STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
2018 - 2022

HERA
This document defines the strategic priorities that will guide the work and the action of the organization in the areas of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender equality in the Republic of Macedonia in the next five years. The goals and tasks set in this strategic framework are based on the core values, the specific capacities and qualities of the organization as well as on the global commitments of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, where HERA is a full member, within the context of the political and social situation and trends in the country.

Our strategy aims at improving the state of sexual and reproductive rights of all citizens, especially of the marginalized communities whose rights have been at risk and seriously retrogressed during the past decade. We have witnessed frequent discrimination and disrespect of human rights related to sexuality and gender, which is why this strategy strives primarily to ensure greater responsibility from decision makers and state institutions with regards to the protection and improvement of sexual rights and gender equality. The strategy also describes all the challenges resulting from the limited access to information and services in the country as well as the unstable sources of financing for the civil society. Yet, the existence of a strong civil society and activism which grew stronger over the years and the change in the central government following the parliamentary election in December 2016 that give hope that there will be changes to the legislation and the policies, leading to the enhancement of sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality.

The Strategic Plan for 2018-2022 comes as a result of a comprehensive organizational and situational analysis, made throughout the course of 2017. A great number of members, volunteers, staff and users of services provided by HERA as well as representatives from institutions, donors and other partner civil society organizations (CSOs) contributed to the analysis through interviews, focus groups and specific workshops which were carried out by an external consultant. Furthermore, the organization conducted a public opinion survey to assess its own reputation and visibility among the general public for the purpose of defining even better its priority strategies and activities. We would like to thank everyone who is part of HERA and has taken part in this process for their dedication and invaluable contribution in the development of the organization’s new Strategic Framework.

The 2018-2022 Strategy sets clear priorities for the future development of the organization which will enable us to both grow our potential and expand our influence in the process of achieving long-term and sustainable change in the field of sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality in Macedonia as well as in the wider region and throughout Europe.

We shall mobilize an all-inclusive civil action to ensure sexual rights for all and to enable improved education and services for sexual and reproductive health for all citizens, the marginalized communities in particular.
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**KEY TRENDS**

**LIMITED ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS**

Nationwide, there is no comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) at any of the levels of the education system while the school curricula lack basic information related to HIV, sexuality, gender and gender identity. Not only have there not been enough public SRH awareness-raising campaigns in the past period but those few that did appear, further delegitimized women’s reproductive rights and the gender equality issues. While the access to social and health care services for youth and for the vulnerable and marginalized communities has been limited, the state institutions fail to ensure confidentiality or adequate standards required to meet the SRH needs of these groups of citizens.

**DISCRIMINATION AND INSUFFICIENT RESPECT AND PROTECTION OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

Gender inequality and discrimination against women, people with HIV and persons with a different sexual orientation and gender identity are still present at every level in the society. The poor economic situation and the high unemployment rates have led to even greater social differences while the conservative ideological and political matrix which has been dominant in the last 10 years, has led to increased social polarization and an even greater stigmatization of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Citizens, in general, have low human rights awareness while the system for protection against discrimination is still not fully functional.
CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

The changes that occurred in the political scene have increased the likelihood of democratization of the political processes. Nonetheless, challenges still remain regarding the partisan state institutions and the weak capacities of the public administration to both undertake reform processes and implement policies effectively. Most of the political parties that constitute the new majority government have committed in their electoral programs to advocate for changes to policies and laws ensuring improvement of the sexual and reproductive health and rights. Nonetheless, the strong opposition to SRH topics, which was fostered during the past decade and further encouraged by the rise of the conservative political ideology both regionally and globally, still exists.

UNSTABLE SOURCES OF FINANCING

In the previous period, we have seen a decline in the number of international donors investing in social and health services and supporting SRH programs in the country. On the other hand, we have seen an increase in the possibilities for greater access to EU funds in the areas of social inclusion, human rights and gender equality which contributes indirectly to the improvement of SRH. The current government has also announced the possibility of funding CSO-provided social and health services from the state budget but the process of establishing effective procedures for domestic financing has still to come. The practice of private donations for CSO activities, coming both from individuals and private companies, is still not very satisfactory; in the past years, SRH-related issues have not been widely supported by the public either.

