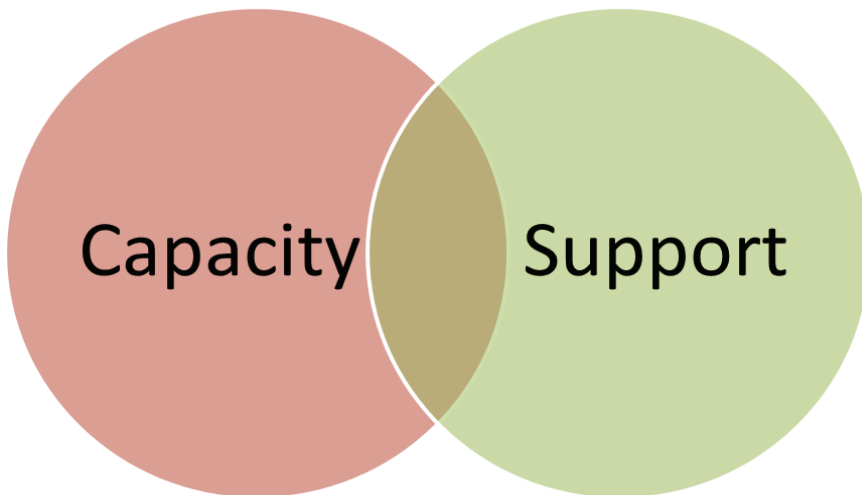
7. Creating public value for rural women

In this chapter we look at the existing policies and institutional mechanisms that support rural women. Our attention is focused on the equal opportunity policy and rural development policy. The prior targeting women, and later targeting rural populations and their development. These policies and mechanisms are approached with a hypothesis that through them they deliver results and services to rural women that are valuable for them (are valued by the rural women), or they create ‘public value’. For the purposes of the analysis we will use the public value analytical framework.

7.1. Introducing the public value analytical framework

The essential issues of public administration have to do with carrying out, in an efficient way, the legitimately mandated instructions of constituents – or, to put it in the words of Mark Moore – “developing and operating the *capacity(ies)* to carry out programs for which legitimate *support* has resulted in the authorization of resources and action” (Moore 2005). So for one policy to be implemented it is needed a **decision** (authorizing environment) what to do, who should do it and with what resources this should be done; and **capacity** (understood by the traditional public administration studies as technical skills and knowledge) to operationalize in efficient and effective way such decision.

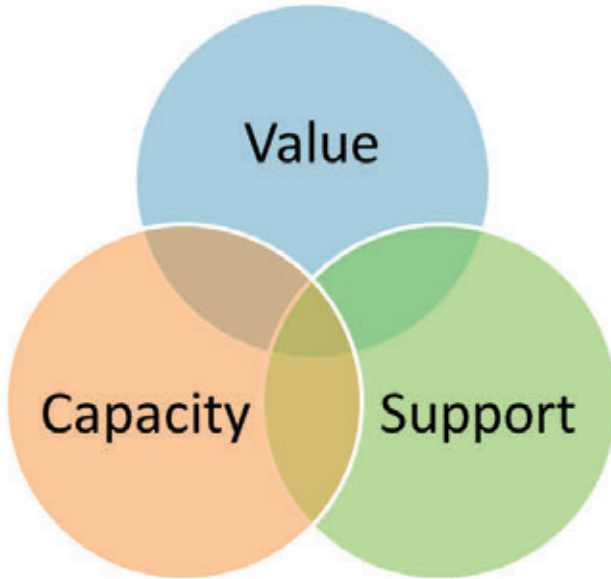
Diagram 1



Source: Moore, M. (2005): “Creating public value”

What is missing from the Diagram 1 presenting above the development and implementation of a policy is the consideration of whether the policy, the legal framework, the program, the financial instrument is actually serving, on balance, the public’s interests or the interest of the public which in our case is targeted to rural women. To put it in terms developed by Mark Moore: whether the policy, the program the financial instrument is “creating public value.”

Diagram 2



Source: “Creating public value” (Moore 2005)

Diagram 2 provides a visualization of the relationship among the capacity for implementation of the policy, the authorizing environment (decision or legitimated support) that created this policy and the value that is created with the policy. Each circle in the diagram denotes the programs or actions that have that particular characteristic. The diagram thus shows actions that have all three characteristics, areas where two characteristics apply, and areas where only one characteristic applies. As it is drawn in Diagram 2, the areas of overlap are relatively small – for example, the actions for which the organization has capacity, enjoys support, and that the action is truly valuable to the public are a relatively small fraction of the area.

This portion of Diagram 2 – the zone where all three characteristics overlap – can readily be seen to be the “easy” part of a public official’s job. Here, the challenge is to make sure that these programs and actions are carried out effectively and efficiently, and that public support is maintained. The challenge is to get the work done in this zone without spending too much time, attention, and energy on it – because those personal resources are more needed in the other areas of the diagram – and to make sure that attention devoted to it is not being used as a means of avoiding more difficult, more important challenges in other parts of the diagram.

The other areas in the diagram present difficult challenges that are distinctly –strategically – different from one another. The area where capacity and support overlap lying outside of the public value is related to policies, actions or programs that are supported and the organization has the resources – knowledge, skills, people, money, space, and so on – to carry them out. The only difficulty is that it does not produce net value for the public. Alternatively, if we consider the area where public value is created over a carrying out the action or program, but the organization has neither the capacity nor the support of the decision makers. And so on.

The essential feature of the analytical framework is not that it provides answers to these questions – the questions are highly context-specific, and getting the answers to them will depend crucially on the details in each situation. The utility of the framework is that it suggests, in an organized way, some of the most relevant questions to pursue. In democratic societies, successful and durable programs must eventually garner all three characteristics – the organization (for example, state institution) must be able to develop and maintain the relevant capacities to carry out the program, the public (e.g. voters, citizens) must provide continuing authorization for the expenditures of the variety of resources necessary to carry it out, and the officials (e.g. public servants) who operate them must believe that it creates public value. Operating in each distinct area of the diagram poses a different strategic challenge, defining the remaining work to be done in moving the locus of capacity and support to encompass a greater proportion of value.

7.2. *Policies and polity that support rural women*

As mentioned before we here focus on the policy for equal opportunities between men and women and the rural development policy. The two policy frameworks have been identified as most relevant for the rural women and instrumental for inclusion of rural women's subjective experiences as a tool for transformation of rural lives.

7.2.1. Policy for equal opportunities between men and women and support for gender equality

The country is signatory party to the key international legal instruments that protect women's human rights, political, economic, social and cultural rights as well. These, jointly with requirements stemming from the EU integration process represent important driving force for many positive changes adopted in the country in regards to legislation, policies and institution-building in the country, including those related to gender equality. Yet the country still faces many challenges and gaps according to the most recent available reports reflecting upon Macedonia's progress towards these two key commitments frameworks. The CEDAW Committee Concluding Comments on country's latest report, as well as recent European Commission's Progress Report key areas of concern in regards to gender inequality include among others the marginalization of rural women. In particular, there are concerns related to the high economic inactivity and unemployment rate of women and persistence of patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted gender stereotypes that socially are affecting young girls and women and hinder their opportunities in private and public life (EC 2010). The CEDAW Committee calls particularly upon the State parties to implement comprehensive measures, in rural areas, to bring about change in the widely accepted stereotypical roles of men and women. Such measures should include awareness-raising and educational campaigns addressing women and men, girls and boys, with a view to eliminating stereotypes associated with traditional gender roles in the family and in society, in accordance with articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention. The 2010 EC Progress Report raises a concern that *little progress has been made on social inclusion and particularly that little has been done to improve women's rights in rural areas*(EC 2010: 18).

On the other hand, analysis of current institutional and policy set up shows that in Macedonia there is support or authorizing environment for gender equality. The argument for this is threefold: (i) there are set of measures that prohibit discrimination upon sex, and protect women's rights; (ii) there is a Law that specifically promotes equal opportunities between men and women; and (iii) there is National action plan for gender equality which introduces specific measures for achieving gender equality.

The primary, is composed of legal framework made of the following documents: the Constitution, the Law on the Courts, the Law on the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Criminal Code, the Law on Execution of Sanctions", the Electoral Code, the Labour Relations Law, the Law on Secondary Education, Law on Higher Education, the Law on Internal Affairs, the Inheritance Law and the Family Law, Article 3 and 4 of the Law on Culture, and the Social Protection Law. This framework uses the UN established concept of gender equality. All these, document reflect Macedonia's commitments as signatory party of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the European Convention for human rights.

Explanatory box: CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CEDAW was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and entered into force in 1981. So far, 185 states ratified the Convention, including Macedonia, which has been a party to the Convention since 1994 (as one of succession states of Former Yugoslav Republic).

Each state reports periodically on progress achieved in elimination of discrimination against women as outlined in respective articles of the Convention. Country's latest report, submitted in 2011 will be discussed in the CEDAW committee in February 2012.

More: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/index.htm>

In line with early mentioned international commitments and EU accession requirements, country adopted the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in 2006 (hereinafter as LEO) that conceptually changed from the 'gender equality approach' promoted in earlier mentioned legal acts. The gender equality concept was swapped with the EU and CEDAW fostered equal opportunities framework (Akcija Zdruzenska 2010). The Law on Equal Opportunities on Women and Men regulates the basic and the special measures for establishing equal opportunities for women and men, the institutional network and their competences, the procedure for identifying the unequal treatment of the women and men, the rights and duties of the mediator for equal opportunities on women and men.

The National Action Plan on Gender Equality (hereinafter: NAPGE) covers period 2007 – 2012. This is viewed as "a basic document through which the international responsibilities of the country (such as CEDAW) in the area of gender equality unite and provide guidance as well as measures for achieving gender equality and improvement of women's status" (according to Akcija Zdruzenska 2010). The rural women are targeted with various activities under four strategic objectives of the NAPGE. Within the Strategic objective 1 it is planned to produce a study on the effective realization of women rights of rural women and building capacities for realization of rights of rural women as well as awareness raising. Under strategic objective 2 it is planned to open few home care services for elderly that will decrease the volume of care work rural women do. Under the same component a drop out study and awareness raising to decrease the drop outs from education of rural women. The strategic objective 3 aims at increasing

rural women participation in decision making. Finally under strategic objective 4 few measures for employment of women in rural areas by: encouraging the as business operators and by increasing their knowledge and business skills though education and trainings. Also the NAPGE mentions rural women on page 44 where it calls for “inclusion of women in the implementation of the Strategy for raising public awareness in managing the environment and implementing ecological programs for education of urban and rural women for prevention and practical action in the protection and advancement of the environment”.

Therefore we can argue that the gender equality policy in Macedonia is not thoroughly blind, but sensitive to rural women needs. However, this document is criticized for not being based on sound analysis and therefore the measures it promotes are not reflecting thoroughly the situation women in rural areas are in. What is more, civil society gender advocates argue that implementation of NAPGE is inefficient due to several reasons, e.g the plan is not consulted in a structured way, the institutional network of gender focal points established under the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (LEO) is not utilized in the process of making this plan, no accountability mechanisms exist for reporting on the implementation of NAPGE (Akcija Zdruzenska 2010).

