

Gender Equality and ICT Innovations: Case Study of Serbia

Natalija Ostojić
Technical Project Analyst, UN Women Serbia
December 2021

Gender Equality and Digitalization

- **Key findings for the Republic of Serbia**

- Women in Serbia use the internet and computers less than men.
- There are gender-based patterns in the use of the internet in Serbia. Women use the internet more for communication and posting content, while men are oriented more towards entertainment.
- Women and men in Serbia have an equal development level of digital skills.
- The digital skills of Serbian citizens are below the average in the European Union (e.g. in solving problems using digital technologies, 34% of women and 42% of men in Serbia, compared to 54% of women and 60% of men in the EU-27, have above basic digital skills).

*Source: Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Serbia 2021

One of key questions: Whether digitalization will bridge or expand the existing gender divide and whether it will open new gender equality issues?

Digitalisation tied to empowerment – as an instrument of social inclusion policy.

UN Women Serbia addressing the recognized gap in usage of ICT by women, especially those living in rural areas and entrepreneurs, and in areas of providing specialized services to women survivors of violence, through partnership with women CSOs.

ICT Innovation for Rural Women and Women Entrepreneurs

- Setting Up **Online Farmers' Market** gathering 122 women farmers, as a response to the lockdown measures in place due to COVID-19. (April 2020)
- The [first gender analysis of digital work in Serbia](#) conducted in partnership with the Association of Businesswomen of Serbia and Public Policy Research Centre, to shed more light on the position of women digital workers. (October 2019)



Some of products made available through online farmers' market.

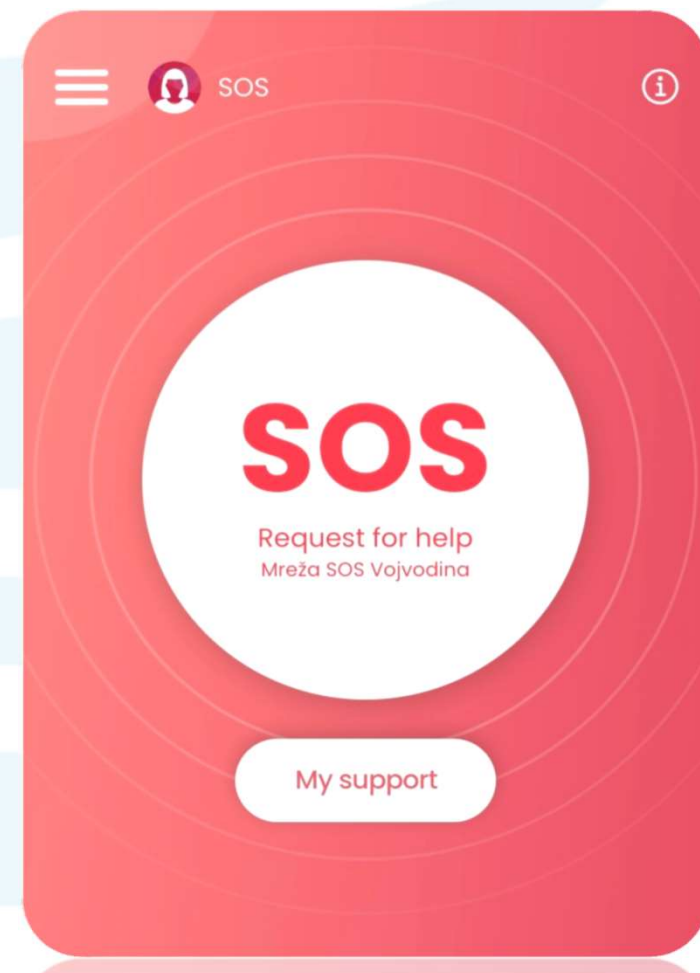
Credits: NGO Women's Association of Kolubara District

ICT Innovation in eliminating VAWG

- **SOS helpline mobile application** *“Sound of Soul – SOS”* and **accompanying Information System** as a fast and easy solution for improvement of services to VAWG survivors during the times of crisis and post-crisis period caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

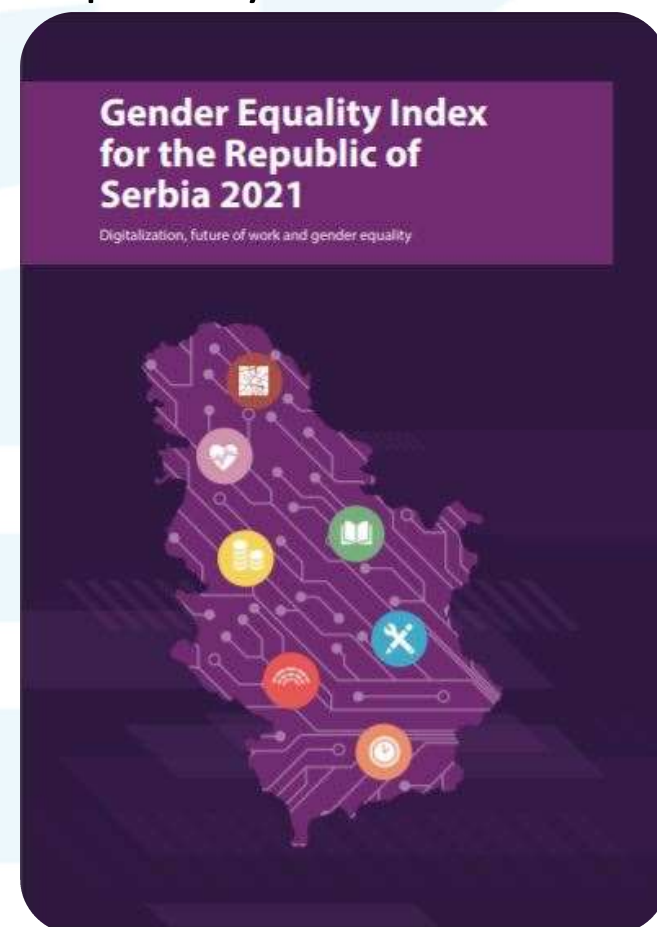
Key features: hidden interface; available in Serbian, Romani and English languages; accessible to women with visual and hearing impairments; enables psychological support through chat; 13 women CSOs; and free internet secured for all women.

- Establishing **the web-based platform for free legal support to women and girls' survivors of violence** for the purposes of customized free legal support. The final aim is to facilitate clients' application process to request free legal aid without withdrawing from the process and with significantly increasing chances of request being approved and lawyer assigned to the case/beneficiary.



Gender Equality Index of the Republic of Serbia 2021: Digitalization, future of work and gender equality

- For the third time in a row, the Republic of Serbia has published [the Gender Equality Index - "Digitalization, future of work and gender equality"](#) in October 2021.
- Thematic focus “Digitalization and the Future of Work” combines perspectives of digital gender gap and digitalized gender gap through three segments:
 - Use of ICT, digital skills and gender equality;
 - Digital transformation of the world of work; and
 - Broader consequences of digitalization on human rights and violence against women.



Thank You!



Natalija Ostojic (she/her/hers)
Technical Project Analyst, UN Women Serbia
Email: natalija.ostojic@unwomen.org