

*PROJECT GOAL AND EXPLANATION – description of the situation, context, needs and reasons for the project, project assignments, conditions and possible risks of project realization*

Information Society (IS) infrastructure is based on new informatics and communications technologies, especially Internet. Although the common opinion exists that those technologies have stronger technical than socio-economic implications, the positive changes driven by the info-communication technologies (ICT) are not accessing equally all citizens of Serbia. This statement is valid specially when it comes to women population. The existing power relations in the society generate also the differences in using benefits enabled by ICT technologies, which brings up the conclusion that those technologies are not gender neutral. Our economy, having the form of transition economy, brings along numerous problems and challenges in the employment both of female and male population. In the near future the most of the work profiles will be related to ICT and the use of ICT. Quick surveys done with two biggest Internet Service Providers show that number of women accessing the Internet is much lower than number of men and that is warningly low for the age 15-20 and over 30, when it makes around 30% out of the total number of Internet users. The figures are a little bit improved for the age 20-30, but not exceeding 38%. The interest of girls in technical faculties in this year is in increase, but the statistical data show the figures of 18-22%. The Draft of the National Strategy for an Information Society – NSIS did not include the gender equality perspective. After the interventions and proposals during the public discussions to include the gender equality perspective, it could be assumed that this problem will be overcome or mitigated. But it is still necessary to insure and continually monitor the inclusion of the gender equality principles during the implementation of the basic NSISD strategies, in order to avoid the circumstances and explanations that the gender equality process is not considered due to the fact of its containment in the terms “citizen” or “society”, as well as the situations when the gender perspective is added in a later stage, leading to the diminishing of the importance of the strategy itself and its implementation.

Aspect of equal access to ICT and IS development has to be included as the strategic issue in all the documents, strategies and policies, as well as in the implementations of the programs and projects based on NSISD.

Certain activities related to gender equality are initiated in Serbia. Council for Gender Equality was established under the Government of Serbia in the Ministry for Labor and Employment. The Council still does not have the own budget, administration, working space, which limits its activities towards the gender equality inclusion in different spheres of the society and economy.

One part of the activities to recognize the gender equality issue in IS development process was conducted through the activities of the NGO Equal Opportunities in organizing three Round Tables – two in Belgrade and one in Podgorica. The third Round Table “Gender Equality and World Summit on Information Society” with Workshop for Media, has shown that media are not recognizing their role in IS development. Except the expert magazines or symposia, the rest of the media instead of having the initiating and reminding role are almost completely not interested or are not recognizing own responsibility in this process. The questions like:

- Is the gender equality issue included in the discussion on the Strategy and Policy for Information Society?
- Are there the economic consequences of neglecting the gender equality issues and how big they are?
- What level of attention is given to those questions?
- Are our media recognizing their role to promote the principles and inclusion towards the Information society?
- How to secure neither to exclude nor to marginalize the rural areas?
- How to build Information Society based on equality and justice?

are asking for the answers and help to resolve them.

Speaking about the gender equality issue, ICT use, gender sensitive projects we can conclude that there are no documents, guidelines or check-lists that could help in one organized approach that would educate the actors in documents development and also be included as a part of each policy, strategy and implementation. The lack of experience throughout those processes in our case could be compensated analyzing best practice ICT projects in the world, which could be customized to local needs and used to initiate the similar projects in our environment.

This implies that the development of the guidelines, checklists and best practice examples could be beneficial for government sector, project teams and civil sector. The NGO Equal Opportunities is actively

working in these areas for more than three years, trying to promote, lobby and attract attention of (civil) society and private sector on gender equal opportunities in ICT access and use, and is recognizing its own role in this process. Therefore the NGO equal Opportunities is proposing the following project:

### **GENDER EQUALITY IN BUILDING UP INFORMATION SOCIETY**

#### **-Guidelines, check lists and proposals for initiating of projects in the implementation process of NSIS-**

Project Goal: Creation of the framework and promotion of the gender equality in the process of National Strategy for Information Society Development process

*PROJECT DESCRIPTION – description and activities chronology, way of realization and methodology, users – project target group, realizators and project participants, territory and areas of project realization, project timeplan*

Project «Gender Equality In Building Up Information Society» - guidelines, check lists and proposals for the initiatives and start up of the projects in the National Strategy for Information Society Development process implementation (hereinafter called the “Project”) would contain the following activities:

1. Development of the Guidelines for gender equality inclusion
  - 1.1. Analysis of recommendations from world forums and gender groups
  - 1.2. Analysis of the documents and the results of I and II world Summit on Information society including the consultations (direct or e-consultations) with WSIS Gender Caucus Group
  - 1.3. Definition of Guidelines Proposal
  - 1.4. Panel discussion on Guidelines Proposal and check lists (from the following activity)
  - 1.5. Final text of Guidelines
2. Development of gender check list(s) to facilitate the process of ICT projects approval and elaboration
  - 2.1. Analysis of examples of check lists from international practice
  - 2.2. Definition of questions
  - 2.3. Final text of Check List (after the Panel discussion)
3. Proposal of Gender&ICT projects based on international best practice examples
  - 3.1. Analysis of international best practice
  - 3.2. Identification of best practice cases
  - 3.3. Description of selected best practice cases as a base for initiating future local projects
  - 3.4. NGO Equal opportunities Web page maintenance and update (with best practice cases)
4. Creation of the text book on selected topics for gender equality promotion in media, containing the additional data and sources relevant for concrete topics, list of competent speakers, inspirative quotations and associated subjects
  - 4.1. Formulation of topics and framework
  - 4.2. Collection of sources, material and data
  - 4.3. Texts creation
  - 4.4. Publication printing
5. Internet usage investigation from gender perspective during the three months period
  - 5.1. Selection of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) from Serbia and research agreement
  - 5.2. Analysis of the number of users based on gender
  - 5.3. Analysis of the time of Internet use based on gender
  - 5.4. Classification per services used
  - 5.5. Classification per content used
  - 5.6. Creation of statistical diagrams and tables

6. Publication "Gender Equality In Building Up Information Society"
  - 6.1. Preparation for printing
  - 6.2. Translation to English
  - 6.3. Printing
7. Project evaluation
  - 7.1. External
8. Narrative and financial report

Part of the activities would be conducted in parallel with the participation of experts from relevant areas.  
Time Plan is presented in Annex 1.

Direct beneficiaries of the results from listed activities will be officials, managers and employees in government structures, project teams from the companies that will implement NSIS, Council for Gender Equality, civil sector, as well as the members of the NGO Equal Opportunities. Delivering the topics and their contents to media would initiate media to follow continuously IS development and its implications on personal and professional life of both men and women.

Indirect beneficiaries would be all society members.