Explanatory box: National Action plan on Gender Equality 2007-2012

Ten strategic areas of focus:

1. women and human rights;
2. women and decision making;
3. women and health;
4. women and social protection;
5. women and education;
6. women and employment;
7. women and violence;
8. women and media;
9. women and peace activities;
10. women and environment.

The implementation is guided by operational plans defining activities, resources and responsible stakeholders

7.2.2. Capacity (institutional mechanisms) for gender equality

The gender machinery in the country is introduced with the introduction of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (LEO). It spans over both, central and local level of government. It is composed of the following institutions/mechanisms:

- Department on Equal Opportunities (hereinafter: DEO) that is established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in March 2007. The DEO is comprised of two Units: Unit for gender equality and Unit for prevention and protection of any kind of discrimination.
- Gender Focal Points (GFP) were appointed in line Ministries also called as Coordinators on Equal Opportunities within the Ministries. Their appointing and obligations is regulated with the Article 13, paragraph 3 - 5.
- Parliamentary Commission on Equal Opportunities established under the LEO within National Parliament. This commission functions from September 2006, with a task to monitor the legal regulation which is proposed by the government from the aspect of gender equality.
- Commissions on Equal Opportunities of women and men (hereinafter EOC) and Coordinators on Equal opportunities on women and men within the local self-government units established and introduced in the local self government units by enacting the LEO in 2006. Currently, there are around 75 coordinators appointed and the same number of local commissions for equal opportunities was established. Their members are elected

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municipal councilors from different political parties with a 4 years' mandate. These commissions develop and adopt Local action plan on gender equality.

This institutional network for equal opportunities is supposed to support also the achieving of overall gender equality goals. However, according to gender advocates (Akcia Združenska 2010) several challenges are hindering realization of these goals :

1. The current Gender Equality Action plan lacks clear recommendations in regards to the implementation of the Law which leaves the central level and local level focal points without a clear objective what they should do;
2. The prior is closely interlinked with another critical challenge which is lack of clear terms of reference (a job description) for the focal points both on local and central level government. This impedes putting the network in action and the realization of the goals of the LEO in general;
3. There is no budget allocated for achieving either gender equality or equal opportunities goals. The DEO is mostly dependent on financial assistance from donor agencies such as the UN Women, OSCE, or UNDP.
4. Finally, under the current framework the DEO has limited authority to coordinate and stir gender mainstreaming of all policies developed on both central and local level.

Protective mechanisms for gender based discrimination also exist. The section below explains them in detail.

In compliance with Article 23 from the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men since December 2009, the Sector for equal opportunities within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy employs a legal representative for equal opportunities to act as mediator in administering a procedure for identifying unequal treatment between men and women. This procedure can address unequal treatment in the public and in the private sector and is coordinated with the work of other institutions, such as the inspections, and the Ombudsman. The number of complains related to gender-based discrimination received since the end of 2009 is two. Both are filed by male citizens and are in regard to rights from family law.

Law on prevention and protection from discrimination sets ground for the establishment of the independent seven member non-professional anti-discrimination Commission (Official Gazette No. 50/2010). The competencies of the Commission are partially overlapping with those of the Ombudsman as well with those of the legal representative for equal opportunities employed at the ministry. If a person feels to be subject of any form of discrimination she/he can complain to the Antidiscrimination commission which discusses and provides advice and recommendation on the available protective measures in front of the courts and other institutions. So far one case related to gender based discrimination was brought before the Commission. Again the party complaining is male who challenges the right of child benefits for a mother of three³².

The Law on Ombudsman was amended in 2009 paving the way for the establishment of the Department for Antidiscrimination (Official Gazette No.60/2003). Since then additional staff was employed and the Ombudsman is acting in the case of unequal treatment in the public sector based on sex. One of the deputies of the Ombudsman has a jurisdiction to proceed on cases of discrimination upon sex. In 2010 the number of citizens' complaints increased by 11% compared to 2009 however official information about proportion of complaints submitted by men and

32 Interview with Jovan Ananiev, member of the Antidiscrimination Commission (28 March, 2011)

7. Creating public value for rural women

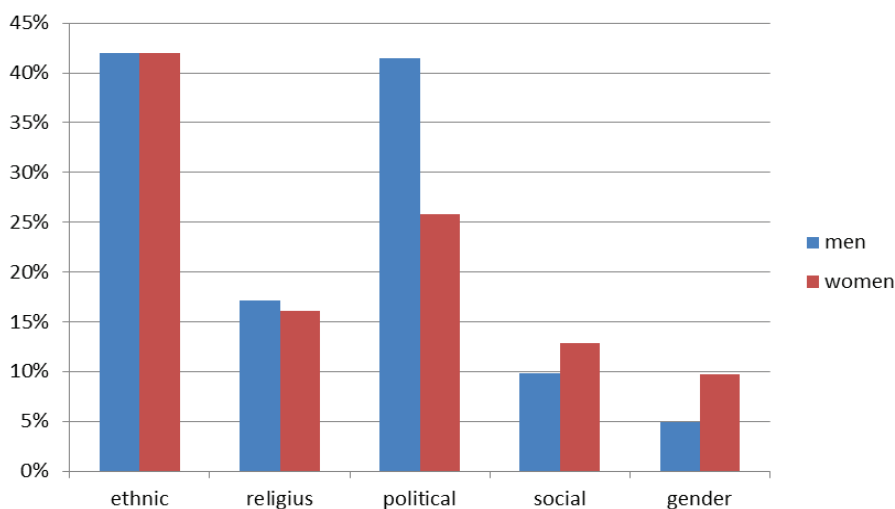
women is not available (Ombudsman Office 2010). In the area of labour relations the number of complaints is 9% of total number of complaints filed to the Ombudsman. To this moment there are no cases of complaints for discrimination based on sex to the Ombudsman office. Though advised that their case is one of discrimination based on sex none of the applicants wanted to file it under discrimination³³.

As noticed the protective mechanisms are not very effective mainly due to low awareness of the citizens of Macedonia of their existence and knowledge on the procedures how to use these mechanisms. However, the main reason for their ineffectiveness is the very difficult to prove sex based discrimination at work and absence of institutional tools that will facilitate generation of evidence for such cases: i.e. in a case of unequal remuneration, an example of such institutional tool could be a job evaluation through which evidence for sex based discrimination may be detected (Kazandiska, Risteska & Schmidt 2011).

7.2.3. Gender equal values for rural women

CRPM survey of rural women & men 2011 gathered primary evidence on some of the issues related to gender based discrimination. It showed that many rural residents have perception they have experienced discrimination in one form or another. 16.7% of all survey participants feel they have been discriminated against and this proportion is almost twice higher among men (21.6%) than among women (12.4%). This difference can be explained by the fact that men are more involved in public & social life, especially among ethnic minorities, and therefore, they a) might have higher awareness on discrimination as such and b) be exposed to higher chance of experiencing discrimination in their dealings with the institutions.

Chart 30: Discrimination



Source: CRPM Survey of rural women and men, 2011

33 Interview with Pirovska Uranija, State advisor for international cooperation and public relations

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The most common type of discrimination seems to be on the basis of ethnic background (see grounds listed in order of frequency in table below) as this ground was most frequently specified among those who reported being discriminated against. Ethnic discrimination is most present among the Albanian and Turkish rural population – every tenth Albanian or Turk reported experiencing discrimination. The second leading ground was political, followed by religious affiliation. Least frequently stated grounds were social status and gender. While political and religious grounds were more often reported by men, social & ethnic discrimination are equally (or almost equally, in case of the second) present among women and men. Gender, reported by a rather limited number of rural residents (3 women and 2 men) was the only type of discriminative practice which is experienced more by women than men, and only by a slight margin.

Table 46: Cases of discrimination as reported by men and women

<i>If you have been discriminated against, what was the basis for discrimination? (no. of cases)</i>	<i>discriminated men (%)</i>	<i>discriminated women (%)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Any kind of discrimination (100)	60%	40%	100%
Ethnic (30)	56.7%	43.3%	100%
Political (25)	68%	32%	100%
Religious (12)	58.3%	41.7%	100%
Social status (8)	50%	50%	100%
Gender (5)	40%	60%	100%
Other (3)	25%	75%	100%

Source: CRPM survey of rural women & men, 2011

Religion was highlighted as the basis for discrimination in 12% of the cases. Of those, two thirds were reported by Muslims and one third by Orthodox Christians. Having in mind the religious cross-section of our sample, we can conclude that Muslims are the religious group that perceives the most discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation in rural areas. Political discrimination (on the basis of party membership or sympathies) was in vast majority of cases stated by ethnic Macedonians on the other hand (22 out of 25). Concerning discrimination on the basis of social status, respondents emphasized their social background, not only in terms of income, but also in terms of origin (urban vs. rural) and education (literate vs. illiterate) as objects of discriminative attitudes and practices. 7 out of 8 of this kind of cases happened to Macedonians and 1 was reported by a Turk. To complete the picture, cases reported under other grounds for discrimination included age (1 case) and handicap (2 cases).

Based on the results one might conclude that the level of awareness of gender based discrimination is rather low, surprisingly even lower among women and this is impeding the realization of other related actions for gender equality, such as equal representation in politics, economy and equal share of responsibilities in society and at home.

7.3. Policy framework for improvement of employment and eradicating poverty

7.3.1. Support for improvement of employment and eradicating poverty

The National strategy for employment (2007-2010) in relation to women sets one very important objective: to increase employment rate of women from 30% in 2005 to 38% in 2010 (p.13). The

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policies it identifies will facilitate reaching this objective are the following: (i) approximation of the Macedonian legislation with the one of EU in the area for equal opportunities; (ii) preparation of educational programs that will increase women's opportunities for their employment in the sectors where they are less represented; (iii) reform of the small and medium sized enterprises and encouraging women's entrepreneurship; development of a network of private and public child care institutions.

The program for active employment measures for 2011 supports the Employment strategy of the government through number of measures focusing on in total 6 target groups: young unemployed, unemployed Roma; unemployed professional soldiers; unemployed people from the energy sector; unemployed for longer than 6 months and unemployed women for longer than 3 months (whereby women from the non-majority ethnic groups will be positively discriminated). The program also targets women victims of family violence through special measures that economically empower this target group.

The employment is considered as one of the modes to break the dependence on their husbands but also the social exclusion of women due to old age poverty. If women are employed they are entitled to benefits (such as old age pension). The National action plan for gender equality (2007-2012) is focused to improve the position of women on the labor market³⁴. This document mentions how the regulation of the working status and the status of a farmer for the women from rural areas are pertinent for neutralization of the factors for social exclusion of rural women.

To this end the National Strategy for poverty reduction and social inclusion 2010-2020 was adopted in the course of 2010. This document identifies the already mentioned in this study factors that influence on the access to health and education of the people living in a rural area. In addition, the strategy also discusses the lacking institutional mechanisms for long term care of elderly people which is especially problematic for the rural areas where access to specialized health care is also missing. It recommends that women belonging to ethnic groups are added to the socially excluded groups of population. In terms of employment of these groups it suggests establishment of 'employment zones' that will through affirmative action promote employment.