EMPOWERED CIVIL SOCIETY AND CITIZEN ACTIVISM

The political turbulence which marked the past several years has not only encouraged the mobilization, solidarity and collaboration in the civil society but also fostered a culture of citizen activism which serves as the basis for building a strong civil society. The reputation and the recognizability of civil society organizations have also improved but the public mistrust fostered during the decade-long ruling of the former government cannot be overlooked.
MISSION:
HERA LEADS A CITIZEN ACTION AND ENCOURAGES SOCIAL CHANGE TO ENSURE SEXUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL AND TO ENABLE IMPROVED SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDUCATION AND SERVICES, ESPECIALLY FOR THE MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

VISON:
ALL PEOPLE ENJOY THEIR SEXUALITY FREELY AND IN SOCIAL WELL-BEING

PRIORITY 1
State institutions are working in accordance with democratic principles towards protection and improvement of sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality

- Improving laws, policies and practices related to HIV, sexual and reproductive health and gender equality
- Building and maintaining partnerships with CSOs at local, national and international levels
- Collaboration and strengthening the capacities of institutions at local and national levels

PRIORITY 2
Everyone is aware of and exercises their social, sexual and reproductive rights

- Empowering women from marginalized communities, especially Roma women to exercise their sexual, reproductive, economic and social rights
- Providing comprehensive sexuality education for young people
- Raising public awareness about sexual and reproductive health and sexual rights

PRIORITY 3
Equal access to quality services for sexual and reproductive health, HIV and gender-based violence

- Providing services for sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, especially for young people and marginalized communities
- Developing professional skills and knowledge of service providers about sexual and reproductive health and gender-related aspects

PRIORITY 4
HERA is a sustainable and professional civil society organization

- Strengthening activism and volunteer engagement within the organization
- Ensuring continuous and up-to-date expertise, professionalism and accountability
- Ensuring financial sustainability and stability

OUR VALUES
- EQUALITY
- EQUITY
- SOCIAL JUSTICE
- EMPOWERMENT
- YOUTH PARTICIPATION
- DIVERSITY
- FREEDOM OF CHOICE
- FEMINISM
**VALUES**

**WE BELIEVE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equal rights and equitable opportunities</th>
<th>Social justice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people have equal rights and deserve equitable opportunities to exercise their rights;</td>
<td>Both as the foundation of an inclusive society and the basis for each person to enjoy one’s rights and freedoms regardless of one’s social status or position of power;</td>
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<tr>
<th>Respecting diversities</th>
<th>Activism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respecting diversities is one of the basic principles of a free society;</td>
<td>Is a precondition for democratic development and a tool allowing every person to exercise one’s own rights and the rights of others;</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freedom of choice</th>
<th>Youth participation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the freedom of choice, in the possibility and in the right of each person to decide for oneself and to make informed decisions free of pressure;</td>
<td>As a model for building citizen engagement and sustainable democratic society;</td>
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<tr>
<th>Fight for rights and freedoms of disadvantaged people</th>
<th>Feminism</th>
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<tr>
<td>The fight for the rights and freedoms of disadvantaged people can be successful only through their empowerment, mobilization and active participation;</td>
<td>Both as an ideology embodying our values and as a movement striving to improve the rights of different sexual and gender identities by overcoming the gender stereotypes that lead to inequality, injustice and violence;</td>
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STATE INSTITUTIONS ARE WORKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES TOWARDS PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY.
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We believe that for human rights to be fully respected and enjoyed, they must first be comprehensively acknowledged in the existing legislation and regulations. During the past decade, Macedonia had seen a trend of retrogression with regards to SRH, especially in the areas of gender equality, women’s reproductive rights and the rights of the LGBTI community. Retrograde policies were adopted with a conservative ideological background contradicting the human rights framework and the scientific facts and evidence. Among other things, the government enacted a very restrictive abortion law which was detrimental to women’s health and life, carried out campaigns which reproduced gender stereotypes and maintained a public discourse that encouraged hatred towards people with different sexual orientation while mechanisms for effective protection of the LGBTI community against violence were completely non-existent. Furthermore, we have witnessed the continued failure to respect and implement laws and policies related to SRH and human rights. Contraceptives are still not covered by state funding as part of either the health insurance package or the prevention programs of the Ministry of Health. The policy and law making processes pose serious challenges since the country lacks mechanisms that would guarantee a wide consultative process during their preparation. As funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) phased out, the sustainability of the established CSO-managed HIV prevention services has become uncertain, especially if the State does not implement adequate regulations and policies for their future financing.

