

**SUPPORT INCLUSIVITY
ENSURE JUSTICE
PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY**

MAKE A CONTRIBUTION – DONATE TO ESE!

With your donation, you enable better access to healthcare, economic independence for women who have experienced domestic violence, and their integration into the labor market. At the same time, you help improve legal protection and remove the barriers that prevent vulnerable groups from exercising their rights.



MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION

Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women

st. Maksim Gorki 20-1-4, Skopje

esem@esem.org.mk

www.esem.org.mk



**PROGRAM
FOR WORK
2026**



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF LEGAL REGULATIONS, BUDGETS, AND SERVICES

ESE is committed to strengthening citizen engagement in legal and social accountability, with a strong focus on women and other vulnerable groups.

In 2026, we will work to empower citizens to recognize and report corruption in healthcare, while supporting CSOs, journalists, and healthcare workers to act ethically and effectively against corrupt practices. Through engaging women and relevant stakeholders ESE will contribute to identifying institutional gaps and advancing gender-responsive reforms, including the development of national policies to reduce corruption in healthcare.

In parallel, ESE will continue monitoring the implementation of key health policies and budgets affecting women, mothers, and children, and will advocate for improved access to quality services—especially for those facing systemic barriers. By combining evidence-based monitoring with health information and education, ESE will aim to strengthen accountability, improve health outcomes, and ensure that communities most affected have a meaningful voice in shaping healthcare policies and services.

Through targeted education and accessible health information, we will support women's health during the perinatal and postnatal period, with a strong focus on improving maternal mental health, an area that remains widely neglected and insufficiently addressed in our society.

For 2026, ESE will focus on:

- Strengthening citizen, CSO, and healthcare worker engagement for accountable and ethical healthcare, including empowering women to recognize and report corruption and supporting community-based action and institutional readiness.
- Advocacy and multi-stakeholder policy development to strengthen healthcare governance and accountability, including the preparation of two national policies.
- Monitoring and evaluation of key health policies and budgets affecting women, mothers, and children, with engagement of Roma women in local monitoring.
- Health education and accessible information to improve perinatal and postnatal health outcomes, with emphasis on maternal mental health and early child health.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF LEGAL REGULATIONS, BUDGETS, AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVE 1.1.
STRENGTHENING
AND PROMOTING
CITIZEN
ENGAGEMENT IN
LEGAL AND SOCIAL
ACCOUNTABILITY

Outputs:

- Strengthened capacity of CSOs to deliver gender-responsive anti-corruption training.
- Improved knowledge among women on how to recognize and report healthcare corruption.
- Improved understanding and willingness of health care workers to act against corruption.
- Key institutional gaps and gendered risks related to corruption in health care identified and addressed.
- Developed two national policies for decreasing corruption in health care grounded in gender-responsive reform.
- Raised public awareness of healthcare corruption and its impact on women.

Activities:

A. Empowering citizens to recognize, report, and collectively advocate against corruption in healthcare

- Train and support CSOs to organize educational events on anti-corruption in health care.
- Prepare educational material for citizens on anti-corruption in health care.
- Conduct educational workshops for anti-corruption in health care among women in six municipalities.

B. Strengthened capacity of healthcare workers and institutional management to recognize, report, and prevent corruption in healthcare settings

- Prepare research report with aim of understanding healthcare workers experience and perception of corruption within institutions.
- Conduct ethics trainings for health care workers on recognizing and combating corruption in health care settings.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF LEGAL REGULATIONS, BUDGETS, AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVE 1.1. STRENGTHENING AND PROMOTING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN LEGAL AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

C. Advocacy for reducing corruption in health care settings

- Generate evidence for anti-corruption reforms in healthcare through stakeholder and women’s interviews, mapping of reporting mechanisms, and procurement monitoring, resulting in analytical reports with gender-responsive recommendations.
- Strengthen media accountability by monitoring gender-sensitive reporting trends, training journalists in ethical and investigative coverage of healthcare corruption, and organizing press briefings to support evidence-based public dialogue.
- Prepare two national policies for decreasing corruption in healthcare through a participatory multi-stakeholder process, including a formal Working Group, iterative drafting, and validation consultations.
- Promote national visibility and institutional uptake of the policies through a national conference and dissemination of an accessible Policy Brief highlighting gendered impacts and targeted solutions.
- Implement a nationwide multimedia campaign to raise awareness of healthcare corruption and its gendered impacts, using diverse formats and continuous audience monitoring to maximize reach and engagement.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF LEGAL REGULATIONS, BUDGETS, AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVE 1.2.
IMPROVING
HEALTH STATUS,
EMPLOYABILITY,
AND SUPPORT FOR
UNPAID CARE WORK

Outputs:

- Improved access to healthcare services for women, mothers and children, with emphasis on vulnerable groups.
- Increased accountability in healthcare policies affecting women, mothers, and children.
- Strengthened evidence-based advocacy for better health service provision.
- Improved health, with emphasis on mental health for women during pregnancy and after childbirth.
- Improved care and health for infants and small children

Activities:

A. Women’s and Children’s Health Monitoring and Advocacy

- Conduct national-level monitoring of policy and budget implementation for:
 - Maternal and child healthcare programs.
 - Early detection of malignant diseases (cervical and breast cancer screening).
- Engage Roma women in monitoring health policy implementation in their municipalities.
- Publish policy reports on the impact of health policies, especially on vulnerable groups.
- Advocate for improved maternal, child, and women’s healthcare coverage through public events and stakeholder engagement, social media and media campaigns, and direct advocacy with decision-makers.

ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF LEGAL REGULATIONS, BUDGETS, AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVE 1.2.
IMPROVING
HEALTH STATUS,
EMPLOYABILITY,
AND SUPPORT FOR
UNPAID CARE WORK

B. Health Information Provision

- Provide free health information on: osteoporosis, contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), youth health advice, and reproductive health.

C. Health Education and Information for women on the topics of perinatal and child health and maternal mental health

- Conduct educational workshops.
- Disseminate health educational materials in communities.
- Produce and disseminate informational podcasts.
- Produce and disseminate social media content.
- Organize conference to share experience with relevant stakeholders from North Macedonia and the region of South Eastern Europe.

KEY INDICATORS FOR 2026

- 1,790 women engaged in community-level actions (surveys, focus groups, workshops, forums).
- 75% of women from marginalized backgrounds demonstrate increased knowledge/awareness of healthcare corruption and reporting mechanisms after workshops.
- 75% of trained healthcare professionals demonstrate increased understanding of gender-sensitive anti-corruption practices in post-training evaluations.
- One Gender-sensitive Ethics Training Module developed and formally adopted under the CME program.
- Two gender-sensitive policy documents co-developed and validated by stakeholders.
- 90 journalists trained and engaged in gender-sensitive anti-corruption reporting and 6 press briefings held.
- Raised knowledge and awareness to 105 women on perinatal, child health and maternal mental health.
- Two monitoring reports of public health policies produced

ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

In 2026, ESE will focus on improving access to justice for women and marginalized communities through a combined approach that links community-level legal empowerment with direct justice services and policy advocacy. The priority will address key barriers faced by survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, including limited access to legal information, inadequate institutional responses, and economic dependency, which often prevents women from seeking justice.

ESE will strengthen the capacities of civil society and grassroots organizations to raise awareness of legal rights and support access to justice at community level, while systematically monitoring State obligations through international and regional mechanisms such as CEDAW, and EU reporting processes. Evidence collected through monitoring, research, and survivor testimonies will be used to inform policy analysis, advocacy, and structured dialogue with decision-makers.

At the same time, ESE will provide legal aid, psychological counseling, and court representation to women survivors of domestic violence and support their economic recovery through targeted training, mentorship, and entrepreneurship opportunities, including through the POGON social enterprise. Engagement with justice institutions through trainings and policy forums will complement service provision and advocacy efforts, contributing to more accountable, gender-sensitive, and survivor-centered justice systems.

In 2026, ESE will focus on:

- Strengthening legal empowerment of women and marginalized communities
- Monitoring State accountability for access to justice and gender equality
- Providing legal and psychosocial support to survivors of domestic violence
- Supporting the economic empowerment of women survivors
- Enhancing the capacities and accountability of justice institutions

OBJECTIVE 2.1.
BUILDING CAPACITIES
FOR LEGAL
EMPOWERMENT

Outputs:

- Enhanced capacities of CSOs and grassroots organizations to raise awareness and support access to justice.
- Increased community engagement in justice-related advocacy initiatives.

Activities:

A. Training and for CSOs

- Conduct trainings for legal empowerment and gender equality for at least 3 CSOs.
- Support the implementation of legal empowerment (service delivery) activities in their communities.

B. Community Awareness-Raising

- Support CSOs in organizing local campaigns on legal rights and available justice services.
- Develop and distribute educational materials on justice access for vulnerable groups.

ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 2.2.
MONITORING ACCESS TO
JUSTICE AND POLICY
ACCOUNTABILITY

Outputs:

- Regular monitoring and reporting on State obligations on international and regional level regarding access to justice.
- Improved evidence-based advocacy through data collection and policy recommendations.

Activities:

A. Human Rights Monitoring and International Advocacy

- Prepare Shadow Reports to CEDAW and ICESCR.
- Provide input to the EU Annual Progress Report on gender equality and justice.

B. Evidence-Based Advocacy for Policy Reforms

- Develop policy briefs and recommendations for decision-makers.
- Conduct advocacy meetings with policymakers to improve justice services for marginalized groups.

ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 2.3.