Considering that since 2006 Macedonia has adopted both the law on equal opportunities; and series of measures in education policy area (compulsory secondary education, branching out higher education and lowering tuition fees) and taking into consideration the increasing educated entrants on the labour market we might say that the measures contributed to the increase of women entrants in the labor force. However the support to women through various measures (trainings, subventions and active employment measures) needs to be strengthened. The analysis of the Active Labour Market Measures as will be discussed in next subchapter (hereinafter: ALMM) showed that gender is not well mainstreamed within the design and implementation of these measure. Additionally, these measures are not targeting economically inactive population (Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010), however inactivity is the most common status particularly among rural women as showed earlier in this study. Even though the analysis targets ALMM from 2009, the measures from 2010 and 2011 have not been changed to reflect on the recommendations provided by the analytical team (except for slight improvement in sex-disaggregated data

³⁴ The national action plan stipulates the need of introduction of the gender based concept in policy making, in the development of programs and the active employment measures and scoping women that are recipients of cash transfers, victims of trafficking, victims of family violence and other forms of exclusion.

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provision). The interventions on strengthening job seeking and absorption skills of women should be inevitably coupled with measures for development of time saving infrastructure and services (such as child care). Both should be also reflecting on challenges stemming from cultural circumstances of rural population in Macedonia which is highly conservative and patriarchal.

7.3.2. Capacity for improvement of employment and eradicating poverty

The support to employment growth is stimulated through the Active Labour Market Measures as well as additional specific or pilot projects mostly realized with support from external donors and pre-accession funds provided by European Union. Similarly, wider ranges of institutions are involved in process of drafting and implementation of these programs, including Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP), the Employment Agency of RM (EARM), through the employment centers, the Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship (APERM)..

The active employment policy measures as shown in the table below through perspective of data available for the analysis of gender issues as of 2009 provided for: self-employment programs, subsidized employment program and program for preparation for employment.

Table 47: Review of the programs of the active labour market policies (ALMP) planned and spent finances for every program.

Program type	Budgets in denars (P - planned & R - realized budgets)			Participation in the total MLSP budget		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Self-employment program	P: 73,000,000 R: 99,506,409	P: 97,236,600 R: 02,487,500	P: 122,407,300	0.37 0.54	0.51 0.54	0.53 -
Program for formalization of existing businesses	-	P: 18,136,500 R: 19,513,500	P: 47,000,000	-	0.09 0.10	0.20
Program for preparation for employment	-	P: 61,363,600 R: 50,776,000	P: 21,546,560	-	0.32 0.27	0.93 -
Program for subsidizing employment	P: 111,800,000 R: 76,338,400	P: 110,150,000 R: 94,436,000	P: 339,006,000	0.57 0.41	0.57 2.70	1.46 -
Traineeship program	-	P: 360,000,000 R: 1,692,000	P: 13,500,000	-	1.87 0.00	0.06 -
Active employment programs (local infrastructure) public works in local self-government units	P: 27,600,000 R: 19,797,915	-	P: 228,980,000	0.14 0.11	-	-
Engagement of unemployed persons from underdeveloped regions performing construction works and environmental projects	P: 19,000,000 R: 20,180,970	-	-	0.10	-	-
Trainings and consultations for unemployed people	P: 50,000,000 R: 50,000,000	-	-	0.26 0.26	-	-
Pilot survey for vacancies	-	-	P: 730,000,000	-	-	3.15 -
Improving the economic situation of women victims of domestic violence	-	-	P: 35,000,000	-	-	0.15 -
Program for support of Roma people	-	-	P: 4,800,000	-	-	0.02 -

Source: According to Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010 (p 40, table adjusted)

7. Creating public value for rural women

The study “Gender-budget Analysis of Social protection and Active Employment Policies” assess the situation and the current institutional capacities. It points out few challenges in this regard: lack of available sex-segregated data for beneficiaries allocations within respective measures disabling appropriate comparison; as well as lack of data to track trends. Thus one of the key recommendations for capacity strengthening and ensuring effective implementation of this policy is improved collection and provision of data (Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010).

Analysis of publicly available data published by Agency for Employment (hereinafter as AERM) in recent years indicates improvements in reporting of sex-segregated data, for beneficiary's incidence. However, publicly available data does not allow for rural / urban comparison. Overview of data available from AERM for 2008 to 2010 presented below provides summary of beneficiaries incidences and as such open discussion around several issues. Closer look at the table suggests that women have greater chances to be included in indirect kind of support (e.g. trainings) with questionable potential to directly and tangibly improving their economic status or access to income generating opportunities (such as credit). Women have low participation in most important measures focusing on self-employment including direct support through financial mechanism for start up or growth of business (ranging from 25 to 40 %). These measures could be especially important opportunities for women from rural areas where there is lack of dependent employment opportunities as such (nevertheless, it should be noted, that majority of rural women are inactive, thus not eligible for these programs until they register as unemployed).

On the other hand, men beneficiaries not only prevail in programs focused on direct support for self-employment including access to credit, but also in absolute numbers (in comparison to other measures) outnumber women beneficiaries in other programs. In other words, data suggests that men may benefit more from access to greater financial resources involved in these programs as women who though dominating in other programs. Women are more often involved in programs that can be categorized as “less or no cash/credit involved” such as trainings and traineeship (see details on trainings provided in annex Table 2.3). In overall, though detailed budgets couldn't be analyzed, data on basic beneficiaries data, indicate that ALMMs implementation seem to have lesser impact on supporting women's access to direct cash/credit than in case of men beneficiaries.

Table 48: Sex-disaggregated data for Active Labour Market Measures

Respective programs & years	Number of beneficiaries			Percentage share		
	Total	women	men	women	men	
Self-employment program						
2008	500	187	313	37.4 %	62.6 %	
2009	654	245	409	37.5 %	62.5%	
2010	700	280	420	40 %	60 %	
Program for formalization of existing businesses						
2008	113	33	74	29.2 %	65.5%	
2009	250	74	176	29.6 %	70.4%	
2010 ³⁵	250	62	188	24.8 %	75.2 %	
Program for preparation for employment (trainings, re-trainings (more details in annex Table A2.3)						
2008	1716	Sex disaggregated data not available				
2009	244	187	57	76.6 %	30.5 %	
2010	280	167	113	59.6 %	40.4 %	
Program for subsidized employment						
2008	219	115	104	52.5 %	47.5 %	
2009-2010	Sex disaggregated data not available					
Traineeship for Young people under age 27						
2008	141	86	55	60.9 %	39 %	
2009	120	60	60	50 %	50 %	
2010	142	83	59	58.5 %	41.5 %	
Pilot survey for vacancies (beneficiaries are unemployed people engaged as surveyors)						
2009	89	64	25	71.9 %	28.1 %	
2010	58	46	12	79.3 %	20.7 %	
Economic Empowerment of women – victims of domestic violence						
2010 – subsidized employment	8	8	-	100%	-	
2010 – self-employment	20	20	-	100%	-	
Program for support of Roma people						
2009	16	10	6	62.5 %	37.5%	
2010	Sex disaggregated data not available					

Source: AERM 2009, AERM 2010, AERM 2011.

Comparison of men and women beneficiaries incidence in other then ALMM programs shows similar pattern to the previous one. Women are predominant target group in measures providing indirect support where tangible and direct impact on changed employment status is questionable (such as advice, information, and training). Contrary, men more often benefit from opportunities of direct support such as providing credit/cash or involving them in cash-generating activity (such as public works programme or support program on accessing credit for self-employment).

³⁵ Out of these, 22 registered as individual farmers (sex division not provided, according to AERM 2011)

Table 49: Participation of women in Employment programmes (besidesALMPs)

Type of Programmes	All	Beneficiaries	
		Women	Women (% of all)
Public Works programme			
2009	4 983	625	12.5 %
Project – self-employment with credits ³⁶			
2008-2009 cumulative data	3 310	1 041	31.45 %
2010 – cumulative data	3 093	Data not sex-disaggregated	
Professional orientation and advice (for students as well as unemployed people)			
2008 – all services	26 376	13 740	52.1 %
2009 – professional information	11 464	6 301	54.9 %
2009 – advice, profession orientation	2031	1 209	59.5 %
2010 – all services	21 672	12 700	58.6 %
2010 – professional information	1 6827	9 404	55.9 %
2010 – advice, profession orientation	2 804	1 702	60.7 %

Source: AERM 2009, AERM 2010, AERM 2011.

The latest report of AERM indicates that the Agency has signed with EC contract to implement Project “*Support for employment for young people, long term unemployed and women*” as part of IPA component IV. Project will included 3 components – traineeship for young people, trainings for professional skills, and trainings for skills needed at labour market (AERM 2010). Though details in implementation status are not available yet, the focus on target groups outlined above sets for opportunities for rural women to benefit from this programme as well, provided that they step out of inactivity and register with AERM. It would be useful to subject the measure to more detailed gender analysis once data are available.

In conclusion, the public reports of AERM do not provide for specific analysis of inclusion of rural women. AERM provides basic sets of data on categories such absolute numbers, in some cases age and sex division (however not cross-cut), or in specific measures focused on specific targets groups faced with selected social risks (such as single parents or victims of domestic violence). Additional aspects - critical for exclusion for labour market – including disabilities or rural / urban division are missing. Last but not least, data to track budgetary allocation per beneficiaries within programs are not available either.

Within the policy framework for eradicating poverty set with the adoption of the Strategy for eradicating poverty and social inclusion and following the adoption of the Law on Social Protection (in June 2009), new parameters have been introduced for the social assistance benefits. The changes (i.e. the determination of the right holder, and the determination of the amount of social assistance benefit depending on the size of the household and the duration of the exercise of this right) however do not have an effect on a equal distribution between men and women as beneficiaries of the social assistance benefits. As presented in the next table there is a huge difference between the holders of social assistance benefits in terms of gender.

³⁶ 42.8 % of credits where provided in area of Agriculture, hunting and forestry, but sex-disaggregated data for these business were available (AERM 2010), resp. 44.2 % as of 2010 cumulative or 1318 in absolute numbers of credits (AERM 2011).

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Though the social assistance benefit is provided to the family, according to the analysis (Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010) one member of family is determined as holder of the right and receives the assistance accordingly. This person is determined in a manner that prioritizes economically active members to the inactive ones, namely firstly choosing employed person, if not possible, then it is pensioner in family, and if this is not possible, then it unemployed person. After these options are exhausted (or possible candidate is not able to fulfill the obligations), other person can be determined by CSW³⁷. The authors of “Gender budget analysis of social assistance measures” suggest that male prevalence among right holders of social assistance benefits is “due to the traditional role of men as providers of finances for the family, or maybe women do not accept this additional responsibility due to preoccupation with home activities” (Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010).