HERA shall continue to initiate and to participate actively in all processes of development of SHR-related laws and policies, especially of those about HIV, abortion, gender equality and non-discrimination, both at national and local levels. We shall also demand that state institutions implement the adopted laws and policies in a consistent manner. We shall carry out advocacy activities while providing both our expertise and arguments based on research and evidence. In parallel to this, we shall continue to ask for greater transparency of the central and local government in the law making and implementation processes by monitoring budget spending, gathering field evidence of the effects of policies on the beneficiaries as well as by making reference to human rights conventions in advocacy activities at international and national levels.

During the next five years, HERA shall directly contribute to the adoption of around 15 laws, policies, regulations or good practices by central and local government institutions. The adopted laws and policies shall enable the achievement of gender equality and shall guarantee and protect the sexual and reproductive rights of all citizens, primarily of women and marginalized communities.
STRATEGIC GOAL 1.2.

We believe that only by joint and coordinated work with CSOs we can generate sufficient social power and influence to make considerable societal changes. During the past period, solidarity and strong cooperation grew within the civil society for the purpose of joint advocacy for human rights issues. We created or participated directly in the activities of various informal networks to block the adoption of harmful laws or to make changes to SRH-related policies. The mutual collaboration has helped us strengthen our advocacy skills as well as develop the capacities of our partner organizations. At the same time, due to our expertise and engagement in regional and European initiatives, we have been more actively involved in the SRH promotion processes globally and have also been following international trends and situations with regards to sexual and reproductive rights.

Over the next five-year period we will continue our collaboration with CSOs, informal initiatives, community activists and leaders as part of the initiatives aiming at improving the legislation and policies on SRH and gender equality. The focus shall be put on furthering our work in already established platforms and networks in various areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights i.e. gender equality and elimination of violence against women, youth issues and CSE, sustainability of programs for HIV prevention among marginalized groups, sexual rights of people with disabilities and protection of LGBTI against discrimination. We shall also join in new informal networks and platforms. We shall work on building the capacities of groups and organizations formed by people living with HIV, sexual workers, LGBTI community, people who inject drugs, people with disabilities and Roma women for the purpose of fulfillment of their human rights.

During the next five years, we will collaborate actively with around 25 CSOs and informal groups which will take part in our public actions to support and improve SRH and gender equality. We shall also increase the number of individuals promoting SRH values and sexual rights; around 250 activists shall be involved in HERA’s public activities aimed at initiating political and social changes.
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WHY?

WHAT?

BY 2022

STRATEGIC GOAL 1.3.

Collaboration and strengthening capacities of institutions at local and national levels

Receiving support from and the active involvement of appointed representatives from government institutions, members of Parliament and local government councils is an important factor in improving human rights policies as well as in ensuring their sustainability in future. Unfortunately, the central and local government institutions lack both the capacity and the knowledge that decision makers need to be able to make informed and relevant policies that would produce greater benefits for the citizens and would be in compliance with the human rights framework. Additionally, over the past years many government institutions have not been open to cooperation with civil society organizations.

HERA shall work to inform and develop more effectively the capacities of deputies as well as of central and local government representatives to ensure open debate and actions in the areas of SRH and gender equality in the next five years. HERA shall build partnerships and take a proactive approach to collaborating and opening dialogue with decision makers, policy creators within institutions and administration officials who could contribute directly to the improvement of SRH-related legislation, policies and practices.

Over the next five years, we shall involve and build the capacities of around 60 representatives of Parliament, local councils and central and local executive authorities to serve as our promoters and as SRH and gender equality supporters in order to have greater influence on policies and decision making processes.
We believe that the situation regarding marginalized women's rights would be impossible to change without empowering the women themselves, thus enabling them to advocate for themselves and take part in the decision making that directly affects their life. The process of empowerment is a comprehensive intervention in terms of not only informing the holders of a given right but also building the skills and resources necessary for the realization of their personal rights.

The enjoyment and respect of marginalized women's social and economic rights has a direct impact on the advancement of their sexual and reproductive rights. The low education level, the high unemployment rate and the discrimination that Roma women continuously face are just few of the main challenges on the road towards social justice in our society. Women with disabilities lack adequate access to services and education, including SRH. Furthermore, women victims of domestic violence have difficulties entering the labor market and are not sufficiently empowered to end the cycle of violence in their family surrounding. All these groups of women are victims of repeated and multiple discriminations which already constitute a violation to their sexual and reproductive rights and make their social wellbeing and quality of life impossible to attain.