PROVIDING JUSTICE SERVICES FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Outputs:

- Women survivors have improved access to legal aid, psychological counseling, and court representation.
- Increased public awareness on gender-based violence and legal protection mechanisms.
- Strengthened institutional response and accountability in justice for survivors.

Activities:

A. Direct Legal Assistance and Psychological Support

- Provide free legal aid to 150–200 women survivors of domestic violence.
- Offer psychological counseling and court representation.

B. Public Awareness and Advocacy

- Organize public campaigns on domestic violence and legal protection mechanisms.
- Conduct media outreach and community discussions on gender-based violence.

C. Research and Policy Analysis on Justice Access

- Conduct interviews with survivors to assess justice system gaps.
- Develop two key policy analyses on:
 - Financial needs of domestic violence on survivors
 - The effectiveness of court procedures for resolution of domestic violence and related legal problems.

OBJECTIVE 2.4.
ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT OF
WOMEN SURVIVORS

Outputs:

- Women survivors gain economic independence through business training and support.
- Improved access to job opportunities, entrepreneurship, and childcare support.

Activities:

A. Supporting Economic Recovery and Employment

- Provide business training and mentorship for at least 30 women survivors.
- Expand access to small business grants and financial planning support.

B. Strengthening the POGON Social Enterprise

- Deliver entrepreneurship courses and vocational training.
- Promote market access for women-owned businesses.
- Maintain and expand POGON’s online platform and outreach.

ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 2.5.
STRENGTHENING
JUSTICE INSTITUTIONS
AND RULE OF LAW

Outputs:

- Justice practitioners receive training to improve institutional responses to gender-based violence.
- Increased judicial accountability and policy engagement on access to justice.

Activities:

A. Building Institutional Capacities and Promoting Institutional Accountability and Reform

- Conduct trainings, forums and conferences for 50+ justice practitioners (police, judges, prosecutors, social workers).
- Engage with the Government on OGP (Open Government Partnership) and the National Strategy against GBV.

KEY INDICATORS FOR 2026

- Three CSOs trained and supported in awareness-raising on gender equality and access to justice
- 150–200 women survivors receive legal aid, psychological counseling, and court representation.
- Two key policy analyses completed on domestic violence, child alimony, and court fee exemptions.
- Shadow Reports submitted to CEDAW, ICESCR, and the EU Progress Report.
- At least 30 women survivors economically empowered through business training and job support.
- At least 50 justice practitioners trained on gender-sensitive legal practices.
- At least 2 policy forums and a National Conference organized on justice reform.

PROMOTING FISCAL TRANSPARENCY IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

In 2026, ESE will continue to advance fiscal transparency and accountability of public institutions in the field of social and economic rights, in line with its Strategic Plan 2025-2029. Persistent gaps in access to fiscal information, limited citizen participation in budgetary processes, and weak oversight of public spending continue to undermine the effective realization of social and economic rights, particularly for women and other vulnerable groups.

Despite the existence of legal frameworks and formal transparency obligations, public financial management remains largely inaccessible to citizens. Budgetary data, procurement information, and programmatic expenditures are often published in fragmented, non-user-friendly formats, limiting their practical use for oversight, advocacy, and informed participation. At the same time, public institutions still lack the capacity, incentives, and mechanisms to proactively engage citizens and civil society in fiscal decision-making.

Building on its long-standing expertise in fiscal transparency, social accountability, and evidence-based advocacy, ESE will focus in 2026 on strengthening the capacities of citizens, civil society organizations, and public institutions to access, interpret, and use fiscal information. Through continuous monitoring of budgets, procurement, and transparency practices, combined with targeted advocacy and regional cooperation, ESE will contribute to more open, accountable, and citizen-centered public finance governance.

As part of its national, regional, and international engagement, ESE will actively contribute to fiscal transparency networks, including COPASAH Europe and the Open Government Partnership (OGP) processes, promoting best practices in open contracting, access to information, and participatory budgeting. Special attention will be given to gender perspectives and the needs of vulnerable communities, ensuring that fiscal transparency translates into more equitable allocation of public resources and improved service delivery.

In 2026, ESE will focus on:

- Strengthening citizen and civil society capacity to access, understand, and use fiscal information related to social and economic rights.
- Systematically monitoring public budgets, public procurement, and transparency practices to increase institutional accountability.
- Advancing evidence-based advocacy on equitable and gender-responsive allocation of public resources, particularly in health and social protection.
- Supporting public institutions in improving proactive and reactive transparency, access to information, and compliance with open governance standards.
- Contributing to national and international fiscal transparency and open government processes, including the Open Government Partnership and COPASAH Europe.

PROMOTING FISCAL TRANSPARENCY IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 3.1.