Table 50: Gender disaggregated data on utilization of social assistance measure for eradicating poverty

Year	Expenses per beneficiary	Total	Number of household			Expenses	Participation in percentage	
			Women	Expenses	Men		Women	Men
2004	2,149.00	67,260	13,803	29,662,647	53,457	114,879,093	21	79
2005	2,186.00	66,918	12,939	28,284,654	53,979	114,867,312	19	81
2006	2,158.00	66,336	13,011	28,077,738.	53,325	115,075,350	20	80

Source: Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010

The amount of the social assistance benefit is very low (MKD 2,140 increased per coefficient 0.37 for every additional member of the household) and though harmonized with the increase of the living expenses published by the State Statistical Office, prevalence of male beneficiaries clearly shows that social assistance benefit provides means for eradicating poverty four times more often to men than to women.

7.4. Policy framework in Agriculture and Rural Development

7.4.1. Support for rural development

Rural development is on the agenda of the Government since the adoption of the Law for agriculture and rural development (2008). Prior to the adoption of the law the Government adopted Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development, comprehensive document that provides for situation analysis of all problems facing rural populations in Macedonia. The strategy however, does not recognize specific vulnerabilities faced by rural women.

Basically, rural development agenda is supported through implementation of two basic programs. Firstly, the Law on agriculture and rural development (OG 49/2010) regulates that the

37 According to “Gender budget analysis of social assistance measures” the holder of the right to social assistance is determined in following manner: “1. in a household with an employed person – the right holder shall be the employed person; 2. in a household that does not have an employed person, but has pension beneficiary – the right holder shall be the pension beneficiary; in a household that does not have employed person or pension beneficiary – the right holder shall be unemployed person; whereas, regarding other families, the competent center for social work shall be the body that will determine the right holder. The Center for Social Work shall be responsible to determine another person from a family or household to be right holder in cases when the right holder is not able to fulfill his/her obligations (due to illiteracy, drug addiction, violent behavior, involvement in crimes etc)” (Maleska-Sacmarovska et al, 2010).

Government adopts every three years a National Program for Agriculture and Rural Development (hereinafter referred as NPfARD). The first cycle of adopted program covers period 2009 to 2011. The second cycle of the program is not yet developed as the implementation of the first cycle takes longer than planned. The Program includes policy measures, indicative time frame and financial framework needed for implementation of planned policy measures. This program is 100% funded by the central budget of Republic of Macedonia. In addition the Government adopts a program for utilization of EU funds earmarked for agriculture and rural development (hereinafter referred as IPARD program). This program is 75% funded by the EU and 25% funded by the budget of Macedonia. It also has limited gender sensitivity. Differences between men and women are emphasized only in respect to demographic data and employment status presented in the background analysis for the document.

In 2008 the Government adopted a Decree (No. 137/2008) which offered operationalization of the rural development policy. The decree entered into force in 2009 and regulates the following policy measures for rural development:

- a. to improve competitiveness and modernization of agricultural holdings, including agriculture
- b. investments in processing, packaging, storage and marketing of agricultural products
- c. investment in rehabilitation of the irrigation systems
- d. financial support in promotional activities
- e. investment in increasing knowledge, training and human potential development
- f. support to joint production activities.

Explanatory box:

Conditions for financing through rural development measures

Three general conditions:

1. to submit an application;
2. not to have been criminally charged;
3. to be registered as farmer; or agricultural producing company
4. not to have opened bankruptcy procedure

Specific conditions per measure:

- A. Improved competitiveness
 1. to declare production facilities
 2. not to have liabilities for use of agricultural land
 3. not to have liabilities for use of pastures
 4. not to have liabilities for use of financial sources from the Food program
- B. Investment in processing
 1. to be registered as a company
 2. not to have liabilities for use of agricultural land
 3. not to have liabilities for use of pastures
 4. not to have liabilities for use of financial sources from the Food program
- C. Investment in irrigation
 1. to be registered in the water communities registry
 2. not to have liabilities for water supply
 3. to submit project plan
 4. to have written consent from the water community
- D. Promotional activities in rural tourism
 1. to be registered as an NGO or foundation
 2. the purpose of the NGO to be economic cultural or social development
- E. Investment in human development
 1. to be registered as an NGO or foundation
 2. to be registered as scientific institution
 3. to have a project plan

In the policy development process for the above mentioned Decree, the coordinator for equal opportunities of the Ministry of Agriculture actively advocated in cooperation with the rural development policy team to include gender sensitive measures within the Decree. Namely, in Article 4, p.3/a the Decree, regulated that 20 points will be awarded to applications for increasing

competitiveness if the lead applicant is a woman; and in accordance to Article 4, p.3/b 15 points are awarded to women entrepreneurs (registered as individual farmers). The Decree applies to IPARD and NPfARD. The Government also encouraged rural women by awarding additional 10 points in comparison to the male farmers for receiving refundable resources from the government in the area of modernization of the agriculture. The possibilities for acquiring financial help are even greater (20 additional points) for the women candidates that are aged between 18 to 40 years, and are registered as a farmer and live in difficult and poorer areas. The applied mode of implementation of the rural development policy resulted with 18-20% increase of the recipients of financial assistance provided through the IPARD and NPfARD programs for rural women in 2009.³⁸

7.4.2. Capacity for rural development

Overall coordination of implementation of the agricultural and rural development policy is done through the inter-ministerial Body for rural development established with a Government decision (OG 15/2007). The Body is constituted of representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Self-government, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economy Ministry of Social policy and Secretariat for European issues. The body is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry which has own representatives in the Body. This mechanism is supposed to be used for identification of problems, analysis and definition of solutions that will resolve the identified problems, coordinate action across all sectors aiming to rural development of the country.

Recently Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development was created with mandate to implement the key programs in rural development mentioned earlier: 1) the National Program for Agriculture & Rural Development (NPfARD) and 2) the Program for utilization of EU funds under the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance for Rural Development (IPARD) 2007-2013. In the agency one of the employees was nominated to be a gender focal point and is responsible for the monitoring of the application of the affirmative measures for gender equality mentioned in the previous section.

Also while measuring capacity one might see that in this area the Government has allocated from the central budget (based on 2011 budget data) 37 684 million denars for rural development. In addition 92 000 million denars are expected from donations (EU funds through the IPARD instrument). The total budget for rural development to be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture sums up to 129 684 million denars. The Agency for financial support of agriculture and rural development is planned to receive 735 500 million denars from the central budget for the improvement of rural areas in 2011. In 2012 the amount allocated to this agency is planned to rise to 958 296 million denars and in 2013 to 1 052 482 million denars. This clearly shows how this sector is important to the government as the amount of investments increases each year. The Agency is responsible for the implementation of the IPARD Operational Programme that covers a period of seven years (2007–2013) and based on this will receive a financial allocation of over €42 millions for the period 2007-2010 (app. € 31.5 millions) from the Pre-accession instrument – IPA. In addition the central budget will provide € 10.5 millions of national co-financing for the same period.

³⁸ Interview with Lidija Chadikovska, Ministry of Agriculture, CRPM / May 2011

7. Creating public value for rural women

That there is not just commitment but also implementation capacity is shown from the results of the implementation of the program and financial instrument in 2009. According to the Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development the number of received applications is 2287 of which 702 were approved, the approximate average amount of each approved application was 319.072.68 denars. The table below shows regional distribution and chart provides visual comparison on distribution of approved applications against distribution of approved finances.

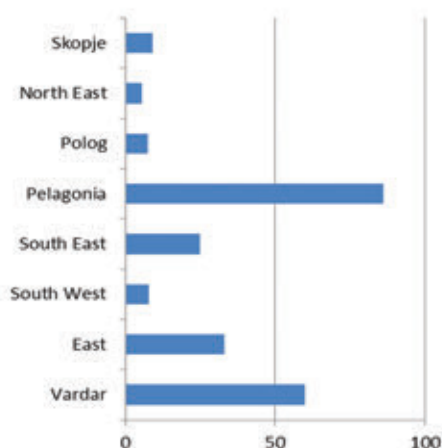
Table 51: Regional summary: 2009 applications and approved allocations for measure 1 from the National program for financial support of rural development

Regions	Approved applications	Approved finances in MKD
Vardar	211	59,841,729
East	110	33,003,319
South West	23	7,598,318
South East	56	24,840,401
Pelagonia	258	86,266,961
Polog	17	7,207,701
North East	27	5,230,593
Total	702	223,989,022

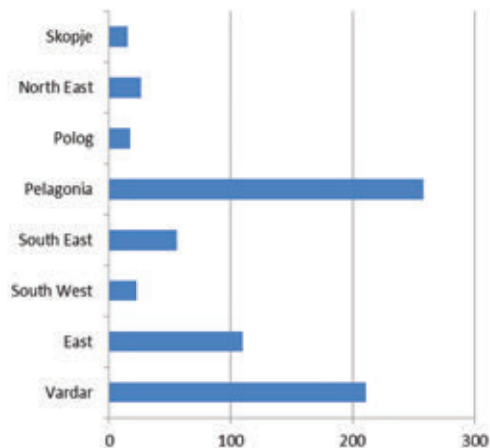
Source: Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development (2010)

Chart 31: Utilization of the 2009 rural development budget for measure 1 from the National program for financial support of rural development

31a: Approved finances in mil. MKD



31b: Number of approved applications



Source: IPARD PA, 2011

Of the approved applications, most of them are from the Pelagonia region-and the Vardar region. In 2009 the same situation continues because most of the applications that are approved are from

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Sveti Nikole and a total of 139, compared to 2008 when 99 applications were approved. Although there are absolutely more approved applications from Sveti Nikole, it should be stressed that in 2009, 108 requests from Resen were approved applications, unlike in 2008 where the number of approved applications was 10, i.e. there is a trend of extremely high applications approved from the municipality of Resen, resulting indirectly Pelagonia to be in the first place according to approved applications. The rural regions of Polog, South east and South west are in the same time with least number of applications and approved applications and as a result they are least beneficiaries of the financial support of the state to agriculture.

The number of approved applications from women in 2009 for **measure 1 (to improve competitiveness and modernization of agricultural holdings, including agriculture)**; were in total 234 out of 717, which constitutes 32.6%. The total amount of approved applications for women was over 83 million MKD which represents over 37 % of share of finances being allocated to women. From these successful applications, 45 % of approved requests were from young women under 40 years of age and 55% from women over 40 years. As the table below shows, women under 40, though they had less approved requests, gained in total more resources than women over 40 years (56:44).

Table 52: Approved applications for women in 2009 under measure 1 (to improve competitiveness and modernization of agricultural holdings, including agriculture)

Age category	Approved applications		Approved resources	
	Number	Percentage	Amount	Share in %
Under 40 years (women)	105	44.87%	46,882,956.17	56.07%
Over 40 year (women)	129	55.13%	36,732,938.00	43.93%
Total	234	100%	83,615,894.17	100%

Source: IPARD PA 2011

As stated earlier, in 2008 affirmative measures providing to women applicants additional points were introduced, thus it is interesting to look at changes in trends from 2008 to 2009 when these affirmative measure came in force. One can observe an increasing trend in proportion of approved applications submitted by women if the figures from 2008 and 2009 are compared. There is a significant increase of the applications for financial help from both male and female farmers, however as the table below shows, while there was less than 1 successful women applicant from every 5 successful applicants in 2008, in 2009, every almost third successful applicant was a woman.