Over the next five years HERA shall support advocacy initiatives for marginalized groups of women for the purpose of realizing their sexual, social and economic rights by building partnerships and developing specific empowerment programs. We shall also support the development of social enterprises and thus contribute to a greater inclusion of marginalized women in the labor market. We shall continue to support the Initiative of Roma women from Shuto Orizari with the aim to build their capacities as paralegals and community monitors and empower them as activists for policy and practice changes.

In the next five years we shall take active part in or support around 10 initiatives of women from marginalized communities, independent or undertaken by coalition of organizations, thus ensuring advocacy for their social, sexual and economic rights. We shall also develop programs for economic, legal or social empowerment of around 50 women from marginalized communities, primarily Roma women, for the purpose of equipping them with skills and resources for social inclusion, mostly in the labor market.
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STRATEGIC GOAL 2.2.

Providing comprehensive sexuality education for young people

**WHY?**
As an organization, we believe that each and every young person, without an exception, should have access to comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). To us, CSE is a key factor to building a society in which young people care and take responsibility for their own SRH, enjoy their sexuality, make informed and conscious decisions free from pressure, prejudices and hatred and acknowledge differences. Young people in Macedonia are still facing a lack of access to information about their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Even now there is no sustainable systemic solution in schools which would enable young people to learn about all CSE topics. Quite the contrary, young people study from textbooks filled with prejudices and containing outdated and inaccurate information. The teaching personnel is not trained to teach CSE to young people who, on the other hand, are part of an education system that taboos topics related to SRH, HIV and sexuality in general. Compared to other European countries, the use of modern contraceptives among the youth is at the lowest level. Furthermore, STIs, juvenile pregnancies as well as homophobia and transphobia have been on the rise in recent years. Another alarming trend is that of bullying and violence in schools.

**WHAT?**
Given the lack of institutional framework within the education system, we shall continue to provide informal CSE by using innovative educational approaches and cooperating with schools and organizations that work with youth. We shall also develop partnerships with other organizations to provide CSE to young people outside the education system. We shall continue to improve our curricula and tools for monitoring and measuring the impact of CSE by undertaking continuous evaluations and research. It is in collaboration with youth organizations, experts and activists that we shall continue to advocate the introduction of CSE in formal education which is not only based on scientific findings and human rights approaches but also taking into account the developmental capacities of children. We shall work on building capacities of schools and their personnel to ensure more effective provision of CSE in the future. We shall also make efforts to expand our activities outside of Skopje and to involve persons from other ethnic communities, especially Albanians.

**BY 2022**
Over the next five years, HERA shall establish a base of 100 CSE youth peer educators. In addition, we shall train around 90 CSE adult educators among the teachers or other professional personnel (social workers, psychologists) who are working with young people in the institutions. It is our expectation that around 1,300 young people will go through the full CSE program while more than 2,000 young people and youth from HIV-affected key populations shall be covered through one-time workshops or a series of workshops related to CSE topics.
Increased information about SRH in the general public is the key step towards better understanding and strengthened respect for sexual and reproductive rights. Changing public awareness is a long-term process dependent on a variety of factors. At the same time, public opinion is an important ally in the efforts to change society toward greater democracy and respect of human rights. As an organization working in the area of SRH which is still a taboo subject in our society, we are well aware that the topics we have been working on in the last years have become unpopular among a large portion of the population. This is mainly due to the propaganda against sexual and reproductive health and rights that was in line with state policies suppressing the freedoms of thought and of expression. Many traditional and electronic media became tools for spreading hate, intolerance, discrimination and false information, leaving almost no room for promotion of SRH values. One such example is the campaign “Choose life, you have the right to choose” which was funded by the government. Over the last years HERA took advantage of the few remaining free media but has also managed to become a medium of its own for the purpose of promoting and educating about SRH and sexual rights.

HERA shall work on informing the public by continuously creating available content using new media. We shall use our social media profiles to further inform the citizens, to understand their needs as well as to debate issues of concern. We shall organize open events, media campaigns and public meeting with the aim to change the conservative matrix that still dominates the public opinion in Macedonia when it comes to sexual and reproductive rights. We plan on intensifying our collaboration with media professionals in order to engage the media’s interest in our topics. Volunteering and activism shall remain our core values and our volunteers and activists – our main SRH promoters.