ENHANCING CITIZEN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR FISCAL TRANSPARENCY

Outputs:

- Strengthened and more visible public debate, civic activism, and informed engagement on fiscal transparency and priority-based budgeting, driven by accessible, evidence-based information and educational content.
- Established and actively supported a networked community of practitioners and civil society actors, equipped with knowledge, tools, and opportunities for joint learning, coordination, and advocacy on fiscal transparency and accountability.

Activities:

A. Public Awareness and Capacity-Building

- Develop, package, and disseminate clear, user-oriented informational and educational materials on fiscal transparency, budgeting, and public spending, targeting citizens and practitioners through social and traditional media.
- Strengthen the capacities of citizens and practitioners to understand, assess, and use fiscal data, including through practical training on different fiscal transparency and accountability assessment approaches.
- Facilitate, support, and actively contribute to the COPASAH network, strengthening peer learning, regional exchange, and joint advocacy on health and fiscal accountability.
- Systematically collect inputs, concerns, and emerging issues from citizens through digital platforms and social media, and translate these inputs into structured public debates and advocacy discussions.

B. Engagement and Institutional Support

- Actively contribute to national, regional, and international initiatives and networks (including OGP, the OGP CSO Network, Public Health Movement (PHM), and related platforms) to advance fiscal transparency and social accountability agendas.
- Ensure visible and strategic participation in global and regional events, promoting ESE’s work, evidence, and policy recommendations, and strengthening international recognition of ESE’s expertise and impact.

PROMOTING FISCAL TRANSPARENCY IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 3.2.
STRENGTHENING
TRUST AND
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF
FISCAL OPENNESS

Outputs:

- Advanced open contracting principles in sectors related to social and economic rights, contributing to increased transparency, integrity, and accountability in public procurement.
- Strengthened realization of the right to access public information, with a specific focus on gender equality and the needs of vulnerable and marginalized communities.
- Promoted digital governance and citizen-centered transparency tools, enabling more direct, inclusive, and meaningful engagement between institutions, civil society, and citizens on fiscal openness.

Activities:

A. Monitoring Public Budgets and Expenditures

- Monitor and assess the fiscal impact and execution of preventive health programs and domestic violence prevention and protection policies, focusing on alignment between budget allocations, implementation, and rights-based outcomes.

B. Enhancing Transparency in Public Procurement

- Systematically collect, analyze, and interpret data from public procurement procedures conducted by at least 62 public institutions operating in the field of social and economic rights.
- Prepare evidence-based action plans and advocacy strategies aimed at addressing identified risks, gaps, and integrity challenges in public procurement.
- Facilitate structured dialogue and discussions among suppliers, service beneficiaries, public institutions, and oversight actors, promoting transparency, fair competition, and accountability in procurement processes.

PROMOTING FISCAL TRANSPARENCY IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

OBJECTIVE 3.2.
STRENGTHENING
TRUST AND
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF
FISCAL OPENNESS

C. Assessing Proactive and Reactive Transparency

- Conduct annual assessments of proactive and reactive transparency among public institutions, applying ESE’s established and tested assessment methodologies.
- Develop and publish annual analytical reports integrating findings from transparency assessments and highlighting systemic trends, gaps, and priority areas for reform.
- Initiate and support joint discussions and coordinated actions among practitioners and institutions to improve access to information, explicitly integrating gender perspectives and the needs of vulnerable groups.

D. Tracking Implementation of Recommendations and Advocacy

- Conduct an evaluation of existing digital platforms and collaboration mechanisms, drawing on good practices, lessons learned, and ESE’s prior collaboration with SEA and the Ministry of Health, to assess their impact, usability, and contribution to institutional, CSO, and citizen engagement, and to formulate evidence-based recommendations for future improvements.

KEY INDICATORS FOR 2026

- Public awareness and educational activities implemented to improve understanding of fiscal information
- Citizens, CSOs, and practitioners actively engaged in discussions on budgets, public procurement, and public spending
- Public procurement monitoring activities conducted and findings documented
- Transparency assessments of public institutions conducted and published
- Evidence-based recommendations submitted to institutions, with follow-up actions tracked
- Active participation ensured in OGP processes and regional fiscal transparency networks

BUDGET OVERVIEW 2026

I. DIRECT STAFF COSTS	EUR
A. Staff Costs	127.583
Subtotal I	127.583
II. OTHER DIRECT PROGRAMME COSTS	EUR
A. Strategic Priority 1	200.428
B. Strategic Priority 2	20.100
C. Strategic Priority 3	11.000
Subtotal II	231.528
Subtotal I+II	359.111
III. OVERHEAD/INDIRECT COSTS	EUR
A. Costs for Support Staff	18.346
B. Allocable Administrative/Operational Costs	19.823
Subtotal III	38.169
Subtotal I+II+III	397.280

PROGRAM FOR WORK 2026

Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women

st. Maksim Gorki 20-1-4, Skopje

esem@esem.org.mk

www.esem.org.mk

