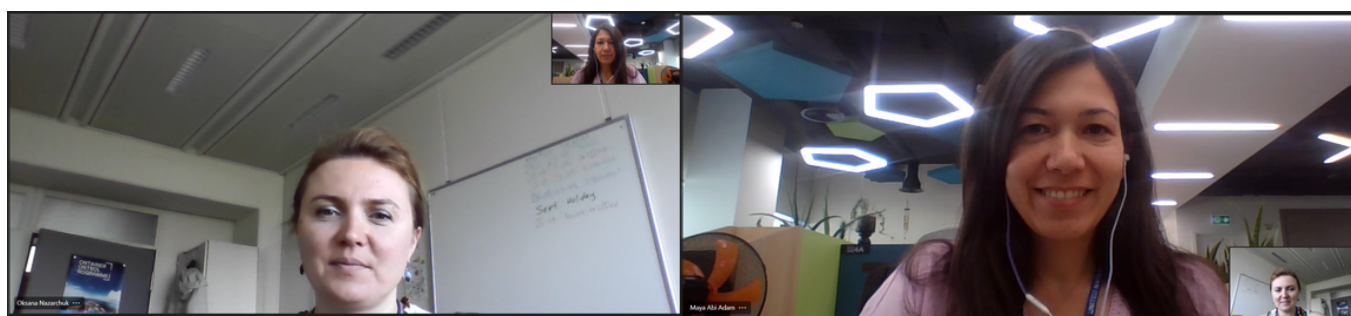


Women's Network Newsletter



Closing Gaps, Increasing Opportunities: A Conversation between CCP Women Trainers



Since its launch in 2015, the CCP Women's Network has made considerable gains in fulfilling global commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. Owing primarily to initiatives such as the Women's Network and gender sensitization training components, the representation of women in Port Control and Air Cargo Control Units (PCUs/ACCUs) has almost doubled, reaching 22% in 2022 compared to 12% in 2015. As for UNODC CCP staff, some of the newest members of the team include two women trainers with a Customs and border management background, Maya Abi Adam (Lebanon, who joined in April) and Oksana Nazarchuk (Ukraine, who joined in May). We hope their life experiences will inspire many more women interested in joining the field.

Oksana to Maya: I understand that you come from a Customs background; when and how did you start your career in Customs? What inspired you to join Customs work?

Maya: I have always been interested in the field of macroeconomics and public administration. Customs work involves both of these roles, which are key aspects of a country's economy. Considering my interest, I felt it was the right thing to do. When the Lebanese civil service announced this opportunity, many people were interested; men and women applied and got in with the assumption that this would be a desk job, especially the women. After we joined, it was a real wake-up call to realize that the job had active fieldwork components.

Oksana: Are you saying the women who joined did not know what they were signing up for?

Maya: Many assumed we would sit behind the desk like any other government job, so most of the women took administrative positions during the first few years. Even the Administration was unsure if they wanted to send us to the border for inspections or keep us in the office. Only after some time were men and women assigned the same tasks.

Maya to Oksana: What was it like to be a woman in a profession where women are substantially underrepresented and gender parity is yet to be attained?

Oksana: I thought the same when deciding whether to enter Ukraine's border guard service. When I joined, I was part of the third cohort admitting women; even then, women represented only 2% of all recruits in the academy. In a way, we were an experimental group, as the previous recruitments were comprised of men only. Today, roughly 20% of graduates of the National

State Border Guard Academy of Ukraine are women, most of whom are assigned to the Chief of Shifts at border crossing points (BCP) during the early phases of their career—quite a critical level. Compared to many other law enforcement agencies, the Ukrainian State Border Guard Service is quite advanced in mainstreaming gender on the operational and middle management levels. However, the long-standing issue of assigning women officers to higher management positions persists, as in many other spheres.

Oksana to Maya: Some women may hesitate to join customs and other law enforcement agencies for fear of losing their professional/personal life balance. Can you reflect on this?

Maya: I think this is a significant concern amongst women in my region. This is because the majority of family tasks and household responsibilities fall on women's shoulders. While I appreciate women choosing to stay at home and raise families out of their own volition, I also want to encourage those who wish to pursue their interests and career plans out in the world. It may be that a profession such as a border management or customs official in the field at BCPs or in regional units isn't a favourable environment for women, but I say, go for it without fear. Women may suffer a bit initially, and the work demands may take a heavy toll on their physical and social life, but if they are passionate enough and strong-willed, they can do it.

READ THE FULL INTERVIEW:

<https://bit.ly/3fCn2xt>



SCAN ME

THE CCP WOMEN'S NETWORK WINS THE 2022 UNOV/UNODC GENDER AWARD

In April 2022, the CCP Women's Network won the **2022 UNOV/UNODC Gender Award** for their initiative of "Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through the CCP Women's Professional Development Programme (WPDP)". The UNOV/UNODC launched the gender awards in recognition of the outstanding efforts of programmes in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. While an independent jury presented the shortlist of candidates for the awards, the five winners, including the WPDP, were selected through a wide-base voting process that saw the active involvement of over 500 staff members within the UNODC.

WPDP WELCOMES A NEW COHORT IN A NEW REGION - EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Launched in 2021, the WPDP was designed to empower emerging women customs leaders by creating networks and offering leadership insights to accelerate their career progress. Following successful implementation in the Asia Pacific region, the initiative brought together 46 emerging women border control leaders from six countries in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA). Hosted by the UNODC and delivered by RMIT University's Transnational Security Center (TSC), the inaugural programme in ESA explored themes of leadership, cooperation, and future preparedness within the border control landscape.



Each week, participants contributed to a weekly 'Snapshot Report' which served as a regional barometer highlighting the perspectives of emerging women leaders on key border control themes. The WPDP ESA has shown there is a deep appetite for practical, engaging training opportunities for women border control leaders. At the conclusion of the two-week intensive programme, participants prepared a joint Commitment Statement proposing the next steps to build their networks, advance their leadership and prepare for the future border control landscape.