Over the next five years, HERA shall reach 12,000,000 users by distributing educational materials and news and by organizing SRH awareness-raising campaigns through all its communication channels. About 70% of all communication activities shall be conducted via social media.
The main priority that we have set from the very beginning is that everyone has the right of access to SRH services and that young people and socially excluded groups shall be in the focus of the services that we provide. Our stationary and mobile services, which have existed for more than 10 years, are rights-based and based on the model of user-friendly services as well as customized to our clients’ needs while also guaranteeing confidentiality. The citizens in Macedonia, especially young people and marginalized communities, are still facing limited access to services for HIV prevention and SRH while specific services for SRH protection and for men’s health lack as well. Most of the services for key populations affected by HIV (men having sex with men – MSM, people with HIV, sexual workers and people who inject drugs) have been provided by the civil society through the programs established by the Global Fund. There is a need to expand and scale up the programs for prevention of HIV and STIs among MSM in the country; special focus has to be put on increasing HIV testing services and on opening specific services for SRH and men’s health.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Health has yet to develop and adopt special financing mechanisms and regulations for CSOs that offer health promotion and prevention services, which is another challenge for the sustainability of our services after the Global Fund. Macedonia also lacks specialized services for protection against gender-based violence according to the standards of the Istanbul Convention and the provision of state funding for the protection of victims of domestic and gender-based violence is another major challenge.

HERA shall continue to provide direct services for HIV, SRH and gender-based violence to young people and marginalized communities, including those affected by a humanitarian crisis. We shall continue to advocate financial support of our services from central and local authorities so to ensure their financial sustainability as well as mobilize funds from the private sector. For the purpose of establishing new services in addition to our regular ones, we shall build partnerships with state institutions; our cooperation with the HIV Counseling Center as a partnership between HERA and the Infectious Diseases Clinic shall continue in the future.

Over the next five years, about 15,000 clients will use our clinics and approximately 72,000 services will be provided out of which 2,000 will be services for domestic and gender-based violence. Another 17,000 health and social services will be provided through our collaboration with the Infectious Diseases Clinic and the newly developed partnerships. HERA shall develop at least a Minimal Package of Services from its existing services and will integrate it within the state funded services, thus enabling their sustainability until 2022.
Providing services for sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, especially for young people and marginalized communities

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Both the education and the professional approach of service providers in the areas of SRH, HIV and gender-based violence, primarily towards the marginalized communities, are all part of our values and a prerequisite for establishing high quality and standardized services. Health institutions in Macedonia are still not adapted to the needs of marginalized communities; the confidentiality is a considerable challenge while service providers are not sufficiently sensitized to work with these groups. The stigma and discrimination against Roma people, people living with HIV and key populations affected by HIV are still present in the health sector. Acquiring new skills and knowledge is not in the focus of the continuous education of health and social workers. In addition to the limited access to counselling services for contraception, young people in the country have no access to free contraceptives at all. In the primary health care, there is a trend of illegal charges for gynecological services which affects the poorer communities the most and is among the most common barriers to the use of prenatal care. The existing clinical guidelines treating various SRH aspects are not adapted to the local context, the patients’ needs and the state capacities. Additionally there is no model in the state which would define the processes of development, implementation and revision of protocols within the health system.

Over the next five years, we shall tend to establish new training models as well as to expand the existing training programs for service providers in the health and social care sector. We shall work on improving the current clinical guidelines and standards for SRH, HIV and gender-based violence in partnership with state institutions and international organizations. We shall, also, improve the access to free contraceptives for young people. Using available legal mechanisms and strategies for community monitoring of quality of the services, we will work closely with members of marginalized communities and with CSOs to overcome barriers and discrimination faced particularly by Roma people, groups at risk of HIV and LGBTI persons when using health and social services.