Table 53: Numbers of successful applications - Comparison between 2008-2009

Gender	2008		2009		Percentage increase
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	
Women	80	18,60%	234	32,55%	292,50%
Men	350	81,40%	485	67,45%	138,57%
Total	430	100%	719	100%	167,21%

Source: IPARD PA 2011

This progress might be accounted to change in policy and regulating affirmative measures for women farmers as beneficiaries of the NPfARD and IPARD measures.

7. Creating public value for rural women

Table 54: Comparison of approved applications between 2008-2009 by age and gender

By Year	By gender	By age		% share (by age)		Total	% share (by gender)
		Under 40 years	Over 40 years	Under 40 years	Over 40 years		
2008	Women	36	44	45%	55%	80	19%
	Men	150	200	43%	57%	350	81%
	Total	186	244	43%	57%	430	100%
2009	Women	105	129	45%	55%	234	33%
	Men	205	280	42%	58%	485	67%
	Total	310	409	43%	57%	719	100%

Source: IPARD PA 2011

Under **measure 2 (supply of equipment for processing, storage sorting and packaging of agricultural products)**; the approved applications from women also increased. In 2009 their total number was 18 and there is equal distribution in terms of age, in terms of funds, this time elderly women gain more resources (56 % to 44 %).

Table 55: Approved applications for women in 2009 under measure 2 (supply of equipment for processing, storage sorting and packaging of agricultural products)

Age category	Approved applications		Approved resources	
	Number	Percentage	Amount	Share in %
Under 40 years (women)	9	50%	11,892,758.00	44.08%
Over 40 years (women)	9	50%	15,089,740.00	55.92%
Total	18	100%	26,982,498.00	100 %

Source: IPARD PA 2011

Since in the last two decades, agriculture has undergone several crises, farmers had to seek alternative sources of profits in order survive which could be only achieved through diversification of their activities. Thus, advancement in rural areas begun through expansion of tourism activities with recreational character. This new and vibrant growing sector is, benefiting from increasing interest of people in exciting activities and independent forms of voyages, offering variety of rural traditions which present numberless opportunities for small-scale, income-generating while locally controlled tourism (and economic) growth. Rural attractions act as basic resource for tourism economic sector organized and sustained through locally owned small enterprises, supported by additional promotion through professional marketing initiatives undertaken by local and central government, NGOs and private sector.

For the great potential of tourism related activities, we have chosen the 4th measure of National Program for Agricultural and Rural Development that is aimed at providing support to expansion and promotion of rural tourism. This measure is implemented through following two sub-measures:

- **sub-measure 4.1** that includes manufacture of brochures, maps, books with historical facts about localities, landmarks and books for traditional assigns and cultural heritage. That would cover up intellectual service or author honorarium for fabrication, translation, lecture and review etc.

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- **sub-measure 4.2** includes signalisation of cultural and natural sights in rural areas and rural accommodations, with acceptable cost such as design and fabrication of adequate indicators for signalisation as well as active charges to designate certain pointer marks.

However utilization data show that the number of applications for rural tourism was significantly lower than for the other measures discussed above. In example in year 2009 from total of 2287 applications that were received, 45 were in rural tourism and from 702 approved, only 10 were related to rural tourism.

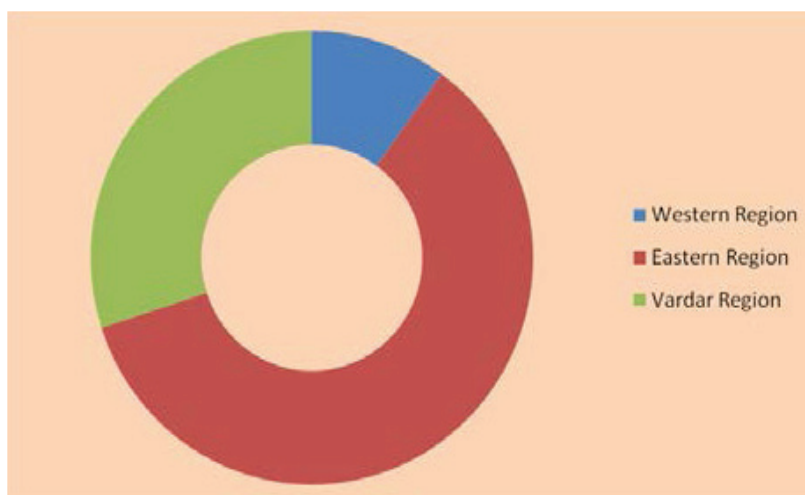
Table 56: Comparison of utilization rate of program on rural tourism

Type of application	Submitted applications	Approved applications	% of approval success (approved against submitted)
Applications for all measures	2287	702	30.69 %
Applications for rural tourism	45	10	22.22%

Source: IPARD PA 2011 (% - own calculations)

Sources from the IPARD agency shows that several factors influenced on such utilization results: (i) lack of capacity to complete the forms and submit adequate application for financial support; (ii) low awareness of the financing ceilings; and (iii) manipulation of the criteria (the address of the applicant had to be in the rural areas, but most of the rejected applicants were with address in urban areas). Most interested were applicants from the Western region, but applicants from Eastern showed better capacity and therefore got approved more projects than applicants from West and Vardar region.

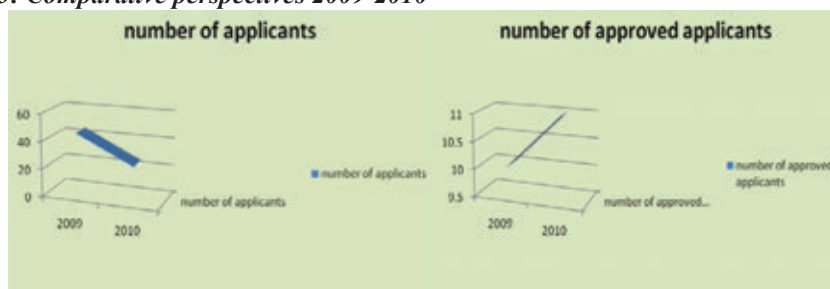
Chart 32: Utilization of rural tourism measure 2009 per region



Source: IPARD PA 2011

If we make comparative analysis between utilization data from 2009 and that of 2010, we will notice that the number of application has dropped to 25, showing significant decline within interest regarding national support aiming those measures. However, the number of approved applicants increased for 44 % which shows increase in capacity among applicants.

Chart 33: Comparative perspectives 2009-2010



Source: IPARD PA 2011

Another encouraging trend is in the area of rural tourism where statistics provided by the Ministry for agriculture forestry and water supply for 2010, show that there is an increased interest and applications from women up to 40%.

7.4.3. Rural development values for rural women

As we see from the data above the policies and financial instruments that support rural residents and especially women are not used to their fullest extent. With the CRPM survey on rural women & men 2011 and through the focus groups, we intended to go beyond official data and explore barriers and factors affecting this situation. The survey data show that, a third of male farmers have not applied for support, whereas almost two thirds of those who didn't apply were women. It is still the case that the husband is the one who is more likely to apply for support, even though the government gives extra points for women farmers who apply for subsidies. This policy measure may not have received a lot of publicity since only 46% said that they are familiar with it (ibid). Furthermore, only 6.5% of 46 women farmers said they have applied for subsidies taking into account this incentive. As far as the type of support goes, the vast majority of people (30) who have applied and received support said the support was in the form of subsidies, and only 2 have applied for loans.

Table 57: Application for institutional support to farming

<i>If you're a farmer, have you applied and have you received institutional support for your activities, incl. subsidies?</i>	<i>Men total (% of men)</i>	<i>Women total (% of women)</i>	<i>Overall (% of total)</i>
Yes, I have applied and received	25 (54%)	11 (28%)	36 (42%)
I have applied, but haven't received	6 (13%)	3 (7%)	9 (10%)
No, I haven't applied	14 (31%)	22 (55%)	36 (42%)
I don't know any such possibilities exist	1 (2%)	4 (10%)	5 (6%)
Total	46 (100%)	40 (100%)	86 (100%)

Source: CRPM survey on rural women & men, 2011

The main reasons for the underutilization of financial support are failure to fulfill the conditions (38%), lack of interest (32%) and not enough information about the conditions (23%). The challenging procedure does not seem to be an important reason, even though 54% of those who applied said that the process is difficult, but half of them had adequate support from the institution throughout the process according to CRPM Survey of Rural women and men 2011.

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Table 58: Reasons for not applying

<i>If you haven't; applied for financial support, what is the main reason for that?</i>	<i>Overall</i>
I can't apply/do not fulfill the conditions.	38%
I have no interest to apply.	32%
Too much required documentation is needed.	4%
The deadline for applying is too short.	2%
I do not know how to fill out the forms.	2%
I do not have enough information about the conditions.	23%
Total	100%

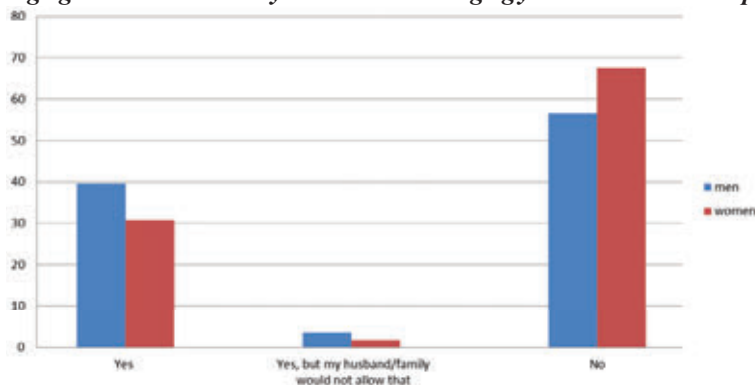
Source: CRPM Survey on rural women & men, 2011

Rural residents interested in applying for financial support were also asked about the reasons for not applying for loans from banks. 45% of them answered that the interest rate is too high, followed by 35% who said they do not own valuable property to put down as collateral according to CRPM Survey of Rural women and men 2011.

Besides subsidies, other types of support are not well known. Only 21 of 103 people who have answered this question said they know of other types of support, including loans for self-employment (4), loans for agricultural machinery (1) and grants (4).

The potential for utilization of this financial instruments or active labour market measures analyzed earlier is high in rural areas as 44 % of men and 33 % of women stated they are planning a change in their work status or work place. This interest in changing work status has been particularly identified in the young (from 18-35 years) educated women (have secondary or higher education about 40% vs. about 20% of those with lower or no education), mainly belonging to the Macedonian ethnic community (40% vs. 14% Albanian and 16% Turk). The limitations set by the husband or other family members have rarely been mentioned as a setback by women (mentioned in 5 cases by 4 Albanian and 1 Macedonian women). The cross analysis of survey results reveals that 30% of the inactive rural women would like to change their status, which is very positive. The other 70% of the inactive rural women would not like to change their status. However we should also note that 3 of the 5 cases that are not allowed to change their status are inactive women.

