

Joint Call for Action on a Regional “Gender-Responsive Green Finance”

WE, the high-representatives of the Western Balkans Six (WB6), gathered in the framework of the Berlin Process and in alignment with the Common Regional Market Action Plan 2025–2028 (CRM 2), and supported by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC):

RECALL one of the main goals of the Berlin Process to enhance regional economic cooperation and foster inclusive, sustainable economic growth across WB6.

REITERATE our strong commitment to CRM 2, particularly under the Business Enabling Environment and Competitiveness Pillar, aiming to unlock gender equal regional potential.

REAFFIRM our dedication to enhance Women Economic Empowerment and reinforce the Regional Network of Women in Entrepreneurship, as a strategic regional platform for advocacy and promotion of women entrepreneurs in the WB6.

WELCOME the efforts of the Working Group on Industrial Development (WGID) and the Regional Network of Women in Entrepreneurship (RNWE), composed of representatives from the WB6 Ministries of Economy and Chambers of Commerce and Industry / Businesswomen Associations, in developing a Gender Responsive Green Finance Roadmap, facilitated by the RCC.

RECOGNIZE the necessity of comprehensive responses that integrate women’s economic empowerment, financial inclusion and green transition within the economic and governance frameworks of the WB6.

DECLARE OUR DETERMINATION to promote gender-responsive green finance aiming to reduce disparities and create opportunities for equitable access and tailored financial solutions. We emphasize the strategic role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) - especially women-led MSMEs - as key drivers of a just and green transition.

ACKNOWLEDGE the importance of establishing regulatory frameworks that support inclusive finance, prioritizing financial literacy, developing inclusive and green financial products, widening access to green finance and empowering women as green economy leaders, and improving gender-disaggregated data collection.

ENDORSE the [Gender-Responsive Green Finance Roadmap](#) policy recommendations and **ACKNOWLEDGE** the need for implementation in a phased manner through strong coordinated action and cross-sector collaboration.

CALL UPON public authorities, financial institutions, donors and other stakeholders to mobilize the necessary financial and technical support in the implementation of the Gender Responsive Green Finance Roadmap recommendations.

I. Recommendations for Policymakers

1. Create an enabling environment for Gender Responsive Green Finance (GRGF) by integrating regulatory reforms, education programmes and inclusive practices into domestic-level and regional strategies.
2. Improve digital financial literacy as critical to fostering equitable participation in green finance. Introduce Financial Education programmes on topics such as climate risk management, sustainable finance tools and gender-responsive instruments (e.g. microloans, climate insurance, and green bonds). Prioritize targeted support for women entrepreneurs in rural and underserved areas by providing them with practical training and resources to access green finance, enabling their success in sectors such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and eco-tourism.
3. Ensure regulatory reforms, aligned with EU standards, embedding sustainability and equity into financial systems: e.g. green and gender budgeting to become a cornerstone of fiscal policy, with public expenditures directed towards gender-responsive and climate-resilient sectors; introduce gender-sensitive budget audits, ensuring transparency and accountability in public spending decisions.
4. Introduce green and gender-responsive procurement frameworks to drive inclusive growth, such as setting specific targets for awarding contracts to women-led green enterprises, evaluating bidders based on sustainability and inclusivity performance, and providing technical support to women entrepreneurs to meet green procurement standards.
5. Harmonise with EU directives, such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), and standardise reporting practices including gender-specific disclosures on climate-related risks, to enhance regional integration and credibility.

II. Recommendations for Financial Institutions

1. Prioritise development of green tools (e.g. green microloans) tailored to the needs of women-led MSMEs in climate-sensitive sectors, including agriculture, renewable energy and sustainable tourism.
2. Link green loans with gender-specific performance metrics to incentivise private sector alignment with green objectives while promoting women economic empowerment.
3. Build institutional capacity to ensure that financial systems in the Western Balkans Six are equipped to address gender-responsive climate challenges, such as specialised training to conduct gender-sensitive climate risk assessments and design innovative financial products that cater to women-led enterprises.
4. Embrace innovative technologies and digital financial platforms, such as mobile banking and app-based credit solutions, to simplify access to green finance by consolidating critical information on sustainability and gender inclusivity and enhance transparency and compliance with sustainability standards.

5. Adopt gender-disaggregated data systems to track progress and inform product development. By analysing data on financial inclusion and the impact of green finance initiatives, identify gaps and refine internal strategies to better address the needs of women-led enterprises and marginalised communities.

III. Recommendations for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs)

1. Support programmes that mentor and prepare women for leadership positions in sustainability-focused sectors, ensuring their perspectives are included in policymaking processes.
2. Raise public awareness about the benefits of gender-responsive green finance and organize campaigns that showcase successful women-led green projects to inspire further engagement and adoption of inclusive financial solutions.
3. Conduct capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of women-led MSMEs, such as on climate-smart practices, renewable energy integration, and green technology adoption, to support overcoming structural barriers like limited access to collateral and financial services.

IV. Additional cross-cutting recommendations

1. Raise awareness as a key component of the GRGF Roadmap: conduct awareness campaigns to emphasize the transformative potential of green finance and highlight success stories of women-led enterprises to build momentum for broader adoption of gender-responsive principles and educating stakeholders about available financial tools.
2. Establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track progress and ensure accountability, introduce key performance indicators to measure metrics such as the number of women-led green projects funded, improvements in financial literacy, and the availability of gender-specific financial products. Additionally, governments and financial institutions to regularly evaluate the socio-economic and environmental impacts of their initiatives and use these insights to enable continuous improvement of GRGF strategies.
3. Enhance regional partnerships - crucial for scaling GRGF initiatives across the WB6 - and provide opportunities to harmonise regulatory frameworks and share best practices among stakeholders.

By implementing these recommendations, the WB6 can embed GRGF into their financial systems, driving sustainable growth and advancing women economic empowerment. This Roadmap sets the foundation for an inclusive green economy where women and marginalised communities actively shape and benefit from a sustainable future and the WB6 can position itself as a leader in gender-responsive sustainable finance.