About 2,000 health and social workers shall broaden their knowledge and competencies about various topics related to SRH and gender-based violence, which would lead to effective reduction of discrimination among health workers and associates occurring on the basis of HIV status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic background or towards any other socially vulnerable category. In cooperation with national and international organizations, HERA shall take part in the preparation of at least 10 new clinical guidelines or manuals aiming at improving the quality of services for SRH, HIV and gender-based violence.
Both the education and the professional approach of service providers in the areas of SRH, HIV and gender-based violence, primarily towards the marginalized communities, are all part of our values and a prerequisite for establishing high quality and standardized services. Health institutions in Macedonia are still not adapted to the needs of marginalized communities; the confidentiality is a considerable challenge while service providers are not sufficiently sensitized to work with these groups. The stigma and discrimination against Roma people, people living with HIV and key populations affected by HIV are still present in the health sector. Acquiring new skills and knowledge is not in the focus of the continuous education of health and social workers. In addition to the limited access to counselling services for contraception, young people in the country have no access to free contraceptives at all. In the primary health care, there is a trend of illegal charges for gynecological services which affects the poorer communities the most and is among the most common barriers to the use of prenatal care. The existing clinical guidelines treating various SRH aspects are not adapted to the local context, the patients' needs and the state capacities. Additionally there is no model in the state which define the processes of development, implementation and revision of protocols within the health system.

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Activism and youth volunteering are among the most important values of HERA. However, the continuous emigration of young people from the country and the high rate of youth unemployment during the past decade are the key sociological trends that have had a major impact on the context that we work in. We are well aware of the challenges arising from the reduced activity of our membership in the previous years and from the constant decline of the number of young volunteers but we still do believe that only with a strong membership and active volunteers we can maintain our activism and lead major social changes.

As an organization, we have in mind the fact that our activities are mostly concentrated in Skopje, i.e. not sufficiently present in other areas such as the regions with a predominantly Albanian population. As a result, our mission and values remain unknown outside the capital. Also, there is insufficient cooperation with organizations at local level, primarily in smaller cities and rural areas, regarding the promotion of CSE as one of our strategic priorities.

Over the next five years, we shall focus on increasing our base of young volunteers by using primarily the model for comprehensive sexuality education. We shall work on recruiting volunteers from regions outside of the capital as well as from communities with predominant Albanian population. The membership criteria and procedures shall be improved and the communication models will be enhanced to ensure greater involvement of the members in our activities. We shall also work on improving strategies for involvement of a larger number of activists which would ensure a more effective advocacy in the areas of sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality.

HERA shall develop a base of around 250 active volunteers who will be included in the organization's activities regarding comprehensive sexuality education and advocacy for sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality. Additionally, at least 70% of our members shall be directly involved in the implementation of the activities. HERA's website will be constantly updated with content in Albanian in order to bring our work closer to the members of the Albanian community, primarily young people.
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### STRATEGIC GOAL 4.2.

**Ensuring continuous and up-to-date expertise, professionalism and accountability**

**WHY?**

Professionalism and expertise are the two key qualities that HERA is recognized and highly valued for by partners, national institutions and donors. Over the last years, we have developed our capacities for argument-based advocacy and analysis for the protection and improvement of SRH and sexual and reproductive rights. These qualities, along with the accountability, should be the key elements of any well-established CSO that can contribute effectively to both SRH and gender equality in the country. This is especially important when considering the fact that there are no continuous and comprehensive research and studies in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights at national level, which might serve as the basis for making relevant decisions based on evidence and existing trends.

**WHAT?**

HERA shall upgrade continuously the knowledge of its employees and shall convey its expertise by taking part in national and international events. We plan on updating our internal policies in order to enhance the operations of the organization in general. HERA shall continue to provide accountability for its work by promoting comprehensive and accessible reports about its activities and funding.

**BY 2022**

HERA shall participate in about 50 national and international events (conferences, trainings, seminars) promoting SHR and gender equality. New policies shall be designed to help us put our values into practice more effectively and to enhance our operational and financial efficiency. All information on our annual program work, revenues and costs will always be available: www.hera.org.mk.
Ensuring financial sustainability and stability

The financial stability will be the key for our organization, enabling us to make sure that we have the capacity to expand our programs, to ensure continuity of the services we provide as well as to provide opportunities for further enhancing of legislation and policies related to sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality. Lately, we have seen a trend of declining financial support from external donors for SRH-related topics, which poses a serious challenge for the financial sustainability of our organization given the fact that 95% of our income originates from international grants. On the other hand, despite the increase of the European funds, their usage rate remains low. Over the last years, our income growth has been mostly due to the expanding of our strategies for resource mobilization in other areas, such as gender equality and economy which have indirect impact on SRH. The funding that the government and the national institutions provided for the civil society over the past decade has been negligible. Moreover, national institutions have yet to establish financing modalities for CSOs, the granting procedures are not transparent and there are no standards for social contracting that would enable organizations to receive funding for their provision of social services, especially to the most vulnerable communities. In recent years, there was a broad debate on social enterprises as means for CSOs to generate income but the existing regulations are not favorable. Donations for CSOs from the private sector are also insufficient even though HERA has had good practices of collaborating with certain private companies in the past.