Chart 34: Changing a work status- Have you considered changing your work status / workplace in future?

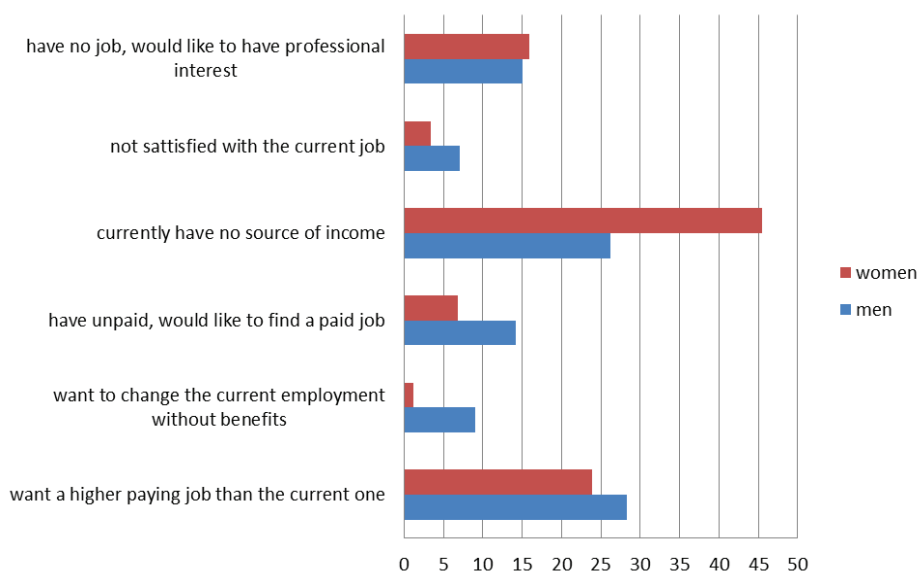


Source: CRPM survey on rural men and women, 2011

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Since more women are unemployed, their primary reasons for changing the employment status is gaining a source for more regular income (45%), while men are divided between this reason (26%) and finding a job which pays better than their current one (28%). The respondents (especially women) do not seem to be acquainted with the concept of unpaid job and only 11% of them report to work unpaid job and would like to change this with a job that pays.

Chart 35: Reasons for changing a job - What is the main reason for changing your work status / workplace?



Source: CRPM survey on rural men and women, 2011

Note: Percentages are based on the number of respondents that have reported to consider changing their work status/workplace

Of those that have considered changing their employment status, the majority (40%) reported to need trainings/education for additional skills, and about one third need counseling on the methods for applying for a job. Almost half of the women (regardless of their educational attainment, ethnic background and age) stated to be in need of trainings for skills development, while men are more interested in learning new ways of seeking for a job.

The possibility of starting up a business is rarely considered as an option, especially by women. More than two thirds of them do not consider this option, contrasted to 55%

Rural Voices 19: Desire for learning

"I would like to continue my education or visit some training for farming activities; there must be many things that we don't know yet. We would go together with my husband."

Albanian woman (Shemshevo village)

"I have married very young and terminated my schooling after primary school, but now I would like to continue my education, because I'm still young and still have time to look for employment."

Macedonian woman (Izvor village)

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of men respondents. 6.4% of women stated to already have a concrete business idea, while 10.2% have ideas but don't believe they possess the capacities needed. The trend is similar as for the previous question, i.e. the women more likely to start up their business are younger (up to 35 years), are primarily from Macedonian ethnic background and have secondary or higher education.

The vast majority of respondents (80%) who consider the option of starting up their business, men and women alike, stated that they would primarily need financial support for this. A quarter of women would also like to be advised on business ideas, while only 13% said they would need trainings for additional skills.

Of those interested in business startup, about 35% (40% of which women) would turn to a bank for support, 20% to the family members for assistance and almost a quarter do not know where to turn if they want to start up a business. The government or non-government institutions that offer support for business startup are among the least considered options, selected by less than 13% of respondents. They are obviously not acquainted with the possibilities for support from these institutions/organizations, which can be illustrated by the opinion/perception of 75% of the respondents that there is no institutional support for improving the economic situation of citizens.

7.5. Summary of chapter 7- Creating public value for rural women

The review of the policies of which rural women benefit, it seems that the education and partially the health policy responds to the needs of the rural women. They also need to be strengthened, but are showing results in improvement of the status of this group in society. The other policy areas do not target rural women sufficiently, i.e. employment policy and social inclusion policy. The gender equality policy in Macedonia is not thoroughly blind, but sensitive to rural women needs. However, this document is criticized for not being based on sound analysis and therefore the measures it promotes are not reflecting thoroughly the situation women in rural areas are in. This is not the case of the rural development policy which promotes affirmative action for women engaged in farming and rural tourism. Nevertheless, this policy does not provision efforts for capacity building of rural women.

8. Conclusions

The study presents an impressive research on the status of rural women (health, social protection, education and economic activity), tackling numerous policy issues from delivery of public services in the rural areas, to how certain policies such as employment, social inclusion, gender equality and rural development address rural women's needs.

As evidence above shows, those certain progress was achieved, rural women still have lowest educational profile. This puts them in a disadvantaged position in comparison to both urban women and rural men who have better educational results than rural women. The reforms in the education policy area (especially the introduction of the compulsory secondary schooling) improve this situation and increase the potentials of the younger generation of rural women. They are however, the most vulnerable to unemployment because of the limited offer of jobs in the rural regions and the tradition patriarchal expectations to fulfill the prescribed role of mothers and housewives, bearing the bulk of the unpaid home-work and be exploited as unpaid family agricultural worker or low paid seasonal worker again in agriculture. Having limited public services offered in the rural areas and being faced with the afore mentioned challenges rural women have little incentive to spend their lives in the villages and would rather move to the cities where they get married. They claim to stay in the rural villages only if work is offered outside agriculture.

The efforts made to improve rural women's livelihoods are on the contrary limited to the increase of the agricultural opportunities. Therefore, the current policy and institutional setup are **minimally** reflecting and responding to the proportion and needs of the rural population (in particular women). The main criticism goes not to the affirmative actions devised to facilitate development of rural areas or increasing equal opportunities, but to the **lack of coordination** between the policy documents and institutions that tackle issues relevant to rural women and their **lack of responsiveness** to both needs of the rural women as well as their effectiveness to appropriately respond to the factors that impinge on their livelihoods. In example, the National action plan for gender equality is referring to the need to strengthen women's capacities for entrepreneurship and increase employment opportunities for rural women. However, the employment measures that operationalize the Employment strategy do not recognize rural women as a target group. This suggests that the three policy documents produced by the same Ministry have not been consulted neither coordinated. The reasons for this are twofold:

- (i) a baseline study on rural women did not exist;
- (ii) the institutions are not aware of the rural/urban differences

On the other hand, rural development is the only area where specific measures are provisioned targeting rural women. The measures are related to agricultural work and rural tourism. Considering that young women who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged of all categories of rural population according to this study would continue living in the village only if they find jobs outside agriculture, these measures also appear non responsive to the needs of the rural women.

Finally, since policies do not necessarily correspond to the capacities, needs and challenges with which rural women are faced, and as this study presents evidence of the gaps and analysis of

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the policies that are (non)respondent to the situation in which rural women live it also provides the following policy recommendations to facilitate development of rural women's livelihoods.

Rural residents need improvement of the sewage system, the road network and water supply in order to live decent lives.

Improvement of coverage with primary health doctors in rural areas is expected. The policy itself is sensitive to the needs of the rural people but monitoring and evaluation of the operation of contracted physicians in rural areas should be strengthened.

The study shows that transition of girls to secondary education is improving but the gender differences in education remain to be determined by ethnic/cultural background. While in the Macedonian ethnic group balance in terms of education is expected very soon in the Albanian and Turkish groups additional support and awareness raising will be needed. Problems with transport must be resolved as this might become the only exclusionary for schooling factor.

Rural women challenged with difficult life, limited offer of public services and living in poverty will inevitably leave the villages if new economic and employment opportunities are not offered.

In this respect the diversification of the agriculture in Macedonia with rural tourism might become attractive to rural women. For that to happen one needs to invest more time and money in raising awareness and increasing capacity for increased utilization of funding available through the national program for agriculture and rural development and the instrument for pre accession for rural development. However, the agriculture as a major rural activity should not be overlooked. Instead, measures should also be taken to improve the status of women farmers and get them re-interested in agricultural work.

Finally for all this to happen we need politics to change to allow for more women to voice their needs and meaningfully participate in local decision making, but also on central level. The policies that are being adopted need to be based on analysis of the current situation and the policy options to reflect the needs of rural women. Participatory mechanisms on local level need particular strengthening, as rural women and men showed little awareness of as well as limited trust in having their voices being heard, let alone considered in local planning and decision making.

9. Recommendations

The provided recommendations in this section reflect on main concerns identified in regards to inclusion of rural women in the society. Concerns are matched with respective recommendations for key actors and stakeholders to take actions on key priorities. The changes in policies, policy making as well as practices in implementation are defined with tangible actions that can be taken forward by key actors with support from partners that have been identified as well.

Suggested scope of recommendations does not aspire to be exhaustive or definite. It is believed that policy making and service delivery are facing constant challenges and in constant need for adjustment and changes that shall be primary motivated with aim to support the public wellbeing and create public value. Particularly, in regards to this study, research team hopes for providing the key stakeholders with key evidence to stimulate positive changes beneficial to rural women challenged with limited opportunities, social exclusion and gender based discrimination.

Recommendations are divided into 7 areas of main concerns.

