



## **CONCEPT NOTE**

### **Community-based Mediation Training for Women Leaders in Kosovo**

#### **Background**

The landmark United Nations Security Resolution 1325 in 2000, proclaimed the essential role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and emphasized their equal participation in the promotion of peace and security. Yet despite this resolution—and a series of other resolutions and national action plans promoting women’s full participation in mediation, conflict prevention, and resolution—the inclusion of women in track one mediation and other peace settlements has been a slow process.

A 2012 UN Women Study which reviewed 31 major peace processes found that women constitute just 4 percent of signatories of peace agreements, 2.4 percent of chief mediators, 3.7 percent of witnesses or observers to peace negotiations, and 9 percent of negotiation team members.

In Western Balkans, women continue to be dramatically underrepresented in formal peace talks, although they have been involved and contributed to end conflicts and engaged in peacebuilding and reconciliation in aftermath of conflicts. In the five international peace processes and peace agreements signed (Dayton Agreement 1995, Rambouillet Agreement 1999, Vienna Peace Talks 2005-2006, Erdut Agreement 1995, Ohrid Agreement 2001) and one ongoing Brussels Dialogue in this region in over 25 years, there was only one women present at any of the formal peace talks and Chief negotiator, that is the RWLSEE Chair Edita Tahiri, Former Deputy Priminister and Minister for dialogue of Kosovo. The was another women negotiator in the Croatia, Vesna Skare Ozbolt, former Minister of Justice, who was part of negotiation on reintegration process. Women have to be empowered to take part in peace processes. Women have different values then men regarding peace, and they have strategic capital that needs to be put up front.

During the 2018 Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, the establishment of several women’s networks was highlighted as playing an integral role in influencing and advancing gender-responsive negotiation processes. The Kosovo Women’s Network and Regional Women’s Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in South East Europe (RWL SEE) are two such networks that have continuously highlighted the need for women’s participation in all



political dialogue processes and which have played an integral role in bringing forward priority issues to inform and guide such discussions.



Since early 2000, women community leaders have also made an important contribution towards greater reconciliation and trust-building. The RWL-SEE **organized a number of outreach** meetings with women from municipalities in Kosovo to discuss women's empowerment and participation in trust-building and to enhance their role in promoting inter-community dialogue and supporting peace processes in line with the UN Security Council resolution 1325. With UN support, two organisations from Mitrovica region, Mundesia and Women's Rights, also co-established the Mitrovica Women's Trust-building Initiative to support greater inter-communal cooperation and dialogue.

Despite these efforts, there remains a gap between the peacebuilding work of women leaders at the community level and high-level political dialogue processes, where women's views and experience are systematically included. In order to bridge this gap, cooperation is proposed between the RWL-SEE, United Nations and women community leaders from Kosovo to design and implement comprehensive local mediation training to help them to better link their accumulated advocacy, peacebuilding and informal mediation experience with high-level political processes underway so that women's identified priorities and needs are better reflected and represented during all stages of ongoing negotiations.

**Aim:**

Women from local communities in Kosovo develop their skills on negotiation / mediation in order to advance trust-building and peace building aims.

**Proposed Approach:**

**Step 1:** Conceptual design workshop involving the RWL-SEE Steering Committee Members, key local leaders from Kosovo and technical experts from the UN Mediation Support Unit to discuss needs and expectations for mediation training and to agree to a methodology for rolling out such training.

**Step 2:** Training Design: Training development led by a team of well-established mediation practitioners and experts with engagement and involvement of identified members of the RWL-SEE.



**Step 3:** Training workshops for women community leaders in Kosovo by UN MSU experts in cooperation with RWL-SEE.



**Step 4:** Evaluation and Follow-up

**Proposed Timeline:**

11 March	Proposed conceptual workshop
April-May	Development/piloting of training materials
July	RWL-SEE Training
September	Training workshops for Kosovo Leaders