HERA shall strive to build its capacities to ensure diversity of funding sources. We shall focus our efforts towards mobilizing resources primarily from the local and central governments. We shall also work on establishing social contracting mechanisms between the state and CSOs for the purpose of ensuring the financial sustainability of services, especially for HIV and gender-based violence. We shall continue and further develop our cooperation with international donors, especially with regards to the funding possibilities provided by the IPA funds. We shall continue developing the social enterprise for professional care of elderly people “Nega Plus” as an option for generating our own income necessary for the implementation of our mission and our planned goals.

HERA shall, at least, maintain the level of income from previous years, thus securing both its financial stability and the optimal conditions necessary for the implementation of the strategic plan for 2018-2022. Over the next five years, we plan to ensure around 2 million USD while the income received from state funds will be increased by at least 20%. Furthermore, we will see an increase in the donations from the private sector as well as in our own income generated by the social enterprise “Nega Plus”.

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<th>STATE INSTITUTIONS ARE WORKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES TOWARDS PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRATEGIC GOALS</td>
<td>Improving laws, policies and practices related to HIV, sexual and reproductive health and gender equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building and maintaining partnerships with CSOs at local, national and international levels.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collaboration and strengthening capacities of institutions at local and national levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDICATORS</td>
<td>15 successful initiatives to change legislation, policies and practices related to HIV, SRH and gender equality at central and local levels, to which HERA contributed with its advocacy activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 CSOs and non-formal groups are directly involved in our public actions for support and promotion of SRH and gender equality.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>250 activists are involved in advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives of the organization.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 representatives of the Parliament and of state institutions at central and local levels have their capacities strengthened or act as promoters and supporters of SRH and gender equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES)</td>
<td>Active participation and provision of expertise in the policy and law making process.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocacy for greater government accountability and transparency.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Using evidence-based data for advocacy by conducting research and gathering field information.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Enhancing strategic collaborations with existing networks for advocacy purposes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Involvement in creating new networks of interest to SRH and gender equality.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Building capacities of organizations formed by marginalized and vulnerable communities for the purposes of advocacy and activism.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informing and building capacities of representatives of central and local governments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing partnerships, collaboration and open dialogue with state institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TARGET GROUPS</td>
<td>Policy creators and decision makers at central and local levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's and youth associations and human rights organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons from communities vulnerable to HIV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVERGAGE</td>
<td>Skopje and larger municipalities in Macedonia.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2018 – 2022
**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC PRIORITY</th>
<th>EVERYONE IS AWARE OF AND EXERCISES THEIR SOCIAL, SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRATEGIC GOALS</strong></td>
<td>Empowering women from marginalized communities, especially Roma women to exercise their sexual, reproductive, economic and social rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDICATORS</strong></td>
<td>Support is provided to 10 initiatives of socially marginalized women, independent or undertaken by coalition of organizations, ensuring advocacy for their social, sexual and economic rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES)</strong></td>
<td>Developing special programs for social, legal and economic empowerment of women</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supporting and developing social enterprise models</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supporting the creation of activist nucleus by marginalized groups of women</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Building the capacities of Roma women for provision of paralegal assistance and for community monitoring of service provision</td>
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<td><strong>TARGET GROUPS</strong></td>
<td>Roma women, persons with disabilities, unemployed women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young people from the Albanian ethnic community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COVERAGE</strong></td>
<td>Skopje</td>
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</table>
## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY** | **EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, HIV AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**
---|---

### STRATEGIC GOALS
- Providing services for sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, especially for young people and marginalized communities
- Developing professional skills and knowledge of service providers about sexual and reproductive health and gender-related aspects

### INDICATORS
- 15,000 clients are using our services
- 72,000 SRH-related services, including for HIV and gender-based violence
- 17,000 SRH and HIV services are provided by health institutions which have signed a memorandum for cooperation with the organization (associated clinics)
- 2,000 health and social workers are trained on various topics related to SRH and gender-based violence
- 10 new clinical guidelines or manuals aimed at improving the quality of SRH, HIV and GBV services developed with active contribution of our organization