1. General – data provision, legal and policy frameworks to support gender equality and women's empowerment
2. Available infrastructure and support to mobility facilitating accessibility of public services
3. Access to general and specific health care for rural women
4. Accessibility of education and child-care services to enable (not only economic) empowerment of rural women
5. Capacities of rural women for economic empowerment
6. Inclusion of rural women in sustainable agriculture and rural development
7. Political participation of rural women with focus on active engagement in local development policy and decision making processes

1. General – data provision, legal and policy frameworks to support gender equality and women's empowerment		
Main concerns	Recommendations on key priorities of actions	Key Actors & Partners
Lack of data to support cross-cutting gender analysis incl. urban / rural, age and ethnic background comparison against sex-disaggregated data	<p>Ensure data systems collecting and processing data related to public services delivery are in place, publicly available and enable cross comparisons of key categories.</p> <p>a) disaggregation of data by key categories – sex, age, urban/ rural, ethnic background</p> <p>b) cross-cutting comparison of sex-disaggregated data against other categories</p>	<p>State Statistical office and central public institutions processing data from public institutions</p> <p>Public institutions involved provided collecting data</p>
<p>Essential legal and policy frameworks supporting gender equality are in place, however implementation is hindered by lack of adequate and sustainable financing. Gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness of such programs is lacking.</p> <p>Participation of rural women and their advocates in local and national level policy making is limited.</p>	<p>Relevant strategies (gender equality, employment, social inclusion, social protection, rural development etc.) need to strengthen the gender analysis in designing phase and reflect through adequate (gender responsive) measures in order to address identified gender gap and needs voiced by gender advocates. This can be supported with respective amendment in the Rules of Procedure of the Government (Art. 138).</p> <p>Adequate sourcing should be planned and secured for all relevant strategic priorities and policy measures. Effects of implementation should be monitored and impact evaluated from gender perspective incl. focus on rural women.</p> <p>Consultative processes at local and national level need to strengthen and ensure mechanisms for meaningful participation and voicing of needs by rural women and gender advocates and experts.</p>	<p>Gender Equality Mechanism and respective line ministries.</p> <p>Sectoral policy makers</p> <p>Gender advocates representing rural women</p> <p>Gender experts and Gender equality Civil Society Organizations (hereinafter CSOs).</p>

2. Available infrastructure and support to mobility facilities facilitating accessibility of public services		
Main concerns	Recommendations on key priorities of actions	Key Actors & Partners
<p>Insufficient quality of roads and their maintenance in rural areas, together with limited offer of public transport services particularly in more distance rural areas, makes it difficult for rural women and men to access to essential services available mostly in urban centers (including public services such as education, health, social protection and employment).</p> <p>Rural women are challenged with additional barriers in their mobility due to gender stereotypes and interlinked lack of skills to support individual mobility (e.g. driving license)</p> <p>Women and men, tasked traditionally with different responsibilities in regards to life in rural areas, weight differently the respective priorities for improving the accessibility of basic infrastructures.</p>	<p>Local stakeholders need to ensure perspectives of rural women are adequately consulted within local infrastructural projects and initiatives (e.g. water, sewage system or roads etc.) throughout the whole process, including design and planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation phase.</p> <p>Local urban planning, and available resources allocations for local development shall consult and consider gender specific needs of rural women and men in order to improve accessibility of services (incl. men and women with disabilities).</p> <p>Enhance capacities of public services providers at local level in expanding outreach of services to rural women and men e.g. through more frequent field visits which needs to be back up by adequate resources to support rural areas outreach.</p> <p>Improve availability of public transport (frequency, reliability & coverage) at local level, particularly in distant villages, e.g. through securing necessary resources at local or regional level (with possible inter-municipality cooperation on sharing of costs or having incentives for private providers)</p> <p>Introduce initiatives to break gender stereotypes and barriers that prevent women from using public or private transport means independently, incl. support to women interested obtain driving license or increasing awareness and sensitizing men.</p>	<p>Local Self-Government</p> <p>Public Institutions</p> <p>Local CSOs</p> <p>Rural women and men and their advocates</p>

3. Access to general and specific health care for rural women	Recommendations on key priorities of actions	Key Actors & Partners
<p>Availability of general health care, incl. the basic services of generalist is limited in rural areas, particularly with highlands and more distant villages.</p> <p>Additionally, the policy of shared health insurance supports greater dependence of rural women on husbands who hold the rights for health insurance.</p> <p>Rural women are aware for need of regular check-ups, incl. reproductive health needs, however they encounter numerous barriers in accessing health care services, especially specialized ones located in urban centers, due to high costs implied (for services and transports), limited individual mobility (lack of skills and means – e.g. driving a car, public transports limitations) and/or cultural norms (need to be accompanied by male partners, shame factor) and language barriers (for some women from minorities).</p>	<p>Involve multiple partners (media, public and private health care providers, local leaders, civic organizations) in awareness raising initiatives for regular gynecological check-ups is needed (inclusive of ethnic Albanian and ethnic Turkish communities).</p> <p>Involve health care providers and specialist doctors in proactive prevention initiatives (e.g. informative consultations with local communities with local doctors as resource persons).</p> <p>Explore possibilities to reduce costs of the gynecologists check-ups creating incentive to increase the frequency of visits (transport or services costs).</p> <p>Explore possibilities (e.g. mediators or supporting hiring of staff with multiple language capacities) to ensure in rural areas services can be delivery in the mother language of the patients to strengthen effectiveness of health service delivery to members of ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Ensure continuation of policies providing incentives to rural health care providers and sustain essential health care services network in rural areas (incl. general practitioners) & establish monitoring mechanism to ensure local ambulatory practices stick to precise working hours and offer constant services to ensure health care services provided to rural women and men are reliable and accessible.</p> <p>Explore possibilities for supporting at least once a week pediatrician and gynecologist coming to the villages on regular basis.</p> <p>Involve men and raise awareness among them about the importance of prevention and encourage their proactive involvement in reproductive health related risks preventive check-ups.</p> <p>Explore policy options for introduction of compulsory gynecological check-up and to free of charge screening for terminal diseases (e.g. for different types of cancer)</p>	<p>Health care providers (private and public)</p> <p>Local CSOs, including women organizations</p> <p>Media</p> <p>Local self-governments</p>

4. Accessibility of Education and Child-care services to enable (not only economic) empowerment of rural women		
Main concerns	Recommendations on key priorities of actions	Key Actors & Partners
<p>Policy of compulsory secondary education has evidenced to some extent positive improvement in enrollment of girls, however gender gap, particularly among minorities, haven been closed yet.</p> <p>While availability and accessibility of primary schools is to some extent sufficient for rural girls and boys, from the level of secondary schools, distance affects negatively access to education.</p> <p>Traditional roles of men and women in the family prevails in the society and particularly in rural areas burden rural women with child and household care responsibilities disproportionately with male counterparts</p> <p>Rural areas lack available child care facilities and rural women see burden of home and child- care responsibilities as key barrier to seek employment.</p>	<p>Ensure resources and incentives for development and provision of child care service network in rural areas enabling women to seek employment opportunities. This may included considering incentives to public or private providers or advocacy with local self-government units for exploring possibility of using centrally distributed block grants for alternative solutions for provision of childcare services in rural areas.</p> <p>Adapt the policy on parental leave to ensure father's portion is not transferable to mother and promote proactively positive male role models (encouraging men taking parental leave and sharing more equally child care responsibilities)</p> <p>Establish mechanisms for early detection of the families assessed as more prone to not enrolling or withdrawing their children from school (e.g. traditional Muslim communities, families living in distant mountainous areas), promote proactive interventions, awareness raising and counseling early in the schooling process.</p> <p>Explore options (at local or central level) for opening student dormitories in areas where there is absence of such institutions or reimbursement of travel costs from public schemes, if the distance from village/school allows it.</p> <p>Ensure the continuation of the policy on minimizing schooling expenses (free transport, textbooks, dormitory accommodation).</p> <p>Introduce and promote adult education programs (primary and secondary) free of charge to individuals who have not completed their formal schooling. This programs shall be carefully designed including proactive component of outreaching the service to those in need of it (the institutions seeking out and motivating the participants) and with specific targets for yearly quotas of new women graduates from rural areas.</p>	<p>Local self-governments</p> <p>MLSP</p> <p>Ministry of Educations</p> <p>CSOs</p>

5. Capacities of rural women for economic empowerment		
Main concerns	Recommendations on key priorities of actions	Key Actors & Partners
<p>Rural women (and men) have limited opportunities for seeking employment within their surroundings.</p> <p>Available active labour market measures do not target rural women sufficiently, needless to say have no capacity to reach out the core of rural women majority of whom remain inactive due to several reasons: a) lack of time (care burden vis a vis unavailable child-care services), b) gender norms supporting women's inactivity particularly in minority groups c) limited awareness about and access to opportunities to change the work status</p> <p>Rural women are lagging behind men an urban women in capacities, e.g. higher education or specific modern skills such as internet and PC use</p>	<p>Support initiatives to increase awareness of rural women (incl. minorities women) on advantages and available support offered through active labour market measures and particularly for starting up their own business.</p> <p>Support capacity building initiatives to facilitate access of rural women (incl. minorities women) to the available public and private economic empowerment opportunities. (e.g. involving them in locally available trainings for developing skills related to employment and self-employment or supporting or mentoring them through the process of applying, developing business plan and other specific skills training).</p> <p>Introduce initiatives to engage men and local leaders (religious and political) in raising awareness on need for and benefits of supporting economic empowerment of rural women, incl. leaders from minority communities.</p> <p>Revise and adapt the employment schemes within the ALMM (criteria or new measures) in order to be ensure inclusion of low-skilled and inactive rural women to promote and increase their economic activity.</p> <p>Introduce initiatives that ensure low educated rural women have opportunities to access adult training programs (life long learning) and complete their missing basic or secondary education.</p> <p>Introduce initiatives to increase capacities of rural women for PC literacy and use of internet and promote innovative networking between rural women, e.g. using social media and building bridges between different generations of rural women.</p> <p>Support creating employment opportunities outside agriculture (e.g. local tourism, innovative services) for women and initiatives that promote or facilitate networking between the women with specific skills (which are not officially recognized, e.g. sawing, handcrafting) and the businesses in need of these skills or involved in marketing of products based on these specific skills.</p> <p>Introduce policies (e.g. tax incentives) supporting more flexible ways of employment arrangements and part time work encouraging women to step out of economic inactivity.</p>	<p>Actors involved in employment policies implementation at local level (incl. Agencies for Employment, Agencies for Promotion of Entrepreneurship as well as private actors)</p> <p>Business and Entrepreneurs organizations & individual local entrepreneurs and business owners</p> <p>Local women CSOs and grassroots initiatives</p>

6. Inclusion of Rural Women in Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development	Key Actors & Partners
Main concerns	Recommendations on key priorities of actions
<p>Limited scope of data available on affirmative measures supporting women and young applicants of some of agriculture and rural development schemes, implies positive influence on increasing proportion of women applicants, though they still do lag behind number of male applicants. Further in-depth analysis is needed.</p> <p>Though majority of rural men and women confirmed to be involved different scope of agriculture production, it is in many cases considered rather as copying strategy than a sources of reliable and sustainable income.</p> <p>Rural women have limited access to assets (incl. farmland and other property) in order to be motivated to engage and commit to agricultural business activities and instead rather opt for opportunities outside of agriculture and/or outside of rural areas.</p>	<p>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy.</p> <p>Agencies involved in implementing national agriculture development schemes and IPARD, incl. Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development and Agency for Entrepreneurship support.</p> <p>Agriculture enterprises associations and federations.</p> <p>Improve collection and reporting on sex-disaggregated data on implementation of rural development schemes and impact of affirmative measures supporting women applicants.</p> <p>Conduct in depth gender analysis including gender budget analysis of rural development programs and affirmative measures and ensure that recommendations are taken into considerations in policy making in order to sustain positive results and/or improve gender responsiveness of rural and agriculture development policies.</p> <p>Making agriculture more attractive for women through e.g. acknowledgment of their work and ensuring equal pay (closing gender pay gap); improving access (such as property rights) to agricultural assets and promoting women farmers as role models.</p> <p>Reduce the costs for registered farmers, bearing in mind the seasonal character of the work.</p> <p>Introduce and strengthen current awareness raising and promotional initiative related to agricultural schemes benefits for farmers, especially targeting and outreaching to rural women and women farmers.</p> <p>Provide for pro-active technical support to rural women in preparation of applications for support in available schemes incl. in rural tourism and financial assistance by IPARDPA.</p> <p>Enhance awareness raising among rural women on property rights (in regard to agricultural land) and provide them with support to exercise their rights so they can improve their economic independence and status of eligibility for agricultural subsidies.</p> <p>Proactively involve (e.g. quotas) and encourage (awareness raising) women to participate at trainings where novel production trends are introduced (e.g. organic farming) so women have equal access to relevant knowledge and information.</p> <p>Provide incentives to support rural women's self employment e.g. by reducing costs and introducing the low-interest credits to support start up of their own businesses.</p> <p>Support initiatives providing peer-to-peer networking and transfer of know-how from successful applicants of public schemes and/or successful agricultural business women to new prospective women start-up businesses.</p>