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES)
- Providing direct services to young people and marginalized communities, including those affected by humanitarian crisis
- Improving access to services for marginalized and socially vulnerable groups
- Advocating support of our services from the central and local governments, including support from the private sector
- Partnerships with state institutions to enable service provision for HIV, SRH and gender-based violence
- Establishing new training programs and modules
- Removing barriers and discrimination faced by the Roma people, groups at risk of HIV and LGBTI persons accessing services
- Cooperating with state institutions for the development of clinical guidelines, manuals and standards
- Improving access to services related to contraception and gender-based violence

### TARGET GROUPS
- Young people
- Persons most at risk of HIV
- Vulnerable groups (Roma people, persons with disabilities)
- State institutions that provide services
- Health workers
- Social workers
- State institutions that provide social and health services

### COVERAGE
- Skopje, municipalities Centar and Shuto Orizari
- Larger municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia
### HERA IS A SUSTAINABLE AND PROFESSIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION

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<td>STRATEGIC GOALS</td>
<td>Strengthening activism and volunteer engagement within the organization</td>
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| INDICATORS         | Established base of 240 volunteers involved in our activities related to CSE and to sexual rights and gender equality advocacy | The staff has taken part in 50 trainings to improve their knowledge in the areas of SRH and gender equality, including management and leadership skills | Income of 125 million MKD is generated from international sources, the state budget, individual donations and membership fees for strategy implementation |
|--------------------| 70% of the organization’s membership are directly involved in the implementation of the organization's activities | All information regarding the organization’s annual program performance, income and expenses is published at www.hera.org.mk | At least 20% of the generated income is provided from the state budget funds (at central and local levels) |
|                    | Continuous update of HERA's website with content in Albanian | | |

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<th>IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES)</th>
<th>Increasing the base of young volunteers, primarily through the CSE model</th>
<th>Continuous employees’ knowledge upgrade</th>
<th>Mobilization of resources from central and local governments</th>
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<td>Recruiting volunteers outside the capital</td>
<td>Updating internal policies and regulations to enhance the operation of the organization, including financial and spending management</td>
<td>Establishing sustainable social contracting mechanisms between the State and CSOs</td>
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<td>Improving membership criteria and procedures</td>
<td>Improving the organization's visibility and branding</td>
<td>Improving capacities for resources mobilization from EU funding mechanisms</td>
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<td>Improving communication with the membership</td>
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<td>Further upgrade of the social enterprise “Nega Plus”</td>
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<th>Executive Board</th>
<th>International donors</th>
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<td>Decision makers at central and local levels</td>
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<th>Skopje, urban and rural areas</th>
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HERA is a sustainable and professional civil society organization. Strengthening activism and volunteer engagement within the organization. Ensuring continuous and up-to-date expertise, professionalism, and accountability. Ensuring financial sustainability and stability.

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

- Established base of 240 volunteers involved in our activities related to CSE and to sexual rights and gender equality advocacy.
- 70% of the organization's membership are directly involved in the implementation of the organization's activities.
- Continuous update of HERA's website with content in Albanian.
- A staff has taken part in 50 trainings to improve their knowledge in the areas of SRH and gender equality, including management and leadership skills.
- All information regarding the organization's annual program performance, income and expenses is published at www.hera.org.mk.
- Income of 125 million MKD is generated from international sources, the state budget, individual donations, and membership fees for strategy implementation.
- At least 20% of the generated income is provided from the state budget funds (at central and local levels).

**INDICATORS**

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- Recruiting volunteers outside the capital.
- Improving membership criteria and procedures.
- Improving communication with the membership.
- Continuous employees' knowledge upgrade.
- Updating internal policies and regulations to enhance the operation of the organization, including financial and spending management.
- Improving the organization's visibility and branding.
- Mobilization of resources from central and local governments.
- Establishing sustainable social contracting mechanisms between the state and CSOs.
- Improving capacities for resources mobilization from EU funding mechanisms.
- Further upgrade of the social enterprise “Nega Plus.”

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

- Volunteers of the organization
- Members of the organization
- Executive Board
- Employees
- International donors
- Private sector
- Decision makers at central and local levels

**TARGET GROUPS**

- Skopje, urban and rural areas
- Skopje
- Skopje and larger municipalities in Macedonia

**COVERAGE**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

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Radomir Trajković