7. Political participation of rural women with focus on active engagement in local development policy and decision making processes		
Main concerns	Recommendations on key priorities of actions	Key Actors & Partners
<p>Despite quote measures in place at national and local level, gender stereotypes prevent women and rural women particular from taking more active role in national and local politics, especially in sharing executive power with men more equally.</p> <p>Rural women rarely participate in policy and decision making processes at local level, needless to say, their needs and priorities are barely voiced at national level.</p> <p>Rural women (and to some extent men) have limited knowledge of local planning and participatory process (if they are in place) and/or little trust in meaningful outcome of voicing their needs towards local actors.</p>	<p>Increase the quota for participation of the less represented gender on election lists on local and parliamentary elections to 50% to strengthen women's participation in politics and their eventual influence</p> <p>Participatory local planning and decision making process shall be strengthen and promoted within rural population, with specific efforts to ensure the involvement of rural women.</p> <p>Ensure that consultative mechanisms employed as part of participatory governance establish for meaningful participation and voicing of needs by rural women and gender advocates and in return meet their demands with adequate policy responses and resourcing for implementation.</p> <p>Introduce participatory budgeting and gender responsive budgeting tools to provide for improved accountability of local governments towards rural populations and rural women in particular. In this regards, it is necessary to support and ensure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> sex-disaggregated data related to local public spending as well as local policies implementation are collected and analyzed from gender perspective participation of rural women is equally balanced with men in all relevant consultative processes at local level, for examples through introducing innovating approaches of introducing a gender and ethnic and age representative quorum of the community for the decision to be made; through consulting and cooperating with local grassroots women's initiatives and organizations etc. rural women are directly approached and encouraged to participate in the local level decision-making. This can be supported for example by outreach of local policy makers to hold consultations in closer proximity of rural women (immediate surroundings) or supporting civil society and local grass-roots initiatives empowering rural women to take meaningful participation in the process. 	<p>Ministry of Local Self Governance</p> <p>Local Self Governments (including their associations)</p> <p>Women CSOs and grass root initiatives</p> <p>Rural women and gender advocates</p>

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11. Annexes

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ANNEX 1

Methodological notes:

Survey & Focus Groups of Rural women and Men

1. CRPM survey of rural women & men 2011

Table A1.1: Distribution of sample per region and geography
CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011

	Options	Number of respondents	Share
<i>Region</i>	South-west	80	13.3%
	East	45	7.5%
	South-east	60	10.0%
	Pelagonia	52	8.6%
	Polog	134	22.3%
	North-east	52	8.6%
	Vardar	40	6.6%
	Skopje	139	23.1%
<i>Type of village in which they live</i>	lowland village	480	79.7%
	highland village	122	20.3%

Table A1. 2: Sample Distribution by demographic categories
CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011

Demographic category	Options	Male respondents	Female respondents	Overall respondents
<i>Gender</i>	Male	279	/	279
	Female	/	323	323
<i>Age</i>	18-25	38	32	70
	26-35	59	65	124
	36-55	107	149	256
	56-65	42	54	96
	Above 65	33	23	56
<i>Ethnic background</i>	Macedonian	189	191	380
	Albanian	60	109	169
	Turkish	22	14	36
	Serbian	4	8	12
	Other	3	1	4
<i>Religious affiliation</i>	Orthodox Christian	190	194	384
	Muslim	85	126	211
	Catholic Christian	3	3	6
	Other	0	0	0

Table A1. 3: Sample Distribution by gender and locality
CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011

Gender / Locality	lowlands	highlands	Total
Male	212 (44.2%)	67 (54.9%)	279 (46.3%)
Female	268 (55.8%)	55 (45.1%)	323 (53.7%)
Total	480	122	602

Table A1.4: Confidence intervals
CRPM Survey of rural women & men, 2011

Share of respondents selecting a reply option	Margin of error (male sample)	Margin of error (female sample)	Margin of error (full sample)	Confidence interval (full sample)
5%	2.56	2.38	1.74	(3.26 , 6.74)%
10%	3.52	3.27	2.40	(7.60 , 12.40)%
20%	4.69	4.36	3.19	(16.81 , 23.19)%
30%	5.38	5.00	3.66	(26.34 , 33.66)%
40%	5.75	5.34	3.91	(36.09 , 43.91)%
50%	5.87	5.45	3.99	(46.01 , 53.99)%
60%	5.75	5.34	3.91	(56.09 , 63.91)%
70%	5.38	5.00	3.66	(66.34 , 73.66)%
80%	4.69	4.36	3.19	(76.81 , 83.19)%
90%	3.52	3.27	2.40	(87.60 , 92.40)%

2. CRPM Focus groups discussions of rural women & men 2011

Table A1.5: Sample Distribution by gender and locality
CRPM focus group discussions of rural women & men 2011

Region	Women focus groups		Men focus groups	
	No. of women	Villages (groups)	No. of men	Villages
Skopje	17	Petrovec & Stracinci	9	Volkovo
Vardar	18	Sopot & Izvor	8	Dolno Disan
South-western	16	Ladorishte & Mislodezda	9	Drugovo
Eastern	18	Grdovci & Orizari	7	Blatec
North-Eastern	17	Staro Nagoricani & Dlabochica	11	Luke
Polog	18	Shemsevo & Merovo	10	Zelino
South-eastern	20	Novo Selo & Murtino	10	Ilovica
Pelagonija	20	Topolcani & Germijan	10	Capari
IN TOTAL	144		74	

ANNEX 2

Detailed data sets

Table A2.1: Comparison of Territorial Distribution of major banks in rural cities

<i>City considered to be rural areas</i>	<i>Stopanska bank</i>	<i>Komercijalna Bank</i>	<i>Tutunska Banka</i>	<i>Uni bank</i>	<i>Pro credit bank</i>
<i>Berovo</i>	1			1	
<i>Bogdanci</i>		1	1		
<i>Valandovo</i>			1	1	
<i>Vinica</i>	1	1		1	
<i>Gevgelija</i>	1	1	1	1	
<i>Debar</i>	1	1			
<i>Delcevo</i>		1		1	
<i>Demir Kapija</i>					
<i>Demir Hisar</i>					
<i>Kavadarci</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Kicevo</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Kocani</i>	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Kratovo</i>			1		
<i>Kriva Palanka</i>			1	1	
<i>Krusevo</i>	1		1	1	
<i>Makedonska Kamenica</i>		1			
<i>Makedonski brod</i>		1	1		
<i>Negotino</i>	1	1	1	1	
<i>Pehcevo</i>		1			
<i>Probostip</i>	1		1		
<i>Radovish</i>	1	1	1	1	
<i>Resen</i>	1	1		1	
<i>In total in Rural areas</i>	12	14	13	13	3
<i>Rural areas coverage in %</i>	55%	64%	59%	59%	14%

Source: Web site of the banks

Table A2.2 Gender pay gap in all sectors – based on average net wage per gender and sector

Average salaries in denars By sectors	2002			2006		
	women	men	Gender pay gap	women	men	Gender pay gap
<i>Agriculture</i>	5308	6775	22%	6014	8935	33%
<i>Fishing</i>	7000	8029	13%	n.a.	11505	n.a.
<i>Mining and quarrying</i>	8880	9673	8%	12671	13124	3%
<i>Manufacturing</i>	7015	9317	25%	8149	11177	27%
<i>Electricity, gas and water supply</i>	11776	12390	5%	13877	14957	7%
<i>Construction</i>	8273	11514	28%	10330	20448	49%
<i>Wholesale and retail sale, servicing of motor vehicles and items for personal and household consumption</i>	7901	9798	19%	9405	11395	17%
<i>Hotels and restaurants</i>	8628	10170	15%	10129	20126	50%
<i>Transport, storage and communication</i>	10274	9839	-4%	13623	12330	-10%
<i>Financial intermediation</i>	13744	16955	19%	16177	17831	9%
<i>Real estate, rental and business activities</i>	11881	11903	0%	11331	13213	14%
<i>Public administration and defence, compulsory social security</i>	9269	12719	27%	13242	13670	3%
<i>Education</i>	8601	9167	6%	10997	12096	9%
<i>Health care and social work</i>	9058	12293	26%	10999	13429	18%
<i>Other public utilities, cultural, general and personal services</i>	8269	10392	20%	10667	11132	4%
<i>Private households employing domestic staff and production activities of households for own use</i>	8875	n.a.	n.a.	6155	7664	20%
<i>Extrterritorial organisations and bodies</i>	22000	24667	11%	20219	33990	41%

Source: State Statistical Office (2003, 2008), authors' calculation

(Gender pay gap is % difference between women salary against men salary)

Table A2.3:: Beneficiaries of trainings at Work Clubs, incl. within ALMM as of 2010.

People involved in any training		All	Women	Women (% of all)		
2008		2 278	1 602	70.3 %		
2009		1 959	1 356	69.2 %		
2010		1 546	1 078	69.7 %		
Computer Trainings				Foreign Languages		
Year	All	Women	Women (% of all)	All	Women	Women (% of all)
2008	1 085	742	68.4 %	1 193	860	72.1 %
2009	785	531	67.6 %	1 174	825	70.3 %
2010	493	346	70.2 %	1 053	732	69.5 %

Source: AERM 2009, AERM 2010, AERM 2011.

Table A2.4: Sex-disaggregated data on improved employment status of ALMM programs beneficiaries³⁹

Program & year	Number of people involved in the program			Number of employed people after the program		
	All	Women	Women (% of total)	All	Women	Women (% of total)
Program for preparation for employment - trainings and re-qualifications						
2009 ⁴	244	187	76.6 %	120	101	84.1%
2010	280	167	59.6 %	165	92	55.8 %
Program for entrepreneurial promotion through already established business incubators and training for specific less demanded professions and skills at the labour market						
2010	31	19	59.4 %	12	8	66.7 %
Work Clubs services						
2008	22 062	11 258	52.0 %	Data not available		
2009	17 361	8253	47.5%	3980	1754	44.1 %
2010	12 302	5662	46 %	Data not available		

Source: AERM 2009, AERM 2010, AERM 2011.

³⁹ Data refer only to people involved in program in 2009. If cumulative data were concerned (e.g people involved in program in 2008 but finishing during the course of 2009, that data would be following. 383 involved people (302 women) and 245 employed people (207 women), according to AERM 2010

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